



## **Chef Charles Says...**

A newsletter for congregate meal participants for the month of April

**Please read carefully.**

**We have new information in  
this section.**

The April newsletter includes information on refrigerator thermometers which are the incentive for April-June, 2012. Maintaining a constant temperature in the refrigerator is important for keeping food safe. Ask the participants to place the thermometer in their refrigerator and check the temperature before the next Chef Charles meeting.

Before teaching the class, stop by a local restaurant and ask to borrow a menu. The article on eating out uses the menu as a prop. Restaurant chains with more than 20 sites will soon be required to provide the calories for the menu items. You may want to request that information as well, if it is available. Nutrition information may also be in a separate brochure.

Chef Charles is concerned that many older adults who are eligible are not participating in the Food Stamp Program, or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) as it is now called. In Iowa the program is called Food Assistance. As an instructor for Chef Charles, you can help those at your meal site understand that the SNAP program can make a big difference in their food budget. Older adults may not want to talk about this program, so a good strategy is to suggest that they share the information with others. To help you discuss the use of Food Assistance with your participants, we have created a feature article in the newsletter. Please share with your participants.

The information in the Chef Charles newsletter may cause participants to ask questions about specific health conditions such as diabetes or medications. It is not the intent of Chef Charles to answer specific health questions. As a Chef Charles instructor, it is important that you direct any personal health questions to **health professionals**.

We encourage you to use the questions at the end of the instructor's guide. This provides feedback to us regarding the success of the Chef Charles program in helping participants to eat healthier, be more active and have safe food. Ask your group the questions at the beginning of your Chef Charles meeting and then again at the end. This will reinforce key points and identify if the participants know the answers.



## Pick a Better...

### Props:

- Newsprint/marker  
or  
Chalkboard/chalk

## Fruit

What is your favorite food? If you are thinking fruit, you are in the minority. Fruit is taken for granted. Here is why fruit deserves more respect.

### Fruit is nutrient-packed.

Vitamin C, potassium, folate, and many other micro-nutrients are found in fruit. Do not forget fiber, and in a few cases, some calcium and iron. Some fruits have more nutrients than others. Eating a variety of fruit is the best way to access all the goodness of fruit.

### Fruit is low in calorie density.

Most fruits are a real nutrition bargain as they have all of their nutrients for less than 100 calories per serving. Fresh fruit is about 85 percent water and it fills you up. There are exceptions like dried fruits that have more calories per bite; that is, they have a higher calorie density.

### Fruit helps lower blood pressure.

Fruit is one of the richest sources of potassium, which may help explain why people who eat more fruit have lower blood pressure. The DASH diet, which can lower blood pressure, includes four to five servings of fruit a day. The best way to increase potassium intake is to eat more foods that are high in potassium, like fruit.

### Fruit is convenient.

Most fruit requires no refrigeration and little packaging. Apples, grapes, bananas and peaches are finger foods that you can grab any time. Fruit is user friendly. You really do not need a recipe.

### Fruit can be cheap.

Fruit is not always a bargain. Raspberries are almost always expensive because they are so perishable. Almost any fruit that is shipped long distances and is out of season will be costly. But in season, you can often find grapes, apples, and pears at reasonable prices.

### Fruit is fabulous.

Fruit adds blasts of color that zips up any dish. Fruit has a range of textures, flavors and colors.

Adapted from *Nutrition Action Health Letter*, June 2011.

## Activity

**Ask the group:** What is your favorite fruit? (As people name fruit, create a list of answers on newsprint or a chalk board)

After all the favorite fruits have been mentioned, ask the group to mention why they like each fruit. (Create a second list of reasons



participants like the fruit. If a reason is mentioned more than one time just write down once.)

Now let's compare our reasons that we like fruit to the reasons fruit is good for us. (Read one reason from the newsletter and if it is mentioned on the list, circle the item. The reasons do not have to be identical but representative of the newsletter reasons.)

After reading the newsletter list, check to see if the group had mentioned additional reasons on the list. Compliment the participants on knowing why fruit is such a good choice.

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## Chef Charles Says **Eating Plant Foods Reduces Dangerous Fat**

### Props:

- Pencils for each person

Excess visceral fat, which surrounds internal organs, raises the risk of diabetes and fatty liver disease, and is more dangerous than the subcutaneous fat that lies just underneath the skin. Eating more plant foods that contain soluble fiber can help reduce this unhealthy fat, according to a recent study.

Soluble fiber dissolves slowly during digestion which helps delay a feeling of being hungry. An increase in the amount of soluble fiber consumed daily decreased the amount of stored visceral fat significantly. Adding vigorous activity for 30 minutes two to four times a week further decreases visceral fat.

Soluble fiber can be found in vegetables, fruits, beans, and some grains. Good sources include oatmeal, oat cereal, lentils, apples, oranges, pears, oat bran, strawberries, nuts, flaxseeds, beans, dried peas, blueberries, cucumbers, celery, and carrots. While the nutrition facts label does not list soluble fiber, it has total dietary fiber. Eating a variety of fiber rich foods can be a benefit.

*Obesity*, June 16, 2011

**Men over the age of 70 need 30 grams of fiber and women need 21 grams of fiber each day.** This recommendation is based on the amount of calories a person needs. Your congregate meal provides 8 grams or more of fiber based on the average weekly menu.

### Activity

**Say to the group:** Not all body fat is the same! It seems that the fat that surrounds our internal organs is more dangerous for our health. This fat can be found around our abdomen. We don't like it because it makes our stomach bigger. Just how can we control this dangerous fat? Answer:

1. Balance calories in with calories out (eating/activity);
2. Get vigorous activity several times a week; and
3. Eat soluble fiber.

The newsletter has a list of soluble fiber examples. Could each of



you use a pencil to circle the foods in the list you eat on a regular basis? And then put a rectangle around other foods you would eat if you had them at home. This is just a short list. The resource this month directs you to a website that can give you many ideas on fiber foods. IF you did not circle or put a rectangle around many foods you should visit the website to find more fiber rich foods.

Vigorous exercise also is helpful controlling visceral fat. Let's look at the Be Active information in the newsletter

## Be Active

### Props:

- 4 cans of soup
- 4 volunteers to do exercise

## Aerobic Exercise Battles Visceral Fat

According to research, aerobic exercise is better than resistance training if you want to lose the belly or visceral fat that poses a serious threat to your health. The eight-month study compared the effectiveness of aerobic exercise (such as brisk walking), resistance training (such as weight lifting), or a combination of the two activities in 196 overweight, sedentary adults, aged 18 to 70.

The researchers found that aerobic exercise reduced the visceral fat and significantly reduced risk factors for heart disease and diabetes, such as insulin resistance. Resistance training did not deliver the same benefits. Aerobic exercise plus resistance training achieved results similar to aerobic exercise alone, the investigators found.

Resistance training is great for improving strength and increasing lean body mass. If you are overweight, and need to lose belly fat, aerobic exercise is the better choice because it burns more calories. Aerobic exercise burned 67 percent more calories than resistance training.

*American Journal of Physiology, Aug. 25, 2011*

### Activity

**Ask for four volunteers from the group.** Give two volunteers two cans of soup and ask them to do exercises with the cans. A simple exercise would be arm curls. Ask the second two volunteers to begin walking around the room.

*Can you name the type of exercise the volunteers are doing? (Exercise with soup cans-resistance training and walking is aerobic and vigorous exercise.)* Both types of exercise are important.

Do you know the name of the fat that surrounds your body's organs and cause our waists to expand? (*Visceral*) Studies have shown that aerobic exercise is a better choice to control this fat. Vigorous exercise is aerobic exercise that gives you the feeling you are pushing yourself.

But do remember that you need to do both types of exercise to for overall health. Aerobic or vigorous and resistance exercise.



## Get the News

### Props:

- Sample menu from a restaurant
- Basket

## Eating Out and Eating Healthy

If you follow a healthy diet for conditions like diabetes or heart disease, it may be hard to stick to your plan when eating in restaurants. In 2012, restaurants with 20 or more locations will be required to post calories for a menu item. When you do dine out, here are some tips for sticking to your healthy eating plan:

- Do not be afraid to make healthy requests. Ask for dressing on the side, no butter and go easy on the salt. Having sauces on the side will help you control what you are eating. If the dish is large, ask to split with your luncheon partner or ask if a half portion is available. **Sample menu from a local restaurant**
- Avoid the bread basket. While waiting for your meal to arrive, you may start snacking on bread without even knowing how much you are eating. Limit yourself to one piece of bread while waiting for your dinner to arrive, or ask your server to hold the bread.  
**Basket**
- Just because it sounds healthy, does not mean it is. Some people think that if you are eating a salad, you are eating healthy, but that isn't always the case. Salads can have a lot of added calories from cheese, meats, croutons, dressings and other foods. **Menu from local restaurant**

### Activity

**Say to the group:** Eating out is enjoyable but it can be a problem if you have a condition like heart disease or diabetes. Paying attention to just a few items on a menu can make a difference.

Hold up the props suggested and read or summarize the three points. If you feel comfortable, you may ask three participants to read the suggestions. After each suggestion is introduced, ask if any participants are already doing this suggestion and share their experiences. If you have the calorie or nutrition information from the restaurant, pick a few items on the menu to highlight and ask the participants to guess which ones are higher/lower in calories.

## Chef Charles Asks the Questions

### Props:

- None

## Do Men Need to Be Worried About Osteoporosis?

A new perspective on why older people are at risk for broken bones, and how to reduce those risks, is changing the treatments to prevent and treat bone loss. For decades, research focused on postmenopausal osteoporosis with special attention to Caucasian women who are at greatest risk for brittle bones. But the research was missing a large portion of the population—men. In fact, men



suffer 25 percent of hip fractures, and their one-year survival rate is significantly lower than that of women with the same injury. Men also lose bone for most of their lives at about the same rate as women. Studies have revealed that half of osteoporosis-related fractures occur in people whose bones had been considered strong by bone mineral density testing. While bone density remains the best measurement for determining fracture risk, newer assessment tools consider many other factors that contribute to fractures such as age, low body weight, lifestyle factors, and medication.

Women should have their bone density measured and fracture risk assessed at age 65. **Men should be measured at 70 or sooner if they have risk factors for osteoporosis, such as family history of the disease, or if they smoke, have a poor diet, or are very thin.** Using the bone density screening is only one piece of the picture. Ask your health professional to also consider other factors to lower your risk of bone fractures.

*Circulation, June 2011*

### Activity

**Say to the group:** Please raise your hand if you have a close relative that has had a broken hip or wrist. (*You should have both men and women raising their hands*)

Now would all the women lower their hands? The men who are still holding up their hands could be at risk for fractures just like the women. Women have been the focus of screening for osteoporosis or brittle bones, but men with certain risk factors could be at just as great a risk. (*Read risk factors highlighted in article*) This is just a reminder that men need to pay attention to healthy bones.

## Food Safety

### Props:

- Refrigerator thermometer for each participant

## Refrigerator Thermometers

To maintain food safely, it is important to verify the temperature using a thermometer. Most refrigerators are easy to adjust. Check the owner's manual for specific details on adjusting the temperature.

Temperatures will vary throughout the refrigerator and with the type you have. The door is usually the warmest part and the top shelf is often the warmest shelf. Place the thermometer below the top shelf and towards the door to give a general indication of the temperature. If the temperature is not 38 to 40 °F, adjust the refrigerator temperature control and check again in 5 to 8 hours. An adjustment period is often required when you change the temperature. Checking the temperature can be important during a power outage. When the power goes back on, if the refrigerator is still 40 °F the food is safe.



Refrigerators should maintain a temperature no higher  
Than 40 degrees F.

Frozen food will be top quality when the freezer  
maintains 0 °F.

### Activity

**Say to the group:** Let's do a survey. Please raise your hand if you know that you have a thermometer in your refrigerator. Now, please leave your hand up if you have checked the temperature in the last month. And, please leave your hand up if you have checked in the last week. Of those left with your hands up, what was the temperature? (*Answer: 38-40 degrees F.*)

Everyone will get a thermometer but make a point of giving the people who did not raise their hands the thermometers first. Your assignment for this next month is to place the thermometer in your refrigerator and check the temperature. Where should you place the thermometer for the best reading? (*Answer: Below the top shelf and near the door.*)

Your thermometer will also come in handy if there is a power outage. Leave the refrigerator door closed and when the power is restored, check the thermometer. If the temperature is 40 degrees or lower the food is safe to eat.



## Snacks

### Teaching Points:

- What is your favorite fruit to eat with cottage cheese?
- 1/4 cup of cottage cheese has about the same amount of protein as one ounce of meat.
- What does low-fat mean? Made from skim, fat-free or 1% milk.
- This single serving recipe can be made quickly to satisfy your hunger.

## Breakfast in a Snap

Cottage cheese for breakfast provides protein that is needed throughout the day.

- 1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese
- 1/2 cup pears or favorite fruit, fresh, canned, light syrup or juice pack
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon or nutmeg

Spoon cottage cheese into a small bowl, top with fresh or canned fruit. Serve cold and eat with a spoon.

Makes one serving. Calories 143; Protein 14 g; Fat 1 g; Carbohydrates 19 gm; Fiber 2 gm; Folate 14.8 mcg; Potassium 216 mg; Calcium 80 mg; Sodium 464 mg



### Did You Learn Any New Ideas?

1. Name one reason fruit is a good choice to eat any time.
2. Where is the best place to position a refrigerator thermometer?
3. Who are often not considered to be at risk for bone fractures?
4. Which type of exercise helps control visceral fat?
5. Which type of food helps reduce visceral fat?

### Your Answers

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### Order Your Materials (provided to Iowa Nutrition Network Partners Only)

Contact Name

Congregate Meal Site (Please list all the sites for which you are ordering the newsletter.)

Address

City, State and Zip

Phone Number

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Month	# Newsletters	# Incentives
April, 2012	_____ Congregate Meal Site Participants	The incentive for April-June is a refrigerator thermometer. Please indicate how many are needed. _____

Return to: Marilyn Jones,  
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## Your Answers

List one of the six ideas from  
page 1

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Below the top shelf and close  
to the door

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Men, especially with risk  
factors for osteoporosis

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Aerobic

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Soluble fiber

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## Chef Charles Says...

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This material was funded by the Iowa Nutrition Network and USDA's SNAP. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. Food assistance can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more about Iowa's Food Assistance Program, contact the local Iowa Department of Human Services office serving the county where you live, or call toll-free at 1-877-937-3663.

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