

THE COMMUNICATOR

A Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging Publication

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Volume 32, Issue 3

Ruth E. Jones, Executive Director



The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging is hosting its Older Americans Month Celebration.

Come and join us and multiple community service agencies for a Sock Hop Themed Party!



The Day's Events:

- Health Screenings
- Community Resources
- Food and Beverages
- Games & Prizes
- Entertainment
- Drawings
- Dance Contests



May 23, 2024

11am - 2pm

George Meyn Community Center
126th & State Avenue
Bonner Springs, Kansas 66012



POWERED BY CONNECTION: MAY 2024



IN THIS EDITION:

- Battling Bites - Blocking Mosquito Borne Diseases
- Osteoporosis In Men
- Medicare Moment
- The Benefits of Vegetables
- Yoga For Health
- How To Prevent Dehydration
- Senior Fun Facts
- Why Some Family Caregivers Refuse Help
- Shrimp Fried Rice Recipe

BATTLING BITES

Blocking Mosquito-Borne Diseases

As the days grown longer and warmer, summer fun beckons, so do bug bites. Mosquitos in particular can ruin a day outside. Mosquito bites aren't just itchy and irritating, they can also spread disease.

The list of illnesses carried by mosquitos keeps growing. Some, like malaria, are rarely seen in the United States. Others, like dengue fever are spreading in the Southern states as temperatures get warmer. But others, like West Nile virus, now pop up seasonally in most parts of the country. For decades, researchers have been trying to develop vaccines to protect people against mosquito-borne diseases. But most haven't been as effective as hoped.



When a mosquito bites you, their saliva gets under your skin. This saliva contains compounds that make it easier for a mosquito to suck blood. It also has compounds that help any disease the mosquito is carrying to get into your body.

When you get bitten by a mosquito, you have an allergic response to the saliva. That response causes an itchy bump to appear after a bite. This is normal, but it can interfere with your body's ability to fight germs. When that allergic response gets turned on, the anti-infection response gets turned down. One of the best ways to avoid mosquito-borne diseases is to prevent bites in the first place.

Here are several ways to prevent mosquito bites:

- **Cover your skin.** When outside, use long sleeves, pants, and socks to help block bites.
- **Use insect repellents when outside.** There are several products on the market containing DEET.
- **Use a fan when sitting outside.** Aim the air from a box fan at your legs when eating outside or gardening.
- **Remove breeding grounds.** Drain puddles around your house where mosquitoes can lay eggs. Looks for pots, buckets, pet bowls, gutters, lawn decorations, and other sites that hold water.
- **Get vaccinated before you travel.** Talk to your doctor before going to areas with many mosquitoes are prevalent.

OSTEOPOROSIS IN MEN

Osteoporosis is a condition that weakens bones. It's often thought of as a disease that affects women since it's more common in women than men. But men can also develop osteoporosis, especially when they reach age 65 and older.

Osteoporosis is a "silent" disease. It often has no symptoms until it is so severe that you break a bone. It is one of the major causes of bone fractures in older men. These fractures most often arise in bones of the hip, spine, and wrist, but can affect any bone.



A fracture after age 50 is an important signal that a person may have osteoporosis. Unfortunately, men are less likely than women to be evaluated for osteoporosis after a fracture. Men also are less likely to get osteoporosis treatment. But treatment strategies are the same for both men and women. These include medications and lifestyle changes.

Men and women have similar risks for osteoporosis. People who have chronic diseases like diabetes or rheumatoid arthritis are at increased risk. So are those who smoke or drink too much alcohol.

You can take steps to prevent osteoporosis. Weight-bearing exercise is a great way to strengthen bones, especially if you start at a young age. Exercise can also help prevent falls that lead to fractures. Eating a well-balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D can help, too.

Stay Active.
Stay Healthy.

MEDICARE MOMENT

The **Kansas Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)** offer valuable assistance to individuals with Medicare, helping them save money on premiums, deductibles, and co-pays. There are several MSP options available in Kansas:

Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB)

- o Monthly income limit for one person: **\$1,215**
- o Monthly income limit for a married couple: **\$1,643**

This option covers Medicare Part A, Part B (or Part B-ID), and Part D premiums, co-pays, deductibles, and co-insurance.

Low Income Medicare Beneficiary (LMB)

- o Monthly income limit for one person: **\$1,458**
- o Monthly income limit for a married couple: **\$1,972**

This option covers Medicare Part B (or Part B-ID) and Part D premiums.

Expanded Low Income Medicare Beneficiary (ELMB)

- o Monthly income limit for one person: **\$1,640**
- o Monthly income limit for a married couple: **\$2,219**

This option covers Medicare Part B (or Part B-ID) and Part D premiums.



SMP
Senior Medicare Patrol



SHICK
Senior Health Insurance
Counseling for Kansas



SHIP
State Health Insurance
Assistance Program



Kansas
Department for Aging
and Disability Services

How to Apply:

Request and fill out the paper **Medicare Savings Program Application**. You can request a paper application by calling **1-800-792-4884**.

Applications should be return by mail to KanCare PO Box 3599, Topeka, KS 66601-9738 or by fax at **1-844-264-6285**.

THE BENEFITS OF VEGETABLES

LuAnn Soliah

Vegetables have special dietary merit because of their unique nutrient profile, abundant fiber, antioxidants, vitamin/mineral content, and overall appealing texture and taste. Additionally, consistent intake of vegetables is associated with better physical well-being concerning diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic conditions. Vegetables are really a marvel of nature! Small packages with great health benefits.

The current recommended intake for vegetables is about five servings per day. This may seem impossibly difficult to achieve, but just remember a serving is only one-half cup.



The goal is to aim for a wide variety of vegetable choices each week. These include dark green, red & orange vegetables, beans and peas, starchy products, and other choices each week. Two other options to consider are salads and salsa which are wonderful ways to satisfy the appetite and achieve overall vegetable recommendations. Additional benefits from vegetable intake include a high fiber/low calorie/low-fat food plan. And, contrary to many people's belief, some vegetables (beans, peas, and lentils) provide protein for extra dietary merit.

Some of the key nutrients that vegetables contain are: potassium, iron, magnesium, folate, vitamin C, beta carotene, and vitamin K. Different vegetables contain different vitamins and minerals, so a wide variety of vegetable intake is recommended.

Also, experiment with different food preparation techniques. For example, vegetables can be grilled, broiled, or roasted. You may also enjoy adding raw vegetables to salads and garnishing casseroles with cooked vegetables. This will add color and texture. Be creative and try new recipes!

YOGA FOR HEALTH

Information provided by newsinhealth.nih.gov

A growing number of Americans are rolling out their mats and engaging in the ancient practice of yoga. Yoga has spiritual origins. But in recent years, it has become a popular way to improve physical health and mental well-being. Have you considered trying yoga?

Research suggests that yoga may help some people manage certain symptoms of disease. The studies also found evidence that yoga can help improve quality of life and reduce fatigue, anxiety, and depression.

When it's done under the guidance of a qualified instructor, yoga is generally considered to be a safe form of physical activity for healthy people. But as with any type of physical activity, it is suggested that you speak with your physician before beginning a new regimen.



HOW TO PREVENT DEHYDRATION

With a few proactive strategies, preventing dehydration is possible. Being aware of the risks is a good first step. So is remembering this simple fact: People can stay hydrated by drinking enough water.

Many wonder exactly how much water is enough. After all, you may have heard or read that everyone should drink eight cups of water each day. Recently, however, many experts have backed away from the eight-cups-a-day rule.

Many often miss out on drinking fluids because they simply forget or get busy. An attractive water bottle provides a portable way to always have a drink at hand.

Adding fluid intake to a daily routine will make drinking a habit. For example, if you take medication, drink a full glass of water with it.

You may have already experienced some mild dehydration effects. Most of us have. If so, you probably didn't feel that you were at your best. Perhaps you experienced some of the possible dehydration symptoms, including fatigue, memory problems, poor concentration, irritability and headaches. These symptoms can appear quickly. In fact, even a small drop in our body fluid levels can lead to physical and cognitive problems in older adults.

Being aware of the risk of dehydration is the first step toward averting it. So don't hesitate to talk to your healthcare provider about creating strategies for getting enough fluids. And watch for the warning signs of dehydration. Although dehydration can be serious, it's also preventable and treatable.



SENIOR FUN FACTS

- We are born with 350 bones in our skeleton. Over the course of time and during our aging process, our bones fuse together leaving us with 206 bones as adults.
- When it comes to voting in the United States, those 60 and over cast more ballots than any other age group.
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, older adults make up the fastest growing age group within the United States.
- Studies argue that only 30% of the characteristics associated with aging are controlled by genetics. The remaining 70% is controlled by chosen lifestyle factors.
- In response to learning, senior citizens can grow new neurons over time which can help fight off dementia.
- Our sleeping patterns change as we age; we get tired earlier and wake up earlier.
- Despite citing other health and money concerns, those 65 and older experience less stress.
- Due to advancements in healthcare and technology, people are living longer. By the year 2040 the population of seniors over 85 is expected to triple from 5.7 million to 14.1 million.
- The baby boom generation is more racially and ethnically diverse. It is estimated that by 2059, 20% of seniors will be Hispanic, 12% black and 9% Asian.

MAKE A DONATION



YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Join us in our mission to provide critical daily care to older adults in need.

If you would like to donate to the Area Agency on Aging, contact our office at 913-573-8531.

NEWSLETTER DONATIONS ENCOURAGED

For years "The Communicator" has served as a vital means for providing seniors in Wyandotte County important information regarding aging news, events, programs, services and much more! The newsletter's continuity depends on your donations for its existence.

Donations should be made payable to:

Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging
849 North 47th Street, Suite C
Kansas City, Kansas 66102

- _____ \$100 **Advocate**
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- _____ \$50 **Benefactor**
benefactor
- _____ \$25 **Patron**
patron
- _____ \$10 **Contributor**
contribuidor
- _____ **Other**
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Appreciation is extended to the following who have contributed toward the cost of this newsletter.

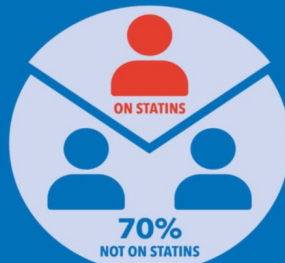
Names are listed in alphabetical order.

Larry & Carolyn Crutchfield

In Memory of Gilbert Tinoco

Starting a statin even after age 75 may lower the risk of developing dementia.

BUT WE DON'T REALLY KNOW.
Results from PREVENTABLE will help us understand.



www.preventabletrial.org

The #PREVENTABLEtrial is one of the largest research studies in adults 75 years or older. The study will test if taking a statin could help prevent dementia in older adults. Study participants will contribute valuable information on how we age and may benefit from additional memory and physical function monitoring.

Compensation is available for those who participate!

Who is eligible?

- Adults over 75 years of age
- Those NOT currently taking statin medication.
- Those without a history of stroke or heart attack.

Find out more by contacting Erica Lower, Project Coordinator at elower@kumc.edu or 913-588-6052.

SPOTTING A UTILITY SCAM



BPU employees will never call and demand immediate payment or threaten to disconnect service over the phone. If someone asks, HANG UP and let us know.



BPU employees will never visit your residence unless they are in clearly marked company vehicles. If you don't see a BPU car or truck, CLOSE THE DOOR and let us know.



BPU employees carry proper ID and will show you upon entering your yard or approaching your home or business. NO ID? CALL US IMMEDIATELY and let us know.



BPU employees in the field will never ask for a credit card from you. If someone posing as a BPU employee asks for these items, TELL THEM 'NO' and let us know.

BE SUSPICIOUS... if you think it's a scam, alert the BPU Customer Service Department directly at 913-573-9190

QUESTIONS ABOUT MEALS ON WHEELS? THEY CAN BE REACHED BY DIALING:

913-573-8546

Press Option #2

WHY SOME FAMILY CAREGIVERS REFUSE HELP

mindyourelders.com

Even when family caregivers have access to help, many still come up with excuses to turn down assistance. Learning to accept support and assistance will ensure you can have a life apart from the needs of your care recipient. Ultimately, family caregivers must acknowledge and work through their motivations for wanting to be an elder's sole care provider.

Caregivers often endure high stress levels (especially those with little or no support) and many eventually become burned out, a condition that should not be taken lightly.

While many caregivers come to terms with the fact that they can't make their loved ones completely healthy and/or independent again, they still want to be the person who cares for them and safeguards their well-being.

It is common for feelings of guilt to pop up throughout one's caregiving journey, even though they are usually undeserved. To make matters worse, guilt-trips are often self-imposed. Caregivers may feel that their position as a spouse, an adult child or even a parent requires them to meet all of a loved one's needs personally. Deserved or not, guilt is nearly always a useless and destructive emotion, yet it's a common problem for caregivers who are so invested in their loved ones' health and happiness.

Hearing horror stories, or even personally knowing others who have had a terrible experience with home health aides, nurses or companions often leads to trust issues. Caregivers care about their loved ones and have a duty to protect them, so they fear what may happen if they are not present to monitor their care at all times.

Some people simply lead more private lives. They treat their homes as their safe spaces and consider family happenings to be extremely personal. Whether help is coming from a hired caregiver, a fellow churchgoer, a neighbor or sibling, many caregivers are simply uncomfortable with the idea of opening up their homes and sharing sensitive information.

Caregivers need regular respite so they can provide the best possible care over the long term. Although insight from the outside is valuable, nobody understands the inner workings of caregiving like fellow caregivers. A caregiver support group, either in person or online is an excellent resource for those who are looking to connect with people in similar situations.

Ongoing guilt is useless. It is better to work proactively with your current reality than to wallow in the past wondering about what might have been. We do all we can to help our loved ones, and looking back repeatedly will only cloud our judgement and prevent us from moving forward.

If you reach out for assistance, you will be able to relax and enjoy having time to take on more responsibilities and be free to engage in your own self-care. This will allow you to spend quality time with your loved one as their family member instead of their caregiver.

With or without help, you remain a caregiver. Even when a senior lives in a nursing home, their primary caregiver has many responsibilities and is on call 24/7. It can be difficult, but opening up to the possibility of outside assistance is the first step towards setting healthy boundaries and preventing caregiver burnout.



SHRIMP FRIED RICE

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 tbsp butter, divided
- 4 lg eggs, lightly beaten
- 3 cups cold cooked rice
- 1 pkg (16oz) frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 lb uncooked medium shrimp, peeled/deveined
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 8 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large skillet, melt 1 tablespoon butter over medium-high heat. Pour eggs into skillet. As eggs set, lift edges, letting uncooked portion flow underneath. Remove eggs and keep warm.
2. In the same skillet, melt the remaining 3 tablespoons butter. Add the rice, vegetables and shrimp; cook and stir for 5 minutes or until shrimp turn pink. Meanwhile, chop eggs into small pieces. Return eggs to the pan; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook until heated through, stirring occasionally.
3. Top with bacon if desired.



Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

- BARBEQUE
- BASEBALL
- CAMPING
- CEMETARY
- CHERRY BLOSSOM
- CINCO DE MAYO
- DIPLOMA
- FATHERS DAY
- FISHING
- FLAG DAY
- FLOWERS
- GARDENING
- GRADUATIONS
- GRILLING
- JUNETEENTH
- KITE
- MAYPOLE
- MEMORIAL DAY
- MOTHERS DAY
- OLDER AMERICANS MONTH
- PARADE
- PEANUTS
- PICNIC
- PINATA
- PLANTING
- RAIN SHOWERS
- SEEDLINGS
- SOCK HOP
- SOLSTICE
- SUNFLOWERS
- SUNSHINE
- TORNADO
- VACATION
- VEGETABLES
- WEDDING

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WYANDOTTE/LEAVENWORTH AREA AGENCY ON AGING

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MAY >>>

CINCO DE MAYO

Sunday, May 5, 2024

MOTHER'S DAY

Sunday, May 12, 2024

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH CELEBRATION - SOCK HOP

Thursday, May 23, 2024

11am - 2pm

MEMORIAL DAY

Monday, May 27, 2024

Unified Government Offices Closed

The Communicator is published bi-monthly by the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging. It is funded by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services through the Older Americans' Act. We assume no responsibility for the care and return of unsolicited material.

Donations are suggested.

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, sex, or handicap.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint with the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services at 1-800-432-3535.

JUNE >>>

FLAG DAY

Friday, June 14, 2024

FATHERS DAY

Sunday, June 16, 2024

JUNETEENTH

Wednesday, June 19, 2024

Unified Government Offices Closed



Linda Ramirez, Editor