

Caregiver Assistance News

"Caring for You - Caring for Others"

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

*Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike,
Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio*

www.aaa7.org **Helping You Age Better!**



MARCH 2013

Nutrition - Taking it Seriously

Good Nutrition for Better Living

We all understand the dangers of being overweight or obese, but in older adults, being underweight can be a problem, too. Seniors with chronic diseases like COPD, Parkinson's or Alzheimer's often have trouble eating well. Being malnourished can lead to reduced strength, bone density, and muscle mass, which is known as frailty. An underweight or frail elder is at greater risk for falls, hip fractures and infections.

Weight alone is not a good measure of proper nutrition. With both over and underweight, it's not only how much a person eats, but also what kinds of food they eat that matters. The best way to make sure the person in your care is receiving the right amount of calories, vitamins, and minerals is to provide a healthy, balanced diet.

Healthy Eating Tips

- It doesn't have to be "all at once." Changing eating habits is easier in small steps. Start by substituting just one healthy food for an unhealthy one, like a piece of fruit instead of a cookie, or a glass of water with a lemon slice instead of a soft drink. One little change

every week can add up to healthier eating habits over the long term.

- Serve lots of fruits and vegetables and be adventurous. Serve mango or pineapple for dessert. Prepare common vegetables in uncommon ways - for instance, instead of french fries, try boiled potatoes tossed with herbs. If you use canned fruits, look for products packed in water or juice instead of syrup. With canned vegetables, go with no-salt varieties.

- Serve whole grain breads, cereals and pastas. Whole grain products are digested more slowly and help keep blood sugar levels steady.

- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk/milk products. Calcium is important for strong bones and muscles and dairy products are a good way to make sure the person in your care is receiving enough.

- Serve lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts. Avoid saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol. Instead of frying, bake or grill. Try main dishes based on beans, vegetables or soy products



instead of meat. Serve fish at least twice a week.

Water

Our natural sense of thirst diminishes with age. Some drugs also dry out the body. It is important to drink water "by the clock," like you would schedule crucial medications

Checklist - Nutrition Assessment

If the answer to most of the points is “yes,” the person is at risk and their doctor should be contacted. Check the list every six months or when you notice big weight changes or changes in eating habits.



- Recent weight loss? How much? _____ lbs.
- Recent appetite loss? _____
- For how long? _____ (days, weeks, months)
- Difficulty chewing? _____
- Difficulty swallowing? _____
- Food allergies? _____
- A special diet? _____
- Have you been given instructions about their diet? _____
- Do they eat fewer than 2 meals per day? _____
- Do they eat few fruits, vegetables and dairy products? _____
- How many servings per day?
 - Fruits _____
 - Vegetables _____
 - Dairy _____
- Do they drink more than three (3) alcoholic beverages per day? _____
- Do they eat most of their meals alone? _____

Fast Facts _____

- Nearly 4 million adults over 60 are food insecure.
- Only 35% of older adults eligible for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) food benefits receive them.
- 80% of older adults receiving SNAP live alone.
- For tips on eating better on a budget, visit www.choosemyplate.gov/food.



Source: National Council on Aging

Alzheimer’s Meals

Be sure to avoid distractions during mealtimes. Expect and ignore spills and less-than-perfect manners. It is important that mealtimes are enjoyable so that eating is encouraged.



“Certain defects are necessary for the existence of individuality” - Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Taking Care of Yourself

Healthy Diet and Meds Help Damaged Hearts

A healthy diet can prevent heart disease in healthy people. We know that a heart-healthy diet, along with doctor-prescribed medication, can help people who already have heart disease lead a longer and better-quality life. People eating a heart-healthy diet, even if they have already had a heart attack or stroke, have a much lower risk of having another heart attack or stroke. Older people may think that it's too late to change bad eating habits. Not so! Recent studies show that changing to a healthy diet, even at a later age, can make a big, positive difference.



Source: WebMD

alzheimer's association®

Understanding and Dealing with Alzheimer's Disease or Another Dementia

What: These programs will provide an opportunity for families and caregivers to learn and ask questions about Alzheimer's disease and dementia, while receiving support from others in similar situations. You are invited to attend any or all of the programs listed below. Programs are free of charge. No registration required.

Where: Best Care Nursing & Rehab
2159 Dogwood Ridge Road, Wheelersburg, Ohio

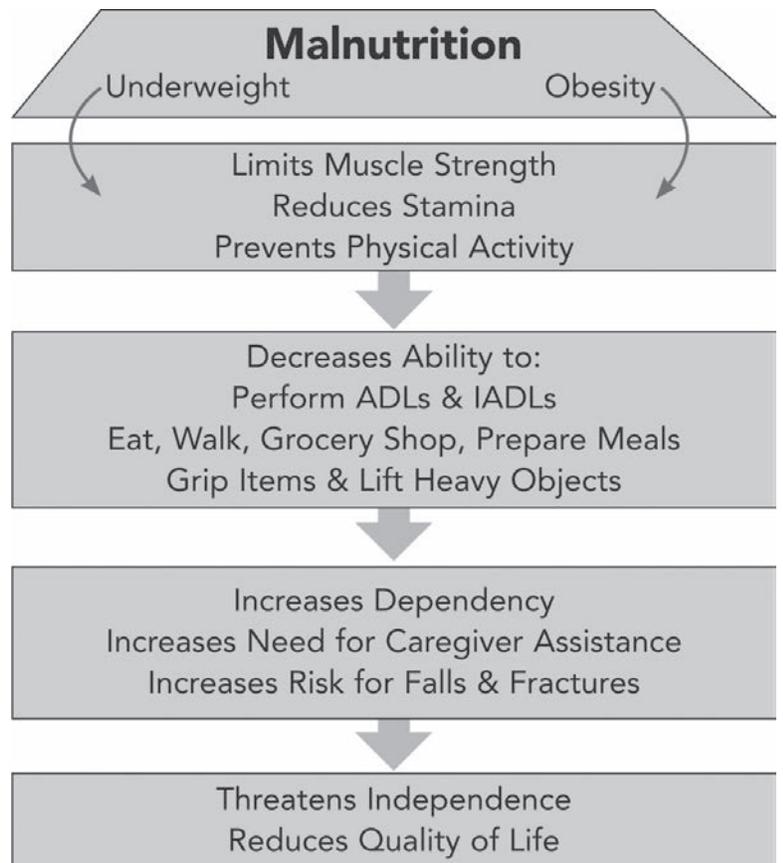
When: 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Remaining Topics:

- April 9th - Communication
- June 11th - Dealing with Behavioral Changes
- August 13th - Caregiver/Family Stress and Grief
- October 8th - Safety Considerations
- December 10th - Activities and Interaction

For more information about this program and other similar programs available in or near your community, please call Melissa Dever, LSW, from the Alzheimer's Association, at (740) 710-1821.

Impact of Malnutrition on Functionality



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Toll-Free Number: (800) 582-7277 • TTY: 711 (Relay Ohio)

Website: www.aaa7.org • E-Mail: info@aaa7.org • Facebook: www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. serves the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton.

Services are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis. Those interested in learning more about the services provided through the

Area Agency on Aging District 7 can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277. Here, individuals can talk directly with a nurse or social worker who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency can also be reached via e-mail at info@aaa7.org.

Safety Tips - Poisons

A poison is any substance that is harmful to your body. You might swallow it, inhale it, inject it, or absorb it through your skin.

The dangers of poisoning range from short-term illness to brain damage, coma and death.

To prevent poisoning, it is important to use and store products exactly as their labels say. Keep dangerous products where Alzheimer's patients, children and pets can't get to them. Treatment for poisoning depends on the type of poison. If you suspect someone has been poisoned, call your local poison control center right away.

If you suspect poisoning, immediately take these steps:

1. Determine what was swallowed, how much, and at what time.
2. Check the person's airway. (Are there signs of breathing, coughing, moving?)
3. Contact the nearest Poison Control Center or call 911 for treatment, and have the container of the suspected poison at hand.
4. Follow up with the doctor.
5. If not breathing (no movement or response to touch or voice), call 911 and be prepared to give rescue breathing and start CPR.

