

# MEALS AND MORE...

NEWS FROM MEALS ON WHEELS WESTERN MICHIGAN  
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## Observances

June - National Safety Month  
June - National Dysphagia Month  
June - National Dairy Month  
June - National Fruit & Vegetable Month  
June 7 - World Food Safety Day  
June 14 - Flag Day  
June 15 - World Elder Abuse Awareness Day  
June 16 - Eat Your Vegetables Day  
June 20 - Father's Day  
June 20 - Summer Begins



## 11 Ways Dairy Foods Contribute to Successful Aging

June is National Dairy Month so we are encouraging you to include dairy each day for good health! Check out these 12 reasons why dairy can help you stay healthy:

1. **Provides essential nutrients:** Many older adults need fewer calories, but more of certain nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, protein, and vitamin B12 than during their younger years. Dairy foods are naturally nutrient-rich, providing substantial amounts of nine essential nutrients and relatively few calories. Further, dairy foods are a source of under-consumed nutrients of public health concern, including calcium, vitamin D, and potassium.
2. **Delivers high-quality protein:** Milk, yogurt, and cheese are rich in high-quality protein, providing all the essential amino acids the body needs. Some experts recommend that older adults increase their protein intake to help preserve muscle mass, improve strength and function, and support weight management and bone health.

## 11 Ways continued.....

3. Boosts bone health. Dairy foods and dairy nutrients, particularly calcium and vitamin D (if fortified), contribute to bone health by helping to slow age-related bone loss and reduce the risk of osteoporosis.
4. Reduces chronic disease risk. Consuming three servings of dairy a day as part of an overall healthful diet may reduce the risk of developing high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and stroke, and play a role in managing type 2 diabetes, conditions affecting many older adults.
5. May benefit brain health. Dairy foods may have a beneficial role in older adults' brain health, according to emerging research. A study among older adults found that daily servings of dairy foods (milk, yogurt, cheese) or milk alone were associated with increased brain levels of glutathione. This naturally occurring antioxidant may help reduce age-related oxidative stress, such as that associated with a number of diseases and conditions, including Alzheimer's disease.
6. Helps meet hydration needs. With aging, some sense of thirst may be lost. Low-fat and fat-free milk, as well as water, and 100% juice, can help older adults stay hydrated.
7. Delivers taste and flavor preferences. Loss of taste and flavor of food may occur in older adults. Today there's a wide variety of dairy foods with new flavors, such as cheeses with herbs and spices and tangy yogurts to enhance their flavor and appeal.
8. Suits special dietary needs. As people age, some foods may no longer agree with them, or they may need to follow dietary restrictions. For older adults with lactose intolerance, dietary strategies are available to help them comfortably keep dairy in their diet. These include consuming smaller amounts of milk at a time, especially with meals, aged cheeses, yogurt with live, active cultures, and lactose-free milk and other lactose-free dairy products.
9. Requires little or no chewing. For older adults with dental problems, many dairy foods such as milk, yogurts and soft cheeses are nutritious options that either don't need chewing or are easy to chew.
10. Affordable. For older adults on limited budgets, dairy foods are a relatively economical source of essential nutrients.
11. Fulfills the need for portion control. For the many older adults who live alone and do not want food leftovers, there's a demand for healthy foods available in individual serving size packages. Dairy foods including milk chugs, yogurt on a stick or in a cup, cottage cheese in a cup, and individually wrapped, single-serve packages of cheese meet this need and is also very convenient.

## Fruit & Veggie Smoothie

- 1 cup fresh spinach
- 1 banana
- 1 cup strawberries
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/2 cup vanilla yogurt
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 cups ice

Directions: Place spinach in blender. Then top with banana, strawberries, yogurt and orange juice. Add vanilla extract and ice. Blend until smooth. Leftovers can be frozen for later use.

Notes: Fresh or frozen fruit can be used. If frozen is used, decrease the amount of ice. Feel free to add more juice, or use milk if desired. You can add chia seeds, flax seeds, or oats if wish. And any fruit you have on hand works!



## WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY is JUNE 15!

Elder abuse is the harming of an older person. It can include neglect, physical, emotional, financial, or sexual abuse.

For more information on elder abuse prevention, please visit [ncea.acl.gov](https://www.ncea.acl.gov).

Here are some things everyone can do to build community supports and prevent elder abuse.

1. Learn the signs of elder abuse and neglect and how we can collectively solve the issue.
2. Talk to friends and family members.
3. Prevent isolation - make calls or visits to older friends and family.
4. Send a letter to a local paper, radio or TV station suggesting that they cover World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15) or Grandparents Day in September.
5. Join Ageless Alliance, an organization that connects people of all ages, nationwide, who stand united for the dignity of older people and for the elimination of elder abuse. Visit [agelessalliance.org](https://agelessalliance.org).
6. Provide respite breaks for caregivers.
7. Ask our doctors to ask all older patients about possible family violence in their lives.

If you are experiencing abuse or suspect abuse, please contact:



MDHHS - Adult Protective Services ([michigan.gov](https://michigan.gov))

855-444-3911

Area Agency on Aging

616-456-5664



## What's new in the MOW Kitchen?

World Food Safety Day on 7 June draws attention and inspires action to help prevent, detect and manage food safety risks in order to promote the availability of safe and healthy food for all. This year's theme is "Safe food now for a healthy tomorrow." At MOW, we are committed to providing meals that are safe to eat. We follow the strictest sanitation and safety practices. Here are a few pictures capturing some of these practices:



Taking Temperatures

Using protective glove while chopping onions



Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces



## Spotlight on Caregivers

### It's National Dysphagia Month!

Caregivers can help ease the symptoms of dysphagia through lifestyle changes, such as offering smaller, more frequent meals; cutting food into smaller pieces and encouraging care recipients to eat slowly and chew food thoroughly; and experimenting with foods with different textures. It's also important to avoid foods that cause trouble swallowing; avoid straws; and avoid triggers that may exacerbate heartburn, such as alcohol, tobacco and caffeine.

As thin liquids may cause aspiration, thickened beverages are a safer choice. And because many dysphagia patients struggle with meeting their nutritional needs, the best dysphagia diets incorporate plenty of nutrient-dense whole foods. It is also helpful for dysphagia patients to eat and drink while sitting up, which lets food go down better. Keep in mind that swallowing food and drink correctly is harder when older adults are tired, so serve meals when the patient is most alert and keep mealtimes short. While dysphagia can't be cured, caregivers who adopt these techniques can help keep aging loved ones with the condition as comfortable as possible.

Lastly, [remember that your loved one may receive pureed meals from Meals On Wheels](#) to help meet their nutritional needs and help caregivers with preparing foods that are safe for seniors with dysphagia.