

Senior Series

*The Ohio
Department of
Aging*



Senior Series - Ohio State University Extension and Ohio Aging Networks
Working Together to Address Older Adult Issues

Senior Hotline

*... a newsletter for older adults or
those who care for an older adult*

Volume 7, Issue 4

SIZZLING SUMMER FRUITS AND VEGGIES

With summer here, it's time to light the grill and add a new spark! Fresh fruits and vegetables are flavorful, nutritious, and are great as a side dish, main course, or elegant dessert. Here are a few ideas that may kindle your interest:

Fruits

Ripe, firm fruits work best for barbecues. Large pieces can be placed directly on the grill. Smaller pieces should be placed on skewers. Fruits should be basted very lightly with melted butter, margarine or a non-stick vegetable spray. Sprinkle with brown sugar, cinnamon or ginger if desired. Grill until hot and slightly golden-brown, between 4 and 10 minutes. Good choices include apples, figs, firm melons (such as cantaloupe), nectarines, papayas, peaches, or pears. Bananas, oranges, tangerines and pineapple can be grilled in their skins.

Vegetables

Select firm, ripe vegetables. Use them whole, cut in large pieces, or place smaller pieces on skewers. Baste them very lightly with melted butter, margarine or a non-stick vegetable spray to prevent sticking. Baste and season with flavorings such as low-sodium soy sauce, flavored vinegars or herbs, such as dill, thyme or rosemary. Grill until hot, tender and slightly golden-brown. Try bell peppers, fresh chiles, eggplant, mushrooms, onions, or summer squash. Pre-cook denser items like artichokes, carrots, or potatoes.

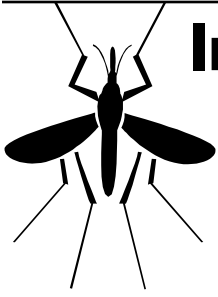
Healthy Grilling

Frequent grilling has been linked to an increased risk for some cancers. You can reduce your risk by:

- * wrapping foods in foil or using a drip pan
- * pre-cooking foods that require longer cooking time
- * using low fat or nonfat marinades
- * not charring or overcooking foods

Submitted by: Jennifer Even, OSU Extension, Hamilton County

The Ohio State University,
The United States Department
of Agriculture and
County Commissioners Cooperating.



Inform Yourself About West Nile Virus!!

The West Nile Virus (WNV) is a viral disease that is spread to people by the bite of an infected mosquito that has previously fed on an infected bird. The principal transmitter of WNV is the Northern House Mosquito. Previously seen only in Africa, Asia and Southern Europe, an unexpected outbreak of WNV occurred in New York City in 1999. At least 62 people became seriously ill and seven of those died. In 2000, 21 human cases of WNV encephalitis were reported in the US, with two deaths. Since then, WNV has rapidly spread throughout New York and into several other northeastern states. Because this virus can cause encephalitis, an infection of the brain and spinal cord, state, federal, and local agencies are working together to address the potential health risks of WNV to Ohio families and their animals. A few of the commonly asked questions about WNV are below. For further information, please contact your local Health Department or visit The Ohio State University Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine website: <http://prevmed.vet.ohio-state.edu/>

•Where do mosquitoes live and breed?

The mosquito that carries WNV lays its eggs in stagnant water and water-holding containers. Weeds, tall grass and shrubbery often harbor adult mosquitoes.

•Is it possible to get infected from an infected person or animal?

No. The virus is not spread from person to person contact, and there is no evidence that people can get the disease by handling infected animals.

•Are some people more easily infected?

While everyone exposed to a mosquito that carries the WNV is susceptible, people at the greatest risk are those older than 50. Those who have a compromised immune system may also be at a greater risk.

•What happens if someone is bitten by a mosquito carrying the West Nile Virus?

Most people who are bitten by an infected mosquito will show no signs or symptoms. However, some will experience a slight fever, headache, body aches and sometimes a skin rash or swollen glands. Symptoms usually occur between 5 and 15 days from being bitten. A small number of people will suffer from a severe infection that is marked by a rapid onset of high fever, severe headache, neck stiffness, nausea or vomiting, confusion, muscle weakness or paralysis, seizures, coma and rarely, death.

•How can I control mosquitoes around my home?

- * Dispose of any tin cans or plastic containers that hold stagnant water.
- * Dispose of discarded tires.
- * Empty bird baths and refill with fresh water once per week.
- * Turn over wheelbarrows when not using.
- * Check and clean clogged roof gutters at least twice every year.

•How can I protect myself from WNV?

The best way is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. Use personal protection while outdoors when mosquitoes are present.

- * Wear light-colored clothing, long-sleeved shirts or jackets and long pants.
- * Avoid mosquito infested areas or stay indoors when mosquitoes are active.
- * Use colognes or perfumes sparingly as these attract mosquitoes.
- * Use mosquito repellent BUT according to directions!

Source: Extension Fact Sheet "People and West Nile Virus: Frequently Asked Questions" at <http://prevmed.vet.ohio-state.edu/extension/WNVHome.html>

Submitted by: Christine Price, OSU Extension State Specialist - Gerontology

Stop Home Improvement Fraud



Fraud can occur with any home improvement. But knowledge is power. Be a wise consumer. Be cautious of offers including free

merchandise or exaggerated promises. Make final payment only when work is satisfactorily completed.

Avoid spur-of-the moment decisions.

Check out the business with the Better Business Bureau. Be cautious of repair persons approaching you about repairs they “noticed you need.” Compare their written estimate with reliable businesses in your area. Ask to see state licenses and proof of liability insurance.

Contracts are important. Read every detail and fill in all blanks. If you don’t understand the contract, consult with an

attorney or someone you trust. The contract should include all costs, quality of materials, starting and ending dates.

Never allow yourself to be pressured into signing a contract. Protect yourself from home improvement fraud by being aware of your rights as a consumer. To request a brochure about Ohio’s Home Improvement Law call The Attorney General’s toll-free Consumer Protection Line 1-800-282-0515 or write to:

The Attorney General’s
Consumer Protection Section
30 E. Broad Street, 25th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-3428

Source: *Home Repair Fraud*, University of Illinois Extension. <http://www.ag.uiuc.edu/~disaster/replace/homerep.html>

Submitted by: Patricia Holmes, Ohio State University Extension.

AARP 55 ALIVE—Driver Safety Program

How are your driving skills? Every driver, regardless of their age, could use a refresher course once in awhile. The AARP’S 55 ALIVE program is the first and largest driving safety course specifically designed for motorists age 50 and over. This is an 8-hour course taught in two, four-hour sessions over a two day period. The cost of the course is \$10.00 and the topics covered in the course include:

- Vision and hearing changes
- Effects of medication on driving
- Reaction time changes as we age
- Left turns and other right-of-way situations
- New laws and how they affect you
- Hazardous driving situations

The 55 ALIVE driving program is open to AARP members and non-members. To locate an AARP 55 ALIVE Mature Driving program near you, call 1-888-227-7669 (1-888-AARP-NOW).

Source: AARP Webplace at <http://www.aarp.org/55alive/>

Submitted by: Christine Price, OSU Extension State Specialist - Gerontology



Legacies From the Kitchen

Definition of Legacy: 1. Money or property left to someone by a will; a bequest.
2. Anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor.*

Some people assume that to leave a legacy, one must have a lot of money. Further, they assume, a legacy always takes the form of a bequest of money or property to family, friends, a charitable organization, or a philanthropic foundation.

There are, however, other ways to leave a legacy that are of a more personal nature. These are legacies that all of us can leave, that don't require our having lots of money, acres of land, homes, or other expensive goods.

For lack of a better term, perhaps they could be called the "legacies of life and love." From the kitchen, for example:

- A time-worn apron
- A favorite utensil or pan
- A special recipe or collection of recipes
- A cookbook
- A cookie jar
- A special set of canisters
- Whatever comes to mind that is special (to you or someone else) from your kitchen

Submitted by: Judy Hardy, Ohio Department of Aging

*Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition.

Humorous Thought:

The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd rather not.

~ Mark Twain

The Reader's Corner



"Out to Pasture (but not over the hill)" by Effie Leland Wilder (1995) Peachtree Publishers, 199 pages. (Hardcover: \$11.96).

Effie Wilder, a resident of the a retirement community in North Carolina puts her observations of fellow residents to good use in her first novel.

Written in the form of letters and journal entries of Hattie McNair, who resides in the Fair Acres Retirement Home, this short novel is full of charming characters and touching stories. For example, the residents join forces to help an illiterate young handyman. This an enjoyable book that emphasizes to the reader how we can all impact those around us, no matter our age.

Sequels to this book *"Over What Hill: Notes From the Pasture"* (1996), *"Older But Wilder"* (1998) and *"One More Time: Just For the Fun of It"* (1999) are more of the same great reading!!

WHAT IS HEALTH LITERACY?

Health literacy refers to the ability to read, understand and communicate about health care information. When patients visit a doctor's office, they often leave feeling confused and unsure of what their doctor said. Many patients complain their doctor speaks too fast, gives them too much information at one time and uses complicated words.



If you find it hard to understand medical information or health care instructions, you are not alone. A lot of people feel the same frustration. Fortunately, there are a few things you can do to reduce your frustration:

- ✓ **ASK QUESTIONS!** Don't be ashamed! Ask any and all questions and keep asking them until you understand what is being said.
- ✓ **Take a list of questions with you.** Make sure your questions about your problem or your treatment are written down. Check your list before you leave to see that all of your questions have been answered.
- ✓ **Write down all the answers.** Before you leave, write down the answers to your questions or have your health care professional write the answers for you. (Be sure you can read their handwriting!)
- ✓ **Have a friend or family member go with you to visit the doctor.** Your companion can assist you in asking questions or writing down answers while you talk with the doctor. This person can also help you remember all that has been said.
- ✓ **Ask for a brochure or pamphlet to take with you.** If the answers to your questions seem too complicated to write down, ask your doctor to provide a chart, pamphlet or other publication you can take with you to help you better understand.
- ✓ **Find out whom to call if you have other questions.** Before you leave, be sure to get a name and number you can call with questions you might have after you get home.
- ✓ **Check your medication.** When you get your prescription medication, make sure it is what the doctor ordered for you. Also be sure you understand exactly how much to take and how often.

For more tips on how to better communicate with your doctor, see *Talking with Your Doctor: A Guide for Older People*, published by the National Institute on Aging. You can get a copy of this publication at www.nih.gov/nia/health/pubs/talking.

Source: *National Center on Women and Aging Newsletter*, Vol 5 (1) – Winter, 2001, Brandeis University: Waltham, MA. Submitted by: Christine Price, OSU Extension State Specialist – Gerontology.

Senior Series Fact Sheets on a variety of topics are available at no charge! To obtain copies, contact your local Extension office or your local Area Agency on Aging. Example topics include:

- Communicating with a Doctor
- Grandparents as Parents
- Consumer Fraud

Address editorial comments to:

Dr. Christine Price, Assistant Professor
Extension State Specialist—Gerontology
Dept. of Human Dev. & Family Science
139 Campbell Hall
1787 Neil Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210

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Ohio State University Extension
U.S. Department of Agriculture
2120 Fyffe Rd.
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Senior Series

Sincerely,

**Extension Agent,
Family and
Consumer Sciences**

*For More Information,
Contact the OSU Extension office
at:*



All educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, disability or Vietnam-era veteran status.

Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Ag. Adm. and Director, OSU Extension
TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868

Senior Hotline, July/Aug 2001

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Senior Hotline, May/June 2001

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U.S. Department of Agriculture
2120 Fyffe Rd.
Columbus, Ohio 43210

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