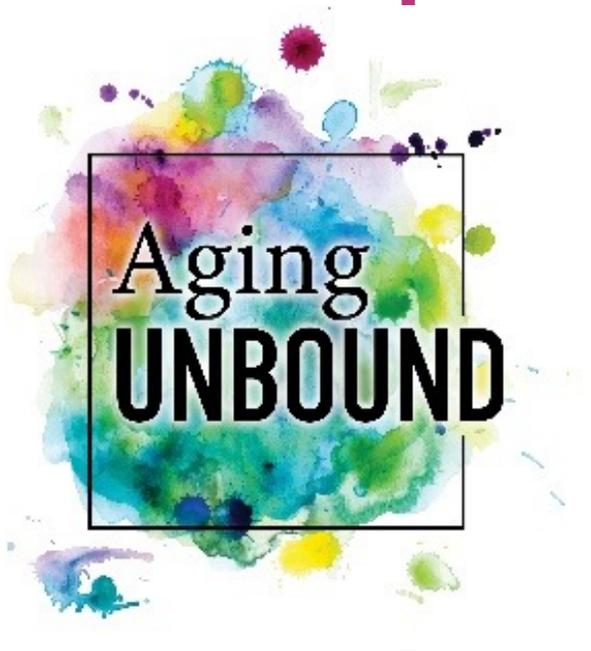


MEALS AND MORE



OBSERVANCES:

- National Fitness Day May 6
- Drinking Water Week May 7-13
- Mother's Day May 14
- National Asparagus Day May 24
- Memorial Day May 29
- National Senior Health and Fitness Day May 31
- Arthritis Awareness Month
- High Blood Pressure Education Month
- Older Americans Month
- National Asparagus Month
- National Strawberry Month

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Established in 1963, Older Americans Month (OAM) is celebrated every May. Led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), OAM is a time for us to acknowledge the contributions and achievements of older Americans, highlight important trends, and strengthen our commitment to honoring our older citizens.

This year's theme, Aging Unbound, offers an opportunity to explore a wide range of aging experiences and to promote the importance of enjoying independence and fulfillment by paving our own paths as we age. This May, join us as we recognize the 60th anniversary of OAM and challenge the narrative on aging. Read on the next page how you can share your unbound aging story with others

**MAY
2023**

AGING UNBOUND



AGING UNBOUND: MAY 2023

As an essential ingredient of well-being, relationships can enhance your quality of life by introducing new ideas and unique perspectives. Invest time with people to discover deeper connections with family, friends, and community members. This month share the answers to the following questions with a loved one to celebrate this special month by passing on the legacy of stories and memories.

- What do you like best about yourself?
- What's something people wouldn't know about you just from looking at you?
- Tell a story about someone who has had a

significant impact on your life.

- Tell a story about a place that is important to you. Paint a picture of the place and talk about why it's important to you.
- Tell a story about an accomplishment or event from your past that had a significant impact on you.
- Tell a story that says something important about who you are.
- The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later successes. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?

Do you have a story to share about how Meals on Wheels Western Michigan meals and programs have impacted your life? We would love to share that with others in our community! **Please email your story to Lydia at lvanderhill@mowwm.org.**

ASPARAGUS

It's nutritious, flavorful and one of Michigan's first signs of spring. Michigan asparagus is the state's first green vegetable harvested each year. A typical Michigan asparagus harvest begins in mid-April, but in wake of a long, cold winter and cooler spring, it can be pushed back. Nestled on Michigan's west coast, the majority of Michigan asparagus is grown in Oceana County, the Asparagus Capitol of the World! Travel down the coast near South Haven, and you've stepped foot in the second-largest producing area of the state. There are about 10,000 acres in Michigan producing asparagus, mostly between these two regions. Harvest is typically a six-to-seven-week season, with May in the center of it all. Unlike crops like corn that can be picked, combined, or chopped just once, all asparagus in Michigan is hand harvested. Throughout the season, asparagus will continue generating new growth, which means harvesters could make 25 to 35 trips across each field to harvest the complete crop. Michigan moved up in the ranks as the 2nd largest producer of asparagus in the nation, producing just less than 21 million pounds. Coming to farm markets and produce sections near you, be sure to stock up and enjoy fresh Michigan asparagus each May. And now you will find asparagus in a few of our home-delivered meals as well!



(adapted from Nichole Heslip, MI Farm Radio Network. www.michigan.org)

SPOTLIGHT ON CAREGIVERS

May is High Blood Pressure Education Month!

Please talk to your loved ones about having regular blood pressure checks at home or at their physician's office. Blood pressure trackers are available at: <https://www.heart.org/-/media/files/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/my-blood-pressure-log.pdf> Or consider a wearable blood pressure electronic tracker for them.

How Can I Lower My Blood Pressure Immediately?

High blood pressure (hypertension) is a dangerous condition that impacts nearly half of adults in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 2018, close to half a million deaths in the country had high blood pressure as a primary or contributing cause. Occurring when the force of blood pressing against artery walls is consistently too high, high blood pressure requires a long-term care approach. However, there are several ways to temporarily lower your blood pressure in just a matter of minutes—give these methods a try if you'd like to lower your blood pressure immediately:

- Take a warm bath or shower. Stay in your shower or bath for at least 15 minutes and enjoy the warm water. This can also help reduce muscle tension.
- Do a breathing exercise. Take a deep breath from your core, hold your breath for about two seconds, then slowly exhale. Pause for a few moments and repeat.
- Relax! Stress is a key contributor to high blood pressure,

so do whatever you can to relax. This may be as simple as sitting in a quiet room for a few moments, doing a few stretching exercises, reading a good book, or meditating.

These techniques can provide a quick fix, but it's important to implement a long-term care plan to successfully manage your high blood pressure. Some of the most effective ways to lower blood pressure include:

- Losing excess weight
- Quitting smoking
- Reducing alcohol and caffeine intake
- Prioritizing sleep
- Avoiding stressful situations, if possible
- Eating less sodium, sugar, refined carbohydrates, and processed foods
- Regularly engaging in low-impact exercise (about 30 minutes every day)
- Taking medication to lower blood pressure

What Are the Symptoms of High Blood Pressure?

Perhaps you're not sure if you have high blood pressure. If it has been a while since you've had your blood pressure taken, consider scheduling a wellness visit with your medical provider. In the meantime, here are some of the key signs of high blood pressure to watch out for:

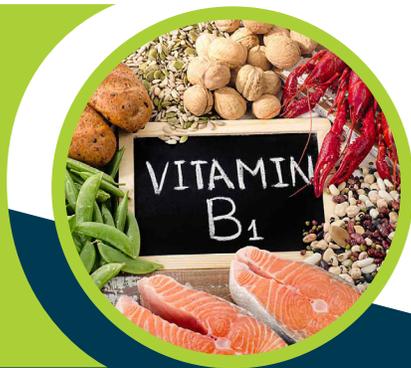
- Headaches
- Skin flushing (redness)
- Nosebleeds
- Bloody urine
- Dizziness

When to Call 911

High blood pressure may warrant emergency care. If your blood pressure is 180/120 or greater, or if you experience any of the following symptoms, call 911 immediately:

- Sudden changes in vision
- Trouble speaking
- Chest pain
- Sudden back pain
- Shortness of breath
- Numbness or weakness

(hhma.org)



NUTRIENT OF THE MONTH: VITAMIN B₁

Thiamin (or thiamine) is one of the water-soluble B vitamins. It is also known as vitamin B₁. Thiamin is naturally present in some foods, added to some food products, and available as a dietary supplement. This vitamin plays a critical role in energy metabolism and, therefore, in the growth, development, and function of cells. Food sources of thiamin include whole grains, meat, and fish. Breads, cereals, and infant formulas in the United States and many other countries are fortified with thiamin. The most common sources of thiamin in the U.S. diet are cereals and bread. Pork is another major source of the vitamin.

RECIPE: Strawberry Oatmeal Bars

PREP TIME:
10 minutes

COOK TIME:
40 min

SERVING SIZE:
1 bar, yields 16 bars

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 c. old-fashioned rolled oats
- 3/4 c. all-purpose flour
- 1/3 c. light brown sugar
- 1/4 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 6 T unsalted butter, melted
- 2 c. small-diced strawberries
- 1 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 T squeezed lemon juice
- 1 T granulated sugar
- 1/2 c. powdered sugar
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 T. milk

DIRECTIONS:

- Place a rack in the center of your oven and preheat to 375 degrees F. Line an 8x8-inch baking pan with parchment paper so that the paper overhangs two sides like handles.
- In a medium bowl, combine the oats, flour, brown sugar, ginger, and salt. Pour in the melted butter and stir until it forms clumps, and the dry ingredients are evenly moistened. Set aside 1/2 cup of the crumble mixture, then press the rest into an even layer in the bottom of the prepared pan.
- Scatter half of the strawberries over the crust. Sprinkle the cornstarch evenly over the top, then sprinkle on the lemon juice and 1/2 tablespoon of the granulated sugar. Scatter on the remaining berries, then the remaining 1/2 tablespoon sugar. Sprinkle the reserved crumbs evenly over the top. You will have some fruit showing through.
- Bake the bars for 35 to 40 minutes, until the fruit is bubbly and the crumb topping smells toasty and looks golden. Place the pan on a wire rack to cool completely (you can speed this process along in the refrigerator).
- While the bars cool, prepare the glaze: In a medium bowl, briskly whisk together the powdered sugar, vanilla, and milk until smooth. Feel free to add more milk if a thinner consistency is desired. Using the parchment-paper handles, lift the bars from the pan. Drizzle with glaze, slice, and serve.

SIDE DISH



MEET KATHY!

She is one of our amazing Client Support Specialists who answers your calls each weekday. Kathy would like you to know that fruit comes with every home-delivered meal. The fruit is selected based on what we have available and changes periodically. Unlike our meals, it is not something clients can choose. Fruit is a valuable component to our meal program due to the nutrients that fruit provide. It makes a great snack too! Kathy and the other Client Support Specialists have tips for using the fruit you receive, so give them a call for more ideas.
616.459.3111

NEWS
FROM
MOWWM

If you would like to know more about our home-delivered meals, pantry, or dining site programs, please call Meals On Wheels Western Michigan at 616-459-3111 or go to www.mealsonwheelswesternmichigan.org

Meals on Wheels Western Michigan is supported by:

