

The Scoop



November 2020



Oconee County Senior Center

3500B Hog Mountain

Watkinsville, GA 30677

(706) 769-3979

Open Monday through Friday

8 am to 4 pm

Find us at www.oconeecounty.com!

Look for us on Facebook!



Welcome to the Scoop newsletter.

Our goal is to provide Oconee County Seniors with the most up to date information to help with their daily lives.

Oconee County Senior Center

Mission: To positively impact our community by creating opportunities for healthy aging through social engagement, physical activity and well-being, civic involvement, creativity, and lifelong learning.

Oconee County Senior Center Goal:

To give all our members a sense of belonging, providing them with programs that contribute to their well-being, and helping to keep them healthy, happy and informed.



Oconee County Senior Center

Fellowship ~ Nutrition ~ Exercise ~ Fun



Fall Photos

Friday, November 13th, 2020

With photographer Wendy Jackson

Beginning at 10 am. Please call

706-769-3979 for a time slot.



Photos will be taken on the patio at the Oconee County Senior Center with a Fall theme backdrop. Pets are optional.

GIVING THANKS CAN MAKE YOU HAPPIER

November kicks off the holiday season with high expectations for a cozy and festive time of year. However, for many this time of year is tinged with sadness, anxiety, or depression. Certainly, major depression or a severe anxiety disorder benefits most from professional help. But what about those who just feel lost or overwhelmed or down at this time of year? Research (and common sense) suggests that one aspect of the Thanksgiving season can actually lift the spirits, and it's built right into the holiday — expressing gratitude.

The word gratitude is derived from the Latin word *gratia*, which means grace, graciousness, or gratefulness (depending on the context). In some ways gratitude encompasses all of these meanings. Gratitude is a thankful appreciation for what an individual receives, whether tangible or intangible. With gratitude, people acknowledge the goodness in their lives. In the process, people usually recognize that the source of that goodness lies at least partially outside themselves. As a result, gratitude also helps people connect to something larger than themselves as individuals — whether to other people, nature, or a higher power.

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.

People feel and express gratitude in multiple ways. They can apply it to the past (retrieving positive memories and being thankful for elements of childhood or past blessings), the present (not taking good fortune for granted as it comes), and the future (maintaining a hopeful and optimistic attitude). Regardless of the inherent or current level of someone's gratitude, it's a quality that individuals can successfully cultivate further.

Research on gratitude

Two psychologists, Dr. Robert A. Emmons of the University of California, Davis, and Dr. Michael E. McCullough of the University of Miami, have done much of the research on gratitude. In one study, they asked all participants to write a few sentences each week, focusing on particular topics.

One group wrote about things they were grateful for that had occurred during the week. A second group wrote about daily irritations or things that had displeased them, and the third wrote about events that had affected them (with no emphasis on them being positive or negative). After 10 weeks, those who wrote about gratitude were more optimistic and felt better

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From the Good Housekeeping Test Kitchen: 8 Turkey Cooking Tips You Need to Know

The GH Test Kitchen has cooked up more than 1,000 turkeys over the years, so we're experts in prepping, brining, stuffing, roasting, and carving.

The turkey, takes some planning. Don't panic. Check out our tried-and-tested turkey cooking tips. You'll be a Thanksgiving pro in no time.

Choose the right size turkey

If you're buying a whole turkey, figure 1 pound (uncooked) per person. For a turkey breast, count on just 1/2 pound per person.

Plan for the long thaw

If you buy a frozen turkey, allow 24 hours for each 4 pounds of weight. So if you do opt for a 20-pound turkey, it needs to start its fridge thaw (never thaw at room temperature) on Saturday morning to be ready to roast on Thursday.

Season, season, season!

Turkey is pretty bland and needs some seasoning to help. Stuff herbs such as sage or thyme into the cavity of the bird (about 12 sprigs total), along with a quartered onion. You can also add a halved lemon or small orange. As the turkey roasts, the seasonings in the cavity will flavor the rest of the bird.

Use a roasting rack

The rack helps keep the bottom of your turkey from steaming and sticking to the bottom of the pan. No rack? No worries! Just cut onions into 3/4-inch thick slices, arrange in two parallel rows, and place the bird on top.

Forget about basting

While it *is* true that basting can help to keep the turkey evenly brown, it has little to do with keeping the bird moist and juicy. In fact, opening the door for frequent basting lowers the oven temperature, which Cont'd . . .

about their lives. Surprisingly, they also exercised more and had fewer visits to physicians than those who focused on sources of aggravation. Another leading researcher in this field, Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, tested the impact of various positive psychology interventions on 411 people, each compared with a control assignment of writing about early memories. When their week's assignment was to write and personally deliver a letter of gratitude to someone who had never been properly thanked for his or her kindness, participants immediately exhibited a huge increase in happiness scores. This impact was greater than that from any other intervention, with benefits lasting for a month.

Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hopes it will make them happier, or thinking they can't feel satisfied until every physical and material need is met. Gratitude helps people refocus on what they have instead of what they lack. And, although it may feel contrived at first, this mental state grows stronger with use and practice.

Here are some ways to cultivate gratitude on a regular basis.

Write a thank-you note. You can make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person by writing a thank-you letter expressing your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life. Send it, or better yet, deliver and read it in person if possible. Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month. Once in a while, write one to yourself.

Thank someone mentally. No time to write? It may help just to think about someone who has done something nice for you, and mentally thank the individual.

Keep a gratitude journal. Make it a habit to write down or share with a loved one thoughts about the gifts you've received each day.

Count your blessings. Pick a time every week to sit down and write about your blessings — reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for. Sometimes it helps to pick a number — such as three to five things — that you will identify each week. As you write, be specific and think about the sensations you felt when something good happened to you.

Pray. People who are religious can use prayer to cultivate gratitude.

Meditate. Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on the present moment without judgment. Although people often focus on a word or phrase (such as "peace"), it is also possible to focus on what you're grateful for (the warmth of the sun, a pleasant sound, etc.).

"Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough." ~ Oprah Winfrey

"Be present in all things, and thankful for all things." ~ Maya Angelou



may prolong the overall cooking time of your bird. Instead, we rub the bird with olive oil and butter before roasting, which helps produce that crisp, golden brown skin.

Take its temperature

Roasting a turkey is not something most of us do regularly and tricks like jiggling the leg, are just not exact enough. You can know that your turkey is done cooking when you insert a meat thermometer into the thickest part of its thigh (without touching the bone) and the temperature reads 165°F. Its juices should also run clear when this part of its thigh is pierced with the tip of a knife.

Let it rest

Letting the bird, or any piece of meat, rest allows the juices to redistribute. If you carve too soon, the liquid will be mostly on the cutting board and your meat will be dry. So, don't make the mistake of rushing the resting period. Cover loosely with foil and let the turkey rest at least 30 minutes before carving.

Do not carve the turkey at the table

It's better to carve your turkey in the kitchen. For our foolproof carving method, follow these steps: First, remove the legs. Next, remove the breast and the wing. Cut along one side of the breast bone and using the non-knife hand, gently pull the breast meat away from the bone. Next, separate the drumsticks from the thighs. Transfer the drumsticks to a platter. Remove the thigh bones, then slice the thigh meat and transfer to the platter. Remove the wings from the breasts and transfer to the platter. Now, all that's left is the breast. Slice the turkey breast crosswise and arrange on the platter. Garnish with herbs and fresh fruit (oranges, clementines, or grapes) for an equally pretty presentation. (goodhousekeeping.com)

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DIABETIC DIET TIPS FOR SENIORS (IT'S DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH)

Simply put, the goal of a diabetic diet is to control blood sugar levels. Preventing spikes in glucose levels will help manage the level of insulin your body produces. The diet is also intended to promote weight loss, as this is a large component of diabetic health, especially for seniors with limited mobility.

The Simple Rules

A diabetic diet can be broken up into a few simple rules: Namely, these are portion control, having regularly set mealtimes, limiting sugar, and eating fibrous, varied foods.

Portion control is mostly in regards to carbohydrates. This is the macronutrient that affects blood glucose levels, but that doesn't mean diabetics need to avoid all carbs. The *type* of carbohydrate is what's important; rather than eating processed, refined carbs from foods like sweets and desserts, choose fruits, legumes, and vegetables instead. These are known as *complex carbs*, which are digested much slower and thus don't cause a spike in blood sugar. This is one of the most important points for managing diabetes in the elderly.

Having regularly set mealtimes and not skipping meals will help regulate glucose levels. The time at which you eat is just as important as the food that you eat. To avoid sugar level fluctuations, eat at consistent times each day. If you, or an elderly loved one affected by diabetes, take mealtime insulin, eating every 4-5 hours is recommended in order to prevent hypoglycemia.

Limiting sugar intake is another essential. Sweets and desserts, soft drinks, honey, and other foods with a high **glycemic index** should be avoided entirely, or only eaten as an occasional treat in tiny amounts. For proper control over diabetes in the elderly, sugar cravings should be assuaged with fresh or frozen fruit. Cut out fruit juices from your diet, as these are high in sugar. Low-fat foods, such as yogurt and other dairy products, should also be avoided, as they often have added sugar to compensate for the reduced fat content.

Fiber is an important element of an enjoyable diabetic diet. Dietary fiber has many health benefits for the body, including a slowed digestion of sugars and improvement of blood glucose levels. Seniors with diabetes should consume more high-fiber foods, such as fruits, vegetables and nuts.

A diet high in whole foods and low in processed foods is best. Highly processed foods often contain extra sodium, sugar, and unhealthy saturated fats.

Preparing your own meals is a good way to avoid unnecessary salt and sugar.

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"Reflect upon your present blessings,
of which every man has plenty; not
on your past misfortunes, of which all
men have some." ~ Charles
Dickens

Health Benefits of Pet Ownership

October is Adopt a Shelter Pet Month. Anthrozoology, the study of the interaction between humans and other animals, has been growing over the last 35 years. Controlled research in this discipline has proved that owning a pet can:

- Buffer stress
- Lower heart rate
- Lower blood pressure
- Give social support
- Help you stay in shape
- Prevent certain sicknesses

Pets provide their owner with comfort, love and humor, all of which have health benefits. In addition, pets demand their owners stay active by requiring walks, attention, play time, baths, and overall care.

Humans have clearly adopted and loved their pets throughout time, but these are a few more reasons why adding a companion animal to your family could be a valuable decision. The advantages that pets bring to your life are just another reason to love them as much as you already do!

"When asked if my cup is half-full or half-empty my only response is that I am thankful I have a cup."

~ Sam Lefkowitz

Thanksgiving Treats!

On Wednesday,
November 18th, drive
by the Senior Center
to pick up a special
Thanksgiving treat
between 10 and
11 am.



Finally, **avoid excess salt**, as diabetics are more at-risk for heart disease than non-diabetics. Excessive sodium can lead to many complications, including high blood pressure, heart failure, and stroke.

How Can I Make a Diabetic Diet More Enjoyable?

Replace, don't remove! Some seniors may find it difficult to adapt to a low-glucose lifestyle, as oftentimes, they complain that the diabetic diet is unpleasant. However, by simply *replacing* sugary foods with healthier options rather than removing them altogether, the diet can be more enjoyable and easier to stick to. For older people with diabetes, here are some examples of easy replacements that can be made:

- Instead of soft drinks, have a glass of water or sparkling water with strawberries;
- Have brown rice as opposed to white rice;
- Similarly, replace white bread with whole-grain bread;
- Replace chips with homemade popcorn, which has little sugar, is low-calorie, and packed with fiber;
- Use an artificial sweetener instead of sugar in tea or coffee;
- For breakfast, choose plain yogurt with fruit instead of sugary cereal;
- When baking, use half the sugar the recipe calls for, or substitute it with mint, cinnamon, nutmeg, or vanilla extract. Some spices, such as cinnamon, are actually believed to help lower blood sugar levels.

There are plenty of changes that can be made to a diabetic diet, making it easier to follow for seniors who may otherwise find it unpleasant. Diabetes in the elderly is an increasingly common problem, so if you or a senior loved one is living with this disease, consider hiring a professional caregiver.

(completecare.ca)

Important Phone Numbers

- *Aging Resource Connection: 706-583-2546*
- *Georgia Cares (Medicare Info): 706-549-4850 or 1-866-552-4464*

☺ The day before Thanksgiving, a guy in Phoenix calls his son in New York and tells him, "Son, I'm really sorry but I have to tell you that your mother and I are splitting up. We can't live with each other anymore."

The son is distraught and shouts down the phone at his father, "Pop, what are you talking about?"

The father replies, "It's just that we can't stand the sight of each other anymore. And I'm sick of talking about this, so will you call your sister in Chicago and tell her?"

The father then hangs up, and the son frantically calls his sister, who's equally distraught and exclaims, "Like heck they're getting divorced! Leave it to me, I'll take care of this." So she calls her father and shouts down the phone at him, "You are NOT getting divorced! Don't you dare to do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't you dare do a thing about this. Do you hear me?"

She then hangs up, at which point the father hangs up his phone, turns to his wife and says, "Okay dear, they're both coming for Thanksgiving and paying their own way."