

## Family Living Focus

by  
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### When Lifestyles Change

Lifestyle changes accompany each stage in life. Think about the independence that comes with becoming an adult, the responsibility that comes with parenthood, or the freedom of having kids finally leave the "nest." The older years may bring new lifestyles and health conditions that impact what, where, and when you eat.

#### • Eating Alone — Special, Too!

For many people, eating is a time to enjoy the company of others, especially for those who cook for a family or share meals with someone else.

When older adults lose a spouse or live-in companion, eating alone can feel boring or depressing. And some people don't feel much like preparing food, or even eating. If you're in that position, or know someone who is, you can help spark a tired appetite.

You don't need to dine alone all the time. Eat with friends occasionally.

Get together with other seniors for weekly or monthly potluck suppers. Cut down on the work by taking turns acting as host. Encourage everyone to bring a favorite dish.

Visit the local senior citizens' center. They typically serve a full midday meal on weekdays. Usually the price is right. In some communities, meals for seniors are served in other local buildings, including churches or schools.

Added benefits: Senior citizen meals offer a place to meet old and new friends. And you can enjoy a meal that takes more to prepare than you'd likely do for yourself.

When eating out, take advantage of early bird specials when the portions are usually smaller and the prices are right. Consider splitting an order or take home half for another meal if the restaurant portions seem too large. Some restaurants also have senior citizen prices — be sure to ask.

Have a standing date with a friend or

relative for lunch or dinner at your home.

If you're still "into cooking," but need someone to cook for, organize a gourmet club of like-minded friends.

When you do dine solo, make eating a special event. Looking forward to mealtime can offer a boost to both your appetite and your morale!

Set your place at the table, perhaps with a placemat, napkin, candles, and a centerpiece. You'll feel more like you've had a meal — and with more enjoyment — than if you had eaten right from the cooking pot.

For a change of pace, enjoy eating in different places. The kitchen, patio or deck, dining room or perhaps on a tray by the fireplace.

Create some atmosphere or interest. Turn on the radio. Play a favorite music tape or compact disk. Or watch your favorite television show as you eat.

Make food preparation easy, especially when you cook for one.

#### • Meals — Fast, Simple, Nutritious

Some older folks say they have no time to cook. They're too busy living life to its fullest. For others, lack of inclination or energy or perhaps a little less mobility, is the reason for quick and easy solutions to nutritious eating.

Try these tasty meals in minutes for starters:

For a quick breakfast, add hot water or hot milk to instant hot cereal. It's just as fast as many ready-to-eat cereals.

Keep a few frozen dinners and entrees on hand for quick cooking and easy cleanup. For the most nutrition, look for frozen meals with meat, poultry or fish; a starchy food (such as rice, pasta or potato); and a vegetable. Team them up with a salad, roll, piece of fruit and milk for a hearty meal that takes little effort.

Trying to lose weight? Choose from one of the many lower-calorie frozen dinners available.

If you're watching your salt in-

# Understanding Osteoporosis In Men

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Although osteoporosis is often thought of as a "woman's disease," 20 percent of the 25 million Americans who have osteoporosis are men.

take, check the sodium on frozen meals and canned ones (stews, soups and chili). Many have more sodium; look for those with less.

Prepare foods ahead for later in the week, or to freeze as leftovers. For instance, make lower fat meatballs with lean ground turkey or beef. Brown the meatballs, drain any grease, then combine with tomato sauce. Serve over pasta on one day, over rice the next and freeze the rest for later.

Freeze homemade soups, stews, lasagna and other casserole dishes in small containers. Then thaw enough for one or two meals at a time. Label and date your packages to keep track of what you have in the freezer.

For easy-to-prepare salads, wash, tear and dry salad greens. Then store them in a plastic container for three or four days. Or you can even purchase washed, cut salad greens in a bag. So when you want a salad, put a handful of greens in a bowl and add your favorite toppings, perhaps sliced tomatoes, grated carrots or canned kidney beans.

The American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide. Larson, Duyff, Roberta. 1998.

In fact, osteoporosis affects nearly half of all people — women and men — over the age of 75.

Even though this disease has been studied more often in women than it has in men, there is basic information that can be useful in preventing the development of osteoporosis in men.

#### Normal Bone Development

Bones are living tissue that change constantly, with bits of old bone being removed and new bone laid down. Think of bone as a bank account, where you make "deposits" and "withdrawals" of bone tissue.

During normal childhood and adolescence, much more bone is added than removed, so that the skeleton grows both in size and density. The amount of tissue or bone mass in the skeleton reaches its maximum by the mid-30s. At this point, the amount of bone in the skeleton typically begins to decline slowly, as more bone is removed than added.

Because of their lighter, thinner frames, women have less bone mass to draw from as they age. In addition, women lose bone mass rapidly in the years after menopause. But by age 65 or 70, women and men lose bone mass at the same rate, and calcium absorption decreases in both sexes.

Adequate calcium intake, proper exercise, and good health habits are essential throughout life to ensure that the body has enough bone tissue to draw from in the later years.

#### Risk Factors

Osteoporosis is an exaggerated loss of bone tissue, a painful and disfiguring disease that weakens bones and makes them more likely to fracture. Fractures resulting from osteoporosis often occur in the wrist, spine, and hip.

These risk factors have been linked to osteoporosis in men:

- Decreases in male hormones, or hypogonadism, can cause reduced bone mass and lead to fractures. Although men do not undergo the equivalent of menopause, gonadal function does decline in some elderly men and, when fractures occur, they are often associated with male hypogonadism.

- Use of steroid hormones, which are sometimes used to treat certain diseases, can lead to breakdown of bone.

- Abuse of alcohol plays an important role in weakening bones, even in relatively young or middle-aged men. For example, alcohol has been found to reduce circulating levels of the male hormone, testosterone. Studies have also found higher alcohol and cigarette consumption in men with osteoporosis.

## 4-H Babysitting Course For Montgomery Teens

COLLEGEVILLE (Montgomery Co.) — The 4-H Babysitting Course For Teens will be offered at four different locations in Montgomery County this winter. Call the number that follows each listing to register.

- Montgomery County 4-H Center located on Route 113, one mile south of Route 73 near Skippack: five Thursdays, Jan. 31 through Feb. 28 (save March 7 for snow date); 6:30-8:30 p.m. (610) 489-4315).

- St. Michael's Church, Landis and Jacob streets, Mont Clare (actually in annex across the street from church — looks like old school building — at 203 Jacob St.): five Tuesdays, Jan. 22 through Feb. 19 (save Feb. 26 for snow date); 6:30-8:30 p.m. Call the 4-H

Center at (610) 489-4315 to register.

- Lower Providence Library, Park Lane Drive, Eagleville, five Wednesdays, Jan. 23 through Feb. 27 (skip Feb. 6, but save March 6 for snow date); 6-8 p.m.

- Lansdale Public Library, Susquehanna and Vine Sts., Lansdale, five Tuesdays, March 5 through April 2; (save April 9 for snow date); 6:30-8:30 p.m. (215) 855-3228.

A \$15 fee for the babysitting course is payable at the first session. Partial scholarships are al-

ways available with no questions asked. The 4-H program will provide all course materials and participants will become 4-H members as a result of taking the course.

Class size is limited for maximum educational value. Participants must be at least 11-years-old before the course begins to participate. For any additional information, call Helaine Brown, 4-H Agent, at (610) 489-4315, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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