Community Meals Notes

Senior Services of Wichita

February 2026

Published monthly for the clients of Community Meals.

HOLIDAY CLOSURE

Community Meals will be closed and not delivering meals on:

President's Day - Monday, February 16th

A nonperishable meal will be sent prior to the holiday; these need to be saved and used on the day you will not be receiving a meal delivery.

Menu Requirements

Have you ever wondered how the menu is determined? Meals on Wheels must comply with federal nutrition policy, Dietary Guidelines for Americans published by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Agriculture. And then menus must be certified by our contracted dietician before we can proceed. We currently follow the "Meal Pattern Planning" requirements.

- Proteins: A variety of protein types must be served, in the following percentages; 70% from beef, chicken, pork sources. 20% seafood and the last 10% in nuts, seeds and soy products. You will see that each week generally contains one pork, one fish/seafood, one beef, and two chicken or one chicken and one turkey component.
- Grains: 100% whole grains must compose 50% of bread products available.
- Fruits: A variety of fruits are to be provided from fresh, frozen, canned or dried forms. This also includes 100% fruit juice.
- Vegetables: Includes all cooked, raw fresh, frozen, canned and 100% vegetable juice. 10% of vegetables are to be dark-green – broccoli, collards, mustard greens, spinach, etc. 30% red and orange – carrots, bell peppers, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, winter squash, etc. 30% starchy vegetables – corn, lima beans, white potatoes, yams, water chestnuts, etc. 20% from other vegetables - brussels sprouts, cabbage, cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, onions, snow peas, etc.
- Dairy: fluid, dry or evaporated milk. Fortified soy beverages, buttermilk, yogurt, cheeses and dairy desserts.

Meals on Wheels aims to offer a variety of dishes, and always welcomes feedback on the meals provided. Serving 900 clients a day we do try to balance elements of the meals to reach preferences. All concerns, compliments, and suggestions are shared with our kitchen staff. Receiving this information helps us to make improvements to our services. Currently we are not able to accommodate special diets, and offer the same menu to all clients. If you ever have any questions the staff would be happy to assist you – give the program a call at (316) 267-0122.

Produce Spotlight: Navel Oranges

By Isabelle Meyer, M.S., R.D

Nutrition Notes

Navel oranges can bring some sweetness to cold winter days. They make for a great snack as they are naturally seedless and easy to peel. Along with their flavor and convenience, they provide a wide range of nutritional benefits.

One medium orange provides most of your daily vitamin C, which supports immune health, iron absorption, and skin health. Navel oranges offer about 3 grams of fiber, helping with digestion, heart health, and steady blood sugar. Their water content makes them naturally hydrating, and their potassium supports healthy blood pressure and muscle function.

Recipe: Yogurt Parfait

Ingredients:

- 1 orange, peeled and segmented
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tsp honey
- Pinch of cinnamon
- Chopped nuts/granola

Directions:

Mix the honey and Greek yogurt together. Top with the segmented orange, cinnamon, and chopped nuts or granola.

This yogurt parfait makes a simple snack or breakfast with protein and fiber to keep you full, plus vitamin C to support your immune system during cold and flu season.

7 Foods That Fight the Flu

(AARP The Magazine – Dec. 2025/Jan. 2025)

What to eat and drink to build a stronger defense this winter. As many as 1.3 million people were hospitalized with influenza during the 2024-25 flu season. This year, be prepared by eating right.

1. **Sweet Potatoes** – are a great source of beta-carotene, a phytonutrient that supports respiratory and intestinal health, and increases immune cells in the body. This is important to older adults, since our bodies make fewer immune cells as we age.

2. **Berries** – They're rich in vitamin C, which stimulates production of infection-fighting white blood cells.

3. **Beans** – Beans are high in zinc, which helps boost your body's production of white blood cells. Zinc deficiency has been linked to immune system dysfunction.

4. **Nuts and Seeds** – They're rich in vitamin E, which plays a key role in your immune system by supporting the growth of germ-fighting T cells. Walnuts are an especially good choice, as they have more immune-supporting alpha-linolenic acid than any other nut.

5. **Keifer** – compounds in fermented dairy products such as kefir (which is like a thin, drinkable yogurt), have anti-inflammatory properties that can help the immune system fight viral infections. Fermented dairy is full of probiotics which seem to have a positive effect on the immune system.

6. **Salmon** – It's one of the few foods that provides vitamin D, which plays a huge role in regulating your immune system.

7. **Garlic** – It's rich in a compound called alliin, which may be the source of its immune-boosting power. A 2020 review found that garlic seems to stimulate cells related to immune system function.

If Your Goals Aren't Working, Try This

By Isabelle Meyer, M.S., R.D

We're a month into the new year. How are your nutrition goals going? By February, about 13% of people have already given up on their New Year's resolutions. Setting goals can be helpful for improving health, but only if those goals are sustainable. Often, the issue isn't the goal itself, but the motivation behind it.

There are two main types of motivation: intrinsic (coming from within) and extrinsic (driven by external pressure). Intrinsic motivation is rooted in personal values, beliefs, or enjoyment of the behavior. Extrinsic motivation is based on rewards, expectations, or avoiding negative outcomes. Goals driven by intrinsic motivation are more likely to last over time.

The good news is that it's never too late to re-evaluate the motivation behind a goal. If a resolution was made out of pressure or obligation, it can be difficult to maintain. Shifting the focus to small, meaningful changes that support overall well-being often feels more realistic and sustainable.

Consider This Example:

"I'm going to stop eating sweets because they are bad for me."

This goal is framed in a negative, restrictive way. A more supportive approach is to focus on what can be added rather than what can be avoided. For example:

"I'm going to add more fruits and vegetables to my meals because they provide nutrients my body needs and help me feel better."

This version connects the goal to feeling good and supporting health, making it more motivating and easier to sustain long term.

Resource For The Statistic:

https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/01/29/new-years-resolutions-who-makes-them-and-why/

February is American Heart Month

(https://www.cdc.gov/heart-disease/php/heart-month/index.html)

This month is a time when all people – especially women – are encouraged to focus on their cardiovascular health.

Heart disease quick facts…

- Heart disease is very common. In the Unites States, heart disease is the leading cause of death for men, women, and people of most racial and ethnic groups. In 2022, 1 in every 5 deaths in the United States was caused by heart disease.
- High blood pressure is a leading cause of heart disease. Nearly half of U.S. adults have high blood pressure, which puts them at risk for heart disease and stroke. And just 1 in 4 people with high blood pressure has it under control.
- Heart disease is costly. The cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity from heart disease amounted to $417.9 billion between 2020 and 2021.
- In the United States, someone has a heart attack every 40 seconds.
- About 1 in 5 heart attacks are silent – the damage is done, but the person is not aware of it.

Americans at risk for heart disease…

High blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and smoking are key risk factors for heart disease. Several other medical conditions and lifestyle choices can also put people at a higher risk for heart disease, including:

- Diabetes
- Overweight and obesity
- Unhealthy diet
- Physical inactivity
- Excessive alcohol use

By knowing the risk factors, living a health lifestyle, and communicating with your medical professionals, you may be able to reduce your risk of heart disease.

FEBRUARY 2026 MENU

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Turkey Cacciatore Elbow Pasta Baby Carrots Whole Wheat Roll Peaches & Yogurt Parfait	3 Parmesan Crusted Tilapia Potato Wedges Yellow Squash Biscuit Cinnamon Applesauce	4 Lasagna (w/ meat) Green Beans Almondine Garlic Bread Pineapple Chunks	5 Apricot Glazed Pork Loin Rice Pilaf Steamed Broccoli w/ Lemon Whole Grain Roll Diced Peaches	6 Chicken Carnitas Fajita Blend Vegetables Corn Tortilla Apple Cobbler
9 Salisbury Steak over Mashed Potatoes Tossed Salad w/ Dressing Whole Wheat Roll Blushing Pears	10 Smoked Pork Riblet Macaroni & Cheese Corn on the Cob Garlic Knot Fluffy Fruit Cup	11 Honey Mustard Chicken Wild Brown Rice Collard Greens Wheat Roll Hawaiian Fruit Cup	12 Turkey and Brown Gravy Cornbread Dressing Buttered Carrots Apple/ Strawberry Bar	13 Breaded Fish Sandwich on Whole Wheat Bun Red Beans & Brown Rice Peas Apricots
16 **Closed For President's Day** Use the Shelf Stable Meal Provided	17 Hawaiian Beef Meatballs Roasted Sweet Potatoes Roasted Cauliflower Garlic Bread Mixed Fruit	18 Chicken Chili w/ Avocado Corn Wheat Roll Tortilla Chips Strawberry Parfait	19 Lemon Garlic Cod Mediterranean Brown Rice Caribbean Vegetables Mini Croissant Fruit Cup	20 Chicken Cordon Bleu Scalloped Potatoes Roasted Broccoli Wheat Roll Fruit Fling
23 Breaded Shrimp Pasta Cavatappi Alfredo Roasted Asparagus Whole Wheat Roll Tropical Fruit	24 Chicken Aloha Potato Wedges Caribbean Vegetable Blend Whole Grain Roll Crushed Pineapple	25 Beef Country Fried Steak Mashed Potatoes Country Gravy Whole Grain Roll Mandarin Oranges	26 Chicken Salad Croissant Cucumber Sour Cream Salad Spiced Apricots	27 Wheat Spaghetti and Meat Sauce Carrot & Raisin Salad Garlic Knot Blackberry Cobbler
				Milk is Served with Every Meal

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