

# Senior Viewpoint

gwinnettcounty senior services

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"There's No Place Like Home!"

February 2013

## Don't fool with the flu



People age 65 and older are more vulnerable to influenza and its related complications. Influenza is a common respiratory infection caused by several related viruses. Symptoms include: high fever, headache, tiredness, lots of cough-

ing, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and body aches.

This year's flu is shaping up to be "*worse than average and particularly bad for the elderly*" says Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, director of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Hospitalization rates for flu have been very high right now and the

majority of those hospitalized are elderly. We need to remember that as we age, our immune system weakens and our ability to fight illness decreases. Influenza germs are easily passed from person to person through coughing, sneezing, or through contact with fluids from an infected person's mouth or nose.

If you have not yet received your flu vaccine, please note that you can get the traditional flu shot or the higher dose version designed to address the age-related decline of the immune system. The best news is that both vaccine options are covered by Medicare Part B with no copay.

## Take charge of your heart — By Brittney Dickey, Office Assistant to Health Services

Heart disease is a leading health threat for seniors, but there are lifestyle choices that can be made to help prevent premature death and improve the quality of life. These following tips are heart-healthy lifestyle choices for seniors:

**Exercise:** The American Heart Association recommends at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity per day. Choose yoga, bicycling, dancing, walking, or swimming to get the heart pumping and improve heart health.

**Add fiber every day:** A high-fiber diet will do double duty of filling you up and helping prevent inflammation of the arteries. Some of the healthiest sources of fiber include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nuts.

**Eat the good fats:** Replace fatty foods with olive or canola oil, nuts and seeds, natural peanut butter, trans-fat-free margarine, fatty fish, and avocados. Foods loaded with omega-3 fatty acids are beneficial to your cardiovascular system like salmon, sardines, halibut, olive oil, and soybeans.

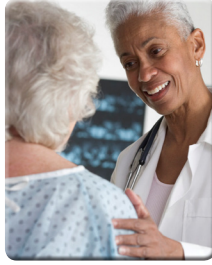
**Lower your sodium:** It is suggested to not take in more than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day, which is the equivalent of about one teaspoon of salt.

**Take time to smell the flowers:** Take time to rid yourself of stress. And don't forget to take time each day to take part in an activity you enjoy.

*Adapted from: <http://www.krtv.com/news/heart-healthy-tips-offered-for-seniors/>*

## Schedule your annual checkup — By Adrienne Noble, Information & Assistance Specialist

In last month's edition, I talked about making positive life changes and suggested that seniors begin this year by scheduling an annual health checkup. I hope you all took this to heart and scheduled your annual checkup to start the year off right. Remember, being healthy in mind, body, and soul is key to a happier and healthier lifestyle.



I know many of you want to stay healthy and have already visited your doctor. Still, many others will find reasons to put this off until a later date. Sometimes when we are faced with physical ailments, we fear the unknown and find ourselves avoiding our doctor. However, the longer we wait to be treated, the worse the condition becomes. Often, easily treatable ailments become serious conditions

when neglected over time. Prevention or early follow-up can make a big difference with the outcome.

If you do not have a doctor who you visit regularly, consider one of the health clinics in Gwinnett County. These are great resources for health care and services and are often offered at a reduced rate. Below is a list of health clinics in Gwinnett County. If you are in need of other resources, please feel free to contact me at 678.377.4150. Schedule your appointment today.

**Good Samaritan.....678.280.6630**  
**Health Center of Gwinnett**

**Four Corners .....770.806.2928**  
**Primary Care Center**

**Hope Clinic.....770.685.1300**

## Feed a healthy heart



February is American Heart Month. A healthy heart is the result of good genes, the right food choices, plenty of physical activity, and knowing how to deal with stress. While you can't do much about your genes, regular exercise, eating right, and

dealing with stress are lifestyle behaviors you can control.

To keep your heart happy and healthy, be sure your diet is balanced. Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables provide vitamins and minerals to keep your body healthy. They are also packed with nutrients that help prevent heart disease and several forms of cancer.

Eat three servings per day of low-fat or fat-free dairy foods and include lean meats, fish, and poultry or plant proteins like beans, nuts, and seeds in your eating plan everyday.

Some examples of foods that promote heart health include:

- Beans, peas, and barley
- Fruits and vegetables
- Salmon, tuna, sardines, and mackerel
- Red grapes and purple grape juice
- Nuts, such as almonds, walnuts, and pecans
- Green or black tea
- Onions, scallions, shallots, garlic, and leeks

*Adapted from: American Dietetic Association Daily Tips: "Feed Your Healthy Heart" and "February is American Heart Month"*

## Gwinnett County Senior Center Locations

**Buford**  
2755 Sawnee Avenue  
Buford, GA 30518  
770.614.2527

**Lawrenceville**  
Rhodes Jordan Park  
225 Benson Street  
Lawrenceville, GA 30046  
678.277.0970

**Norcross**  
5030 Georgia Belle Court  
Norcross, GA 30093  
770.638.5683

