

Senior Signal

December 2014

Cold Weather Health Tips for Seniors

Cold weather can pose serious health hazards to older adults. Falls and other accidents, hypothermia and depression are more common as the temperature drops. The key to safety is prevention. Follow these simple tips to ensure a safe season.

Watch out for Ice

More than 1.6 million older Americans go to the emergency room each year for fall-related injuries, according to the National Institutes of Health. But falls don't have to happen, even when snow and ice make for slippery conditions. To lessen the chance of falling in cold weather:

- Stretch before going outside. Stretching improves circulation and limbers muscles.
- Wear sensible footwear. Shoes should have low heels, good support and non-skid soles.
- Stick to cleared sidewalks and roads. Shovel snow and sprinkle sand or salt on icy areas - or ask someone to do it for you.
- Use assistive devices when necessary. Hold handrails on stairs. Use a cane or walker if necessary to help maintain balance.
- Avoid going outside when conditions are poor. Exercise indoors. Stock up on necessities in good weather, or ask someone to deliver them to you.

Stay Warm

As people age, their sense of touch declines. Arthritis, diabetes, poor circulation, paralysis caused by stroke and many other conditions can cause lack of feeling, especially in the extremities. A diminished response to cold can put seniors at risk for hypothermia (abnormally

low body temperature). To prevent hypothermia:

- Keep your home's thermostat set at 68 degrees F or above. If paying your energy bill is a burden, you may be eligible for fuel assistance. Contact the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/liheap>), a public service of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or the Eldercare Locator (<http://www.eldercare.gov>), a public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging.
- To reduce heating costs, make your home more energy efficient. Contact the U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program (<http://www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization>) to see if you're eligible for home improvements paid for by the program.
- Dress in loose-fitting, layered, lightweight clothes for warmth.
- Keep your head covered when you're outdoors. A great deal of body heat is lost through the head.
- Wear mittens or gloves outdoors.
- Eat well. Food provides the body with energy. Remember, calories are a measure of heat! Seniors who have difficulty preparing their own food can have a member organization of the Meals on Wheels Association of America (MOWAA) deliver nutritious meals (<http://www.mowaa.org>).
- Be alert for symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite. Hypothermia symptoms include

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Cold Weather Health Tips for Seniors (*cont.*)

slurred speech, sluggishness, confusion, dizziness, shallow breathing, unusual behavior and slow, irregular heartbeat. Frostbite symptoms include gray, white or yellow skin discoloration, numbness and a waxy feeling to the skin. If either of these conditions is suspected get immediate emergency help. Warm the body, but avoid rubbing tender skin. Reduced sensitivity to temperature can also cause burns from too-hot water. To prevent burns:

- Set the temperature on the hot water heater to 120 degrees F or lower.
- When using faucets, turn on cold water first and then add hot water. When turning off the water, shut off hot water first and then cold.

Protect Your Skin

As we age our skin becomes thinner and drier and thus more susceptible to tears. In addition, certain medications can thin already fragile nasal tissue, creating a risk of nosebleeds. To lessen the possibility of dangers associated with dryness:

- Keep room air moist. Add a humidifier to your heating unit, if possible, or purchase a separate humidifier or vaporizer. Another option is to place a pan filled with water near a heat source such as a radiator. Remember to change the water daily.
- Keep your body moist! Drink plenty of water and other fluids. Eat foods with high water content like soups and vegetables.
- Moisturize your skin with creams or lotions. Use nasal lubricants or petroleum jelly to protect the lining of the nose.

Keep Your Spirits High

Perhaps the most devastating threat to seniors in wintertime is depression. Inclement weather can restrict activities and opportunities to mingle with others. The isolation and loneliness that afflict many seniors become even worse when the weather is harsh. Shorter days mean less sunlight, which can also contribute to depression. To prevent depression:

- Socialize. Make an effort to visit with family and friends. Contact a local Council on Aging for help locating transportation services, senior centers and social activities.
- When the weather is too harsh for travel, pick up the phone and call a friend or relative for a chat.

Be Prepared for an Emergency

Winter storms can mean power outages and resultant loss of heat, water and telephone services. Inclement weather can mean difficulty going out for necessary supplies. Be prepared for emergencies:

- Stock up on food and fresh water. Some Meals on Wheels programs provide frozen emergency food packs that can be heated on days when there is no delivery.
- Keep batteries, candles, flashlights, Sterno fuel, extra blankets and a battery-operated radio on hand.

Don't wait for emergencies to develop a system of communication. Everyone living alone should develop a "buddy system."

"If you have an elderly neighbor, check on them," recommends Karen Martin, community services director of Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc., in Massachusetts. "Their heat could have gone out or their electricity. A quick call can be so important."

From: <http://protectedtomorrows.com/community/articles/196.php>

Cookie Swap and Ornament Exchange

December 22, 2014 at 1:00pm

Come share in some holiday merriment with your friends! Bring with you one dozen cookies and one ornament (wrapped). When you leave, you will take home one dozen assorted cookies and a different ornament! We will host the cookie swap and play a game to exchange the ornament that will be tons of fun and laughs.

Can't wait to see you all there!

Portland Rose Festival Trip

We will once again partner with Alki Tours for a great adventure to the Portland Rose Festival.

June 4 - 6, 2015

3 days

\$479 per person/double occupancy

Single supplement \$85

Whoever said "Life isn't a bed of Roses", clearly hasn't seen this tour. In 2015, the Rose Festival will celebrate 107 years of tradition, innovation and celebration-an event like none other!

A great two day tour. We will depart Orcas Island on June 4th and spend the night in Lynnwood. The official part of the tour begins with a train trip to Portland on June 5th. Once in the city, enjoy a scrumptious luncheon cruise along the Willamette River. Next, check into our lovely hotel- centrally located so that you can enjoy the festivities in town! The next day, celebrate the nation's second largest floral parade. You'll have the opportunity to wander amongst the amazing floats, see the craftsmanship and discover how they make them. Then we're off to the Coliseum where we'll watch the Grand Floral Parade from our reserved seats. Hurry, this trip sells out every year, so if you snooze, you'll lose!

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT DUE BY DECEMBER 15, 2014. THIS TRIP IS LIMITED TO TEN PARTICIPANTS.

Regular Outings:

First Wednesday of Each Month:

Bargain shopping at the Good Will in Mt. Vernon where we will take advantage of senior discount day (25% off every purchase)! We will also make a stop at a local park for a sack lunch picnic. Bring your lunch (or money). Trip cost is only \$10.

Third Thursday of each Month: Make the stops at your favorite off-island shopping locations. Stock up on necessary supplies or browse the isles for treasures. We will also stop for lunch along the way. Cost is only \$15.

Christmas Shopping at Bellis Fair Mall

It's really not Christmas without a visit to the mall . . . you may even get to see Santa while you are there. Take advantage of less crowds during a mid-week trip to the mall in Bellingham. We will depart on the 8:50am ferry and return on the 6:30pm ferry. Cost is only \$20



Cracking the Coconut!

By Carol Simmer, RDN
WCOA Sr. Nutrition Program

The holidays make me think of the favorite foods of my family. My dad loved coconut and when I look at any recipe with, I think of him. Coconut is everywhere now, especially in the news as a “good” saturated fat! Let’s explore the nutritional qualities of the coconut.

Years ago the high saturated fat content of coconut oil and palm oil, as well as the saturated fat of animal products were associated with high cholesterol and increased risk of heart disease. Recent research has shown that all saturated fats (SF) are not alike. The predominant SF in coconut oil is lauric acid, a medium-chain fatty acid, is considered a good saturated fat. It is processed by the liver and quickly converted into energy by our cells. This process suggests that one's metabolism is increased with coconut oil. Evidence is still unclear on the benefit (or not) of coconut oil in weight loss products!

The high lauric acid content of coconut oil has been linked to raising both the good (HDL) **and** the bad (LDL) cholesterol. This neutral effect does not warrant replacing other oils in your diet with coconut oil exclusively for reducing cholesterol risk. Use a variety of healthy oils in your cooking to include heart-healthy Omega-3s that are not found in coconut oil.

Coconut oil is great for baking and in a variety of other dishes. The mild taste with a hint of tropical flavor makes it great choice for stir fries and curries, sauces and salad dressings. It is also a substitute for other saturated fats like butter or lard and margarines. However, coconut oil is still a fat and all fats are calorie dense so it is best used in moderation!

Coconut sugar is made from the coconut sap of the Coconut Palm. Don’t confuse coconut sap with coconut water from inside a ripe coconut. Coconut sugar contains inulin, a fiber that slows digestion. That is why coconut sugar is lower on the glycemic index (35) than regular sugar or sucrose (65). Slower digestion can reduce blood sugar spikes after a meal.

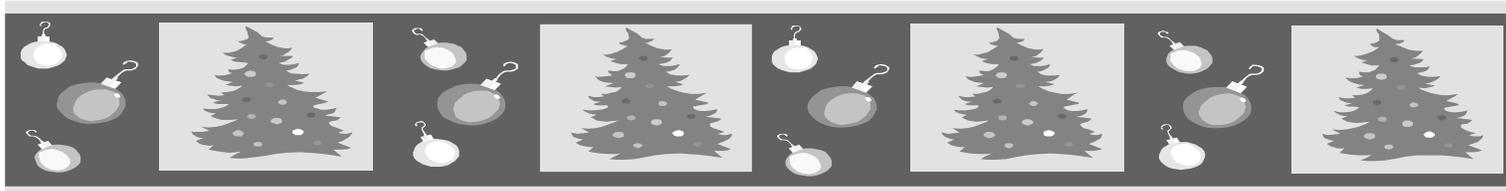
Coconut, unsweetened or sweetened is a delightful treat, giving texture, color, and mild flavor to many foods. Be creative and include it in your holiday recides and familv meals!



Tuesday	Friday
3 Country Fried Steak Mashed Potatoes w/ gravy Peas & carrots Apple Cake	5 Vegan Split Pea Soup Turkey Wrap (vegan wrap available) Garden Salad Fresh Fruit
9 Cheese Enchiladas Spanish style rice Steamed veggies Garden Salad Tropical Fruit	12 Beef stew w/ garden vegetables Veggie pasta salad Buttermilk biscuit Banana Pudding
16 Sundried tomato pasta w/ chicken Steamed broccoli Caesar salad Fruit	19 – Christmas Luncheon Roasted Turkey Cranberry Sauce Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Seasonal Veggies Dinner roll Holiday spiced cake
23 BBQ chicken Mashed potatoes & gravy Garden salad Fresh fruit	26 Stuffed cabbage roll Roasted potatoes Carrot raisen salad Chefs vegetables Sliced peaches
30 Florentine fish Roasted potatoes Brussels sprouts Spinach salad Sliced pears	

**Menu subject to change based on food cost & availability.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 8am: Walking Club 10am: TML FREE	2 10am: Photo Club 10am: Book Club 12pm: Lunch 1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	3 10-11am: Chair Yoga 11:30am-4pm: Open art studio time	4 8am: Walking Club 9am: Operations committee Meeting 10am: TML FREE	5 12pm: lunch 1pm: crafty afternoon FREE 4pm: Strength training	6
7	8 8am: Walking Club 10am: TML FREE	9 10am: Photo Club 10am: Book Club 12pm: Lunch 1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	10 10-11am: Chair Yoga 11:30am-4pm: Open art studio time	11 8am: Walking Club 10am: TML FREE Christmas Shopping at the Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham – Depart 8:50am ferry. \$15	12 12pm: lunch 1pm: crafty afternoon FREE 4pm: Strength training	13
14	15 8am: Walking Club 10am: TML FREE	16 10am: Photo Club 12pm: Lunch 1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	17 10-11am: Chair Yoga 11:30am-4pm: Open art studio time 2pm: Afternoon Tea	18 8am: Walking Club 10am: TML FREE Mainland shopping. Depart 8:50am ferry. \$15	19 12pm: lunch 1pm: crafty afternoon FREE 4pm: Strength training	20 10am-3pm scrapbook, craft & sewing day – enjoy the company of other crafters & seamstresses. Bring your own project to work on!
21	22 8am: Walking Club 10am: TML FREE 1pm: Cookie swap and ornament exchange	23 10am: Photo Club 12pm: Lunch 1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	24 10-11am: Chair Yoga 12pm: Potluck 11:30am-4pm: Open art studio time	25 Closed	26 12pm: lunch 1pm: crafty afternoon FREE 4pm: Strength training	27
28	29 8am: Walking Club 10am: TML FREE	30 10am: Photo Club 12pm: Lunch 1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	31 10-11am: Chair Yoga 12pm: Potluck 11:30am-4pm: Open art studio time	<h1>December</h1>		



Holiday Fun

Try your hand at a little fun this holiday season! Enjoy

Tis the Season

S I A N G E L O V K E H X Z Z
 U K G K T N E M A N R O H C S
 F P O N B L I G H T S F A E A
 Q Z R W C U F V D G F L E L M
 B R E I N D E E R P R M I E T
 G S N O W F L A K E P Q I B S
 C G U S F N H N W H Q C N R I
 A S E I T I V I T S E F U A R
 N P D A E R B R E G N I G T H
 D U F S S E I K O O C Q L E C
 Y Q X L I U N A M W O N S G E
 C P H O X Y V T Z E E R T O B
 A Y G R F A M I L Y P A O N T
 N B S A S H O P P I N G D B H
 E V D C E Y X T N E S E R P H

CHRISTMAS TREE
 ORNAMENT
 COOKIES
 SHOPPING LIGHTS
 SNOWFLAKE
 SNOWMAN
 CAROLS
 EGG
 NOG
 ANGEL
 ELF
 PRESENT
 GINGERBREAD
 CELEBRATE
 FAMILY
 FESTIVITIES
 REINDEER
 CANDYCANE

HELP IS JUST A CALL AWAY

Mobility Equipment is available for loan, maintained by the Lions Club, at the Senior Center. Preferred Pick up Wednesday & Friday from 10am-11am.

Special Needs Fund has limited emergency assistance when no other funds are available. Call Marla for information at 376-2677

Merts Taxi offers free transportation to and from the ferry terminal for all Island Hospital and Island Hospital affiliated appointments. Call 360-293-0201 to schedule.

Weatherization Assistance 1-800-290-3857

SHIBA volunteers can assist with Medicare enrollment, choosing a secondary plan, and the affordable healthcare enrollment. Available at the Medical Center Tuesday's & Wednesday's by appointment. Call 376-2561

P.A.L. offers assistance with electrical costs. Call OPALCO at 376-3552 for eligibility requirements and to apply.

Social Security 1-800-633-4227

Hearts & Hands offers trained volunteers to provide 1-2 hours per week of practical assistance such as respite, errands, housework, meal preparation, shopping and companionships. Call Betsy Louton at 376-7723 for information.

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Veterans Administration 1-800-827-1000

Orcas Safe Homes -- A free program to assist Orcas Island seniors to identify and correct safety and health hazards in their homes. Call 1-888-685-1475 for an appointment.

SERVICES WE PROVIDE

Lunch is served twice weekly on *Tuesday's and Friday's* at noon. Suggested donation is \$5; however, no senior will be denied a meal due to inability to pay.

Home delivered meals are provided each lunch day from your Senior Center. Please call 376-2677.

Lunch transportation is available. Call the front desk at 376-2677 by 10:00am on lunch days to schedule.

Transportation to mainland medical/legal appointments is available. Please schedule appointments on Wednesdays as follows:

- 1st & 3rd Wednesday to Anacortes, Mt. Vernon & Burlington (suggested donation \$40)
- 2nd Wednesday to Seattle and surrounding area (suggested donation \$60)
- 4th Wednesday to Bellingham and surrounding area (suggested donation \$50)

Call Marla at 376-2677 to schedule.

Foot care nurses are available every Tuesday and some Thursdays/Fridays for routine foot care. Reservations are required by calling 376-2677. Cost is \$25.

Case Management services are available. To discuss needs and schedule an appointment call Marla at 376-2677.

Orcas CARES: Emergency response service and partnership with local island agencies including Lahari, Orcas Fire and Rescue, Hearts & Hands, Medical Foundation and San Juan County Sheriff's Office.



Senior Services of San Juan County
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www.orcasseniors.org

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ORCAS SENIOR CENTER

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Mail submissions to: PO Box 18, Eastsound, WA 98245

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