

# Healthy Georgia Connections

Issue No. 7

NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM **UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA** COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

## **FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES**

### **Prepare food safely to avoid foodborne illness while sheltering in place**

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Daily routines have been disrupted by the current COVID-19 crisis and many people are spending more time cooking at home than before. While health is always on our minds, it is important to maintain safe food handling at this time so our lives are not further complicated by foodborne illness.

Even for those accustomed to preparing and cooking foods at home, a busier household than usual may mean more disruptions in the kitchen. Unless you pay attention to safe food handling, extra activity and hands can lead to foodborne illness.

Be sure to keep everything clean. That includes your hands and kitchen surfaces while you are preparing meals or snacks. Wash hands and kitchen surfaces often with hot, soapy water. Remember to wash cutting boards, dishes and utensils after preparing each food item and before you begin preparing another food item.

If cutting boards or other surfaces have been in contact with raw meat, poultry or seafood juices, sanitize them after washing and rinsing them. Use 1 teaspoon of unscented, fresh household bleach mixed with 1 quart of water and immerse your items in this solution for five to 10 seconds, then let the items air dry.

Other food-safety practices for food storage include refrigerating perishable food within two hours of taking



it out of refrigeration. In warmer weather, when the temperature is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, that limit should be one hour. Cook or freeze fresh poultry, fish, ground meats and variety meats within two days; other fresh beef, veal, lamb or pork should be cooked or frozen within three to five days.

Use paper towels for cleaning kitchen surfaces as much as possible. Do not clean surfaces with used cloth towels.

For more tips, visit [t.uga.edu/60A](https://t.uga.edu/60A).



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## AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

# Preventing termites in Georgia homes

**Dan Suiter**

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Border to border, the state of Georgia enjoys mild temperatures and more than adequate rainfall, which are perfect conditions for the growth of an abundance of insects, including subterranean termites.

Georgia is part of what entomologists and pest management professionals refer to as “the termite belt,” where termites are common and abundant.

Subterranean termites are the most common type of termite found in Georgia, and the yards of most homes in Georgia will be occupied by one or more related groups of termites, sometimes called colonies. They are called subterranean termites because they require access to moisture, which is most commonly found in the soil.

Termites eat wood, and because we build homes with a substantial quantity of structural softwood, it is not surprising that some homes may become infested by this hidden pest.



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Subterranean termites are persistent. They never stop looking for sources of food and, when they locate and infest structural wood, can do moderate to substantial damage if infestations go unchecked. It is therefore important that homeowners are aware of common signs pointing to termite infestation.

First, homeowners should be aware of what a termite swarmer looks like. Swarmers are male and female termites that fly in the spring each year — most commonly February

to April in Georgia.

Soon after flying, swarmers lose their wings, mate and begin a new colony. Another important, outward sign that homeowners should be able to recognize are the tell-tale mud tubes that termites use to move between their soil home and the wood on which they are feeding.

Termites build hollow mud tubes comprised of moist soil

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**4-H YOUTH****Healthy nutrition and physical activity habits at home****Courtney Brown***Georgia 4-H public service assistant, UGA Extension*

Our nutrition and physical activity habits are not just the result of our personal choices. The environment in which we live and our family culture and customs can also influence our choices and behaviors.

Parents can help encourage youth to adopt healthy habits by making small changes in the home and family setting that are supportive of health.

With so much time spent at home, you may find that you are having more family meals than ever. This is good news for your health — eating meals as a family has been linked to increased fruit and vegetable consumption.

Involving children and youth in meal planning and preparation can help increase their interest in trying new or healthier options.

Shake up the monotony of eating at home by planning a themed dinner, eating outside or even dressing up.

Avoid using food as a reward when possible and consider what non-food ways could be used as a celebration. Doing a fun activity together, small non-food rewards like stickers or earning “points” towards a bigger future prize are all good non-food options. Model positive attitudes about food in both your behavior and your language.

One easy way to support healthy food choices at home is to make healthier choices easily accessible. Try storing fresh-cut fruits and vegetables in a designated space in the fridge where children know they can go for a snack, or keep easy-to-eat options like clementine oranges and apples displayed on the counter.

Children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 years should do 60 minutes or more of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity daily.

Consider how your family’s routines have changed. If school or sports activities were providing most of the physical activity opportunities for the kids in your home, it may be a



good idea to look for some activities to add to your at-home schedule.

In other cases, youth may be getting more activity than ever, as a less strict schedule can afford time for play, walks and activities with siblings.

Caregivers can support physical activity for youth by providing movement breaks during school-at-home activities, limiting screen time when possible and making physical activity a family activity. Remember that for young children, unstructured play can be a great source of physical activity.

On a rainy day, online resources can be a good place to find fun, follow-along physical activity videos for younger children.

For older youth, offer opportunities for physical activity like family walks, practicing for a sport they enjoy or gardening together, but recognize their independence and do not force physical activity.

Find online nutrition and physical activity resources at [georgia4h.org/about-us/resources/activity-resources/#healthy-living](https://georgia4h.org/about-us/resources/activity-resources/#healthy-living).

**EXTENSION FEATURE****Getting back to business responsibly: the “new normal”**

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**Manpreet Singh**, *professor, Department of Poultry Science*

**Elizabeth Address**, *professor, Department of Foods and Nutrition*

The scientific community still has much to learn about the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19, which has in turn impressed the need for caution as we get back to our day-to-day routines.

It is reasonable to assume that we will experience periodic spikes in cases, and it is important to continue practicing many of the new habits we have acquired over the past two months as our new normal.

While it is tempting to rush out to visit elderly and immunocompromised individuals after weeks of social distancing, refrain from doing so and continue to rely on phone or video calls to communicate.

If you must interact in person with more vulnerable members of the population, be sure to maintain a safe distance (at least 6 feet) and always wear a mask.

Masks reduce the spread of disease from the person wearing the mask, so even if you are not concerned about getting ill, consider wearing one to protect those who are concerned about the virus when out in public.

If you have been able to work from home, continue to telework for as long as possible to limit your exposure to coworkers if your employer allows it.

Limit contact with people outside of your household, and anytime you do come in contact with people you don't live with, keep at least 6 feet apart and wear a mask.

While we wait for science to catch up with the disease, we must continue to protect ourselves and those around us until we have effective treatments for COVID-19. In the meantime, wash your hands and wear your mask — it's the responsible thing to do.

**More information about handwashing, grocery shopping, and cleaning and disinfecting can be found at [extension.uga.edu/emergencies](https://extension.uga.edu/emergencies).**

**Continue to protect yourself and others in your community with these best practices.**

- Minimize trips outside of your home and keep them as short of possible. For example, make lists for stores so you can quickly purchase what you intend to buy. This prevents unnecessary contact with people and the potential for the spread of COVID-19 from asymptomatic people.
- If you have been using curbside pickup for groceries, take-out or other retail, continue to do so to limit your exposure.
- Wash your hands frequently, use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) and avoid touching your face. Be sure to wash hands or use hand sanitizer after being in stores and receiving pickup or delivered items.
- Wear a mask or a cloth face covering when out in public or at work.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and never go out in public if you are sick, unless it is to receive medical attention.

*These recommendations are provided by the Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

**Termites** *continued from page 2*

and their own saliva to protect them from predators and from desiccation. When mud- or soil-like tubing is found anywhere in or on the structure, where it should not be, there is a chance it might be the soil tubing made by worker termites to gain access to the wood in the structure.



Should a homeowner suspect that their home might be infested by termites, it's a good idea to contact a local termite and pest control company for an inspection. Employees of Georgia's termite control companies are trained on the nuances of termite control and are uniquely qualified to provide this service.

Pertinent publications to address homeowner questions include "Biology of Subterranean Termites in the Eastern United States" (Bulletin 1209) and "Termite Control Services: Information for the Georgia Property Owner" (Bulletin 1241), which can be found at [extension.uga.edu/publications](http://extension.uga.edu/publications).

**For more advice on termites and their control, homeowners should contact their local county Extension agent by calling 1-800-ASK-UGA1.**

## EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS

**Supplements and Immunity:** [uga.edu/988](http://uga.edu/988)

This publication addresses common confusion about using vitamins and supplements, including a baseline question on the topic: "Should I use supplements to 'boost' my immune system?" The publication also covers the immune system, whether supplements help, and whether using supplements presents safety concerns.

# LOOKING <sup>TO</sup> BUY LOCAL?

## Let Us Connect You!



## AG PRODUCTS CONNECTION

In collaboration with Georgia Grown and other industry partners, UGA Extension is using its network of county offices to connect agricultural producers with consumers looking for fresh, Georgia-grown products. Visit [uga.edu/908](http://uga.edu/908) for more.



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