



# MEALS ON WHEELS Newsletter

Promoting optimal health, quality of life and independence through improved nutrition, quality of diet and socialization opportunities.

## APRIL 2021

### MARCH TOTALS

#### DINING ROOM PICK-UP

Meals served: 3700

New people: 16

Average donation: 0.53

#### HOME DELIVERY

Meals served: 9311

New people: 57

Average donation: 0.30

### 2021 TOTAL

**MEALS SERVED 37,143**

### April is National Volunteer Month!

We would like to give a big **THANK YOU!** to all of our volunteers

In 2020 we had 82 volunteers donate 5,149 hours which helped us save money so that we were able to provide meals to more seniors in our community. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer, please call Julie Grasher, MOW Assistant Manager at (509) 426-2603.

### The Perfect Combo

May is national osteoporosis and prevention month, so I thought it would be a great time to talk about the importance of calcium. Calcium is a common word we hear as we age. So, why is it so important? Our bodies need calcium for our heart, muscles and nerves, but it is also needed for our bones.

Many published studies have shown that low levels of calcium can lead to osteoporosis and an increase in fractures. Although there are many other factors that can lead to osteoporosis, calcium intake can play a big part in helping to prevent it. On average, older adults need around 1000-1200mg per/day of calcium according to the National Institute of Health. It is important to note that your body can only absorb about 500mg of calcium at a time.

If you are taking a supplement be sure to not take more than 500mg of calcium in the morning and 500mg in the evening to get the best absorption. Be sure to ask your doctor what the best dose is for you.

Vitamin D also plays a big role in calcium absorption. If our body does not get enough vitamin D, it cannot produce enough of the hormone called calcitriol. This results in low levels of calcium absorption from our diet which causes calcium to be pulled from stores in our skeleton. This causes our bones to be weaker, which is the exact opposite of what we want to achieve. So be sure to get in your daily dose of calcium and vitamin D!

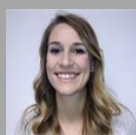


Basic Food is a program that helps supplement Washington residents' diets with healthy, nutritious food. Eligible individuals receive an Electronic Benefits Card (similar to a debit card) to purchase food items at the grocery store.

**To find out if you qualify, simply dial 2-1-1**



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. Basic Food is available to all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, region, or political belief.



Cyndi Balk, MOW Registered Dietician (RDN)  
*If you have dietary concerns Cyndi is available to talk with you, call our office @ (509) 426-2601 or toll free (855) 426-2601. Check out our cooking videos on Facebook:*

<https://www.facebook.com/PeopleForPeopleWA>

Funding is provided by the Older Americans Act and Washington State Aging and Disability Services through a grant from the Southeast Washington Office of Aging and Long Term Care Conference of Government and donations made by seniors and private individuals and businesses.

People For People does not discriminate in providing services on the grounds of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability.

## **Added Sugar: 4 Hidden Dangers Every Older Adult Needs to Know**

Experts may debate tea detoxes and the keto diet forever, but five out of five nutritionists agree: We're all better off limiting added sugar. It's not just the extra calories or eventual downward energy spiral that's at stake, says Nathan Myers, R.D., a clinical dietitian at James J. Peters VA Medical Center in New York City. Added sugar also increases your risk of developing a laundry list of serious health problems, he says. The list includes being overweight and related conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers. It also includes chronic inflammation, which can make arthritis and joint pain worse. So, what exactly is added sugar, and why is it so bad? Here's how to spot it and four reasons it's dangerous to your health.

**Danger #1: It's Calories Are Useless:** Unlike natural sugar that comes in wholesome foods, added sugar arrives empty-handed. It has plenty of calories—but no nutritional benefit in the form of vitamins, minerals, protein, or healthy fats. In other words, it's the definition of “empty calories.” How much should we get? The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends limiting added sugar each day to:

- For women: No more than six teaspoons, 25 grams, or 100 calories
- For men: No more than nine teaspoons, 36 grams, or 150 calories

How much do we get? The average American eats/drinks 17 teaspoons every day, according to the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. That's about 68 grams or 270 calories. For perspective, 12 ounces of Coke has 39 grams of sugar—that's more than what the AHA recommends for both men and women.

**Danger #2: Its Harmful Effects Get Worse with Age:** You can thank your metabolism for that. After age 30, your metabolism starts to slow down, Myers says. By your 60s, you may be less active throughout the day and thus need fewer calories than you did previously. Now, imagine you have decreased your calorie intake to account for a slowing metabolism and less physical activity—but you have a soda or sweet habit that you can't quit. If you consume the same amount of added sugar as you did before, that means it's taking up a bigger percentage of the calories you have to spend overall. In other words, Myers says, when you eat a lot of foods with added sugar, that leaves less room in your diet for foods with more nutritional value. And any excess calories you eat can be stored in your body as fat, which can lead to weight gain and type 2 diabetes. Plus, there's another problem looming, Myers says—insulin resistance. “The body becomes less effective at regulating the level of sugar in the blood,” he says. “High levels of sugar in the blood damage organs in the body.” If you have diabetes or notice any of these signs of diabetes, talk to your doctor about steps you can take to protect your health. The sooner you act, the more you can do to reverse symptoms of diabetes and avoid serious complications.

**Danger #3: It's Tied to a Shorter Lifespan:** Here's something your cardiologist wants you to know: A sugar-laden diet may increase your risk of dying from heart disease. One *JAMA Internal Medicine* study, for example, found people who consumed 21% or more of their daily calories from added sugar were more than twice as likely to die from heart disease than those who kept it to less than 10 percent. That was true regardless of the person's weight, physical activity, or—here's the kicker—the number of vegetables and other healthy foods they ate. In another study, researchers from the University of California, San Francisco, estimated that if Americans as a whole cut added sugar consumption by 20%, cases of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other metabolism-related conditions would drop. Here's what else your cardiologist wants you to know: Heart disease is often a silent disease, meaning it's possible to have it and not even know it. It's smart to talk to your doctor if you notice any warning signs of heart disease. It's even smarter to ask about your risk factors, even if you feel healthy.

**Danger #4: It's Habit-Forming:** Added sugar is great for providing quick energy because it requires minimal digestion to be absorbed and used for fuel in the body. The bad news: This surge of energy burns out quickly—and is typically followed by a crash of energy. This, Myers says, can trigger a negative cycle of eating sugary foods to recover from the crash. Translation: The more sugar you eat, the more sugar you want. “You're increasing the likelihood of excess calorie consumption, and the development of obesity and its host of potential comorbidities,” he says. On the other hand, if you snack on an apple, you avoid this crash because the fructose in fruit is accompanied by fiber. And when fiber is digested, the gut sends a signal to your brain to stop eating. <https://www.silversneakers.com/blog/added-sugar-hidden-dangers-seniors-should-know/>