

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Craig Ackerman  
352-629-0137, ext. 2052  
Craig.Ackerman@FLHealth.gov

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH**

*"Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle" theme stresses lifelong commitment to a healthy lifestyle*

OCALA—"Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle" with the Florida Department of Health in Marion County as the department celebrates March as National Nutrition Month.

Each April, the department joins with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to encourage the community to return to the basics of healthy eating. This year's theme, "Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle," encourages a lifestyle-based approach to health.

"It takes more than the latest diet or exercise routine to enjoy healthy living," said Mary Anne Hitson, director of the Public Health Nutrition Program at the Florida Department of Health in Marion County. "A consistent healthy eating pattern and regular physical activity will lead to longer and healthier lives."

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign that focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The "Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle" theme encourages eating and physical activity plans that focus on consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices, and getting daily exercise.

"Only 35 percent of Marion County adults are at a healthy weight," said Meaghan Crowley, the department's Health Education program manager. "By providing our community with the information on how to make healthy choices, we can help the adults and children in our community reach and maintain a healthy weight."

Marion County residents can make a commitment to make healthy choices on the Healthy Promise message board at the department's Ocala location, 1801 SE 32nd Avenue. Healthy Promise Florida is an interactive campaign promoting commitments to healthy choices. You can also post a healthy promise, along with a personal photo, to the online message board at [www.HealthyPromiseFL.com](http://www.HealthyPromiseFL.com). On this website, you can view photos and promises posted by other Floridians who have committed to live longer and healthier lives.

Find out more about National Nutrition Month at [www.NationalNutritionMonth.org](http://www.NationalNutritionMonth.org). For information on healthy choices, visit the department's website at [Marion.FloridaHealth.gov](http://Marion.FloridaHealth.gov), or call 352-629-0137.

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