



# MIDLAND AREA AGENCY ON AGING

2727 West 2nd St., Suite 440 Hastings, NE 68901

402-463-4565 Toll Free 1-800-955-9714

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## IMPORTANT DATES

**CLOSED**  
**Independence Day**  
**July 4th, 2022**

Midland Area Agency on Aging (MAAA) is a non-profit agency serving senior citizens in Adams, Clay, Hall, Hamilton, Howard, Merrick, Nuckolls, and Webster counties. We take pride in serving those 60 and older who want to remain comfortable and independent in their own home for as long as they safely can.

### **Why is Swimming and Exercising in Water Good for People with Arthritis?**

Swimming can be a good choice of exercise if you have arthritis because it:

- Stimulates blood circulation and can reduce muscle stiffness and ease pain.
- Helps to maintain and build strength and cardiovascular fitness.
- Can help make your joints more flexible.
- The buoyancy of water reduces impact on your joints.

### **Why is swimming and exercising in water a good option versus other types of exercise?**

You might find specific exercises like walking, running, or cycling hard; swimming is low impact, and you can work at your own level. You can try other water-based exercises like aqua aerobics and aqua jogging.

It can be a good choice of exercise if you're recovering from surgery to help ease stiffness and tone muscle.

### **What are the benefits of regular exercise?**

All exercise releases endorphins (feel good hormones) and there's evidence to show swimming can benefit physical, and mental health by improving mood, sleep and reducing stress. Find out more about the benefits of swimming for boosting your health and wellbeing.

Just being in the pool makes it easier and moving in water reduces pressure on joints and can ease stiffness. Make sure you take time to warm up and cool down.

### **Find what works for you**

You can choose to go for a swim with a friend or join a group class and make it a social event.

Try out different strokes or movements in water and if you are feeling fatigued, be gentle with yourself and do a bit less. If you notice any pain, listen to your body and take a break if you need to.

# MIDLAND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



Please call  
1-888-997-1655 to  
schedule your ride or  
to receive further  
information.



Midland Public Transit provides transportation for individuals of all ages, regardless of race and/or disabilities. We will take you where you need to go and return you home. Services are provided in Clay, Nuckolls, Merrick, Howard and Webster Counties. We offer rides both in and out of town.

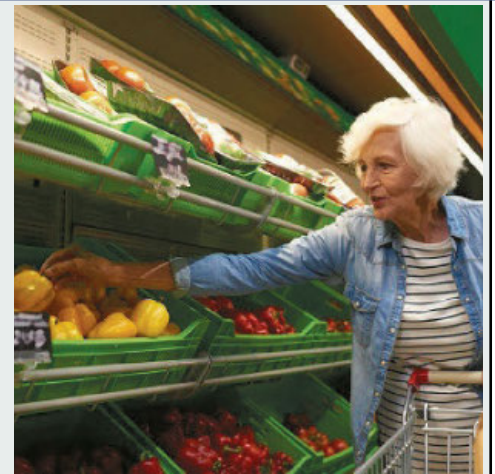
Public transit allows increased access to health care appointments, shopping and public service for all community members. We have multiple vehicles equipped with mobility in mind, featuring ramps and lifts for wheelchairs.

## GOT MEDICAID?

If you have Medicaid, we can give you a ride to your medical appointments! We are currently contracted with Nebraska Total Care, United Health Care and WellCare of Nebraska to provide transportation services in Adams, Clay, Howard, Merrick, Nuckolls, and Webster counties.

## 6 tips for healthy food shopping on a budget

1. Plan ahead. This first step is perhaps the most important. Take stock of what you have at home so your produce doesn't wilt and your pantry items don't expire before you use them. Look at the upcoming week and think about how much time and energy you'll have to cook. Then plot out menus, factoring in days for leftovers. Bonus: You'll waste less food and help the environment!
2. Make a shopping list and stick to it. Always have your grocery list on hand, either on paper or on an app. That way you can add items as you go about your day. When you go to the grocery store, only buy what's on the list. Don't go to the store when you're hungry, so it's easier to avoid pricey impulse buys like junk food.
3. Look for sales and coupons. Talk to friends and neighbors about where they shop to scout the best deals. Then join the free store loyalty programs and stay updated on sales and coupons. Keep in mind that it may be most cost-efficient to stock up on certain items, such as paper products or meat, at different stores.
4. Keep in mind that your freezer is your secret weapon. It's wonderful to buy fresh produce in season. But frozen fruits and veggies are usually at least as nutrient-dense as their fresh counterparts—and typically cheaper. Prepare large batches of nutritious meals and freeze them for nights when you're too busy or tired to cook.



5. Go meatless. Reducing or eliminating your meat intake is great for your wallet, your body and the planet. If giving up meat entirely seems too daunting, start with one dinner a week. Research amazing vegetarian recipes to make it fun!
6. Drink more water. Not only does water have zero calories, it's essential for optimal physical performance and costs much less than sugary drinks. So drink up!

# GRANTS & CAREGIVER SUPPORT

## GRANT PROGRAMS

### Homemaker

Helps individuals living in their home who have difficulty with any general cleaning duties



**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT CRYSTAL**

**402-463-4565 EXT. 318**

### Chore

Helps individuals living in their own home who have difficulty with any heavy tasks such as lawn care, snow removal, and other heavy cleaning.

## CAREGIVER SUPPORT

There are grants available specifically to assist caregivers with their journey and ease their workload.

### Lifeline/Emergency Response

Access to Grants to help pay for your service.

### Respite Care

Allows for bringing in extra services to give a caregiver a break

### Supplemental Services

Helps pay for meal services, lifelines, etc.

**Webster County Community Hospital**  
 Webster County Community Hospital  
 (402) 746-5600  
 Webster County Clinic  
 (402) 746-5614  
 Red Cloud, NE

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 or (800) 950-9952 x2677

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**4PI** Contact us at: [careers@4pi.com](mailto:careers@4pi.com) | [www.4pi.com/careers](http://www.4pi.com/careers)

### NUTRITION PROGRAMS

#### The Golden Friendship Center

Congregate Meal  
Monday - Friday 12pm  
Meal must be reserved by 2pm the day before.

#### To-Go Meal

Monday - Friday 11:45am  
Meal must be reserved by 2pm the day before

#### Goldbeck Towers

Congregate Meal & To-Go Meals  
Monday - Friday 12pm  
Meal can be signed up for in the dining room the day before.

#### Roseland

Congregate Meal  
Every Tuesday 11:30am  
Meals can be reserved by calling the Roseland Bar & Grill (402) 756-6900

#### VOUCHERS

Vouchers can be redeemed at The Village Diner located inside The Good Samaritan Village Monday - Friday.

#### Limit 10 Vouchers per month

Vouchers can be obtained at The Golden Friendship Center during office hours or during Monthly distribution at The Village Diner from 10-10:30 the last Thursday of the month

#### HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Home Delivered Meals are provided to anyone 60 and over who are homebound by reason of illness or disability or who are deemed eligible. Meals are available throughout Adams county. Please call The Golden Friendship Center for more information.

Office location:  
The Golden Friendship Center  
2015 W 3rd St,  
Hastings NE 68901  
402-460-1246

Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 4:00pm

### OTHER PROGRAMS OFFERED

Exercise Equipment and Classes, Walking Area, BINGO, Toenail Clinic, Blood Pressure Clinic, Special Events

Contact our office for more information and a schedule.



## Older, wiser, sleepier?

Some changes in sleep cycles come naturally with age. But if you're having regular trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, or if you feel drowsy all day, the cause probably goes beyond getting older.

According to the National Sleep Foundation, **common causes** of sleep problems in older adults include:

- Medical problems such as arthritis, depression, heartburn, dementia, lung disease, heart disease, incontinence or osteoporosis.
- Sleep disorders such as sleep apnea, restless legs syndrome, periodic limb movements disorder and advanced sleep phase syndrome.
- Lifestyle changes such as more frequent naps, less physical and mental activity, and less exposure to sunlight.
- Stress, sadness or anxiety. These feelings may come with retirement, losing loved ones, or medical or financial concerns.
- For women, menopause. This transition can cause hot flashes and breathing changes that interfere with sleep.

### Getting help

If pain, frequent urination, a chronic disease or any other medical problem is interfering with your sleep, talk to your doctor. The medical problem should be treated both for its own sake and the sake of your sleep.

If you're drowsy during the day or not sleeping well at night and you don't know why, ask your doctor about finding the cause of your sleep problems. He or she may recommend a sleep study to check for a sleep disorder.

### Better ZZZs

Go to sleep and get up at the same time everyday, avoid caffeine late in the day, skip the nightcap, and only use your bedroom for sleeping. If you're not tired get up and do something else until you feel sleepy.

# AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

## ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU ARE CARING FOR OVER 60 OR DISABLED?

Do you need help applying for Medicare/Medicaid, Social Security and other services?

Are you looking for in-home assistance, housing or financial assistance?

Are you having trouble locating adequate transportation, behavioral health services, legal services, medical care or assistive technology?

The ADRC provides contact information for local and state resources, supports and services of value. They can also assist with application processes and verification. This information can assist you in making informed choices about the services that best meet you or your loved ones needs.



ADRC provides information, assistance, and education on community services and long-term care options for: seniors (age 60+), people with disabilities of all ages, their caregivers, family members and advocates.

adrcnebraska.org  
or call  
402-463-4565  
ex. 309

### SENIOR HEALTHCARE PRODUCTS

**Low Cost Medicare Supplements**  
(Multiple Companies to choose from)

**Prescription Plans Final Expense Policies**

Saving Seniors Money  
Call for FREE Comparison & Consultation



E. Clark Rasmussen  
308-380-3832  
clarkras@charter.net

Not affiliated with any Gov't Agency or Federal Medicare Program

### Stay in your home!

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**Carol 308-381-8220**

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Midland Area Agency on Aging, Hastings, NE

B 4C 05-0619

### NUTRITION PROGRAMS

#### CONGREGATE MEAL

The Gathering Place  
Monday - Friday at Noon  
Reservations must be made by  
9am the day of the meal

#### HOME DELIVERED MEALS


Meals are delivered Monday  
through Friday to eligible  
participants in and near Cairo

#### OTHER PROGRAMS OFFERED

Coffee group, Monthly Dinner, and more

Office Location:  
The Gathering Place  
314 S. High St  
Cairo, NE 68824  
308-485-4634

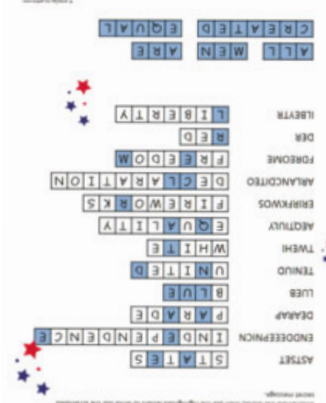
Hours:  
Monday -Friday  
9:00am - 2:00pm



## Fourth of July Word Scramble

Unscramble the words, then use the highlighted letters to write out the scrambled secret message.

ASTSET	<input type="text"/>
ENDDEEPPNICN	<input type="text"/>
DEARAP	<input type="text"/>
LUEB	<input type="text"/>
TENIUD	<input type="text"/>
TWEHI	<input type="text"/>
AEQTIULY	<input type="text"/>
ERIRFKWOS	<input type="text"/>
ARLANCDITEO	<input type="text"/>
FDREOME	<input type="text"/>
DER	<input type="text"/>
ILBEYTR	<input type="text"/>



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# LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

## WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE LTC OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM?

**Education** - to inform residents, families, facility staff and others on a variety of issues related to aging, long term care and residents' rights.  
**Information and Referrals** - to empower individuals to resolve concerns and complaints on their own behalf.

**Consultation** - to make recommendations for protecting the rights of residents and improving their care and quality of life.

**Individual Advocacy** - to facilitate the resolution of concerns and complaints and to protect the rights of residents.

**Systems Advocacy** - to identify significant concerns and problematic trends and to advocate for systemic changes that will benefit current and future residents of long-term care facilities.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTC) Program was established under federal mandate through the Older American's Act. A LTC Ombudsman is an advocate for the rights and well-being of nursing home and assisted-living facility residents.



**For more information call**

**Brenda McVey 402-463-4565 ex. 311**

**E-mail:  
brenda.mcvey@midlandaaa.net**

## Now Open in Grand Island!

A variety of daily activities and special outings will be offered, from movie showings and trivia games to dining out at area restaurants.



*The Heritage  
at Sagewood*

Assisted Living | Memory Support

1920 Sagewood Ave.  
Grand Island, NE 68803

heritage-communities.com   308-398-8005



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • www.lpcommunities.com

Midland Area Agency on Aging, Hastings, NE

C 4C 05-0619

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### CLAY CENTER CONGREGATE MEAL

Clay Center Legion  
Every Wednesday at noon.  
To reserve a seat, call the office by 3pm the day prior to the meal.

### FAIRFIELD VOUCHER CONGREGATE

Fairfield Legion Auxiliary  
Every Tuesday at noon.

### SUTTON VOUCHER CONGREGATE

Sutton Legion  
Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11:30am.

### HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Clay County offers home delivered meals to eligible participants over the age of 60.

**Clay Center**- Every Wednesday

**Edgar**- Monday- Friday

**Fairfield**- Every Tuesday

**Harvard**- Monday- Friday

**Sutton**- delivers meals every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but offers up to 5 meals/week.

Office Location:  
202 W Fairfield, STE B  
Clay Center, NE 68933  
(402) 762-3226

Hours:  
Monday- Friday 8-4pm

### Voucher Distribution

available at the following locations:

**Clay County Senior Services**-  
Every Wednesday 8am-10am

**Fairfield**- The fourth Tuesday of every month from 11:45-12:45

**Sutton Legion**- First Monday of every month

JULY 2022

# MAKE A GREAT PLATE.

A homemade mix of salty, sticky and sweet makes this snack so good.

## Popcorn Trail Mix

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups popped salted popcorn
- ¼ cup unsalted almonds, pecans or cashews
- ¼ cup unsalted sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- 1 tbsp neutral oil (avocado or canola)
- 1 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp cinnamon

### DIRECTIONS

In large mixing bowl, combine popcorn, nuts and seeds. In small bowl, combine oil and honey. Pour over trail mix. Sprinkle with cinnamon and toss to coat. Enjoy with a spoon – it's sticky.



Makes 6 Servings. Each: 125 calories • 3g protein • 9g total fat • 8g carb  
3g sugar • 2g fiber • 15mg sodium • 1g saturated fat • 4g mono fat • 4g poly fat

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# \*HALL COUNTY

Senior Citizens Industries, Inc

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
DANA KIRBY

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### THE GRAND GENERATION CENTER

304 E 3rd St, Grand Island  
308-385-5308

### DONIPHAN SENIOR CENTER

103 W. Pine, Doniphan  
402-845-6583

### CONGREGATE MEAL

Monday-Friday 11:30-12:30

### CONGREGATE MEAL

Monday - Friday at Noon

### CURBSIDE MEAL

Monday-Friday 11:30-12pm

### TO-GO MEAL

Monday - Friday at Noon

### HOME DELIVERED MEAL

Monday - Friday for eligible participants in Grand Island

### HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Monday - Friday for eligible participants in Doniphan

### OTHER PROGRAMS

Recreation Room, Cards, Fitness Classes, BINGO, Support Groups, and More.

### OTHER PROGRAMS

Cards, Blood Pressure Clinic, Puzzles, Walking, and More.



GLPI

# \*HAMILTON COUNTY

DIRECTOR  
JENNY FRIESEN

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### Hamilton County Senior Center

1205 11th Street  
Aurora, NE 68818  
(402) 694-2176

### CONGREGATE MEAL

Monday- Friday at 11:30

### HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Monday - Friday for eligible participants in Hamilton County.

### CURBSIDE

Monday - Friday at 11:30

Please call by 9am to reserve your meal

## OTHER PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Blood Pressure Clinic, Toenail Clinic, Exercise Classes, Exercise Equipment, Movies, Crafts, Coffee Groups and more

\*INDEPENDENT NON PROFIT

# HOWARD COUNTY

**Site Supervisor**  
Toni Bentz

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### CONGREGATE MEAL

Monday - Friday at 11:30 am  
Please call by 2pm the day before to reserve your meal

### HOME DELIVERED MEAL

Provided Monday - Friday for eligible participants.

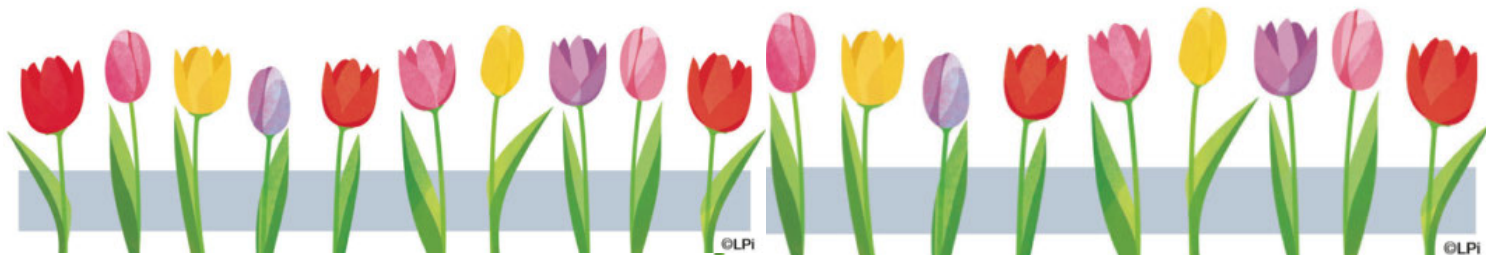
To cancel a meal, please call by 8:30am

Office Location:  
St Paul Community Center  
808 Howard St  
St. Paul, NE 68873  
308-754-5452  
or  
308-754-5453

Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 4:00pm

## OTHER PROGRAMS OFFERED

Toenail Clinic, BINGO, and more.



# MERRICK COUNTY

**SITE SUPERVISOR**  
Tina Broekemeier

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### CENTRAL CITY

#### THE GOOD LIFE CENTER CONGREGATE MEAL

Monday - Friday at 11:45 am

#### TO-GO MEAL

Monday - Friday at 11:30

#### HOME DELIVERED MEAL

Monday - Friday for eligible participants

#### CLARKS

#### HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Monday - Friday

### PALMER

#### THE LEGION CLUB CONGREGATE MEAL

Thursdays at Noon  
Call (308) 894-2700 for a reservation

#### HOME DELIVERED MEAL

Monday - Friday for eligible participants

#### CHAPMAN

#### HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Weekly meals for eligible participants

Office Location:  
The Good Life Center  
803 C Avenue  
Central City, NE 68826  
308-946-5176

Office Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 am - 2:30 pm

## OTHER PROGRAMS OFFERED

Blood Pressure and Toenail clinics, Exercise Classes, Cards, Bingo, Puzzles, Exercise Equipment, Library Checkout, and much more.

# MIDLANDS CHOICES

Do you want to know more about the services, care, and support options available to you in your community?

Are you interested in living the most independent life possible?

Do you need help deciding what living alternative is best for you?

Do you have questions about the type of care you need and how your needs can be met?

Do you need more information about funding and options available to you?

If you answered yes to any of these questions our Choices program can help!

## Care Management

Available for individuals 60+ who need assistance with coordination of in home services and supports

## Case Management

Available up to 4 times per year. For individuals 60+ with less intensive needs

## Medicaid Waiver

If eligible for Medicaid, individuals may qualify for waiver services to help in the home, transportation, meals, and lifeline.

For referrals or questions call and speak with Nicole  
402-463-4565 ex. 301

## Place Your Ad Here and Support our Community!

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### AD CREATOR STUDIO



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<b>LOUP CITY</b> 308.745.0573	650 P St PO Box 624
<b>CENTRAL CITY</b> 308.946.3018	1634 16th St PO Box 177



[www.bankwithcitizens.com](http://www.bankwithcitizens.com)

## Valley County Health System Home Health & Hospice



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308.728.4355



Jennifer Smydra  
CPA LLC

C: (308) 750-7398  
O: (308) 571-0754

207 Howard Ave #2  
St Paul, NE

## Williams FUNERAL HOMES



**Red Cloud**  
402-746-2500  
241 West Fourth Avenue  
Red Cloud, NE 68970



**Superior**  
402-879-3123  
814 Idaho St  
Superior, NE 68978

**Edgar**  
402-224-5315  
Edgar 219 North Street  
Edgar, NE 68935



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • [www.lpicommunities.com](http://www.lpicommunities.com)

Midland Area Agency on Aging, Hastings, NE

D 4C 05-0619

# NUCKOLLS COUNTY

**SITE SUPERVISOR**  
Brenda Combs

Office Location  
447 North Central Avenue  
Superior, NE 68978  
402-879-4691

Office Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 4:00PM

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### SUPERIOR

**THE VESTEY CENTER  
CONGREGATE MEAL**  
Monday - Friday at Noon

**TO-GO MEAL**  
Monday - Friday 11:30am

**HOME DELIVERED MEAL**  
Available Monday - Friday for  
eligible participants.

### NELSON

**HOME DELIVERED MEALS**  
Available Tuesday - Saturday for  
eligible participants.

**LAWRENCE  
HOME DELIVERED MEALS**  
Available Tuesdays & Thursdays  
for eligible participants.

**VOUCHERS**  
Can be used at D&D Lyon's Den  
In Nelson & Dick's Place in  
Lawrence. Call for more info!

## OTHER PROGRAMS OFFERED

Blood Pressure and Toenail  
Clinics, Cards, Trivia, Music,  
BINGO, Coffee Group,  
Popcorn & Conversation and  
much more.



# WEBSTER COUNTY

**SITE SUPERVISOR**

Office Location:  
432 N. Elm St  
Red Cloud, NE 68970  
402-746-3708

Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 4:00pm

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

**RED CLOUD  
Elm Street Center  
CONGREGATE MEAL**  
Monday - Friday at Noon

**TO-GO MEAL**  
Monday - Friday 11:30am

**HOME DELIVERED MEAL**  
Available Monday - Friday for  
eligible participants

**BLUE HILL  
HOME DELIVERED MEALS**  
Monday - Friday for eligible  
participants

**GUIDE ROCK  
Senior Center  
CONGREGATE MEAL**  
Monday - Friday at Noon

**TO-GO MEAL**  
Monday - Friday 11:30am

**HOME DELIVERED MEAL**  
Available Monday - Friday for  
eligible participants

**HOME DELIVERED MEALS**  
Available in Inavale, Bladen,  
Rosemont with a modified  
schedule.

### VOUCHERS

Vouchers can be redeemed  
at Thrainers in Blue Hill and  
at AJ's in Bladen.

Vouchers are distributed  
monthly in Bladen and Blue  
Hill or by appointment in  
Red Cloud

## OTHER PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Toenail and Blood Pressure Clinics, Fitness Classes, Activities and more

# WOOD RIVER

WOOD RIVER SENIOR  
CENTER  
120 E 9TH, WOOD RIVER  
308-583-2066

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS

**CONGREGATE MEAL**  
MONDAY - FRIDAY AT NOON

**TO-GO MEAL**  
MONDAY - FRIDAY AT NOON

**HOME DELIVERED MEALS**  
MONDAY - FRIDAY FOR  
ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS IN  
WOOD RIVER



**FOSTER  
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402.463.1440



**St. Paul  
Dental**

**Andrew Benson DDS  
James Krejci DDS**  
**308.754.4296**



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**AD CREATOR STUDIO**



[lpicommunities.com/adcreator](http://lpicommunities.com/adcreator)



**Frank Musalek**

402-463-0631  
630 W. 2nd St. Hastings, NE 68901  
[frank.musalek@edwardjones.com](mailto:frank.musalek@edwardjones.com)

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For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • [www.lpicommunities.com](http://www.lpicommunities.com) Midland Area Agency on Aging, Hastings, NE E 4C 05-0619

# NUTRITION PROGRAM INFORMATION

Nutrition services are authorized under The Older American Act. They are designed to promote the general health and well-being of older individuals age 60 and up, The services are intended to reduce hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition of older adults, promote socialization of older individuals, promote their health and well-being by assisting in gaining access to nutrition and other disease prevention and health promotion services and to delay the onset of adverse health conditions resulting from poor nutritional health or sedentary behavior.

## NUTRITION PROGRAMMING PROVIDED

CONGREGATE MEALS	HOME DELIVERED MEAL	VOUCHERS	TOGO MEALS
<p>Congregate meals are served in a group setting. Often times activities, educational programming and entertainment are offered. Participants have the opportunity to socialize while enjoying nutritionally balanced meals in a comfortable and welcoming environment.</p>	<p>Home Delivered Meals are provided in the participants home five days a week. Nutritious meals, education, and risk screening are provided for individuals over the age of 60 who are homebound by reason of illness or disability, who are otherwise isolated and or deemed eligible.</p>	<p>Vouchers are available in certain counties and allow dining at local establishments. Please contact your county to see if they participate.</p>	<p>At the beginning of the pandemic, in an effort to accommodate social distancing the ability for TOGO meals began.</p> <p>Please contact your county for more information about availability.</p>

## WHAT WILL THIS COST ME?

All of our meals are contribution based. This means we do not charge for the cost of them, but we suggest a contribution amount that helps keep this program running in the future. The suggested donation amount for participants over 60 is between \$4.00 to \$5.00 depending on the meal site. Meal programs are supported by funding through the Federal Older American's Act (OAA), the state of Nebraska, local donations, and your contributions. All contributions are voluntary and confidential.



# 5 BALANCE EXERCISES FOR SENIORS

## SIDESTEPPING

Step sideways in one direction with your toes pointed straight ahead. Move 10 steps in one direction, then return in the other direction.

As this exercise gets easier to do, try using a resistance band stretched across your legs just above the ankles.

## SIT TO STAND

Rise out of a chair without using your arms to push yourself up. Too difficult? Place a firm pad on the chair seat to raise your sitting height as needed.

Do this exercise 10 times.

## STAND ON ONE FOOT

Shift your weight onto one leg. Stand on that foot and stretch the other leg out in front of you, a few inches off the floor.

Hold that position for a count of eight.

Slowly return your leg to the starting position. Repeat with your other leg.

For an extra challenge, flex and point your lifted foot: Bend your ankle so your toes first point away from you, then flex the ankle up to point your toes toward you.

Do this exercise 10 to 15 times with each leg.

## BALANCE WALK

Raise your arms to the side until they're even with your shoulders.

Focus on a spot in front of you to steady yourself as you walk.

Walk with one foot in front of the other in a straight line.

As you walk, lift your back leg and pause in this position before stepping forward.

Do this for 20 steps.

As this gets easier to do, try looking from side to side as you walk. (Skip this step if you have inner ear problems.)

## HEEL-TO-TOE WALK

Raise your arms to the side until they're even with your shoulders.

Position the heel of one foot just in front of the toes of the other foot. Your heel and toes should touch—or at least almost touch.

Take a step. Put your heel just in front of the toes of your other foot.

Do this for 20 steps.



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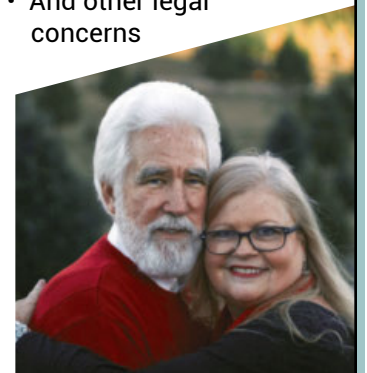
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Midland Area Agency on Aging, Hastings, NE

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# Benefits of Gardening for Seniors



## 1. GARDENING LOWERS STRESS

Studies have found that gardening can lower levels of cortisol which can alleviate stress and even reduce high blood pressure. One study asked participants to perform a stressful task and then asked them to either garden or read for 30 minutes. Both groups showed a reduction in stress levels, but the group that gardened showed a greater decline in cortisol than the reading group. The gardening group also exhibited a positive mood, while the reading group experienced a further decline in mood. Additionally, being out in the sunlight and creating a beautiful space to rest and relax will bring peace and a reduction in anxiety.

## 2. GARDENING INCREASES SEROTONIN

Serotonin is a chemical in the brain that increases mood and feelings of calmness and peace. Some studies have even linked gardening to a reduction in symptoms of depression. One study found that contact with a certain bacteria in soil triggers the release of serotonin in the brain and works as a natural anti-depressant. This may be why 'horticulture therapy' is a growing form of therapy that has shown positive results for people with depression and other mental illness.

## 3. GARDENING BOOSTS HEART HEALTH AND REDUCES THE RISK OF STROKE

Gardening is a moderately intense exercise and can count towards the expert recommended 30 minutes of exercise daily. A study from Stockholm found that regular gardening can reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke by as much as 30% for people over 60. Additionally, being outside in a sunny garden can increase vitamin D levels, which has also been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease.

## 4. GARDENING INCREASES MOBILITY

In addition to being a great form of physical exercise, gardening can increase mobility and strength. Keeping lesser used muscles engaged, gardening has been shown to be a productive way of rebuilding strength and mobility following a stroke.

## 5. GARDENING MAY BOOST BRAIN HEALTH

While no one knows what exactly causes Alzheimer's and how to prevent the disease, research has shown that positive life choices do have an impact on the risk of developing the disease. Gardening is one such lifestyle choice that may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and related forms of dementia. Engaging critical functions like dexterity, problem-solving, endurance, and sensory awareness, studies have found that gardening can reduce the risk of dementia by as much as 36%.

