

Aging Healthfully Newsletter

March/April 2022



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eat right Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

March is **National Nutrition Month®**, which came about in 1973, originally as “National Nutrition Week” and soon became a month-long observance as of 1980.

The purpose is to motivate people to make healthful, informed food choices, and develop sound eating and exercise habits.

This year’s theme is ***Celebrate a World of Flavors***, which embraces cultural cuisines and inclusivity across the globe!

Through sharing and learning about the similarities and uniqueness of different cultures across the globe, we can start to see the common threads in what makes up a traditional meal (for each culture) and open our minds and our taste buds to new and exciting flavors!



This year's theme gives every culture the opportunity to shine and have a seat at the table.

The way we eat is about a whole lot more than just eating the foods we like to eat or that are readily available to us. Each culture's eating habits have been shaped over time from many different factors including but not limited to hardships, climate, religion, politics, colonization, traditions, advances in agriculture, geography and many other factors.

Our world is comprised of a variety of delightful and unique eating patterns that have built and supported communities, sustained life, and provided enjoyment as we sit down to share good conversation over a meal.

To ***Celebrate a World of Flavors***, we must first learn about which foods and beverages are commonly consumed by different cultures and the reason behind why these foods and beverages are consumed by that culture.

Oldways, is a food and nutrition organization rooted in cultural traditions, that highlights the **importance of traditional diets** across the globe.



Here are a few examples of cultural eating patterns across the globe, courtesy of Oldways:

- [African Heritage Diet](#) and [African Foods List](#)
- [Asian Heritage Diet](#)
- [Latin American Diet](#)
- [Mediterranean Diet](#) and [Mediterranean Foods List](#)
- [Vegetarian & Vegan Diets](#)

Click [here](#) for additional cultural flavor profiles and pictures of commonly consumed foods by regions of the world.

Whether you are ready to dive right in to cultural cuisine or just test the water, you can start by incorporating foods and ingredients referenced above in the cultural food lists in the meals you like to eat. For example, if you like spaghetti and meatballs, try making pasta puttanesca.

Click [here](#) for 5 meal ideas that have had a Mediterranean makeover!

Looking for more recipes from different cultures around the world? – Check out the resources on [Nutrition.Gov](#)

Click [here](#) for a quick and easy Mediterranean Shrimp & Tomato Skillet recipe.

Click [here](#) for an African heritage-inspired Collard Greens recipe.



SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

CELEBRATE • INNOVATE • EDUCATE

During the month of March, the [Administration for Community Living \(ACL\)](#) is celebrating their 50th Anniversary of the Senior Nutrition Program!

The theme for this year is *Celebrate. Innovate. Educate.*

We want to thank and celebrate all the Nutrition Program Provider's efforts in Illinois and highlight their innovative ways they have been reaching seniors and providing education and awareness to their communities about the Senior Nutrition Program!

- One of the Egyptian Area Agency on Aging's nutrition providers, *Senior Adult Services* routinely schedules entertainment during lunch at their meal site in Jackson county. They have singers, dancers, magicians, and guest speakers to draw a crowd.
- [AgeGuide](#) Area Agency on Aging started a restaurant program in partnership with Senior Dine, in Kankakee county on November 1st of last year and has already served 1,155 meals to older adults. This program allows seniors to have more meal choices than a traditional/non-restaurant congregate meal site and still follows the dietary guidelines and nutrition standards for a Congregate meal. They have plans to expand to at least one restaurant program in each of their 8-county region!
- One of East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging's nutrition providers, OSF Peace Meal, developed [Cafe Chats](#), which is a virtual education opportunity to bring clients together on a weekly basis covering 7 counties in hopes to decrease social isolation, through education, in a respectful and intentional

environment. These education sessions are run by a registered dietitian or health specialist and allows their clients to come together to learn more about the topic of the day, ask questions, and learn.

April is National Volunteer Month!

There is no better time than now to honor all the volunteers in our communities.



Continuing to volunteer in the face of a global pandemic is truly inspiring! All these efforts, both big and small make a collectively positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Volunteers continue to rise to the challenges we face to help keep older adults safe by providing balanced meals, well-being checks, and most importantly support, to help them remain in their homes and communities.

Mark your Calendar for April 17th through April 23rd to celebrate **National Volunteer Week!**

National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to celebrate and show appreciation for their service and recognize the combined power that volunteers have in building stronger communities, confronting society's greatest challenges, and being a force that inspires others to serve.

During this week, make a point to recognize and thank the volunteers in your community who lend their time, voice, and talents to making a difference in your life and the community.

Ideas to Celebrate Your Local Volunteers:

- Present a **Certificate of Appreciation** to show special recognition to your volunteers.
- A picture is worth more than 1000 words – sharing a photo of volunteers in action (with the volunteers' written permission) on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or even through staff email

can inspire others to volunteer and honor those that already do.

- The impact of a video – make a quick 30-second to 1-minute ‘thank you’ video with your smartphone compiling volunteers in action that you can share on social media or make a quick slideshow of photos with text and music.
- Send a letter to the editor of your local paper about volunteers making a difference in your community or write a handwritten thank you note to a volunteer.



Check out these adult coloring pages to keep your brain active and encourage your creative side.

- [Carrots](#)
- [Pear](#)
- [Pepper](#)
- [Strawberry](#)

For previous editions of the **Aging Healthfully Newsletter** or to find the newsletter offered in a different *language [click here](#).

*Translated versions of the newsletter may not be posted on the site right away.
Please check back often!

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