



Buzz, Body & Bites

A newsletter for actively aging adults
Virginia Cooperative Extension Family & Consumer Sciences
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Coping with a Money C.R.U.N.C.H.

We are all likely to find ourselves in a money crunch at some point in our lives. Regardless of the reason, having a plan for tackling a money crunch can reduce stress and help us regain control. Here are some thoughts about how to approach a money crunch:

Consider Immediate Options – See if there are ways to bring in additional income. Check into programs such as unemployment insurance, energy assistance, SNAP, Medicaid, etc. At <https://benefitscheckup.org/> older adults can enter their zip code to find a list of programs and determine eligibility.

Revise or Create a Spending Plan – A spending plan (or budget) is a must for a money crunch. Make a “bare bones” plan that will cover necessities and stick to the plan to make ends meet. Learn more about spending plans at: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/moneymatters/budgeting/>.

Use All Available Resources – Think “outside of the box” about resources to increase income or decrease expenses. Do you have a hobby that could become a “side hustle,” items you don’t use that you could sell or a skill to trade for something you need? Are there resources where you can get things for free, low cost, or on a sliding-fee scale (think libraries, health clinics, community meals, and area agencies on aging)? One good place to find local resources is <https://211virginia.org>.

Narrow Your Priorities – If you can’t pay everything, first meet your basic needs and then tackle high, medium, and low-priority debts. Low-priority debts would go away in bankruptcy, such as credit card or medical debt. Don’t let these creditors pressure you into payment plans you can’t afford!

Contact Your Creditors – Definitely contact your creditors if you can’t pay. They may have relief options available. Be sure you understand any new agreements and get written confirmation, even if that means screenshots of text messages or copies of an online “chat” with the company.

Heed Scam and Loan Warnings – Be wary of offers to “help” you get out of debt! Some are not good deals and others are scams. Be sure to check with your own bank or credit union. And always compare at least three options before deciding.

Contributed by by Karen Poff, Senior Extension Agent, Warren County, VA

Financial Health and The Dimensions of Wellness

Our financial health can affect the other dimensions of wellness. When we worry about money, we sometimes experience anxiety (emotional wellness). This can lead to medical problems, such as sleep loss, migraines, muscle tension, hypertension (physical wellness), and trouble at work (occupational wellness). When this happens, we

may even question our personal sense of meaning and purpose (spiritual wellness). Ask yourself these questions to begin the process of improving your financial wellness:

- Are you working or volunteering in a field that you feel passionate about or do well?
- Are you looking for paid or volunteer work?
- Do you keep an eye on your checking account to be sure you do not overextend yourself?
- Are your savings in line with your life goals?
- Do you have a weekly or monthly budget so you can plan for expenses?
- Have you considered getting help from someone specializing in money management or personal finances?

Vegetable quesadilla

Source: <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/vegetable-quesadillas/>

Ingredients:

- 4 (8 inch) whole wheat tortillas
- 3/4 cup shredded cheese
- 1/2 cup cooked beans
- 1/2 cup chopped vegetables (corn, mushrooms, onions, peppers, tomatoes)

Instructions:

- Heat a skillet to medium. Spray with nonstick cooking spray.
- Put 3 tablespoons cheese, 2 tablespoons beans, and 2 tablespoons vegetables on half of each tortilla.
- Fold the empty side of the tortilla over the cheese, beans, and vegetables.
- Cook quesadillas in a skillet until lightly browned on both sides. This will take about 2–3 minutes per side.

Exercise: Overhead Press

1. You can do this exercise while standing or sitting in a sturdy, armless chair.
2. Keep your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart
3. Hold weights at your sides at shoulder height with palms facing forward. Breathe in slowly.
4. Slowly breathe out as you raise both arms up over your head, keeping your elbows slightly bent.
5. Hold the position for one second.
6. Breathe in as you slowly lower your arms.
7. Complete one set of 10-15 repetitions.
8. Rest for 15 seconds, then complete one more set of 10-15 reps.

Resources

SAMSHA's Creating a Healthier Life (<https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/sma16-4958.pdf>)

PARCI Lab LIFT exercises: <https://www.parcilab.org/lift>

Master Financial Education Volunteer: <https://ext.vt.edu/family/mfev.html>

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