



Senior Viewpoint

gwinnettcounty senior services



“There’s No Place Like Home!”

March 2011

Coming Out of Hibernation

Give yourself a pat on the back and dare to poke your head outside without forming icicles on the tip of your nose. Georgia’s coldest winter ever is almost over and the daffodils are reminding us that we won’t have to hibernate inside much longer. As we move into spring, it is time to start thinking about all those projects in or around our residence that we put off because of the cold weather. Please take the time to take a look around to determine if you need yard work or general clean-up assistance, because the good news is that if you are not able to handle the tasks, we have lots of great volunteers and lots of willing groups who can help you.

These good-hearted helpers can clean up your yard, help organize your household, and make some of those

home repairs that just can’t wait any longer. Some of our volunteers can repair roofs, help with plumbing, and install grab bars or correct potential in-home fall hazards. Our groups generally have safety checklists so that they can make sure that outside and inside fall or safety hazards are identified and repaired. After all, we don’t want you to fall and get hurt when the weather is so nice!

If you need some volunteer assistance to help with yard work, repairs, or household organization, please contact our Volunteer Specialist, Shawn Valadez, at (678) 377-6716.



Ask A – By Adrienne Noble, Information & Referral Specialist

“Dear A,

My Mother is 90 and entered a retirement community about a year ago not long after my Dad passed away. The place is great and she likes it. The only serious problem is that, with mild dementia, she tends to watch TV very late into the night (past midnight sometimes) and then sleep late the next morning, sometimes until noon. I would like to see this sleep pattern change, preferably so that Mom would go to bed around 10 and wake up early enough to attend group exercise at 9:00 am; she attended a few times and seemed to like it. Ideally, she’d wake up even earlier, early enough to attend breakfast before exercise. Have you heard of families that have approached this problem successfully? Any approaches to avoid?” – *Concerned Son*

Dear *Concerned Son*,

My suggestion is that you contact the Alzheimer’s Association. They have a wealth of information on Alzheimer’s & Dementia and most likely have brochures of information that may relate to your mother’s specific needs. They can even provide information on any support groups in the area. Support groups are a wonderful way to reach out for help and information. The Alzheimer’s Association contact information is: 404-728-1181, If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me.

Take Control – Keep Moving! – By Pat Milhous, Nutrition Services Coordinator

On March 18, 2011, our second **Community Health Fair** will be held at George Pierce Community Recreation Center in Suwanee, Georgia. This is designed to inspire all of us to stay active and healthy. Here are two recent studies that give us even more encouragement!

According to a recent study by British Journal of Sports, people who are more physically active have fewer and milder colds. The researchers tracked the respiratory health of 1,000 adults between the ages of 18 and 85 for 12 weeks. Participants who were physically active at least five days a week reported having cold symptoms fewer days than those who were active less than one day a week. This is just one more reason to put on your walking shoes.

Also, new research suggests that walking at least six miles per week may protect your brain from shrinking in size and in turn, preserve memory in old age. The study

found that people, who walked at least 72 blocks per week, or roughly six to nine miles, had greater gray matter volume than people who did not walk as much after nine years. Walking more than 72 blocks did not appear to increase gray matter volume any further. At 13 years into the study, 40 percent had developed cognitive impairment or dementia. Researchers found that those who walked the most cut their risk of developing memory problems in half. This is more evidence that regular exercise should be a priority for all adults.

Adapted from "Chef Charles Says" February 2011, Iowa Nutrition Network

Put Spring Into Your Walk – By Julie Lucas, Office Assistant to Health Services

After a long and snowy winter in Georgia most of you are probably ready for longer days, more sunshine and warmer weather. Daylight saving time is on March 13, 2011 (remember to 'spring ahead') and March 20, 2011 is first day of spring. Get outside and walk. Walking is great exercise and the spring is a perfect time to do it. The weather is getting nice, the birds are chirping, the bugs are not out yet, and walking is a wonderful low impact activity, especially if you have been inactive this winter.

Walking can be done most anywhere and at just about any time. For seniors, walking is an exercise that can grow in its intensity and duration as you increase your fitness level. Your walking program may start with an easy stroll, in your neighborhood, park or the track at your local high school. Walking is a very versatile exercise program. Just keep your walking shoes handy so wherever you go, you can be sure to take your walk.

Seven health benefits of walking:

- Improvement of cardiovascular function and possibly a reduction in the chances of having a heart attack
- Potential weight loss or weight control
- Reduction in blood pressure
- Has been found to be helpful in the prevention and treatment of depression
- Has a positive impact on the health of people with diabetes
- Helps build endurance and muscle strength
- Helps build and maintain bones and muscles

You can get started walking for exercise today with just a pair of good shoes and comfortable clothing. Before you realize it, you will be feeling better and be headed toward a healthier life

Adapted from MayoClinic.com

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
(770) 822-5180

Norcross

5030 Georgia Belle Court
Norcross, GA 30093
(770) 638-5683

