

# NUTRITION

Notes



March 2024

Published monthly for the clients of Meals on Wheels.

## March for Meals

Each March, Meals on Wheels celebrates the historic day in 1972 when a national nutrition program for seniors was added to the Older Americans Act. This legislation supported the rapid growth of the Meals on Wheels network that now collectively serves 2.8 million seniors each year.



Meals on Wheels operates in virtually every community in America through our network of more than 5,000 independently-run local programs. While the diversity of each program's services and operations may vary based on the needs and resources of their communities, they are all committed to supporting their senior neighbors to live healthier and more nourished lives in their own homes.

## Meals on Wheels America - March for Meals ([mealsonwheelsamerica.org](http://mealsonwheelsamerica.org))

Senior Services is excited to celebrate March for Meals again this year. The Wichita Meals on Wheels program runs 65 routes to almost 800 persons each day Monday thru Friday.



Each and everyday we are so appreciative of the volunteers who take their time and give of their hearts to get meals out to your homes.

During this month we will have other special volunteers to deliver meals, including Mayor Lily Wu. Mayor Wu is the first woman elected to a full term and the first Asian-American mayor of the largest city of Kansas.

## Free Home Fire Safety Information

Meals on Wheels is partnering with the **American Red Cross and the Wichita Fire Department on Wednesday, March 20th**, to bring free home fire safety information and inquire about working smoke alarms in your home during your meal delivery. Your safety is our priority, and our volunteers want to ensure each of you have access to this lifesaving device.

Fire experts agree that people may have as little as two minutes to escape a burning home before it's too late to get out. The Red Cross recommends two easy steps to help protect your home and to increase your chances of surviving a fire: get a smoke alarm and create a fire escape plan.

EVERY HOME NEEDS

**working  
smoke  
alarms.**

Sign up for a **free installation** from the American Red Cross.



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## ASK OUR DIETITIAN

By LuAnn Soliah, Ph.D., R.D.



Please call Meals on Wheels at (316) 267-0122 to submit your question.

### QUESTION:

#### Are soft drinks okay to drink?

Soft drinks are delicious, but are they okay to drink on a routine basis? They are enjoyable, bubbly, delicious, and sweet. Most people prefer the dark cola-types vs. the uncola type or the fruity types of soft drinks.

The term soft drink is used to distinguish it from liquor (hard drinks), thus soft drinks consist of water, carbonation, flavorings, coloring agents, and sugar/sweeteners. The drinks have many drawbacks, but one advantage is: hydration. Clearly, the drinks provide a liquid component, but... they frequently have caffeine and no nourishment.

Another major concern with soft drinks is the calorie component. Many individuals find out that they really enjoy drinking soft drinks on a daily basis, and they soon start drinking them in large quantities. Most Americans are prone to gain weight and this is surely an unwanted trait of soft drink consumption.

#### Set some guidelines for yourself regarding soft drink intake:

- Limit the amount that you drink
- Limit the frequency of intake (a sometimes treat)
- Resist the urge to super size to 20-32 oz containers
- Try to avoid substituting soft drinks for milk or 100% fruit juice

- Select diet soft drinks instead of regular soft drinks
- Consider soft drinks for pleasure/celebrations (not daily intake)
- Select caffeine-free options whenever possible

Just remember, no more than **10% of your total daily calorie level** should come from sugar. So, if a suggested daily calorie level was 2000 calories/day, then only 200 calories should come from sugar. Soft drinks can easily contain that amount. Plus, don't forget typical foods/beverages also contain sugar. Watch the frequency and the amount of your soft drink intake. However, you don't have to totally eliminate soft drinks from your diet. Moderation and balance are still key to a healthful dietary plan.

## Free Home Fire Safety Information - Continued

Home fires claim **seven lives** each day in the United States. That's why the American Red Cross launched the Home Fire Campaign with community partners in 2014 to help prevent fire tragedies. Working smoke alarms save lives and can cut the risk of dying in a home fire in half.



If you need a free smoke alarm, battery replacement, or if your smoke alarm is more than 10 years old, **call (316) 268-4441** to schedule an appointment with the Wichita Fire Department to inspect and install it.

**Don't forget we will be visiting with you about fire and tornado safety on March 20th and you can let us know if you want your smoke alarms checked.**

## Food-borne Illness: How serious is it?

By LuAnn Soliah, Ph.D., R.D.

Food-borne illness can be serious, unpleasant, and unexpected. It is very common; although the actual incidence numbers are unknown. Several cases go unreported or they may be misidentified. Nevertheless, all individuals do not want to come down with flu-like symptoms that they believe originate from something they ate!

Would you believe one of the best strategies to avoid food-borne illness is: frequent and proper hand washing techniques? Such a simple approach to avoid needless medical worry, expense, and loss of work productivity.

Some individuals are more vulnerable than others regarding food-borne illnesses. The “risky” category of individuals includes: young children, elderly individuals, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. Under normal conditions most bacteria is harmless, and some types of bacteria are helpful (fermentation processes and probiotics). Nevertheless, some bacteria can be very worrisome and disease-causing. To make matters even more complicated, each of us reacts differently to contaminated food. Healthy individuals can handle a bit more bacteria compared to compromised individuals. But you never want to take that chance!

In modern times, food comes to our dinner table from multiple locations from around the globe. Different food handling procedures may increase the risk. Additionally, minimally processed food can increase the risk of food contamination. To make matters worse, bacteria is hard to detect.

### Bacteria need the following conditions to thrive and multiply:

- 40-140 degrees F temperature range for optimal growth

- Time to multiply and increase in numbers
- Something to grow on (food, beverages, skin, etc.)
- Moisture enhances bacterial growth
- Most bacteria need oxygen, but there are a few exceptions
- A good substrate such as protein rich foods
- Lack of proper processing and handling

### So how do we protect ourselves?

Follow some simple rules - such as frequent and rigorous hand washing, keep cold foods cold, and hot foods hot. Be vigilant about safe food storage and safe food handling strategies. Be wary of food from an unknown origin or food that “maybe” wasn’t handled appropriately. You know the old expression - *Better Safe than Sorry*. That surely applies to food-borne illnesses.



## LIEAP: Low Income Energy Assistance Program

This program might help you with a one-time payment toward your heating bill this winter. LIEAP is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs. The benefit amount varies based on your household members, the type of dwelling you live in, and the type of heating fuel you use.

### Applications are still being accepted until March 29, 2024.

The Meals on Wheels program has some applications for the LIEAP program which we can mail to you. You can also apply online at [www.lieap.dcf.ks.gov/](http://www.lieap.dcf.ks.gov/). For more information about this program or to request an application, call (316) 267-0122.

**LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK! PLEASE MARK YOUR MENU AT THE END OF THE MONTH AND SEND IT BACK TO US:**

Cross through items you don't like.

Circle items you do like.

Put a star in front of items you want to see more often.

Suggested Donation  
\$10 Monthly

**March 2024 - NOON MEALS ARE NOT LATE UNTIL 1:00 P.M.**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
New menu items are underlined.				1 Baked Fish on Bun w/ Cheese on Whole Wheat Bun Diced Tomatoes Hush Puppies Fruit Cup
4 White Bean Chili w/ Chicken Green Beans Corn Bread Sliced Strawberry	5 Country Fried Chicken Steak Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy Mixed Vegetables Wheat Roll Banana Pudding	6 Loaded Baked Potato Soup Chicken Nuggets Wheat Crackers Marinated Vegetable Salad Fruit Cup	7 Breakfast Turkey Links Omelets Hash Browns Wheat French Toast Sticks Mandarin Oranges	8 Beer Battered Fish Macaroni & Cheese Peas & Carrots Wheat Rolls Fruit Compote
11 Tatar Tot Casserole w/ Ground Beef Green Beans Wheat Rolls Pears	12 Chicken Fajita w/ Fajita Blend Vegetables Corn & Black Beans Corn Tortilla Chilled Apricots	13 Sliced Roast Beef New Potatoes Tuscan Vegetable Blend Wheat Rolls Fruit Cocktail	14 Pork Chop Mixed Vegetables Rice Pilaf Cornbread Pineapple	15 Crab Cakes Over Rice w/ Cheese Sauce Squash Zucchini and Tomatoes Wheat Roll Cherry Pie Filling
18 Sloppy Joe on Wheat Bun Corn on Cob Potato Wedge Fruit Cup	19 Hamburger w/ Cheese, Onion and Tomato on Wheat Bun Mixed Vegetables Potato Wedges Peaches	20 Turkey w/ Gravy Cornbread Stuffing Green Beans w/ Carrots Garlic Roll Fruit Crisp	21 BBQ Pulled Pork on Wheat Bun Corn Potato Salad Baked Beans Brownie	22 Tuna Noodle Casserole Buttered Peas Wheat Roll Fruit Gelatin Cup
25 Chicken Stir Fry Fried Rice Carrots Egg Rolls Fruit Muffins	26 Kielbasa-Polish Sausage w/ Sauerkraut Sliced Fried Potatoes Mixed Vegetables Fudge Brownie	27 Beef Tacos on Soft Taco Shells Refried Beans Corn & Peppers Nutty Buddy Bar	28 Salisbury Steak and Onions Squash Scallop Potatoes Wheat Rolls Mandarin Oranges	29 Baked Catfish Coleslaw Succotash Wheat Roll Tartar Sauce Fruit Cocktail

**IF YOU DO NOT EAT YOUR MEAL WHEN IT ARRIVES - REFRIGERATE IMMEDIATELY!**

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