



## Chef Charles Says...

A newsletter for congregate meal participants for the month of June

**Please read carefully.**

**We have new information in this section for June 2011.**

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans were released January, 2011. The guidelines continue to encourage people to eat better, exercise more and make both a part of everyday life.

The information in the Chef Charles newsletter may cause participants to ask questions about specific health conditions such as diabetes or medications. It is not the intent of Chef Charles to answer specific health questions. As a Chef Charles instructor, it is important that you direct any personal health questions to **health professionals**.

Chef Charles is concerned that many older adults who are eligible are not participating in the Food Stamp Program, or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) as it is now called. In Iowa the program is called Food Assistance. As an instructor for Chef Charles, you can help those at your meal site to understand that the SNAP program can make a big difference in their food budget. Older adults may not want to talk about this program, so a good strategy is to suggest that they share the information with others.

We encourage you to use the questions at the end of the instructor's guide. This provides feedback to us regarding the success of the Chef Charles program in helping participants to eat healthier, be more active and have safe food. Ask your group the questions at the beginning of your Chef Charles meeting and then again at the end. This will reinforce key points and identify if the participants know the answers.

And finally, you will notice that we have retired the bingo card that usually accompanies your newsletter.

## Pick a Better...

### Props:

- 1 cup chopped strawberries
- 1 uncut strawberry as an example

## Berry

Berries taste great especially in the summer when they are most fresh. They are also developing a reputation as nutritional powerhouses with special health benefits. Growing research suggests that in addition to providing vitamins and minerals, berries contain a variety of other nutrients that keep us healthy.

Research has shown benefits for preventing urinary-tract infections, boosting memory, preventing some types of cancer, and protecting against heart disease. Combining the great taste and health benefits is a win-win for your table.

When shopping for berries look for plump, firm fruit with a sweet aroma. Store them unwashed in an airtight container in your refrigerator. Remember that whole berries tend to have more



nutrients and fiber than juices and juice drinks, as well as fewer calories and less sugar.

### Activity

**Say to the group:** June is a great month for fresh fruit, especially strawberries. Please share how you like to prepare or eat strawberries. (Many participants will like items like strawberry pie, strawberry short cake, jam and others.) I noticed none of you mentioned using strawberries in a salsa. SALSA is another word for sauce, and in our world we usually think it must have tomatoes. Not so.

I have an example of a strawberry here. We will use the chopped strawberries in our recipe. Let's look at the newsletter to remind ourselves how to choose a berry. *The selections and storage information are highlighted in yellow.*

## Chef Charles Says **Planned Weight Loss Is Good For You If You Are Overweight**

### Props:

- Bath scale

There is some debate about whether it is good for older adults to lose weight, even if they are overweight. Some studies have found an association between weight loss in older adults and risk of dying, but many of those studies did not distinguish between voluntary weight loss and involuntary weight loss that may be related to illness.

Just as in younger people, the prevalence of overweight has increased in the elderly. About 20 percent of people 65 and older are obese, and that is expected to continue rising as more baby boomers become senior citizens. Overweight is known to be associated with impairments in daily living, limitations in mobility and an increased risk for physical decline and frailty.

### Activity

**Say to the group:** There are just some topics we do not like to talk about. Being overweight is one of those topics. What would you say to me if I asked you to step on the scale? You would probably tell me it is not any of my business. That may be true, but Chef Charles would like you to think about your weight and how it impacts your health.

If you need to lose weight, the first person to talk to is not Jenny Craig or Richard Simmons, but you do need to talk to your doctor. If you are overweight, your doctor can tell you if it is safe for you to lose weight, and even suggest ways of doing it safely. But how do you lose weight? Let's look at the Chef Charles Asks the Questions article.



## Chef Charles Asks the Questions

### Props:

- Exercise equipment like a stretch band or weight
- Grocery store newspaper insert

## I Am Overweight. Should I Try To Lose Weight?

Older adults who are overweight frequently face severe health risks, including high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes, which can be made worse when it is difficult to walk and move around. Research done at Washington University studied 100 overweight older adults for a year. Results revealed that diet alone and exercise alone improved physical function. But, neither was as effective as diet and exercise together, which improved physical function by 21 percent.

In addition to improved physical function the study looked at quality of life, and again, those in the combined diet-exercise group had the biggest improvements. Strength, balance and walking speed all showed the most consistent improvement in the diet-exercise group.

It may be just as important for older people to improve physical function and quality of life as to reverse or treat risk factors for cardiovascular disease, especially those who are obese. Combining exercise and diet change is not designed so much to extend life expectancy as it is to improve the quality of life during the remaining years, and to help older adults avoid being admitted to a nursing home.

A potential drawback of voluntary weight loss is that when older people lose fat, they also tend to lose muscle and bone. In this study, the researchers did find slight reductions in muscle and bone density among those who lost weight, but the decreases were smaller in the combined diet-exercise group than in those who dieted or exercised alone.

*The New England Journal of Medicine, March 31, 2011*

**Although losing weight by changing diet and/or exercise is beneficial, when older adults do both, they get a greater improvement in physical function. Maintaining muscle is important for independence.**

### Activity

**Ask the group:** Do any of you know people who have successfully lost weight? Do you know what they did to lose weight? (Let group share ideas.)

I believe I hear a theme that people used either diet or exercise or in some cases they used both. Is that the right way? Yes. The Chef Charles article shared with us that for the best results in weight loss you need to do both. (Hold up the exercise equipment and food



insert.) But, the interesting point of the study was that not only did the participants lose weight, but their quality of life increased. What does that mean? (Read the yellow highlighted sentences in the article.)

So, losing weight is not so you can buy a smaller size of clothes, but to improve the quality of your life. We could all benefit from this.

## Get The News

### Props:

- If the meal site has a computer available, go to [www.oasis.iowa.gov](http://www.oasis.iowa.gov) before the Chef Charles meeting

## Applying For Food Assistance Benefits Can Help You, Just Like Mary

Mary, a resident of a senior high-rise apartment complex, did not have enough food to last the month. She just ran out of money. So, she went to the local food pantry for food to help her till the end of the month. While there, she learned how to apply on-line for the Iowa Food Assistance Program. Food Assistance benefits provides families and individuals with the ability to purchase the much needed food for their family. It took twenty minutes to fill out the application, and a phone conversation with a Department of Human Services staffer, and Mary had her EBT card within two weeks. Each month the credit for buying food is deposited in her EBT account, and she is ready for a grocery trip. If you knew it was that easy to receive help for food each month, would you take the time?

Mary's experience is a good example of how the Food Assistance program works. After filling out an application, you will have a meeting, generally by phone but sometimes face-to-face, with a Department of Human Services staffer in your county to verify your personal information. Before you have the meeting, you will receive a list of items you need to send or take with you to complete the application process. If you need help with food, consider applying for Food Assistance. If you know people who could use the help, share this information with them. Just go to the website [oasis.iowa.gov/](http://oasis.iowa.gov/) to complete the application.

### Activity

**Say to the group:** In Iowa we have many people who do not have enough money for food. That is unfortunate and unnecessary. I am going to read Mary's story. *After reading the article, ask if there are people you know who could benefit from Food Assistance. Discuss how someone would go about telling a friend about how easy it is to apply. Ask if anyone would like to look at the computer site at the meal site.*



## Be Active

### Props:

- Chair without arms for each person

## Exercising Your Upper Body

Even if you are confined to a wheel-chair or cannot exercise your lower body due to an injury, surgery, or other challenges, you can still burn calories and keep your upper body muscles strong. Upper-body strength is particularly important whether you are pushing yourself in a wheelchair, or transitioning to crutches or a walker. Good posture requires strong back and abdominal muscles, and helps you avoid neck and shoulder pain. Neck and shoulder pain can happen when you spend hours using a walker or wheelchair.

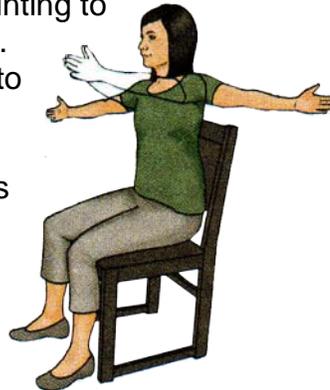
Stay as active as possible, working within the limits of your body. Exercise regularly if you can and remember that the muscles you cannot see (back, back of arms, and abdomen) are as important as those you can see.

Exercises source: *Food and Fitness Adviser*, 2011

### Upper-Back Strengtheners:

Sit with your back straight and feet firmly planted on the floor. Extend your arms straight in front of you at chest level, palms facing each other. Squeeze your shoulder blades together as you extend your arms out to the side, turning your hands outward with thumbs pointing to the ceiling.

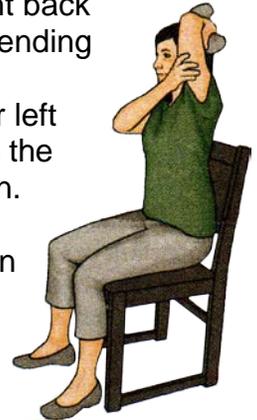
Return to the start position. Do 2-3 sets of 10 repetitions each.



### Triceps Strengtheners:

Sit with your back straight and feet firmly planted on the floor. Holding a free weight (2-4 pounds) in your left hand, bring your left arm straight up in the air, as close to your head as possible. Support your left arm with your right hand; slowly bring the weight back and down by bending at the elbow. Straighten your left arm back up to the starting position.

Do 10 repetitions, then repeat with the right arm. Do 2-3 sets.



### Activity

**Say to the group:** Some people have limitations that make it hard for them to exercise. For instance, even if you cannot use your legs, it is important to exercise your upper body. Let's practice these two exercises.



## Food Safety

### Props:

- Small refrigerator containers
- List of fruits and vegetables (example of what to put on the outside of the refrigerator)



### Activity

## Clean Your Refrigerator

Having an orderly refrigerator is one step in keeping food safe. Place dated leftovers near the front of the refrigerator so you will not forget them. This will help limit the wasted food you must throw out. Cleaning out the refrigerator once a week, and storing odds and ends (half-eaten onions or left over salads) in clear containers makes it easy to see what you have.

The typical refrigerator serves as our own personal vending machine which we go to when our stomachs start growling or we are bored. In most homes, we reach for last night's leftovers perched on the top shelf in easy sight, instead of the fresh vegetables and fruits, bagged and buried in the crisper drawers. To make better use of your produce, make a list of what is in the crisper and check the list when you head for the refrigerator. Better yet, leave a bowl of whole produce on the counter for easy access. Remember that any cut fresh produce must be refrigerated to prevent spoilage.

**Say to the group:** Keeping your refrigerator orderly also makes sure it is clean. How often should we clean our refrigerator? Once a week. If you do it this often, it will not be a major job. Make sure to check all items in the refrigerator, and date them so you will not keep them too long. Fresh fruits and veggies are plentiful in the summer. Don't forget to eat them. Leave them on the counter so you remember them, but if you cut them they must be refrigerated. To remember what is in the refrigerator, make a list as you put it in and cross it out when you take it out.



## Snacks

### Teaching Points:

- Jicama is sometimes called a Mexican potato
- Make sure to refrigerate before serving
- A sweet onion is a good choice
- Leftover strawberries, jicama, onion, bell pepper can be used in a tossed lettuce salad

## Strawberry Salsa

- 1 cup chopped strawberries
- 1/2 cup jicama
- 1 tablespoon diced green onion
- 1 tablespoon minced green bell pepper
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- Dash of black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon brown sugar
- Whole grain crackers, optional

Stir together strawberries, jicama, onion, green pepper, orange juice, black pepper and brown sugar. Serve at room temperature with vanilla wafers or whole grain crackers.

Serves 6 (1/4 cup each). Calories 16; Fat 0 mg; Sodium 1 mg; Carbohydrates; Fiber 1 g; Folate 8.5 mcg; Potassium 70 mg

Source: [www.hy-vee.com/recipes](http://www.hy-vee.com/recipes)



### Did You Learn Any New Ideas?

1. Which form of berries has the most nutrients, fiber and fewer calories? Whole berries or juice?
2. Weight loss is best achieved by two activities. What are they?
3. If you have cut produce like watermelon, how do you store it?
4. What is the web address for food assistance in Iowa?
5. Weight loss can improve life expectancy, but more importantly it improves?

### Your Answers

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### Order Your Materials (provided to Iowa Nutrition Network Partners Only)

Contact Name

Congregate Meal Site (Please list all the sites for which you are ordering the newsletter.)

Address

City, State and Zip

Phone Number

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Month	# Newsletters	# Incentives
June, 2011	_____ Congregate Meal Site Participants	The incentive for April-June is an orange peeler. If you did not receive enough with your April newsletters, indicate how many are needed. _____

Return to: Marilyn Jones,  
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321 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Des Moines, IA 50319

or by FAX 515-281-4913. For questions, call Marilyn at 800-532-1579 or 515-281-6047.



# Instructors' Guide June 2011



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## Your Answers

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Whole berries

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Exercise and diet

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Refrigeration

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[www.oasis.iowa.gov](http://www.oasis.iowa.gov)

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Quality of life

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## Chef Charles Says...

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This material was funded by the Iowa Nutrition Network and USDA's SNAP. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. Food assistance can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more about Iowa's Food Assistance Program, contact the local Iowa Department of Human Services office serving the county where you live, or call toll-free at 1-877-937-3663.

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