

MEALS AND MORE



**Thank you for volunteering
to deliver meals!**

OBSERVANCES:

- Rosa Parks Day (DEC 1)
- World Aids Day (DEC 1)
- International Volunteer Day (DEC 5)
- National Influenza Vaccination Week (DEC 4-8)
- National Pear Month
- Handwashing Awareness Week (DEC 5-11)
- National Energy Conservation Day (DEC 14)
- First Day of Winter (DEC 21)
- Kwanzaa (DEC 26-JAN 1)
- National Identity Theft and Prevention Awareness Month
- Read a New Book Month
- Christmas Day (DEC 25)
- New Years Eve (DEC 31)

**DECEMBER
2023**

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY!

International Volunteer Day is a reminder of the immense impact that volunteers can have on a global level. IVD offers an opportunity for volunteer-based organizations, like Meals On Wheels Western Michigan (MOWWM) to promote volunteerism and recognize contributions of volunteers. This day serves to encourage all people to contribute their time, skills, and heart to make the world a better place! Embrace the spirit of the day and join the millions making a difference in the world! We want to thank our over 220 volunteers who deliver essential services to Kent and Allegan counties on a weekly and monthly basis. They make an incredible difference in this community each day!

SUDS UP, STAY SAFE!



To stay on top of your health during the cold winter months, be sure to wash your hands often and properly! The CDC recommends specific hand washing techniques to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

Step 1: Wet hands first, then apply soap

- Why? Using clean, running water allows the soap to lather and spread on hands easier than dry hands.

Step 2: Lather hands with soap, focusing on backs of hands, fingernails, and between fingers

- Why? Lathering and scrubbing creates friction that loosens microbes, dirt, and grease from the skin. Making sure to get in between fingers and under nails is crucial to an effective handwashing.

Step 3: Scrub for at least 20 seconds

- Why? Scientific studies show that scrubbing hands with soap for less than 20 seconds does not remove harmful bacteria or chemicals. 20 seconds and above washes the most amount of germs off of the hands

Step 4: Rinse hands with running water

- Why? Rinsing hands with clean, running water, removes the lifted microbes, grease, and dirt that was scrubbed with soap.

Step 5: Dry hands with clean towel or air dry them

- Why? The transmission of bacteria is more likely to occur with wet hands than dry hands. Drying hands thoroughly with a paper towel is the best way to remove the water and remaining bacteria on the hands.

**ENERGY
CONSERVATION
NATIONAL DAY
DECEMBER 14**

ENERGY CONSERVATION DAY

Stay mindful of the amount of energy you are using daily! December 14 is a day to reduce the use of energy and motivate people to use energy efficiently. Reducing carbon emissions helps improve our air quality and saves our limited resources! A few ways to reduce energy use include keeping exterior lights on a timer, setting your thermostat to 68 degrees, hang clothes to dry, unplug energy users when not in use, limit opening your refrigerator and freezer.

SPOTLIGHT ON CAREGIVERS

CREATING FOOD NOSTALGIA AND THE BENEFITS TO OUR HEALTH

This holiday season is a time of year that for many of us creates nostalgia of past years, maybe in remembering fun family celebrations, but also in feelings of sadness and hard times as holidays are difficult for so many. Food nostalgia has been shown to be beneficial for health, however, and the holidays tend to be the perfect time to recreate and elicit the smells and tastes of the past. For your loved one and those you are caring for, what might you do to create some food nostalgia for them this season? Ask your loved one: what food do you remember eating as a kid that tasted good to you? Maybe it's not a homemade item, but a certain candy and if so, is it still made today or is it something you could order? Even talking about the item or finding the recipe and trying to recreate it can lower depressive, lonely thoughts and increase happy moments for your loved one. This also is a good question to ask yourself - what food would create

happy memories for you and even if your loved one can no longer make it, maybe it's time for you to try! For me, the food that I wish I could have from her kitchen is my grandma's homemade bread, which my sisters and I used to toast up with butter and honey. She passed away some time ago, but my mom gave me the recipe which I make every holiday season. It's not exactly the same as my grandma's because the kitchen and loaf pans are different, but it creates happy memories for my family and my children now call it "Mama's toast" as my version is the only one they know. It creates nostalgia for me remembering my grandma each holiday season. Paula - Director of Nutrition, MOWWM

NUTRIENT OF THE MONTH: BIOTIN

Biotin is a B-vitamin found in many foods. Biotin helps turn the carbohydrates, fats, and proteins in the food you eat into the energy you need. Many foods contain some biotin. You can get recommended amounts of biotin by eating a variety of foods, including the following:

- Meat, fish, eggs, and organ meats
- Seeds and nuts
- Certain vegetables (such as sweet potatoes, avocado, spinach, and broccoli)

Biotin deficiency is very rare in the United States. Biotin deficiency can cause thinning hair and loss of body hair; a rash around the eyes, nose, mouth, and anal area. Dietary supplements that contain biotin are often promoted to improve the health of your hair, skin, and nails, but there is little scientific evidence to support these claims. In a few small studies, some people with thin and brittle nails who took high doses of biotin had harder nails.



RECIPE: Spiced Pear Cookies

PREP TIME:
10 minutes

COOK TIME:
15 minutes

SERVING SIZE:
24 cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ c butter, softened
- 1 ½ c packed brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 c all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ginger
- 1 pear, peeled, cored, diced
- ½ c raisins
- ½ c walnuts
- 1 ½ c confectioner's sugar
- 2 ½ T lemon juice

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Beat butter and sugar in a large bowl until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and ginger; mix into batter.
3. Stir in diced pears, raisins, and walnuts.
4. Drop cookie dough about 2 inch apart by rounded tablespoonsful onto baking sheets.
5. Bake until edges are gold brown about 15 minutes.

NOTES:



As a reminder, MOWWM will be closed on Monday, December 25, and Tuesday, December 26. If you are a client who normally receives home-delivered meals on Mondays or Tuesdays, we will be delivering your meals for those days on Thursday, December 21. Please let us know if you will not be home for delivery during this holiday season. (616) 459-3111



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:

