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**ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!**  
**EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE**

This newsletter is produced by the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington* to enhance communication and coordination among those who educate Washington families about nutrition and food. *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

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#### SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

*Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* can be sent to you electronically each month. There is no charge. To subscribe or unsubscribe, contact Christa Albice, WSU Puyallup, 253-445-4541, e-mail [albice@wsu.edu](mailto:albice@wsu.edu).

To access past issues, go to <http://nutrition.wsu.edu/take5/index.html>.

*Energize* is a publication of the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington*, whose staff is responsible for its content.



**Food \$ense**

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP, The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact: <http://foodhelp.wa.gov>, or the Basic Food Program at: 1 877 501 2233.

## This Month's Focus:

### *Senior Nutrition and Physical Activity*

As our nation's population ages, nutrition educators are increasingly involved in helping older adults with access to healthy foods and socializing at meals. We are also engaged in guiding seniors to be active to improve their quality of life, prevent falls, and stay healthy. In response to our readership survey, this issue of the *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* focuses on local programs and resources for senior nutrition and physical activity. The theme of this newsletter ties in with the month of May as Older Americans Month <http://oam.acl.gov> and Osteoporosis Prevention Month <http://nof.org/nationalosteoporosismonth>.

**Older Americans Act Passed Congress** – After very long delays, bipartisan legislation renewing the Older Americans Act (OAA) passed both houses of Congress this month, and President Obama signed it into law on April 19, 2016. The OAA was last reauthorized in 2006 and expired in 2011 because Congress failed to pass reauthorization legislation. This reauthorization extends the OAA for three years. This law provides millions of older adults with much-needed services such as meals, nutrition education programs, in-home services, transportation, legal services, elder abuse prevention, and caregivers' support. These programs help seniors stay as independent and engaged as possible in their own homes and communities. Roughly one in five older adults receive these services, targeted to those in greatest economic and social need. The largest program in the OAA involves nutrition services, aimed at reducing hunger and food insecurity. (Source: [www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/192](http://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/192).)



Source: Thinkstock

**Healthy Heart, Healthy Brain** – Older adults who eat heart-healthy diets also do better in cognitive function, particularly mental processing speed, memory, and executive functioning. Those are the conclusions of a study that began with more than 1,000 participants whose average age was 72. Researchers looked at seven factors that can contribute to better heart health, including regular moderate-intensity exercise and a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fish, while minimizing salt and sugar. (Source: H Gardener et al, "Ideal cardiovascular health and cognitive aging in the northern Manhattan study," *Journal of the American Heart Association*, March 2016, 5:e002731.)



Source: Sound Generations

**Seniors Enjoy Eating Together** – At 11 congregate dining programs at senior centers throughout King County, older adults enjoy the companionship of eating with others, and they adore their chefs. Kaitlyn Todd, dietitian and Operations Manager of the Community Dining Program with Sound Generations (formerly Senior Services), says that these weekday lunches provide socialization and nutritious meals. Anyone age 60 or older may participate regardless of income, with a requested \$3 donation (SNAP benefits may be used). Chefs do scratch cooking on-site, which the clients love, and are increasingly responding to requests for fresher, lighter fare while still retaining the #1 favorite meal: meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and gravy. The program is funded by the OAA, and includes two nutrition education presentations per year per site. Kaitlyn shares that food really brings people together and provides a good opportunity for referral to other services. One client told her, “We could solve all the world’s problems if we could sit down together.”

Sound Generations in collaboration with the University of Washington created an evidence-based fitness and wellness program, “Project Enhance” [www.projectenhance.org](http://www.projectenhance.org), designed to help seniors become stronger, have better balance, and receive nutrition and wellness counseling. They are licensed to train others around the US to use the program. (Contact: Kaitlyn Todd, RDN, Operations Manager, Community Dining Program, Sound Generations, [kaitlynspring@gmail.com](mailto:kaitlynspring@gmail.com). Information about community dining and nutrition education resources for seniors at <http://seniorservices.org/foodassistance/CommunityDining.aspx>)

**“Exercise” – Making it Real for Seniors** – Angel Planells works with older men in his work with the Veterans Administration to help them maintain their quality of life by eating well and being active. He’s found that their concept of “exercise” includes activities like playing basketball or lifting weights, which they are unlikely to do at age 70-plus. They are more receptive to advice to get 5 to 10 minutes of activity several times throughout the day, such as getting up and moving around during TV commercials; taking short walks at 10:00, noon, and 2:00; doing an exercise video on cable TV; or going outside for short bursts of gardening. He’s asked men who are 90 or 100 their secret to longevity, and invariably they respond that it’s being active throughout life. (Contact, Angel Planells, RDN, VA Puget Sound and Peak Performance Consultant, 917-682-8194, [acplanells@gmail.com](mailto:acplanells@gmail.com).)



Source: Thinkstock

**SAILing into Fitness** – Performing exercises that improve strength, balance, and fitness are the most important activities that adults can do to stay active and reduce their chances of falling, says Mary Borges, Falls Program Manager, WA Department of Health. The Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) program for adults age 65 and older is offered several times a week in one-hour classes throughout Washington State. The curriculum can be conducted in community settings or residential facilities, and has been approved by the Administration for Community Living as fall prevention evidence-based program that meets the OAA Title 3D funding requirement. Depending on the community, participants can take the class free of charge or for a low cost. Mary shares a story about a 93-year-old participant who comes to SAIL two to three times a week, rain or shine. If she isn’t feeling 100% she completes the entire program sitting down with tireless determination. Instructors enjoy it too! An instructor comments that she finds great joy helping participants improve strength, balance, and flexibility to prevent falls, and having fun and making friends at the same time. (Contact: Mary Borges, Falls Program Manager, Department of Health, 360-236-2861, [mary.borges@doh.wa.gov](mailto:mary.borges@doh.wa.gov), [www.sailfitness.org](http://www.sailfitness.org).)



Source: 93-year-old SAIL participant, WA-DOH

## IN THE MEDIA

**Shorter Life Span for Lower Incomes** – Rich people live longer than poor people, and that’s true even more now than before. A study by the Brookings Institution found that a wealthy American born in 1920 lived about six years longer than a poor American born the same year. But a wealthy American born in 1950 is now expected to outlive a poor man of the same age by 14 years. Possible reasons are that more affluent Americans are more likely to engage in exercise, and are less

**OUR MISSION:** *The Nutrition Education Network* coordinates nutrition education efforts to communicate consistent, positive and relevant messages to increase awareness of healthful and enjoyable eating among low-income families. *Energize* is one way that *the Network* shares information and resources to accomplish this mission.

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likely to be obese or smoke. An implication of the likelihood that the rich are living longer means that Social Security benefits will be disproportionately be paid out to wealthier Americans. Access this publication at: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2016/02/22-growing-life-expectancy-gap-burtless>.

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

**Updated MyPlate for Older Adults** – Last month Tufts University launched its updated *MyPlate for Older Adults*. This revision of the icon emphasizes the nutritional needs of older adults using the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. It includes images of good sources of fluid, such as water, milk, tea, soup, and coffee. It also has a section for heart-healthy fats such as vegetable oils and soft margarines, as well as herbs and spices to be used in place of salt to lower sodium intake. This is the fourth edition of the icon for older adults created by the Jean Mayer US Department of Agriculture Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University. What's new this year is collaboration with the American Association of Retired Persons Foundation, enabling broader distribution and awareness of this nutrition education resource. Accessed at <http://hnrca.tufts.edu/myplate>.

**Protein Tip Sheet for Seniors** – Protein is the focus of a two-page tip sheet for older adults. It includes reasons to get enough protein, foods that contain it, and the value of consuming protein throughout the day. It also includes meal tips and recipes. Available for free download at <http://nutrition.eatsmart.org/products/protein-be-strong-be-active-for-active-older-adults>

**Fun New MyPlate Materials** – USDA's Choose MyPlate initiative added some really engaging, interactive educational tools for kids and families. A card stock flip book opens to show options within each food group <http://www.myplatematerials.com/zencart/products-card.php#>. A fruit and veggie wheel displays the nutritional benefits of different types of produce <http://www.myplatematerials.com/zencart/products-fv-wheel.php>. All are colorful....and fun! <http://www.myplatematerials.com/index.html>.

## WASHINGTON GROWN

**Fresh This Month** – As farmers' markets begin opening in May, we can turn from wintery squashes and stored tree fruit to a big array of leafy spring greens. Coming to the markets will be lettuces, herbs, peas, radishes, spinach... and, of course, asparagus! As nutrition educators plan ahead to educate clients about using produce, they can use a helpful guide from USDA called *Nutrition Through the Seasons*. At this site, fruits and vegetables are listed by seasonal availability, and one click takes the user to nutrition information, recipes, and uses for that particular item: <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-through-seasons/seasonal-produce>.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Cinco de Mayo (May 5) is an especially festive day to enjoy flavorful, spicy Mexican food. The "hot" peppers contain capsaicin, a chemical compound that causes a mild burning sensation. Capsaicin is fat soluble, not water-soluble. That's why drinking water after that spicy salsa doesn't cool the heat. For relief, scientists suggest milk. Milk contains casein, a lipophilic (fat-loving) compound, which binds to the capsaicin and washes it down when swallowed. Because it's the casein (a protein), not the fat in milk, which does the trick, skim or low-fat milk work just fine. (Source: General Chemistry Online, <http://antoine.frostburg.edu/chem/senese/101/features/capsaicin.shtml>.)



Source: Wikipedia



### EAT TOGETHER EAT BETTER – Family Meals Focus

Because our readers have told us that Family Meals is a hot topic, in the May 2011 issue we began a small section on recent news relating to this topic and our long-standing signature program, *Eat Together, Eat Better*.

Australian families were asked, "If you could have dinner with anyone, who would you choose?" The touching video with surprisingly different responses between parents and kids went viral with more than 1,500,000 views, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wfbY3i4FY0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wfbY3i4FY0). For a summary of research on what parents think about family meals, see pages 44-46 of WSU's *Eat Together, Eat Better Leader's Guide*, "Background Paper on Family Meals for Educators and Health Professional," at <https://nutrition.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/414/2015/01/ETEBLeaderGuide.pdf>.

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