

THE 50+ Connection

NEWS and EVENTS from the
Howard County Office on Aging and Independence

A Publication of the Department of Community Resources and Services

Volume 13, No. 3 • March 2023

March is National Nutrition Month

Plant-based diets provide “Fuel for the Future”

By Carmen Roberts, MS, RD, LDN, Nutritionist, Howard County Office on Aging and Independence

Many Americans are turning to a plant-based diet, which can offer both health and environmental benefits. Plant-based diets are linked to a lower incidence of obesity, heart disease, and hypertension, and are rich in fiber, phytochemicals, vitamins, and minerals, making them the perfect fuel for your body’s future. “Fuel for the Future” is the 2023 theme of National Nutrition Month.

A plant-based diet is potentially lower in calories and saturated fat than a standard American diet, while also providing more dietary fiber and higher amounts of some vitamins and minerals. A well-planned eating pattern is essential in order to obtain all the nutrients needed for good health (eatright.org). Include a variety of protein-rich foods at each meal – tofu, soy, lentils, beans, nuts, and seeds – to preserve muscle strength. To maintain bone health, add three to four servings of calcium-rich foods such as plant-based milks, tofu and fortified juices.



Following a plant-based diet can have numerous health benefits, but it is important to eat a well-balanced variety of foods that includes fresh fruits and vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds to ensure your nutritional needs are met. It is also a good idea to talk to your healthcare provider or a registered dietitian before making dietary changes.

To schedule a free one-on-one nutrition consultation at a Howard County 50+ Center near you, visit bit.ly/OAInutrition.

Age-Friendly Action Plan: Implementation is underway!

Age-Friendly Howard County work groups are laying the groundwork to make Howard County a livable community for all, working to implement the 80+ recommendations of the Action Plan. We are currently recruiting volunteers for the Outdoor Spaces & Buildings Work Group as well as the Age-Friendly Howard County Advisory Council. Interested?

For more information, please email agefriendly@howardcountymd.gov. To learn more about the Age-Friendly Howard County initiative, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/agefriendly to view the Action Plan, download meeting minutes, and sign up to join a work group!

A message from
Howard County Executive

Calvin Ball



March is Social Work Month, a time to celebrate the many social workers throughout Howard County who enrich our community and empower our residents to overcome hurdles that prevent them from living life to the fullest. These dedicated professionals embody the 2023 theme, “Social Work Breaks Barriers.”

An estimated 800,000 social workers will join the profession by 2030. Chances are over the course of your lifetime, you, a family member, or a friend will have been helped by one. Social workers play a key role in the work our Department of Community Resources and Services and our Office on Aging and Independence (OAI) do every day. Together, these teams focus on advocating for the rights of at-risk children, youth, adults with disabilities and aging adults, helping to address food insecurity, social isolation or lack of affordable housing, and providing access to behavioral health supports, disability services and social day programs.

Many of our Maryland Access Point (MAP) information specialists are social workers, answering calls daily from older adults and caregivers seeking assistance. Other OAI social workers provide critical case management services through programs such as Senior Care, Medicaid Supports Planning and the Caregiver Support Program. For more information, contact MAP at 410-313-1234.

Living Well Workshop: Nutrition and More (in Korean)

Elkridge 50+ Center
Six Thursdays, March 2 – April 6
10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Now offered in Korean, the Living Well Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop meets in a small group setting to help participants learn how to better manage ongoing health conditions like diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and high cholesterol. Discussion topics include:

- Pain and fatigue management;
- Dealing with depression;
- Healthy eating and exercise;
- Medication management;
- Working with health care providers; and
- Goal setting and problem solving.

A free box lunch will be provided for registered participants age 60 and over (donations accepted). For more information or to register, contact Minjung Engle, 410-313-6539 or mengle@howardcountymd.gov.

Howard County

50+ CENTERS

Enrichment. Engagement. Connection. Growth.

Celebrate Women's History Month

Women and Mental Health Through History: Taking Care of Ourselves

NORTH LAUREL 50+ CENTER
 March 24 • 11 a.m. to Noon

Karen Hull of SeniorsTogether will discuss how women's mental health has evolved over time and highlight resources and options for care. Free. Sign up at the 50+ Center front desk.

The Sanctified Sisters of Colesville

GLENWOOD 50+ CENTER
 March 9, 11 a.m. (A03637.200)

Learn about the savvy businesswomen that operated a popular retreat for Washingtonians called the Commonwealth Farm Inn. Led by Julianne Mangin. Free. Call 410-313-5440 or register on ActiveNet.

Women of Baltimore

ELKRIDGE 50+ CENTER
 March 14 • 11 a.m. to noon (A05616.200)

Public historian, Jennifer Liles, shares largely untold stories of Baltimore women who made history, but not headlines. These women worked in the city's factories, breaking barriers which changed their lives and the lives of their families. Free. Call 410-313-5192 or register on Activenet.

Documentary Screening: "Becoming"

BAIN 50+ CENTER
 March 24 • 1:00 p.m.

This intimate documentary chronicles former first lady Michelle Obama's life, hopes and connections with others during the 2019 book tour for her novel, *Becoming*. Tickets available March 1 at the front desk (free; suggested lunch donation applies).

Challenge your brain

Brain Builders

ELLCOTT CITY 50+ CENTER
 Wednesdays, March 1 – 29 • 1:00 p.m. (A02114.201)

Looking for ways to keep your mind active? Join Peggy Bruce for an hour of brain teasers and trivia, engaging conversations and cognitive games which promote brain health. Free. Call 410-313-1400 or register on ActiveNet.

March Madness Game Day

EAST COLUMBIA 50+ CENTER
 March 1 • 12:30 to 2 p.m. (A04711.200)

Join us for an afternoon of laughs and challenges, as we play Telestrations, Uno and Scrabble. Invite others to join in your game of choice. Snacks will be provided. Free. Call 410-313-7680 or register on ActiveNet.

OAI Employee Spotlight

Meet Aaliyah Cash, Fitness Specialist Ellicott City 50+ Fitness Center



Can you tell us about yourself?

I am a Certified Nutrition Coach through the National Academy of Sports Medicine and working towards obtaining my Group Fitness Instructor Certification. I also hold a Bachelor of Science from Towson University in Exercise Science.

What excites you the most about your work?

I take a holistic approach to fitness, and OAI provides an environment that supports my views promoting healthy and active lifestyle choices.

What is your role?

I lead a monthly equipment orientation to teach new users how to safely use the equipment with proper form, plus offer a daily workout to try!

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I enjoy reading health and psychology books. I like knowing the "why" behind doing things so I can make informed decisions.

COMING IN MARCH

Senior Planet presents: Finding Information Online

March 22 • 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES & SERVICES

9830 Patuxent Woods Drive, Room 337 • Columbia 21046

The internet can be an incredible resource but finding exactly what you are looking for can be time consuming. In this hands-on workshop, offered through Senior Planet, we will review helpful tips for using effective search terms, evaluating search results, and searching within a reliable site for accurate information. Free, limited class space; registration REQUIRED.

Call or email to reserve your spot: 410-313-6542 or mburgess@howardcountymd.gov

Medicare Lunch & Learn

ELKRIDGE 50+ CENTER
 March 31 • 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (A055610.200)

Learn how to protect yourself from Medicare fraud. Senior Medicare Patrol experts will share information about trending scams, and offer tips to detect, report and avoid abuse. Registration is required; lunch is provided. RSVP by Thursday, March 23 to 410-313-5192 (voice/relay) or register on ActiveNet.



9830 Patuxent Woods Drive, Columbia, MD 21046
 410-313-6410 (VOICE/RELAY) • www.howardcountymd.gov/aging
 Find us @HoCoCommunity on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Nextdoor
 Kim Higdon Henry, Editor • EMAIL: kahenry@howardcountymd.gov

AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATE FORMATS UPON REQUEST
 Join the subscriber list <https://bit.ly/HoCosubscribe>

Advertising in the Beacon is not endorsed by the Office on Aging and Independence or by the publisher.

To register or find more events, visit
<https://anc.apm.activecommunities.com/howardcounty/>