



Healthy Aging Update

Iowa Department of Elder Affairs

February 6, 2007

Volume 2, Issue 2

In This Issue

- Physical Activity
- March is National Nutrition Month
- Medicare Preventive Services for Diabetes
- Dental Care in Iowa
- Resources

Welcome

This issue of Healthy Aging Update continues to provide information on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans with issue focusing on physical activity. Additional information is included to serve as a resource for providing nutrition and health promotion services to older adults.

Physical Activity: Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The following information on physical activity is from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services www.health.gov/DietaryGuidelines/

Overview

Americans tend to be relatively inactive. In 2002, 25 percent of adult Americans did not participate in any leisure time physical activities in the past month, and in 2003, 38 percent of students in grades 9 to 12 viewed television 3 or more hours per day. Regular physical activity and physical fitness make important contributions to one's health, sense of well-being, and maintenance of a healthy body weight. Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles resulting in energy expenditure (<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/terms/index.htm>). In contrast, physical fitness is related to the ability to perform physical activity. Maintenance of good physical fitness enables one to meet the physical demands of work and leisure comfortably. People with higher levels of physical fitness are also at lower risk of developing chronic disease. Conversely, a sedentary lifestyle increases risk for overweight and obesity and many chronic diseases, including coronary artery disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, and certain types of cancer. Overall, mortality rates from all causes of death are lower in physically active people than in sedentary people. Also, physical activity can aid in managing mild to moderate depression and anxiety.

Key Recommendations

- Engage in regular physical activity and reduce sedentary activities to promote health, psychological well-being, and a healthy body weight.
 - To reduce the risk of chronic disease in adulthood: Engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity, above usual activity, at work or home on most days of the week.
 - For most people, greater health benefits can be obtained by engaging in physical activity of more vigorous intensity or longer duration.
 - To help manage body weight and prevent gradual, unhealthy body weight gain in adulthood: Engage in approximately 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity on most days of the week while not exceeding caloric intake requirements.
 - To sustain weight loss in adulthood: Participate in at least 60 to 90 minutes of daily moderate-intensity physical activity while not exceeding caloric intake requirements. Some people may need to consult with a healthcare provider before participating in this level of activity.
- Achieve physical fitness by including cardiovascular conditioning, stretching exercises for flexibility, and resistance exercises or calisthenics for muscle strength and endurance.

Key Recommendations for Older Adults

- Participate in regular physical activity to reduce functional declines associated with aging and to achieve the other benefits of physical activity identified for all adults.

Discussion

Regular physical activity has been shown to reduce the risk of certain chronic diseases, including high blood pressure, stroke, coronary artery disease, type 2 diabetes, colon cancer and osteoporosis. Therefore, to reduce the risk of chronic disease, it is recommended that adults engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week. For most people, greater health benefits can be obtained by engaging in physical activity of more vigorous intensity or of longer duration. In addition, physical activity appears to promote psychological well-being and reduce feelings of mild to moderate depression and anxiety.

Regular physical activity is also a key factor in achieving and maintaining a healthy body weight for adults and children. To prevent the gradual accumulation of excess weight in adulthood, up to 30 additional minutes per day may be required over the 30 minutes for

reduction of chronic disease risk and other health benefits. That is, approximately 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity on most days of the week may be needed to prevent unhealthy weight gain (see table below for some examples of moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activities). While moderate-intensity physical activity can achieve the desired goal, vigorous-intensity physical activity generally provides more benefits than moderate-intensity physical activity. Control of caloric intake is also advisable. However, to sustain weight loss for previously overweight/obese people, about 60 to 90 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per day is recommended.

Most adults do not need to see their healthcare provider before starting a moderate-intensity physical activity program. However, men older than 40 years and women older than 50 years who plan a vigorous program or who have either chronic disease or risk factors for chronic disease should consult their physician to design a safe, effective program. It is also important during leisure time to limit sedentary behaviors, such as television watching and video viewing, and replace them with activities requiring more movement. Reducing these sedentary activities appears to be helpful in treating and preventing overweight among children and adolescents.

Different intensities and types of exercise confer different benefits. Vigorous physical activity (e.g., jogging or other aerobic exercise) provides greater benefits for physical fitness than does moderate physical activity and burns more calories per unit of time. Resistance exercise (such as weight training, using weight machines and resistance band workouts) increases muscular strength and endurance and maintains or increases muscle mass. These benefits are seen in adolescents, adults, and older adults who perform resistance exercises on 2 or more days per week. Also, weight-bearing exercise has the potential to reduce the risk of osteoporosis by increasing peak bone mass during growth, maintaining peak bone mass during adulthood, and reducing the rate of bone loss during aging. In addition, regular exercise can help prevent falls, which is of particular importance for older adults.

The barrier often given for a failure to be physically active is lack of time. Setting aside 30 to 60 consecutive minutes each day for planned exercise is one way to obtain physical activity, but it is not the only way. Physical activity may include short bouts (e.g., 10-minute bouts) of moderate-intensity activity. The accumulated total is what is important—both for health and for burning calories. Physical activity can be accumulated through three to six 10-minute bouts over the course of a day.

Elevating the level of daily physical activity may also provide indirect nutritional benefits. A sedentary lifestyle limits the number of calories that can be consumed without gaining weight. The higher a person's physical activity level, the higher his or her energy requirement and the easier it is to plan a daily food intake pattern that meets recommended nutrient requirements.

Proper hydration is important when participating in physical activity. Two steps that help avoid dehydration during prolonged physical activity or when it is hot include: (1)

consuming fluid regularly during the activity and (2) drinking several glasses of water or other fluid after the physical activity is completed.

Calories/Hour Expended in Common Physical Activities

Some examples of physical activities commonly engaged in and the average amount of calories a 154-pound individual will expend by engaging in each activity for 1 hour. The expenditure value encompasses both resting metabolic rate calories and activity expenditure. Some of the activities can constitute either moderate- or vigorous-intensity physical activity depending on the rate at which they are carried out (for walking and bicycling).

Moderate Physical Activity	Approximate Calories/Hr for a 154 lb Person^a
Hiking	370
Light gardening/yard work	330
Dancing	330
Golf (walking and carrying clubs)	330
Bicycling (<10 mph)	290
Walking (3.5 mph)	280
Weight lifting (general light workout)	220
Stretching	180
Vigorous Physical Activity	Approximate Calories/Hr for a 154 lb Person^a
Running/jogging (5 mph)	590
Bicycling (>10 mph)	590
Swimming (slow freestyle laps)	510
Aerobics	480
Walking (4.5 mph)	460
Heavy yard work (chopping wood)	440
Weight lifting (vigorous effort)	440
Basketball (vigorous)	440

^a Calories burned per hour will be higher for persons who weigh more than 154 lbs (70 kg) and lower for persons who weigh less.

Source: Adapted from the 2005 DGAC Report.

What Impact Can the Dietary Guidelines have on U.S. Agriculture?

To help Americans meet nutritional requirements while staying within caloric recommendations, the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans encourage consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, and fat-free or low-fat milk or milk products. A new report identifies one view of the potential implications for U.S. agriculture if Americans changed the way they eat to reflect the amounts recommended for good health. For Americans to meet the fruit, vegetable, and whole-grain recommendations, domestic crop acreage would need to increase by an estimated 7.4 million harvested acres or 1.7 percent of total U.S. cropland in 2002. To meet the dairy guidelines, consumption of milk and milk products would have to increase by 66 percent; an increase of that magnitude would likely require an increase in the number of dairy cows as well as increased feed grains and, possibly, increased acreage devoted to dairy production. The full article can be accessed at: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR31/>

March is National Nutrition Month

Articles and other resources can be accessed at www.eatright.org. The following two articles are examples of what is available for National Nutrition Month® 2007.

1 The Best Path to Fitness and Health Is to Be 100% Fad Free

Diet fads come and go, and some may help you lose weight – in the short term. For National Nutrition Month® 2007, the American Dietetic Association says the most effective long-term way to achieve a healthful lifestyle is to be *100% Fad Free*.

“You can lose weight on virtually any diet,” said registered dietitian and ADA spokesperson Roberta Anding. “If you eat less, you will lose weight. The question is, can you maintain a healthy lifestyle over the long term – your life? The real key to reaching long-term goals is to focus on your overall health.”

Through National Nutrition Month, created in 1973, the American Dietetic Association promotes healthful eating by providing practical nutrition guidance and focusing attention on making informed food choices and developing sound physical activity habits. National Nutrition Month also reminds consumers that registered dietitians are their most valuable and credible source of timely, science-based information.

Anding encourages everyone to keep in mind these National Nutrition Month key messages to enjoy a *100% Fad Free* lifestyle:

- 1. Develop an eating plan for lifelong health.** Too often, people adopt the latest food fad rather than focusing on overall health. Get back to basics and use the new *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPyramid* as your guide to healthy eating.
- 2. Choose foods sensibly by looking at the big picture.** A single food or meal won't make or break a healthful diet. When consumed in moderation in appropriate portions, all foods can fit into a healthful diet.

3. **Learn how to spot a food fad.** Unreasonable or exaggerated claims that eating (or not eating) specific foods, nutrient supplements or combinations of foods may cure disease or offer quick weight loss are key features of fad diets.
4. **Find your balance between food and physical activity.** Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness plus it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.
5. **Food and nutrition misinformation can have harmful effects on your health and well-being,** as well as your wallet. Registered dietitians are uniquely qualified to communicate current and emerging science-based nutrition information and are an instrumental part of developing a diet plan that meets your individual needs.

2 American Dietetic Association's Top Ten Reasons Why Consulting with a Registered Dietitian Can Benefit You

1. You have diabetes, cardiovascular problems or high blood pressure.

An RD serves as an integral part of your health-care team by helping you safely change your eating plan without compromising taste or nutrition.

2. You are thinking of having or have had gastric bypass surgery.

A registered dietitian will help you learn to eat again. Since your stomach can only manage small servings, it's a challenge to get the right amount of nutrients in your body. An RD will work with you and your physician to develop an eating plan for your new needs.

3. You have digestive problems.

A registered dietitian will work with your physician to help fine-tune your diet so you are not aggravating your condition with fried foods, too much caffeine or carbonation.

4. You're pregnant or trying to get pregnant.

A registered dietitian can help make sure you get nutrients like folate, especially during the first three months of pregnancy, lowering your newborn's risk for neural tube or spinal cord defects.

5. You need guidance and confidence for breastfeeding your baby.

A registered dietitian can help make sure you're getting enough iron, vitamin D, fluoride and B vitamins for you and your little one.

6. Your teenager has issues with food and eating healthfully.

A registered dietitian can assist with eating disorders like anorexia, bulimia and overweight issues.

7. You need to gain or lose weight.

A registered dietitian can suggest additional calorie sources for healthy weight gain or a restricted-calorie eating plan plus regular physical activity for weight loss while still eating all your favorite foods.

8. You're caring for an aging parent.

A registered dietitian can help with food or drug interaction, proper hydration, special diets for hypertension and changing taste buds as you age.

9. You want to eat smarter.

A registered dietitian can help you sort through misinformation; learn how to read labels at the supermarket; discover that healthy cooking is inexpensive, learn how to eat out without ruining your eating plan and how to resist workplace temptations.

10. You want to improve your performance in sports.

A registered dietitian can help you set goals to achieve results — whether you're running a marathon, skiing or jogging with your dog.

With approximately 65,000 members, the American Dietetic Association is the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. ADA serves the public by promoting optimal nutrition, health and well-being. To locate a registered dietitian in your area, visit the American Dietetic Association at www.eatright.org.

Medicare Preventive Services for Diabetes

A recent study published in the journal *Diabetes Care* estimates that 61 percent, or 21 million, of the approximately 35 million Medicare beneficiaries age 65 or older have diabetes or pre-diabetes. As many as half of the 7 million Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes are undiagnosed, and "virtually all" of the 14 million beneficiaries with pre-diabetes do not know they have higher than normal blood glucose levels and are likely to develop diabetes, the letter said.

The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 authorized a "Welcome to Medicare" physical for beneficiaries, including cardiovascular and diabetes screening, as of Jan. 1, 2005.

Screening Medicare beneficiaries is the critical first step to preventing diabetes for those with pre-diabetes and improving care for those found with diabetes. It is known that small changes in diet and exercise can prevent diabetes in 58 percent of people at high risk for the disease, and in 71 percent of individuals over 60 years of age.

With an aging population and the problems associated with many chronic conditions, prevention must be a central priority for our health care system.

Important Updates to Medicare's Diabetes Related Services in 2007 are identified in the document at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/diabetesupdate.pdf>.

Dental Care in Iowa

Delta Dental of Iowa has awarded a \$150,000, three-year grant to the College of Dentistry at the University of Iowa to help retain dentists in rural Iowa, where 79 of Iowa's 99 counties are considered dental shortage areas.

Background:

- Iowa's dental workforce is aging. Approximately 50 percent of Iowa's practicing dentists are over age 50.
- 79 of Iowa's 99 counties are dental shortage areas; 12 of the 79 counties are considered critical shortage areas.
- The Iowa population is aging and in general, people are retaining their teeth longer, creating a high level of demand for dental services.
- The predicted dental workforce shortage will adversely affect the access to oral health care for economically disadvantaged populations, residents of rural communities and people who already face barriers to care.
- A dental practice in Iowa is estimated to have an average economic impact of \$1.3 million, or \$1.6 billion statewide.
- Iowa communities interested in recruiting a dentist should contact the College of Dentistry at 319-335-9865.

Delta Dental of Iowa supports a number of community benefit programs as part of its not-for-profit mission to improve the oral health of Iowans. In 2006, the company contributed more than \$475,000 to oral health projects in Iowa, benefiting underserved children and the elderly. Delta Dental of Iowa, the largest and most experienced provider of dental benefits in the state, is a member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, a national organization of not-for-profit Delta Dental member companies. The national association is the largest dental benefits carrier in the nation, providing coverage to more than 47 million people in nearly 81,000 employer groups.

Consider nominating a program that helps older adults improve their oral health. The Geriatric Oral Health Care Award from the American Dental Association recognizes programs that have improved the oral health of older adults through innovative community outreach activities. The first place recipient will receive a \$2,500 check and a wall plaque. A meritorious award of \$500 may be granted to one other entrant. Visit www.ADA.org/goto/accessawards for more information.

RESOURCES

Nutrition Education

- Pick a **better** Snack materials, recipe, graphics and newsletter articles are available at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/Pickabetersnack/newspaper.asp>
An example of one of the February articles is at the end on this newsletter.



- **Tools to Help Consumers Use the Nutrition Facts Label** at <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2006/NEW01508.html>
 - Make Your Calories Count, a Web-based learning program
 - Nutrition Facts Label brochure.

Health Promotion

- ***A Purchasers Guide to Clinical Preventive Services: Moving Science into Coverage (Purchaser's Guide)***. The *Purchaser's Guide* is a decision support tool that translates and packages clinical preventive services recommendations on screening, immunizations, counseling, and preventive medications in a way that clarifies for purchasers/employers what we in public health know works to promote health and prevent disease. The guide is a culmination of almost two years of work by the National Business Group on Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. You can access the guide at www.cdc.gov/business .
- **Stay Safe in Cold Weather! Booklet** - offers older adults tips on avoiding a dangerous condition called hypothermia. This free 12-page publication is now available from the National Institute on Aging. To order free copies or for more information about Stay Safe in Cold Weather! and other NIA publications, visit the NIA Web site at www.nia.nih.gov or call 1-800-222-2225. Bulk orders are welcome.
- **February is National Health Month**. The International Council on Activity Aging and Philips have provided a website with a variety of resources to use with Heart Month activities. Check out <http://www.icaa.cc/heartmonth.htm> for posters, cholesterol questions and answer sheets and heart health facts.

- **A Report on Mammography for Older Women.** Screening mammography can reduce mortality from breast cancer by approximately 20% to 35% in women aged 50 to 69 years and approximately 20% in women aged 40 to 49 years. However, the authors described Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) findings that indicate self-reported mammography use declined among women aged 40 or older. The reason for the apparent decline in screening mammography is unclear and might be attributable to a combination of factors. More research will be needed to verify this apparent decline and to identify the underlying causes. A full copy of the article can be obtained at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/index.html> or <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5603a1.htm>.

Additionally, two new fact sheets about mammography are available on CDC's cancer Web site. You may find "Understanding Breast Health" at http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/fact_breast_health.htm, and "Understanding Mammograms: A Tool to Check for Breast Cancer" at http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/fact_mammograms.htm.

- **Used Equipment Referral Service.** Information on the availability of assistive technology equipment is available online at <http://www.iowacompass.org/>

Health Literacy

- **Health Literacy Improvement Website**
<http://www.health.gov/communication/literacy/>
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion recently launched a website promoting the improvement of health literacy. The site contains a wealth of information, including a basic overview of health literacy concepts, techniques for improving health literacy, a health literacy PowerPoint presentation, and links to other resources.
- **Report:** "The Health Literacy of America's Adults: Results From the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy" <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/>
- **Issue Brief:** "Cultural Competence and Health Literacy: Making Your Health Promotion Program Accessible to Diverse Groups of Older Adults" http://www.asaging.org/cdc/issue_briefs/Issue_Brief_4.pdf

Mental Health

- **NIHSeniorHealth** <<http://www.NIHSeniorHealth.gov>> provides an interactive educational site with a recently added section dealing with depression in older adults. This senior-friendly medical Web site is a joint effort of the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM), which are part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This web site also has information on falls, Alzheimer's Disease, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and osteoporosis.

Physical Activity

- **Waltzing improves functional capacity.** A group of 110 people with stable chronic heart failure, average age 59 years, participated in supervised exercise on a cycle or treadmill or danced slow and fast waltzes or had no exercise. After 8 weeks, the dancers and the exercisers improved functional capacity, while the nonexercisers did not. The dancers significantly improved quality of life. [SOURCE: American Heart Association \(November 12, 2006\)](#)
- **Structured exercise helps prevent disability.** This is among the first studies to demonstrate that physical decline in the elderly is reversible. This analysis showed that, compared with those who received health education, participants in the physical activity group had a 29% lower risk of being unable to walk 400 meters. [SOURCE: National Institutes of Health \(November 17, 2006\)](#)

Food Safety

- **A hand washing poster** in Spanish and English along with other nutrition and food safety materials are available at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/ftjan07.shtml>.
- **Food thermometer** use is the only way to know food has been cooked to a safe internal temperature. This web site contains drawings illustrating proper placement of a food thermometer in meat and poultry. Visit FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/food_safety_education/proper_thermometer_placement/index.asp.
- **Food Safety 101:** Leftover pizza, fried chicken, Chinese food and other take-out foods should be refrigerated as soon as possible. Perishable food should never be out of refrigeration more than two hours. At room temperatures over 90° F, discard after one hour.

Keep the refrigerator set at 40° F or lower. Refrigerate leftovers in shallow containers. Wrap or cover the food. Cooked meat or poultry and leftover pizza is safe for 3 to 4 days, while luncheon meats and egg, tuna and macaroni salads are safe for up to 3 to 5 days. Foods stored longer may begin to spoil or become unsafe to eat. Never taste a food to determine if it has spoiled.

Use microwave safe containers. Do not microwave foods in margarine tubs or other plastic containers intended for cold storage. Chemicals used in such plastics could transfer into the food when heated.

For additional food safety information about meat, poultry or egg products, call the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854); for the hearing impaired (TTY) 1-800-256-7072.

Food Service

- **Bid Specifications** in Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs- Read about how bid specs can help improve meal quality and provide better control of purchases. http://nutritionandaging.fiu.edu/creative_solutions/bid_specs.asp

Fall Prevention

- The council's website (<http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/family>) lists critical actions that caregivers and professionals can take to make homes safer for older adults. Many of the home-safety steps that the council lists are simple -- installing grab bars in bath and shower stalls, using nightlights, and ensuring rugs have nonskid backs or liners.
- A combination of education regarding home safety practices, physical activity, and proper medication management can help individuals greatly reduce their risk of falling in the home. The National Institute of Health's "Falls and Older Adults" website (<http://nihseniorhealth.gov/falls/toc.html>), which was designed especially for elders, contains information about the risks of falling, home safety, the importance of physical activity, the use of adaptive devices such as canes, and other fall-prevention techniques. The site also has a section on what to do if one does fall.
- The American Society on Aging (ASA) has addressed the topic of falls with emphasis on sociocultural barriers to home safety in the spring 2005 newsletter. It is available online at <http://www.asaging.org/networks/NEST/max-124.cfm>. In addition, the winter 2002-03 issue of "Generations," ASA's quarterly journal, was devoted to falls and fall-related injuries. The issue is available for purchase online at <http://www.asaging.org/generations/gen26-4/toc.cfm>.
- To keep up to date on fall-prevention research, tools, and programs, visit the fall-prevention website of the National Council on Aging (NCOA)'s Center for Healthy Aging at <http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=69>.

Articles of Interest

- "Health Care Spending in the United States and OECD Countries"

<http://www.kff.org/insurance/snapshot/chcm010307oth.cfm>

- "Retirement looks slim for many women: Single Ones Have Higher Rates of Poverty Than Men," by Jonathan Peterson (_Lexington [Kentucky] Herald-Leader via _Los Angeles Times_, Jan. 10, 2007).
<http://www.kentucky.com/mld/heraldleader/news/nation/16424014.htm>
- Acid suppression medication linked with increased risk of hip fracture. Use of the drugs proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) for the treatment of acid-related diseases such as gastro esophageal reflux disease (GERD) is associated with a greater risk of hip fracture, according to a study in the December 27 issue of JAMA. (JAMA. 2006;296:2947-2953)
http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2006-12/jaaj-asm122106.php
- AARP Policy and Research: "Across the States 2006: Profiles of Long-Term Care and Independent Living," by Ari N. Houser, Wendy Fox-Grage, and Mary Jo Gibson (December 2006, .pdf format, 350p.).
http://www.aarp.org/research/longtermcare/trends/d18763_2006_at.html
- "Talk therapy may be best for depressed seniors," (Reuters Health, November 29, 2006).
<http://www.reutershealth.com/archive/2006/11/29/eline/links/20061129elin002.html>
- "New dementia screening tool detects early cognitive problems missed by commonly used test" (Eurekalert [American Association for the Advancement of Science], Nov. 1, 2006).
http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2006-11/slu-nds103006.php
- "Retirement looks slim for many women: Single Ones Have Higher Rates of Poverty Than Men," by Jonathan Peterson (_Lexington [Kentucky] Herald-Leader via _Los Angeles Times_, Jan. 10, 2007).
<http://www.kentucky.com/mld/heraldleader/news/nation/16424014.htm>

Did You Know?

- US Census Bureau is predicting the fastest growing job to be 'home health aide.' New York Times, December 15, 2006. Statistical Abstracts.
- Nutritional status is a key factor to help prevent or delay disability in older adults, according to the results of a longitudinal study reported in the November 27, 2006 issue of the Archives of Internal Medicine. In the study, older women with lowest levels of serum vitamin B6, vitamin B12, and selenium were at increased risk for problems with Activities of Daily Living. Arch Intern Med. 2006;166:2335-2340.

**Pick a *better* snack
On the Go- With Mushrooms!**

February is Wise Healthcare Month! Part of being healthy is maintaining a low-fat diet high in nutrients. Having a healthy diet can help prevent and lessen the effects of certain diseases and illnesses.

Various civilizations throughout the world believed mushrooms had magical properties that could give people superhuman strength. Don't count on mushrooms for giving you "super hero" powers, however, current evidence shows fruits and vegetable consumption is associated with improved health and reduced risk of major diseases.

With more than 2,500 varieties of mushrooms in the world, the vegetable offers something for everyone.

Wash. Slice. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Nutrition Facts:

Mushrooms are a good source of niacin, riboflavin pantothenic acid, selenium as well as being low in carbohydrate and fat free.

Selenium works as an antioxidant with vitamin E to protect cells from damage that may lead to heart disease, and perhaps cancer and other health problems. It also boosts the immune function (Complete Food and Nutrition Guide. Roberta Duyff/American Dietetic Association).

Quick Nibble:

Egyptian pharaohs believed mushrooms were foods of the gods and forbade commoners to eat them.

-Produce Marketing Association and the Produce for Better Health Foundation