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Nutritious Bites

Food for Your Eyes

By Whitney Bignell, Wellness Coordinator

We often talk about “eating with our eyes first” - but did you know that there are several foods that helpful for your vision?

Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids and other nutrients, such as vitamin C, vitamin E, lutein, zeaxanthin, copper, zinc, and beta carotene are important for eye health, as shown in the Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS). To optimize your eye health, focus on the following foods:

Fish: Many fish are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are not only good for heart and brain health but also good for vision. Focus on fatty or oily fish, such as salmon, trout, and tuna. Add light canned tuna or salmon to a salad to get a healthy dose of omega-3’s.

Nuts, legumes, and seeds: These foods are also rich in omega-3 fatty acids, as well as vitamin E, which helps protect

eyes against age-related damage.

Leafy green vegetables: Spinach, kale, and collard greens provide vitamin C, lutein, and zeaxanthin for better eye health.

Carrots and sweet potatoes: These staples are rich in beta carotene, the precursor for vitamin A that’s a key component of rhodopsin - a protein that helps the retina absorb light.

Eggs: The incredible, edible egg is a good source of lutein and zeaxanthin

Beef: Beef is high in zinc, which may delay age-related vision loss, as well as macular degeneration.

As you can tell, an overall healthy diet with lean protein and plenty of produce is also good for protecting your eye health!

Recipe of the Month

Quick Strawberry Shortcake Trifle

(Serves 8)

This quick dessert takes advantage of the bountiful supply of fresh strawberries, which are good sources of vitamin C!

Ingredients

- 1 store-bought angel food cake, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 package instant sugar-free pudding, vanilla or cheesecake flavor (prepared with 1% or 2% milk)
- 2 pints fresh strawberries, sliced
- 2 tbsp. Sugar
- 1 (8 oz.) container reduced fat frozen whipped topping, thawed

Directions

1. Slice strawberries and toss with 2 tbsp. sugar in a bowl; refrigerate for at least 4 hours until strawberries have developed juices
2. Prepare pudding according to package directions; refrigerate for about 20 minutes
3. Fold thawed frozen whipped topping into prepared pudding
4. In a large bowl, layer cubed angel food cake, pudding mixture, and strawberries. Spoon into serving bowls (each serving is about 1 cup).

Keep on Moving

Staying Flexible

We usually remember to get physical activity in the form of aerobic or endurance exercise, as well as strength-training. However, we may forget how important stretching and flexibility training are for keeping us limber, performing our daily activities with ease, and helping with arthritis.

Stretching exercises help synovial fluid flow through the joints, which prevents stiffness. To get started, remember the following tips:

- Warm up with a few minutes of walking or marching in place before stretching
- Hold each stretch at least 10 seconds – aiming for about 30 seconds each stretch
- Avoid “bouncing” in a stretch – you want to work towards going deeper into the stretch
- Breathe into the stretch – deep breaths bring oxygen to the muscles and allow you to go deeper into the stretch as you exhale

Monthly Chair Exercise

Overhead Reach with Side Bends

This exercise is important for opening the torso and stretching the oblique abdominal muscles.

Seated in a chair with good posture, reach your arms up overhead. Hold for 10 seconds. Allow your right arm to relax down by your side (can rest hand on chair seat) while your left arm stays up overhead. Slowly lean to the right and reach your left arm over your head to the right. Hold for 8 to 10 seconds. Come back up to the center position, pulling both arms overhead again. Repeat by bending to the opposite side, relaxing the left arm to the side this time.

Do another set.



For more exercises, visit the following link:

[https://s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/livewellagewell-archive/Exercise+Resources/13-ChairExercisesBallsBands+\(1\).pdf](https://s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/livewellagewell-archive/Exercise+Resources/13-ChairExercisesBallsBands+(1).pdf)

Living Better

Staying Young at Heart

There's a saying that "you're only as old as you think you are." It turns out that feeling younger than your "chronological age" is associated with living longer according to a study at University College London published in 2015.

Being young at heart means having a sense of vitality or energy. Even with a chronic health condition, you can still feel engaged in life, able to do the things you want to do, and feel positive about life in general. The following tips will help you feel young at heart:

1. Engage in regular exercise or physical activity. It may be that people who feel older than their age also shy away from challenging themselves physically - which leads to a cycle of deterioration. Aim for about 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week.
2. Eat a healthy diet. People who feel older may give themselves permission to "eat whatever" because it "doesn't matter anymore." Enjoy lean proteins, whole grains, a variety of fruits and vegetables,

and low-fat or fat-free dairy every day for optimal health.

3. Learn something new. Challenging our brains with learning a new skill or developing new knowledge keeps us feeling positive and younger.
4. Practice mindfulness. Focus on being in the moment helps decrease stress and increases a sense of gratitude.
5. Find meaning. Developing a hobby or volunteering for a cause fosters a sense of purpose in life.

If you don't feel younger than your age now, practicing these tips may help you take charge of your health and life. It will take time, but with practice, you may find that you, too, feel young at heart.

Medication Manager

Questions to Ask Your Dentist

When you think about your healthcare providers, you may forget to include your dentist in that list. Dentists have to understand a lot about health conditions that affect oral health. So, it's important to have a list of questions for your dentist each time you visit. The following are possible topics you'd like to discuss with your dentist:

- **Good oral health habits.** As we age, we may find that it's more difficult to brush our teeth if we have arthritis, or floss with loosening teeth. Ask your dentist to show you how to properly brush or floss your teeth.
- **Dry mouth.** Medications, not drinking enough fluids, and certain medical conditions can lead to feelings of dry mouth, which increases the risk for oral health problems such as cavities.

- **Affordable dental care.** It may be challenging to visit the dentist regularly if you are on a fixed income without dental insurance. Talk with your dentist about options for affordable care, such as payment plans or finding a dentist who offers lower fees for older adults.
- **Medications.** Your dentist is a healthcare provider and should be aware of the medications you take regularly. Be sure to share your list of medications at each visit.

As with all other healthcare providers, write down any questions or concerns you have about your oral health, such as loose teeth, sensitive teeth, dry mouth, or any other issues, before visiting the dentist.

To Your Health

Managing Your Congestive Heart Failure

By Whitney Bignell, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 5.7 million Americans have been diagnosed with “heart failure.” In congestive heart failure, or CHF, the heart is no longer able to adequately pump blood and oxygen throughout the body. Blood can backup in the lungs, hands, abdomen, or feet - causing the “congestion” in the disease name.

Managing CHF requires medications, as well as diet and lifestyle changes. The following changes will help you manage your condition:

- **Stop smoking.** Any habit that increases risk for heart disease also increases risk for and complications of CHF.
- **Decrease sodium.** Diet changes that are helpful for high blood pressure are also good for CHF. Reduce sodium by purchasing fresh or frozen vegetables or low-sodium or no-salt-added canned vegetables (draining and rinsing canned vegetables helps remove excess sodium); limit salty snacks; refrain from adding table salt to dishes at the table; carefully measure salt if adding to recipes; and limit frozen or shelf-stable prepared meals, as they tend to be higher in sodium.
- **Get physical activity.** It seems counterintuitive that exercise can help a condition that makes you feel tired and out-of-breath. However, exercise is important for heart health and managing your

weight. Be sure to track your symptoms, though, and communicate with your healthcare provider if exercise is too difficult.

The good news is that changing habits can help you manage your CHF. It will be important for you to communicate regularly with your doctor about any changes you experience, such as increased swelling in the hands, legs, feet, and abdomen or increased shortness of breath.

Upcoming Events

A Matter of Balance Workshops

Madison County Senior Center
Danielsville, GA
Tuesdays and Thursdays
June 7 – July 3, 2018
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Living Well Workshops

More workshops coming Fall 2018!

If you'd like to host a workshop,
please contact Whitney Bignell
(web1975@uga.edu)

Check out our website for upcoming
workshops:
<http://www.negahealthmatters.org/index.php/calendar-2/>

Support for this newsletter is also provided by:

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Questions or Comments? Contact us!

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