NUTRITION Notes

Senior Services OF WICHITA

April 2026

Published monthly for the clients of Meals on Wheels.

How to Prepare for Severe Weather

(Home Care Advocacy Network - hcan.com/aging-in-place/severe-weather-safety-for-seniors-essential-tips-to-stay-safe/)

Must have Emergency Supplies

One of the most effective ways to ensure safety is to build a dedicated emergency kit. This kit should be easy to access and clearly labeled. Consider stocking the following items:

- **Communication:** A fully charged cell phone, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, and a list of emergency contacts.
- **Lighting:** Working flashlights with plenty of extra batteries. Avoid candles, which pose a fire risk.
- **Nutrition:** A three-day supply of non-perishable food (like protein bars and canned goods with pop-tops) and several gallons of water.
- **Health:** A comprehensive first aid kit. If your loved one takes daily prescriptions, ensure they always have at least a three-day supply on hand.
- **Comfort:** Blankets, a change of clothes, and personal hygiene items.

Pro-Tip: If you or a loved one relies on medical devices that require electricity (like oxygen or CPAP machine), contact your local power company. Many have priority lists for customers with medical needs during outages.

Create an Evacuation Checklist

Sometimes, the safest choice is to leave. Evacuation can be incredibly stressful, so having a "Go Bag" checklist ready is crucial. Put together an emergency checklist of everything you might need if you must evacuate. This should include:

- **Medical items:** Medications, eyeglasses, hearing aides (and batteries), and denture supplies.
- **Documents:** Copies of insurance cards, photo identification, and a list of doctors.
- **Essentials:** Cash (ATMs may not work), special dietary foods, and change of clothes.

Set Up Weather Alerts and Communication

- Take time to set up weather alerts on your cell phone or install a weather app that pushes notifications for watches and warnings. If you do not have a cell phone, consider a NOAA weather radio, which can be programmed to alert you loudly for your specific county.
- Keep a list of phone numbers for yourself, a neighbor, and post it on your refrigerator.
    - The number of a child or family member that can be contacted in an emergency.
    - The number of a neighbor who can quickly check on you.
    - At least one out of state contact if you have one available. Local lines may be jammed, but long-distance calls generally will go through.

Severe weather is a fact of life, but fear doesn't have to be. Take proactive steps so you can prepare yourself for the storm season in confidence.

Produce Spotlight: Asparagus

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

Nutrition Notes

Asparagus is a spring vegetable that is both nutritious and versatile. It can be roasted, grilled, steamed, or added to salads and pasta dishes. Along with its mild flavor, asparagus provides several important nutrients that support overall health.

Asparagus a good source of vitamin K, which plays a role in blood clotting and bone health. It also provides vitamin C, an antioxidant that helps support the immune system. Asparagus contains potassium, a mineral that helps regulate fluid balance and supports normal muscle and nerve function. Another benefit of asparagus is its fiber content. Fiber supports digestive health and helps you feel full after meals.

Recipe: Roasted Parmesan Asparagus

Ingredients:

- 1 bundle asparagus
- 1 T oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- 2 T grated parmesan
- 1 T lemon juice

Directions:

Wash and dry the asparagus. Cut off the hard ends (about 1 inch off the bottom). Toss asparagus in oil, salt, and pepper. Place on a baking sheet. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese. Bake at 425°F for 10 minutes. Squeeze on lemon juice before serving.

Listen to your heart, *Keep high blood pressure in check*

(Linda R. Bernstein for Costco Connections – February 2026)

High blood pressure is common and can put your health at risk. The Department of Health and Human Services states that almost half of U.S. adults have the condition, also known as hypertension. It can affect all ages. Only about a quarter of adults with hypertension have their blood pressure under control.

A normal systolic blood pressure reading (the top number that measures the pressure against your artery walls when your heart contracts) is less than 120 millimeters of mercury (mmHg), and a diastolic blood pressure reading (the lower number which measures the pressure against your artery walls between beats) is less than 80 mmHg, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A high blood pressure reading is consistently at or greater than 130/80 mmHg.

Health care providers diagnose high blood pressure after several readings on separate occasions. There are usually no signs or symptoms of high blood pressure, so it is often called the “silent killer”. It can increase risk of a heart attack, stroke, heart failure, kidney disease or failure, vision loss, sexual dysfunction, heart disease and angina, and plaque buildup, according to the American Heart Association.

Call 911 of chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness, weakness, change in vision or difficulty speaking occur as they may indicate a serious blood pressure medical emergency.

Lifestyle changes are usually a first step to reducing high blood pressure. Here are a few examples:

- Start regular physical activity.
- Quit smoking.
- Eat more fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, skinless poultry and fish, nuts and legumes.
- Limit saturated and trans fats, alcohol, salt, fatty and processed meats, and high sugar items.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Adress any other health conditions.

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Listen to your heart *Continued*

There are many things you can do to proactively manage your high blood pressure. It is important for your health to stick with a plan you develop with your health care provider.

In addition to lifestyle changes, medications may be required to control high blood pressure. Your health care provider will discuss their benefits and risks. Don't be afraid to ask your provider and pharmacist questions about potential side effects and what medicines, activities, foods, and beverages to avoid. Take medicines as directed to keep your blood pressure in check.

The Truth About Fat in Your Diet

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

Fat often gets a bad reputation, but it is an important part of a healthy diet. Your body needs fat to function properly.

Dietary fat provides energy and supports many important processes in the body. It helps your body absorb fat-soluble vitamins—vitamins A, D, E, and K. This means that the dressing you put on your salad helps your body get the most nutrition from the leafy greens. These vitamins support vision, healthy skin, the immune system, and bone health.

Your body also needs fat to produce certain hormones, such as testosterone and estrogen. Fat helps protect organs and keeps the body warm. Additionally, it contributes flavor to foods and helps meals feel more satisfying.

There are two main types of dietary fat.

Saturated fats are commonly found in animal products such as butter, cream, lard, and fatty cuts of meat. They are also found in tropical oils like coconut oil and palm oil. Eating high amounts of saturated fat over time may increase the risk of heart disease.

Unsaturated fats are found in foods like nuts, seeds, most plant oils, avocados, and many types of fish. These fats can support heart health when they replace saturated fats in the diet. Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, and sardines contain omega-3 fatty acids, a specific type of unsaturated fat that supports heart and brain health.

Here are some tips for including fat as part of a balanced diet:

- Cook with liquid oils (such as canola, olive, or avocado oil) more often than butter, lard, or tropical oils.
- Choose cooking methods that use less fat, such as baking, grilling, or sautéing instead of deep-frying.
- Select leaner cuts of meat, such as 90/10 ground beef instead of 80/20, chicken breasts instead of chicken thighs, and turkey bacon instead of pork bacon.
- Try to eat fatty fish (such as salmon, tuna, or sardines) one to two times per week.
- Limit intake of high-fat dairy products such as heavy cream, sour cream, and cream cheese.

Fat is an important part of a balanced diet. Choosing healthier sources of fat most often can help support long-term health. These are general recommendations, so speak with a healthcare provider about your individual nutrition needs.

Delivery Reminders

<u>Meals Delivery Time:</u> Meals are delivered between **10:00am and 1:00pm**, your meal is not considered late until 1:00pm. Delivery times can vary depending on when the meal was picked up by the volunteer, and how many others are on your route.

Any concerns, compliments, and suggestions can be reported to the Social Services staff in the Meals on Wheels office at **(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

April 2026 - NOON MEALS ARE NOT LATE UNTIL 1:00 P.M.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 Lasagna w/ Meat Green Beans Almondine Garlic Knot Mixed Fruit	2 Pork Carnitas Spanish Rice Fajita Blend Vegetables Spiced Peaches	3 Chicken Drumstick Scalloped Potatoes Broccoli Whole Grain Roll Mandarin Oranges
6 Chicken Tenders Macaroni & Cheese Green Beans Whole Grain Roll Apple/ Strawberry Bar	7 Hamburger on Whole Wheat Bun BBQ Baked Beans Corn on the Cob Fruit Cup	8 ***(Cold Meal)*** Tuna Salad on Wheat Pita Garden Pasta Salad Tangy Coleslaw Mandarin Oranges	9 Italian Chicken Breast Wild Brown Rice Mixed Vegetables Whole Wheat Roll Tropical Fruit Cup	10 Ham & Beans Mixed Vegetables Corn Bread Apricots
13 Apple Smothered Pork Chop Black Eyed Peas w/ Pearl Onions Salad Cup Blackberry Cobbler	14 Sweet & Sour Chicken Fried Rice Broccoli w/ Red Peppers Fortune Cookie Tropical Fruit	15 ***(Cold Meal)*** Turkey Sandwich on Whole Grain Bread Three Bean Salad Pineapple Chunks	16 Breaded Fish Sandwich on a Whole Wheat Bun Red Beans & Rice Buttered Carrots Pears	17 Beef Country Fried Steak Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy Green Beans Whole Grain Roll Tropical Fruit
20 Beef Hot Dog on a Whole Wheat Bun Tater Tots Mixed Vegetables Peaches	21 ***(Cold Meal)*** Ham Salad Sandwich on Whole Wheat Bread Cold Pea Salad Pasta Salad Diced Mango	22 Cilantro Lime Chicken on Pasta Vegetable Medley Blushing Pears	23 Biscuits & Turkey Sausage Gravy Scrambled Eggs Hashbrowns Assorted Yogurt	24 Battered Cod Rice Pilaf Green Peas Cornbread Strawberry Applesauce
27 ***(Cold Meal)*** Chicken Salad on Croissant Cucumber Sour Cream Salad Spiced Apricots	28 Fish Sticks Potato Wedges Buttered Carrots Whole Grain Roll Peaches	29 Smoked Pork Riblet Scalloped Potatoes Buttered Corn Whole Grain Roll Diced Pears	30 BBQ Beef Meatballs Sweet Potatoes Roasted Cauliflower Garlic Knot Tropical Fruit Cup	Milk is Served with Every Meal

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

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