

HEALTHWORD

Putting Health Promotion Back in Motion

January 2006

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HEALTHWORD is a monthly e-mail newsletter produced by the American Society on Aging's Live Well, Live Long project, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Live Well, Live Long provides education and resources to professionals in the field of aging to help them improve health promotion and disease prevention efforts aimed at older adults. Current and past issues of this newsletter are available on the Live Well, Live Long website at <http://www.asaging.org/cdc/HealthWord.cfm>.

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ASA and the CDC release "Food for Life," the newest training module in the Live Well, Live Long program, to help professionals teach older adults to eat more healthfully

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FEATURE:

NEW MODULE OFFERS HEALTH-PROMOTION STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING NUTRITIONAL WELL-BEING IN OLDER ADULTS

It's no secret that eating well is a critical component of a long, healthy life. Numerous studies have found that chronic health conditions can be prevented or managed through good nutrition. Public health surveys have found that 88 percent of people 65 and older have chronic health conditions. The American Society on Aging (ASA), in cooperation with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has just released "Food for Health: Nutritional Well-Being for Older Adults," the newest module in its "Live Well, Live Long" online training series. The module was developed for aging-services professionals who do not have an extensive background in nutrition. It provides information, resources, and tools to support healthy eating in older adults, so that the food of everyday life can become "food for health," and elders can reap the benefits of better nutritional status.

The module reviews basic principles of nutrition science, including a definition of nutritional well-being for older adults and guidelines for good nutrition. The module also addresses the cultural aspects of nutrition, such as the role of food in various cultures, tips for service providers

on developing culturally competent practices, cross-cultural recipe resources, and strategies for promoting nutritional well-being in culturally diverse communities.

Many barriers prevent older adults from eating healthy and nutritious foods, including lack of transportation, social isolation, lack of appetite or taste, inability to cook, and lack of money. In addition, as we age we tend to decrease our food intake, which often results in a decline in intake of essential nutrients. The module contains approaches to finding solutions to barriers such as these.

“Food for Health” also contains nuts-and-bolts information for professionals to use in setting up or enhancing nutrition-related health promotion programs for older adults: sample nutrition education curricula and tools, screening tools and surveys, and advice on how to get help from a dietitian. On the level of community-based health promotion, the module presents information on community food security coalitions and health literacy as well as short profiles of innovative programs around North America.

Other highlights of the module:

* Nutrition Concerns Expressed by Older Adults

This section features information on how to decide whether to take vitamin and mineral supplements, how to maintain your health at every size, how to set realistic weight-loss goals, how to eat healthfully in restaurants, how to set goals for improving your health, where to go for food assistance, and how to use nutrition-facts labels on storebought products.

* Tailoring Nutrition Education Messages to an Older Adult Audience

This section provides information and tips on delivering educational messages about nutrition to older adults. Professionals should consider age-related stereotypes and myths, income level, cultural and ethnic identity, older adult learning patterns, and health literacy.

* A Sample Two-Hour Program: Nutrition and Physical Activity for Older Adults

This two-hour interactive curriculum gives an introduction to healthy aging for older people who are interested in the topic and have struggled with changing their eating habits. It mixes instructor presentations with group discussions, and gives participants practical tips for eating better. The curriculum includes a facilitator’s outline, activities, and handouts.

To read “Food for Health,” visit the Live Long, Live Well project website at <http://www.asaging.org/cdc>. For more information on the module, contact Chaya Gordon at chayag@asaging.org.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE:
NUTRITION EDUCATION

Nutrition education curricula for older adults should be scientifically accurate and culturally appropriate, include measurable objectives, and use at least a 14-point font size for participant materials. Several nutrition curricula for older adults are available free online:

* Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults

Website: <http://www.ncoa.org/Downloads/ModelProgramsHealthyEating.pdf> (downloadable PDF file)

Developed by the Lahey Clinic of Massachusetts, this curriculum is designed for a support group format with a focus on behavior change. It includes a peer-leader instruction manual with a scripted curriculum.

* Nutrition for Older Adults' Health (NOAHnet)

Website: <http://www.arches.uga.edu/~noahnet>

Developed by the University of Florida, NOAHnet features cost-effective ways to improve eating patterns in accordance with the USDA Dietary Guidelines. The program provides lesson plans, scripts, handouts, and activities for each topic in the series. [Warning: site hard to navigate.]

* Steps to Healthy Aging: Eating Better and Moving More

Website: www.fiu.edu/~nutreldr/STEPS_Program/STEPS_home.htm

This curriculum, developed by the National Resource Center on Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Aging at Florida International University, teaches older adults to eat more healthfully and to use step counters to increase walking.

Other curricula that can be ordered online at low cost include “Elder Nutrition and Food Safety: Healthy Living Program” (available at <http://www.ifasbooks.ufl.edu/merchant2>) and the “Purdue University Family Nutrition Program” (<http://www.ces.purdue.edu/cfs/topics/FNP/index.htm>).

For additional nutrition resources and tools, visit “Food for Health: Nutritional Well-Being for Older Adults” at <http://www.asaging.org/cdc>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Event: Caregiving Practices With the Geriatric Population

Date: March 1, 2006

Location: Columbia University, New York City

The Professional Education Center of the Jewish Home & Hospital will be hosting a one-day caregiving conference for social workers, healthcare providers, certified nursing assistants, case

managers, caregivers, and dietitians. For more information, visit <http://www.jewishhome.org/pec> or contact Naim Gribaa at (212) 870-4762 or NGribaa@jhha.org.

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Event: Injury Prevention Through the Ages
Dates: March 5-7, 2006
Location: Toronto

This year, the annual Ontario Injury Prevention Conference will provide a forum that addresses injury prevention throughout the lifecourse. Participants will examine key issues, debate various approaches to injury prevention, acquire new knowledge and skills to inform their work, and help raise public awareness about injury. Early registration ends on February 3. For more information, visit <http://www.oipc.org>.

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Event: 2006 NCOA-ASA Joint Conference – “Invest in Aging: Strengthening Families, Communities, and Ourselves”
Dates: March 16-19, 2006
Location: Anaheim, Calif.

The National Coalition on Aging and the American Society on Aging are again collaborating to offer educational conference and networking opportunities for professionals in the field of aging. Health promotion sessions presented by ASA staff include the following:

- * Sex, Lies and Videotapes: Getting Older Adults to Your Health Promotion Program
- * How to Attract Attention to My Community Health Issues: Finding the Data
- * Healthy Aging Through Medication Adherence: A Community-Based Approach

Discounted early-bird registration ends January 27. For more information, visit <http://www.agingconference.org>.

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Event: 16th Annual Art and Science of Health Promotion: Creating Opportunities for Innovation and Growth
Dates: March 20-24, 2006
Location: Las Vegas

Sponsored by the American Journal of Health Promotion in conjunction with the International Health, Racquet, and Sportsclub Association, this year’s conference will focus on strategies to improve the quality of health promotion efforts, stimulate innovation, reach new markets through new channels with new partners, and secure better funding. The conference will be organized into four educational tracks: “Innovation,” “Financial Analysis,” “Advocacy,” and “Practice Skills.” For more information, visit <http://www.healthpromotionconference.org>.

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For more educational offerings in the field of aging, visit the searchable “Events in Aging” calendar on the ASA website: <http://www.asaging.org/calendar>.

Have an event related to health promotion and aging that you would like to tell your colleagues about? Please submit your event, call for papers, or grant announcements to Nancy Bui at nbui@asaging.org. Include the title, organization, date and time, location, contact information, and a short description of the event.

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