

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.
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www.aaa7.org

Meals on Wheels

The person in your care may be eligible for Meals on Wheels, a nationwide program that delivers prepared meals to seniors. The qualifications vary from program to program, but generally, to be eligible, a person must:

- * Be age 60 or older.
- * Be unable to use kitchen appliances.
- * Have no motivation to prepare food and no caregiver to help cook.
- * Have become homebound in winter months.
- * Be recuperating from a serious illness or surgery.

To find the closest program to you, contact your local Area Agency on Aging at 800-582-7277.

The Ombudsman program can handle your concerns about areas such as elder abuse, client care, consumer rights, etc. For more information, call 1-800-582-7277.

For information about Ohio Medicaid programs or to report suspected Medicaid fraud, you may call the Ohio Medicaid Fraud Hotline at 1-800-324-8680.

NEXT ISSUE...BACK SAFETY AND TRANSFERS

www.aaa7.org



Assistance. Advocacy. Answers on Aging.

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

Pamela K. Matura, Executive Director

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CAREGIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS

“CARING FOR YOU ... CARING FOR OTHERS”

Good Nutrition & Healthy Meals On a Budget

Good Food Is Key to Good Health

Good nutrition requires effort, knowledge and some planning. To some degree, it's as much about what you *don't* eat as what you *do* eat.

It starts with changing how you view your plate. Instead of making meat the center of the meal with vegetables as side dishes, make vegetables and grains the *main course* and reduce your meat portion to a *side dish*. The recommended meat portion should be no bigger than a deck of cards--much smaller than the typical meat course.

The Food Pyramid

According to the current USDA food pyramid, adults should eat 2-2 1/2 cups of vegetables every day and 1 1/2-2 cups of fruit a day for a total 3 1/2-4 1/2 cups. Making sure you have at least one fruit or vegetable dish at each meal accomplishes that goal. Add two fruit snacks between meals, and the goal is surpassed. This isn't hard to do, but it takes a little planning.

If you're having trouble getting the person in your care to eat fruits and vegetables, start by buying produce in season--it costs less and tastes best. To make it easy, buy veggies that are easy to prepare or that can be eaten raw. When steaming vegetables, don't overcook them--

they should be crunchy, *if* the person does not have difficulty chewing. Also, stock up on frozen veggies. Cook them in the microwave for a quick and easy dish. Packages of baby carrots and celery sticks make quick snacks. When buying fresh produce, only buy what can be consumed in a few days.

To lower your sodium intake, prepare meals using fresh ingredients. Packaged and processed foods are the source of most sodium in the American diet. When buying canned vegetables, buy those labeled "no salt added."

At meals, include a green salad at dinner each night, and add colorful, in-season vegetables. Make a salad the *main course* at lunch every few days by adding a little chicken. And go light on the salad dressing and leave off the croutons, which contain a lot of calories. Try a veggie stir-fry or soup as the main dinner course or a bean-and-grain casserole.



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www.aaa7.org

Menus for Every Condition

Help for planning low-cost, nutritious meals:

- Get personalized eating plans and advice on making smart choices in every food group at www.mypyramid.gov/.
- Get menus, recipes and tips on buying and serving healthier food at <http://snap.nal.usda.gov> (in English and Spanish), as well as find information on whether the person in your care qualifies for food stamps.
- Find over 100 low-cost, nutritious and delicious recipes at <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>.
- If you're preparing food for a heart patient, go to www.americanheart.org and type "delicious decisions" into the search window, then click on Browse Recipes.
- If you're preparing food for a person with diabetes, go to www.diabetes.org and click on Recipe of the Day. From there you can access other recipes.
- To locate a **Senior Nutrition Center** in your area, call The Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. at 800-582-7277.



Saving \$\$\$

Simple tips for saving money on food purchases:

- \$ **Plan meals**, create a list from that meal plan, then shop from that list--it'll help you to stick to your budget.
- \$ **Look for coupons, sales and store specials.**
For even more savings, sign up for the store's discount card.
- \$ **Don't shop when you're hungry.** Shopping when full makes it easier to stick to your list.
- \$ **Buy store brands.** They usually cost less and are of similar quality.
- \$ **Compare prices.** Even if you have a coupon, other brands may still be cheaper.
- \$ **Buy larger quantities** when items are on sale, divide them into smaller portions, and freeze them.
- \$ **Check sell-by dates**, and buy the freshest food possible.



Taking Care of Yourself

Studies have found that caregivers often don't eat as well as they should. In addition, they have higher rates of heart disease than non-caregivers.

In addition, poor eating habits contribute to obesity, which in turn contributes to heart disease and diabetes. Diabetes itself contributes to high levels of heart disease and stroke. Waistline measurements have been shown to predict a variety of diseases. Women with waists larger than 35 inches and men with waists over 40 inches are considered at highest risk. Studies show that waist size is a better predictor of premature death than overall weight.

Try to eat fewer calories. An easy way to do this is to give up sugary snacks and drinks. These are considered "calorie-dense" foods. Calorie-dense foods pack a lot of calories in a small package--think chocolate. For example, 8 ounces of broccoli is 65 calories; 8 ounces of chocolate chip cookies is 1,070 calories!

For reliable and easy-to-understand information on nutrition, changing your diet, easy-to-follow eating plans and quick, tasty and healthy recipes, go to www.AmericanHeart.org. It is a free, one-stop shop for heart-healthy nutrition.

LIVE LIFE LAUGHING

Herb used to be an all-around sportsman, but he became all-round.



Tip

Remember to check with the doctor before starting any special diets, especially for the person with a swallowing impairment. If diabetes is an issue, ask your doctor for an eating plan. The doctor, pharmacist, or registered dietitian will know what effects medicines have on what the person in your care can eat.

Inspiration

Of all the medicine created out of the earth, food is the chief.

*~Sir Robert McCarrison, M.D.
British Nutritionist*