

# Food and Fitness

## We the People.....

.....of West Virginia may be getting more help for treatment of our obesity epidemic. Since the American Medical Association has classified obesity as a disease, there may be improved funding for treating our problem.

.....of West Virginia are in and out of the limelight as the state with the highest rate of obesity, somewhere around 33% of the population or higher. Since obesity is directly linked to type 2 diabetes and cardiovascu-

lar disease it would make sense to treat it and even to try to prevent it.

.....of West Virginia don't have to wait for funding to treat our problem. We can start now with just a little attention to how much we eat. Let's get the measuring cups out of the cabinet and use them. Let's take the choose my plate picture and change it just a little:

**Take** the fruit off the plate and make it one half



cup only.

**Measure**

1/2

cup

only for starchy vegetables like potatoes and corn. Alternate these with whole grains.

**Make** fully half the plate low

starch vegetables— green beans, summer squash. Measure out 1 cup for these.

Add a salad of raw vegetables on the side.

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### Websites of interest:

- [caloriecount.about.com](http://caloriecount.about.com)
- [go4life.nia.nih.gov](http://go4life.nia.nih.gov)
- [medicare.gov](http://medicare.gov)

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# Gardening Linked To More Life Satisfaction and Physical Activity In Older People

People who garden may live longer, more satisfied lives, says published research from Texas A & M and Texas State Universities. "Gardening could be an effective way for older adults to increase life satisfaction and physical activity, according to the study." ([http://](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/219517.php)



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In a time when older adults are living longer and enjoying more free time, gardening offers the opportunity to fulfill needs created by changing lifestyles." Aime Sommerfeld, Jayne Zajicek, and Tina Waliczek first published their study in August 2010, and it has since appeared in the journal *HortTechnology*.

Some of their basic findings include the follow-

- ing:
  - Gardening is a healthy activity which enhances one's quality of life.
  - Gardening provides participants with opportunities to reconnect with themselves through nature.
  - Gardeners give more positive answers when compared with non-gardeners regarding satisfaction with life and plans for the future.
  - Gardeners report eating more vegetables because of their gardening activity.



If you have a little space at home in a sunny location, then all you need is a small hoe or shovel, some seeds, and a watering can to water your plants. The West Virginia Cooperative Extension Service is a valuable resource for information on what grows best in your area and when it should be planted.

Perhaps you live in an apartment and don't even have a small patio for a garden. Growing several vegetables in one container is always an option Or you might get the word out that you'd like to start a Community Garden. There may already be one in your area!



If there is not, the American Community Gardening Association offers tips (Continued on page 3)

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(Continued from page 2) and even an annual conference for people interested in forming such a garden. For more information go to <http://communitygarden.org/learn/starting-a-community-garden.php>

Here are some of the most important things to remember:

- **Organize** a meeting of interested persons. Form a planning committee. Be sure to have a few experienced gardeners in this group!

- **Identify** resources. When you put your talents together the work will be easier to accomplish, so find out who has a tractor or tiller, who owns tools and who would be willing to look for sponsors!

- **Solicit** a sponsor. Large businesses that sell tools



- and plants, such as Lowe's or Home Depot, may be a



good place to start. Be sure to figure out what you need and approximately what it will cost before you approach a sponsor.

- **Choose** a site. You may get lucky and someone will have a perfect spot.
- **Prepare** and develop

the site. You will need to clear the soil of grass and



weeds and then till it up. A great way to start is to have the Extension Service analyze a soil sample and give free advice about what your soil may be lacking.

- **Organize** the space and assign plots. There are many different ways to do this. You can diagram the plot and plant vegetables



according to how much space each will take and how tall they get. You may

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want to designate a spot for each person to call their own.

- **Plan** to include the younger generations. Seniors will do well to interest



their children and grandchildren in gardening. It's



a good way to help them develop interest in growing and eating vegetables.

- **Determine** rules and put them in writing. The American Community Gardening Association suggests that members are more willing to comply



with rules that they have helped to create. Some groups may want to have members sign a contract that includes the rules they have agreed upon.

- **Help** members to keep in touch with each other. You can start a phone list or send out periodic information via email. Other ways to keep up include having a dry erase board for announcements posted near the garden site.

Be sure to make your garden attractive. During the summer months, sunflowers are a good choice to decorate your garden

rows. In the fall, marigolds will help to keep bugs from your plants while they make your garden pretty.



Keep in mind that this kind of gardening is an experience in learning to get along and work with others! We and our fellow gardeners may be very particular about sharing space and also very particular about how we think the work should be done!

Older people may enjoy sharing their knowledge with younger



folks and will benefit from having young helpers in the garden. Young people will enjoy learning new skills that are both fun and practi-

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## Recipe Corner: From Garden to Table

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cal. While older children are more focused on the outcome of the garden, i.e., the harvesting, the younger children really enjoy the process—like digging and watering.



## Recipe Corner: From Garden to Table

### Cucumber and Honeydew Medley

- 2 cucumbers
- 1 honeydew melon
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped red onion
- ½ cup feta cheese crumbles
- 2 tablespoon fresh dill, snipped



Wash cucumbers and slice crosswise into pieces about ¼ inch wide. Peel and cut melon into bite-sized pieces. Stir together with onion, feta cheese and fresh dill. Add light vinaigrette (recipe below), stir and cover. Chill for several hours in refrigerator before serving.



### Light Vinaigrette Dressing:

- 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice



- 1 clove fresh garlic, minced
  - 1 teaspoon Greek seasoning
- Combine ingredients and

blend thoroughly.

### Mary's Roasted Eggplant

*Simple and tasty!*

### Ingredients:

- 1 Black Magic or Black Beauty eggplant
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- Tony's Seasoning or salt and pepper



### Preparation:

Wash the eggplant and remove the stem. Cut eggplant in half lengthwise and place on baking sheet. Drizzle lightly with olive



oil and sprinkle generously with seasoning powder.

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## Recipe Corner: From Garden to Table

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Place in preheated 420 degree oven and bake about 25-30 minutes. Test for doneness by gently squeezing sides of eggplant.

If done, your finger impressions should stay put. (Cooking time will vary according to size of eggplant.) Allow to cool about five minutes before serving.

Eggplant aficionados will enjoy this dish straight up while other cooks like to scoop out the shell and add ground beef and rice to the cooked eggplant, making a “stuffing” to put back in the shell. New Orleans cooks often use crabmeat or shrimp for a wonderful eggplant dish! Did you know that there is actually a website for eggplant lovers? Go to <http://www.iloveeggplant.com/varieties>

### Crispy Summer Pickles

1 quart white vinegar

¼ cup salt  
¼ cup sugar  
3 cucumbers  
1 stalk celery  
½ small white onion  
3 small red hot peppers

Wash and cut cucumbers into slices; cut celery into 3-inch sticks, and slice the onion thinly into rings. Place all vegetables in a large bowl and cover with water and ice cubes (sometimes called a water bath), then plastic wrap.



Refrigerate overnight.

Next day: Prepare jars for canning by making sure they are clean. Then sterilize them in boiling water for about five minutes.

Drain vegetables and dry with paper towels or dish cloth. Arrange vegetables in small canning jars

up to the top, allowing space for liquid.

Heat vinegar, salt and sugar in a medium-sized saucepan. Bring to a boil, cook for five minutes,



then remove from heat. Pour over the top of vegetables and seal with lids and rims.

Processing is not necessary as the lids will seal themselves by the action of the hot liquid.



Refrigerate pickles for several weeks before serving. These taste great with sandwiches or by themselves on an hors d'oeuvres tray!

# Let Freedom Ring!

Picnics, parades, fireworks—it's time to celebrate America's independence on the 4th of July! Living freely and having a long life

are indeed blessings but inde-

pendent living at home in our later years is the hallmark of freedom and of a happy life!

To maintain your independence in your activities of daily living you need strength, flexibility, and balance. All of these can be achieved through regular exercise.

What are activities of daily living? Examples are walking, climbing stairs, getting up from a chair,

bathing, getting dressed, lifting groceries, and doing house-

work. All these activities require some degree of



muscle strength to perform.

Muscle mass and muscle strength tend to decrease as we age. However, numerous studies from the '80's and '90's have shown that strength training can reverse the loss of both muscle mass and muscle function, even in frail elderly nursing home residents!

A landmark study by Maria Fiatarone, M.D. and colleagues found that a high intensity weight-training program could lead to "dramatic increases in muscle

strength in frail men and women up

to 96 years of age". Subsequent studies have both supported and expanded upon the results of Fiatarone's study. ("High Intensity Strength Training in Nonagenarians" JAMA, June 13, 1990).

Wayne Westcott, Ph.

D. and colleagues reported on their study where patients were able to improve body composition, increase muscle strength, and enhance joint flexibility with

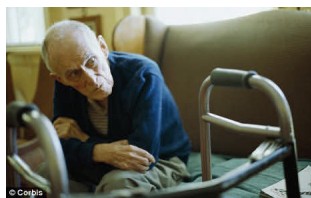


strength training. More importantly, strength training resulted in improved performance of activities of daily living. Study subjects had a 14 percent improvement in functional independence. ("Strength

Training Elderly Nursing Home Patients" in Mature Fitness, formerly Senior Fitness Bulletin, [www.seniorfitness.net](http://www.seniorfitness.net))

A scientific review of 121 studies involving 6,700 people over age 60 found that persons who strength trained two or three times a

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## Let Freedom Ring!

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week produced a large improvement in muscle strength. This enabled them to improve significantly in performing activities of daily living. (*ScienceDaily* July 26, 2009) "Progressive Resistance Strength Training Helps Older People in Daily Life" )

*Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* was first published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services in 2008. One chapter is dedicated entirely to older adults for whom regular physical activity is essential for healthy aging.

The guidelines suggest that older adults perform some sort of aerobic exercise, like walking, for 30 minutes daily and muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days per week.



Muscle-strengthening exercises are designed to make muscles do more work than usual.

You can strength train your muscles by lifting weights, using stretch bands, doing calisthenics, or lifting household items like soup cans and milk cartons. Start with one set of 8 to 12 repetitions. When you can do this easily, increase the weight or add a second set.

Ask a fitness professional at your local gym or senior center to help you get started with strength training. You can find

strength training information at the Go4Life website (<http://go4life.nia.nih.gov/>).

Risk of falling can

also be reduced with regular exercise when strength training and balance exercises are combined. Balance exercises can include walking backward, walking sideways, heel to toe walking, standing on one

leg and standing up from a seated position.

It's a good idea to hold on to something to support yourself when you first start balance exercises, then

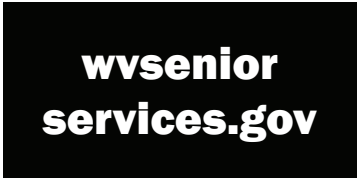


progress to doing them without holding on. There are instructions for balance training exercises at the Go4Life website.

On this Independence Day keep in mind that you can play a role in staying independent. The more you can do for yourself, the longer you can maintain your independence. And that is true freedom.



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West Virginia  
Bureau of Senior Services

## We the People.....(continued)

## News You Can Use

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**Make** the grains all whole grains and keep the serving to 1/2 cup for pasta or rice.



**Make** the 3 oz. protein portion lean—like fish, chicken breast, or loin of beef or pork.



### Medicare: Diabetes Supplies

If you have diabetes and you like having your supplies delivered to your home, beginning July 1, 2013 Medicare will do this only when you order from a Medicare mail-order contract supplier. These supplies include glucose test strips, lancets, lancet devices, batteries, and control solution.

This practice is designed to reduce the costs of providing diabetes supplies overall. To learn more either call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or visit [medicare.gov](http://medicare.gov)

