



Renaissance

Choices Today...Possibilities Tomorrow

March is National Nutrition Month

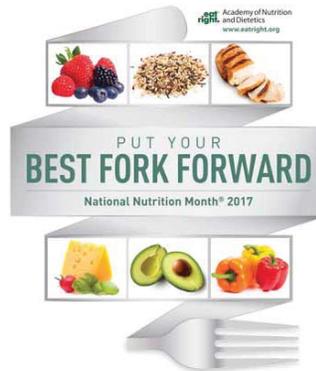
Each year during March, we celebrate National Nutrition Month® by focusing on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

“Put Your Best Fork Forward” is the theme for 2017 which serves as a reminder that each one of us holds the tool to make healthier food choices. Making small changes during National Nutrition Month and over time, helps improve health now and into the future.

Elderbridge Nutritionist and Registered Dietician Amy Jones has this advice about nutrition and aging, “Men and women are living longer – but you are never too old to enjoy the benefits of improved nutrition and fitness. In fact, as we get older we need fewer calories but more nutrients, so older, adults need to focus on quality not quantity and make food choices that are high in nutrition.”

A variety of foods is important because no one food or food group provides all of the nutrients our bodies need to grow and stay healthy.

- Vary Your Veggies: Plan meals to include different colored vegetables throughout the week. Use vegetables that are in season and remember to choose vegetables from each of the subgroups of dark, green leafy, red and orange, beans and peas and starchy.
- Focus on Whole Fruits: whole fruits are convenient but cut up fruit works too! Make sure juice is 100% fruit juice and un-sweetened. Use fruit as snacks throughout the day.
- Make half your grains whole grains: brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat bread, wraps and cereal! When making bread, use half whole wheat flour and half regular flour to increase fiber and nutrition.
- Choose a variety of protein from both plant and animal sources: use beans instead of meat in chili, soups and salads. Remember to eat heart healthy fish twice a week!
- Dairy: it’s high in calcium and Vitamin D; eat 2-3 servings of low fat dairy every day.



Think nutrient-rich rather than "good" or "bad" foods. The majority of your food choices should be packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients, and lower in calories. **Focus on Variety.** Eat a variety of foods from all the food groups to get the nutrients your body needs. Fruits and vegetables can be fresh,

frozen or canned. Eat more dark green vegetables such as leafy greens and broccoli and orange vegetables including carrots and sweet potatoes. Vary your protein choices with more fish, beans and peas. Eat at least 3 ounces of whole-grains every day.

Know Your Fats. Look for foods low in saturated fats and trans fats to help reduce your risk of heart disease. Most of the fats you eat should be monounsaturated and polyunsaturated oils. Check the Nutrition Facts panel on food labels for total fat and saturated fat.

Putting it all together: small changes make healthy habits that last. Make small specific goals that are achievable, one forkful at a time. Make one small goal and then the next to keep adding up to a healthier you!

March 2017

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A step forward in the future of Elderbridge Agency on Aging took place on February 14, 2017.

The agency Board of Directors named Shelly Sindt the new Chief Executive Officer for Elderbridge.

Sindt joined Elderbridge three and half years ago as the Case Management Coordinator. She came to Elderbridge through its merger with the Northwest Area Agency on Aging in

Spencer where Sindt served as the Case Management Coordinator for 15 years.

Shelly is a member of the Iowa Coalition on Mental Health, the Area Agency on Aging State Case Management Coordinators group; and the National Council on Aging. In addition, Sindt has developed strong professional partnerships with local, regional, and state agencies. She has worked as a nurse supervisor serving adults with severe and persistent mental illness, as well as a supervisor of case management services for the frail elderly. Shelly also has specialized training in the areas of Falls Prevention, Substitute Decision Maker, Grant Writing, Benefits Counseling; Aging and Disability Resource Centers; and Mental Health.

Shelly is married with two grown children, two grown step-children, a 14 year old step son and two grandchildren.

Ready, Set, Retire! to be held in Sheldon

Elderbridge staff members and experts from the community will be on hand in Sheldon in early April to speak with seniors about retirement.

When: April 4th and 5th

Time: Registration starts at 5:45 pm; Presentations are from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Where: Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon

Topics to be discussed: Legal Aid, Medicare and Medicaid coverage, pre-planning funeral expenses, retirement investments and more.



To reserve a space, please contact Thomasina at 712-262-1775 or thegg@elderbridge.org

Ready, Set, Retire! Is free to the public.

Employee Spotlight - Mary Beth McMullin, Case Manager, Mason City



Where did you grow up and spend your early years?

I was born and raised in California and moved to Iowa when I was 15.

Did you ever have a job(s) sometime in your life that no one would guess you had?

I was a certified chiropractic assistant for 2 years.

What made you want to get involved in social services and elder care?

I have always had a passion for the elderly and was exposed to public service from a very young age.

How long have you been with Elderbridge?

I have been with Elderbridge since June 2012.

What is the favorite part about your work?

I love that the job is different from day to day and that I have the power to make my own schedule.

What are 3 career lessons that you've learned this far?

Do your work right, always do your best and try not to take anything personally.

What are some of the changes that you have seen in your profession since you started?

The type and amount of work that case managers have to complete has changed significantly over the last few years, especially after the MCO transition.

What are some of your hopes for the future of the work done in social services for the elderly and disabled adults?

That Elderbridge continues to be person-centered and that we never forget that the person is the most important piece in the grand scheme of things.

Tell us something about yourself that would surprise people.

I have an unnatural amount of 'sevens' on my birthdate. I was born on June 7th at 9:27am at 7 lbs. and 7oz.

Do you have a personal motto or words of wisdom that you try to live by?

Choose a job you love and you will never work a day in your life.

Nutrition Knowledge is the Main Menu Item at “Fresh Conversations”

At the Helgeson Truman Civic Center in Lake Mills, a group of seniors are meeting to learn more about how they can make healthier nutrition decisions. This meeting, one of many going on across the state every month, is where “Fresh Conversations” is taking place. Amy Jones, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist with Elderbridge is leading this particular discussion. Today’s topic is about lentils, a high protein-high fiber seed that can cut cholesterol while stretching one’s food dollar. Asking questions and brainstorming how to use the pea-like seeds in dishes they may already know, the participants are taking steps to stay healthy without giving up the foods they love.

“Fresh Conversations” is also bringing a more active role in personal nutrition and healthy living to the table. Across the 29 county Elderbridge service area and around Iowa, “Fresh Conversations” also incorporates wellness and exercise to create a well-rounded approach to living healthfully.

The program is developed by a partnership with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and is funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Through these discussions, both the IDPH and Elderbridge hope to start more conversations to give Iowa seniors knowledge to eat healthier and maintain their independent lifestyle. But “Fresh Conversations” is unique in that it allows for more than just a one-way monolog by an expert. Questions are asked by participants and facilitators are able to take feedback and better understand what challenges seniors may be facing at this point in their lives.

Located at 21 Elderbridge meal sites, the program has been growing. According to Jones, the goal is to “Expand across the Elderbridge service area to additional congregate meal sites and to increase participation at the current sites.”

Once every month, groups come away with many fresh meal ideas and samples of new foods. Here, there is a chance for seniors to learn, through group presentations, discussion, hands-on tasting and sampling how to make easy changes with lasting benefits. The participants come away more informed and confident about cooking and eating in a way that meets their particular nutritional needs.

Jones says that long-term, she hopes to see “healthy, active older adults who can live independently,” and that the program is leading to overall improved wellness and health in the communities they serve.

For more information about the “Fresh Conversations” program call Amy Jones at 800-243-0678 or visit our website at www.elderbridge.org.



Amy Jones works with diners in Lake Mills on the “Fresh Conversations” program.

Walk Plans Canceled for Older Americans’ Month

In last month’s Renaissance, it was announced that walks will again take place this May for Older Americans’ Month. Unfortunately, we here at Elderbridge are sorry to announce that there has been a change of plans and the state wide walks have been canceled for this year.

Alternative plans to recognize Older Americans’ Month are in the works and will be announced just as soon as they are finalized.

The theme for Older Americans’ Month this year is “Age Out Loud” and is intended to give aging a new voice—one that reflects what today’s older adults have to say about aging.

Companion Pets for the Elderly

The power of pet therapy is thought to be stronger than any medication, not only for people going through tough times or in poor health, but also for the elderly as well. Proven to increase mental alertness, build self-esteem, and decrease loneliness, pets can provide a warm and fulfilling relationship that older people—or indeed all of us—desire.

Having the responsibility of caring for a pet can be a healthy situation for most elderly people. Sometimes, a pet can be the only reason some seniors feel a need to get up in the morning; it provides them with a sense of purpose. In addition, there are many studies that attribute pet ownership to relieving stress, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels and bettering mental health.

Not only do pets help the elderly over-

come various health ailments, but they can also significantly decrease their owners' sense of loneliness. Pets are automatic people magnets and are often a great conversation starter. People love talking about their pets, and others love interacting with the pets they encounter. When choosing a pet, you must take into consideration the limitations of the elderly person's physical and mental health. An older dog or cat that has matured past their ball of energy phase can be a perfect companion.

It is proven that animals can help enrich the lives of their owners both physically and emotionally, and this can be especially true for the elderly. The right pet can provide them with a sense of purpose, non-judgmental acceptance, and companionship that both animals and humans need to stay happy and comfortable.

Daylights Savings is Also Time for Fire Safety

It's time to turn the clocks ahead and lose an hour of sleep this month when Daylight Saving Time kicks in at 2:00 a.m. Sunday, March 12th in Iowa.

With that, it's also time to remind everyone to TEST the batteries in their smoke alarms as they TURN their clocks forward an hour. Smoke alarm maintenance is especially important for seniors. People over the age of 65 are twice as likely to suffer injuries or lose their lives in fires compared to the population-at-large.

Here are some fire safety tips for elderly people with special needs, provided by the U.S. Fire Administration and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):

Check smoke alarm and CO detector batteries. When turning the clocks ahead, take a few minutes to replace the smoke alarm batteries if needed and push the test button to make sure the alarms are working. It's also a great time to check carbon monoxide detectors.

- Smoke detectors double your chance of surviving fire in your home by providing early warning and valuable time for escape.
- If you can't install a detector yourself, ask a relative, a friend, or a neighbor. They will help you locate the best spot for the detector and make sure that the detector is installed.
- At a minimum, you should have a detector immediately outside your sleeping area. The ideal spot is on the ceiling or high on the wall, out of corners where "dead air" space might not capture smoke.
- Do not disable your detectors by removing batteries or disconnecting wires.
- If your detector goes off because of cooking fumes or steam from the bathroom, you may need to move it or you may need a different type of detector.
- Clean the detectors periodically to keep them free from dust and dirt. Test the batteries. Detectors connected to your house wiring should be tested regularly, too.
- Smoke detector batteries should be changed at least twice a year. Use your birthday or other significant date (begin/end Daylight Savings Time) as your twice annual "Battery Replacement Day."
- If your landlord or building management is responsible for smoke detectors where you live, call and ask when they last were tested, cleaned or replaced.

- Practice an escape plan. Make sure everyone in the household knows how to get out of every room and how to get out of the home in less than two minutes.
- There are three essential items that should be kept by your bedside: a telephone, whistle, and your eyeglasses. You need your glasses to see how to escape from fire and avoid injury. The whistle serves two purposes: It lets people know where you are so that you can be rescued, and enables you to warn other family members of fire. Your first priority in fire is to get out of the building. Don't stop to call the Fire Department until you are safe outside.
- If you use a wheel chair or walker, check all the exit routes in advance to be sure you can get through the doorways. If not, map out escape routes that will work and let family and friends know what they are.
- If you have impairments that might make it more difficult for you to escape from fire, consider talking to your Fire Department and letting them know your special circumstances in advance.
- Plan your escape route. You should have a primary and a back-up route mapped out for each room. Practice getting out.

If you've practiced escape routes, your memory and instinct will help you move in the right direction and in the right way. Check all the windows from which escape is planned. Can you open the window, or is it painted or nailed shut? Make sure your exits allow you to exit!



St. Patrick's Day

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid.

The remaining 34 letters spell a secret message. Answer on page 10.

- Beer
- Belfast
- Bishop
- Cabbage
- Celebration
- Celtic Cross
- Christian
- Clover
- Cork
- Corned Beef
- Dancing
- Dublin
- Events
- Feast Day
- Festival
- Green
- Guinness
- Heritage
- History

- Holiday
- Holy Day
- Ireland
- Irish
- Leprechaun
- Limerick
- March
- Missionary
- Music
- Parade
- Patron Saint
- Potatoes
- Seventeenth
- Shamrock
- Snakes
- Soda Bread
- Tradition
- Yearly

S A S S E N N I U G E V E N T S P
 I Y A D I L O H N T Y Y P A E P O
 C T H I S T O R Y R A R P K G O T
 I L S O D A B R E A D A A I R H A
 S C O K L H T N E E T N E V E S T
 U C I V N V H D E R S O I D E I O
 M E I C E U A C O N A I T L N B E
 E L C H E R A N R I E S E K B F S
 G T H T A L S H R A F S C F E U F
 A I R P R A E E C T M I I E F E D
 T C I G I A L B S E R M B T S G H
 I C S N N A D A R E R D H T Y A O
 R R T R N I F I M A E P I C E B L
 E O I D E L C I T N T V E K A B Y
 H S A S E E L N R I A I R L R A D
 E S N B H N B O A L O O O T L C A
 S H A M R O C K U D C N R N Y Y Y

APRIL 2017 MENUS				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3	4	5	6	7
Porcupine Meatballs Mashed Potatoes Brussel Sprouts Strawberries & Bananas	Crunchy Pollock Potato Wedges Peas Chocolate Pudding Peaches	Ham Loaf Roasted Red Potatoes California Blend Raisin Rice Pudding	Cheese Burger WW Bun Santa Fe Corn Baby Carrots Plums OJ	Golden Baked Chicken Potatoes w/ Gravy Garden Beans Fruit Cup WW Roll
10	11	12	13	14
Salisbury Ground Beef Baked Potato Mixed Vegetables or Mixed Vegetable Salad Peach Crisp	Hot Pork Sandwich w/ WW Bread and Potatoes w/Gravy Carrots & Broccoli Oatmeal Raisin Bar	COOK'S CHOICE	Creamed Chicken Buttermilk Biscuit Green Beans Strawberry Rhubarb Raisin Crisp OJ	Hearty Veg Beef Soup Corn Bread Banana Half Cinnamon Apples w/Crunchy Topping
17	18	19	20	21
Swiss Style Gr. Beef Baked Potato Triple Salad Blushing Pears	Roast Turkey Potatoes/gravy Creamed Asparagus Strawberries OJ	Crunchy Pollock Sweet Potato Wedges Corn, bean, broccoli salad Pineapple Crunch Tomato Juice	BBQ Pork on WW Bun California Blend or Chop-Chop Salad Potato Salad Banana half	Golden Baked Chicken Scalloped Potatoes Harvard Beets Sunshine Salad WW Roll
24	25	26	27	28
Pork Loin Chop Potatoes/Gravy Squash WW Roll Apple Crisp	Taco Salad Corn Salad Plums Royal Brownie Tomato Juice	Chicken Noodle Casserole Brussel Sprouts Apricots Pumpkin Custard OJ	Liver and Onions Mashed Potatoes and Gravy Mixed Vegetable WW Roll Mixed Fruit	Crunchy Baked Fish Parsley Potatoes Creamed Peas Fruit Cup with Dip
<p>Each Meal Includes:</p> <p>* 1/3 of the Required Daily Amounts (RDA) for persons age 70+ *Milk * Condiments as appropriate * Sodium >800mg</p>				
 <p><i>Amy Bogus MS RN LDN</i></p>				



Dear Marci

Dear Marci,

While I am not anticipating any problems with my private insurance plan, I would like to be prepared for the worst. If difficulties arise, am I allowed to change plans at any time?

Ronald

Dear Ronald,

The short answer to your question is that it depends on the specific difficulties that you are facing with the plan. Under certain circumstances, you may be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to change your Medicare Advantage Plan and/or Part D prescription drug plan outside of the usual enrollment or disenrollment periods. If you get an SEP, your new coverage will usually start the first of the month after you sign up for or disenroll from your plan.

An SEP allows you to change your Medicare Advantage Plan or your stand-alone Part D plan that works with Original Medicare. Here are three common dif-

ficulties you might encounter with your plan to warrant an SEP:

1. Your plan violated its contract with Medicare.

If you believe your plan did not follow Medicare's rules, you may have the right to an SEP, which begins once Medicare determines if the violation occurred and extends for 90 days from the time you disenroll from your current plan. Examples of rule violations include not giving you information about your benefits in a timely manner, not providing benefits to you in a timely manner, the benefits your plan provided not meeting Medicare's quality standards, or your plan giving you misleading marketing information to get you to enroll, such as promising a zero dollar premium for a plan that does have a premium. Call 1-800-MEDICARE and explain your situation. Be prepared to show how your plan broke Medicare's rules, and the name of the plan agent who told you wrong information about the plan.

2. Your plan ends coverage.

If there is a plan termination (your plan decides to no longer offer Medicare coverage), you will

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Working Family Caregivers Need More Help

One in five workers today are caring for aging, disabled, or chronically ill loved ones, according to the AARP. That's some 26 million people, many of whom are distracted at work, have high rates of absenteeism, and often end up quitting their jobs because they simply can't do it all.

Current federal and corporate policies are a start, but there is more to be done to help working caregivers. So far, the solutions that most companies are able to offer are those mandated by the federal Family Medical Leave Act. The FMLA is the legal framework from which millions of employees (especially part-time workers and employees of small businesses) are exempt. A caregiving employee costs a company \$2,000 per year in lost productivity. Offering more paid time off to care for a sick or aging loved one is just part of the solution.

There are a few other ways companies can improve their support to caregiving employees. For starters, they can subsidize or cover services like backup and respite care. Employers can also train and equip managers to know how to have the right conversations with their team members and even provide support to take some stress off of working caregivers. Sometimes just offering information and resources can go a long way.

Many people weighing health care options for an aging parent or other loved one find themselves in an awkward in-between stage in which the would-be patient is still independent enough to stay in their own home, but whose physical condition is not at 100 percent. Is aging in place realistic for your parents?

- Do physical or mental limitations affect your parents' ability to live at home? Can their health needs be met at home?
- Do they have family, friends, or organizations



like church groups who will provide non-paid care for you? And are these informal caregivers able to provide the care your parents may require?

- Do you or your parents have the financial means – primarily savings and/or health and long-term care insurance – to cover in-home services? Medicare will cover some home health services, but it won't pay for 24/7 care in the home.
- Is the layout of your parent's home conducive to aging in place? Will stairs or the lack of a bathroom on the main floor affect your parents' ability to remain in the home?
- Can your parents afford the home modifications necessary to be able to move about their home as aging affects their physical abilities?
- What kinds of community services are offered in the area? Are they affordable?
- Are transportation services available?
- Is there a senior center nearby?

For more information on these questions and other family caregiver related issues, contact Elderbridge Agency on Aging by calling 800-243-0678. You may also contact LifeLong Links at 866-468-7887.



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www.facebook.com/elderbridge

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have an SEP to enroll in a new plan starting two months before the plan ends through one month after the month that the plan ends. Your plan must give you 60 days notice before the date that the plan ends coverage. You can ask that your new plan coverage starts the month after you get notice or up to two months after your old coverage ends. If your plan decides to end Medicare coverage at the end of the year, you will have an SEP to enroll in a new plan from December 8 of the current year until the last day of February of the next year. Your plan must notify you by October 1 that it will not offer coverage the following year. Note that this SEP is in addition to the Fall Open Enrollment Period, which runs October 15 through December 7 of each year. During Fall Open Enrollment, you can make any changes to your Medi-

care coverage. If Medicare ends your plan because the plan violates its contract, you will get an SEP to enroll in a new plan starting one month before the plan ends through one month after it ends. This can happen at any time during the year.

3. Your plan is under review by Medicare.

If your plan is under sanction (Medicare has found a problem with your plan), such as if the plan does not meet Medicare requirements for handling appeals, you can use an SEP to choose a new plan if the sanction directly affects you. The start and length of your SEP is decided on a case-by-case basis. Learn more by reading the Medicare announcement that describes the sanction, or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE.

- Marci



22 N. Georgia Ave., Ste 216
Mason City, Iowa 50401

Our Mission is to Empower Older Iowans
and Adults with Disabilities to Live with
Dignity and Independence.

Returned Service Requested

The Elderbridge Agency on Aging was created under the Older Americans Act and has been meeting the needs of Iowans age 60 years and older and their caregivers for more than 40 years.

Elderbridge serves older Iowans in a 29-county area in Northwest, North Central and Central Iowa with the goal of providing the necessary information and resources to empower our constituents to manage their lives and the aging process to the best of their and our abilities.

To learn more about the services Elderbridge provides to older Iowans, contact an Elderbridge office or visit www.elderbridge.org.

Mason City

22 North Georgia Avenue, Suite 216
(641) 424-0678 or 1 (800) 243-0678

Fort Dodge

308 Central Avenue
(515) 955-5244 or 1 (800) 243-0678

Carroll

603 North West Street
(712) 792-3512 or 1 (800) 243-0678

Spencer

714 10th Avenue East
(712) 262-1775 or 1-800-243-0678

Renaissance Newsletter Order and Change of Address Form

Mailing information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Send to:

Renaissance - Elderbridge

22 N Georgia, Ste 216

Mason City IA 50401

Change of Address

The Renaissance is published monthly by the Elderbridge Agency on Aging. It is available to persons aged 60+ living in our 29-county service area without charge. If you wish to give a voluntary donation to help defray costs, the suggested donation is \$5.