

# 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](http://www.aaa7.org) **Helping You Age Better!**



**FEBRUARY 2023**

## **Food Insecurity - Nutrition on a Budget**

Food and nutrition insecurity is a term to describe when someone is unable to access or afford enough food or enough nutritious food for their overall health and well-being. Food and nutrition insecurity doesn't always mean that someone goes without food; it can mean that they're not getting the healthiest kind of food. This can be because nutritious foods may be hard to find in some communities or because they can be too expensive for many to afford. For women and seniors living alone, food insecurity increased.

The United States Department of Agriculture breaks food insecurity into two categories:

Low food security is when the food you eat is lower-quality or isn't very appealing, and you don't have many choices. But you typically get enough food.

Very low food security is when you can't get food when you need to or you have to eat less because you don't have money or other ways to get it.

Adults in low-income, food-insecure conditions are more likely to get diseases.

Nutritious foods may be too expensive for some people, which limits healthy food choices. Foods that are cheaper and easier to get tend to be lower-quality foods that are high in added sugars, saturated fat and sodium (salt).

A diet that includes plenty of vegetables, fruits,

and lean proteins is important for diabetes management.

But some of these nutritious foods cost more than foods that are high in calories but low in nutrition. While lower nutritional foods can cost less and provide plenty of calories, they can cause frequent spikes in blood sugar levels

(hyperglycemia), which can increase the risk of diabetes-related complications like nerve damage or vision loss.

*Resource: Food and Nutrition Insecurity and Diabetes | CDC*

### Resources for You

**Home-Delivered Meals** - you may be eligible if you are age 60 or older. Contact the AAA7 for more information about nutrition programs in your area to support individuals living in their homes and communities. Call 1-800-582-7277 or [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org).



## **2023 Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program**

New applications will be available soon - please note that you must re-apply each year if you have participated in the past. You can stay updated by calling the AAA7 Farmers Market Nutrition Program hotline at 1-800-343-8112 or e-mail [farmersmarket@aaa7.org](mailto:farmersmarket@aaa7.org).

## What You Don't Eat and What You Do Eat

Although calorie needs decline with age, nutritional requirements remain the same or in some cases increase. Good nutrition requires effort, knowledge and some planning.

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.

According to the USDA's ChooseMyPlate guidelines, seniors should eat 2–2½ cups of vegetables every day and 1½–2 cups of fruit a day for a total 3½–4½ cups. Eating at least one fruit and vegetable dish at each meal accomplishes that goal.

A variety of food is not only best for dietary needs, but also makes eating more appealing. Varied colors, textures and flavorings can help stimulate appetite. Herbs and seasonings can make up for taste changes, without simply adding more salt.

You can cut food costs by cooking more meals at home and by making sure they include some of the healthiest foods, like whole grains, vegetables and beans. Cook extra portions and freeze for later use.

### Affordable Nutritious Foods

- Brown Rice
- Whole Wheat or Multigrain Pasta
- 100% Whole Wheat Bread
- Non-Fat Greek Yogurt/Milk
- Old-Fashioned Oats
- Frozen Vegetables
- Russet or Sweet Potatoes
- Fresh Bagged Spinach
- Beans
- Canned Tuna
- Bananas and Frozen Berries
- Peanut Butter
- Eggs or Egg Substitute
- Dried Beans and Lentils



*Remember, prepared foods cost more and often have too much salt and sugar. Note, if the person in your care has medical problems such as diabetes, special therapeutic diets should be discussed with the doctor or registered dietitian.*

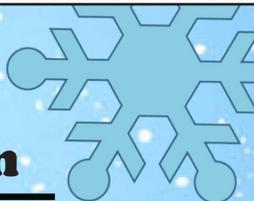
### Saving \$\$\$\$



Simple tips for saving money on food purchases:

- \$ Plan meals. Create a list from that meal plan, then shop from that list—it will 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.

## HEAP Home Energy Assistance Program



Now open for applications for 2022-2023.  
This program can help eligible Ohioans manage their heating bills. Applications are available from your local Community Action Agency

*If interested or if you have questions, contact your county Community Action Agency or the AAA7 Resource Center at 1-800-582-7277.*

# Taking Care of Yourself

## Poor Eating Habits

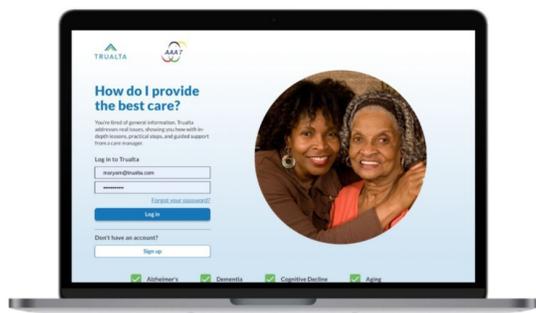
Studies have found that caregivers often don't eat as well as they should. In addition, they have higher rates of heart disease than non-caregivers.

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—like chocolate. For example, 8 ounces of broccoli is 65 calories; 8 ounces of chocolate chip cookies is 1,070 calories!



## Trualta helps families learn skills to manage care at home, provided for free by AAA7



- You can register today to access an **interactive eLearning environment**
- Short, quick lessons created by experts in aging
- Easy to use for all ages, completely private and **accessible 24/7**
- **No app required**, view on any browser, laptop, phone or tablet

The AAA7 is excited to offer this interactive opportunity to caregivers to support them in their caregiving role at no charge!

Sign up today!

**aaa7.trualta.com**



## Memory Care

### Low Appetite

Evaluate and fix potential physical problems. Bad fitting dentures or dental issues can make eating unpleasant. Medications may be impacting appetite. If you notice the person is coughing a lot or having trouble swallowing, be sure to get swallowing evaluated.

# Cholesterol and Salt Consumption

Because cholesterol is a major factor in coronary artery disease, it is important to get it checked both in yourself and the person in your care. High numbers may be reduced through appropriate diet, regular exercise and weight loss. If that doesn't work, check with the doctor about cholesterol-lowering drugs.

The typical American diet is very high in sodium. Even if no salt is added during cooking, most people still consume too much sodium because most processed foods, such as frozen dinners, boxed noodles, and canned soups and vegetables, are high in sodium. When an individual consumes too much sodium, extra fluid builds up in the body, which causes the heart to work harder. So, it is very important to look at labels when grocery shopping to avoid foods/products high in sodium. You may hear healthcare providers talk about low-sodium diet or low-salt diet and wonder if they are the same or whether they are two different diets. There is no difference between the two, doctors and nurses use the terms sodium and salt to mean the same thing.



*Source: The Comfort of Home for Chronic Heart Failure: A Guide for Caregivers*

*Some content in this publication is excerpted from The Comfort of Home: Caregivers Series. It is for informational use and not health advice. It is not meant to replace medical care but to supplement it. The publisher assumes no liability with respect to the accuracy, completeness or application of information presented, or the reader's misunderstanding of the text.*



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*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 trained Resource Specialist 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](mailto:info@aaa7.org).*