

# MEALS AND MORE...

NEWS FROM MEALS ON WHEELS WESTERN MICHIGAN  
VOL. 3 MAR APR

## Observances

March - National Nutrition Month

March 8 - Daylight Savings Time Starts

March 17 - St. Patrick's Day

April - Alcohol Awareness Month

April 2 - Read Across America Day

April 7 - World Health Day

April 9 - Passover Starts

April 12 - Easter Sunday

April 22 - Earth Day

April 24 - Ramadan Starts

**EAT RIGHT**



**BITE BY BITE**

National Nutrition Month®  
March 2020

**eat right.** Academy of Nutrition  
and Dietetics

## EVERY BITE COUNTS!

In recognition of National Nutrition Month, we want to focus our attention around how important every bite of nutritious food can be for an older adult. Many adults experience a decreased appetite and chewing and swallowing difficulties as they age. Healthy, balanced meals and beverages are so important if this occurs. Every bite of food can contribute life-giving nutrients to our aging bodies. If you have problems with swallowing and chewing, talk to your doctor. If you have problems with your teeth, see your dentist. It is best to get some medical care and advice before unintentional weight loss occurs and you become at risk for being malnourished.

## Here are some tips to make foods easier to swallow, bite or chew:

1. Thicker liquids are sometimes easier to swallow like nectar and Kefir.
2. Chop, mash or puree foods. Use a fork, blender or food processor.
3. Add gravy or sauce to help soften and moisten food.
4. Try different food textures to see what suits you best.

Remember: If you receive Meals On Wheels Home Delivered Meals, you can receive meals Cut, Minced & Moist, or Pureed if you are experiencing significant chewing and swallowing problems. Just call for more information. Meals on Wheels Western Michigan 616.459.3111

### See the chart below for examples of soft, easy to swallow foods



#### Soft Food Choices:

Grain Products - Soft, fresh breads, mashed or boiled potatoes, pasta, rice, barley, quinoa, oatmeal, grits, cream of wheat

Meats and Alternatives - Yogurt, kefir, pudding, ice cream, tapioca, custard, eggs

Vegetables - Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables that are well-cooked, 100% vegetable juice

Fruits - Canned fruits in own juices, 100% fruit juice, applesauce, mashed bananas, pureed fruits

Foods from two or more food groups - Shepherd's pie, macaroni and cheese, goulash, chili, hearty soups, dal, spaghetti with meat sauce, red beans and rice

## Best Pasta Ever... without the Tomato Sauce



### Ingredients:

- 2 T. extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 gloves garlic (thinly sliced)
- 1/2 small red onion (minced)
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 4 cups kale, fresh (torn or thinly sliced)
- 1/4 cup water
- 4 oz, dry whole wheat spaghetti noodles
- 1/4 cup, kalamata olives (sliced and pitted)
- 2 T. feta cheese, crumbled

### Directions:

1. Heat olive oil over medium-high heat in a large skillet. Add garlic slices then cook, stirring near constantly, until slices are pale golden brown. Remove to a plate and set aside.
2. Turn heat down to medium then add red onion. Season with salt and pepper then cook until golden-brown and tender, about 3 minutes.
3. Add spaghetti to a large pot of salted, boiling water then cook until al dente.
4. Add kalamata olives to cooked kale and cranberry mixture. Transfer cooked spaghetti to skillet then toss to combine all ingredients. Add up to 1/4 cup pasta cooking water if needed.
5. Scoop on plate and top with feta cheese and 1/2 the cooked garlic slices.
6. Enjoy!



## APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH!

Drinking too much alcohol increases people's risk of injuries, violence, drowning, liver disease, and some types of cancer. This April, during Alcohol Awareness Month, MOWWM encourages you to educate yourself and your loved ones about the dangers of drinking too much.

If you are drinking too much, you can improve your health by cutting back or quitting. Here are some strategies to help you cut back or stop drinking:

- Limit your drinking to 1 drink a day for women and 1 or 2 drinks a day for men.
- Keep track of how much you drink.
- Pick a day each week when you will not drink.
- Don't drink when you are upset.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you keep at home.
- Avoid places where there is a lot of drinking going on.
- Make a list of reasons not to drink.

If you are concerned about someone else's drinking, offer to help.

For more information, call Alano Club  
616-456-5709



## What's new in the MOW Kitchen?

We have dedicated staff people who prep and assemble our modified meals each day. We use special equipment to make sure our meals still look and taste as good as the regular meals. If you or your loved one are having difficulty cutting the food, chewing or swallowing, call to try one of our modified meals!

Cut



Minced & Moist



Pureed



## Spotlight on Caregivers

### A Resource for you...Caregiver Resource Network

The Caregiver Resource Network (CRN) is a collaboration of West Michigan organizations dedicated to providing for the needs and welfare of family and professional caregivers within the community that will improve the quality of life for caregivers and their care recipients. The CRN is facilitated by Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan, which administers Title III E Older Americans Act National Family Caregiver Support Program.

Through CRN, you have access to the Family Caregiver University which provides practical education and support to caregivers in West Michigan, one class at a time. All classes are taught by community experts and are open to individuals providing care to their family members. Register for upcoming classes at:

<http://www.caregiverresource.net/family-caregiver-university>



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