



## Isolation, Loneliness May Raise Death Risk for Elderly

The Chef Charles newsletter is designed to promote better eating and physical activity habits for older adults attending congregate meal sites. The expected outcome is better health and quality of life for participants. But there are other risk factors like isolation and loneliness that seriously influence a person's quality of life.

*Congregate meal sites not only provide food but also socialization. Combining both healthy food and socialization contribute to a healthier and longer life.*

Research suggests that being socially isolated is not good for your health, and may lead to serious illness and a reduced life span.

The investigators in this study found that social isolation was a more consistent predictor of not surviving than was loneliness, and was related to greater risk of dying even after age and background health were taken into account.<sup>1</sup>

Leaders need to encourage participants to take advantage of opportunities for social connections at the meal site. It is important to encourage participants to spend time with other people, whether it is family, friends, community organizations or volunteering. This is where Chef Charles and congregate meal sites come in.

As the leader, you can contribute to positive socialization for your participants by:

- Spending time before your class talking and inquiring about their life.
- Using actions that promote contact with other participants.
- Using small group discussion to encourage social interaction.
- Praising participation in activities to encourage discussion.

### Instructions

Read articles in the newsletter. Consider one step you will take to provide socialization for participants.

## Food and Exercise for Better Health

### Presentation

How many of you know someone diagnosed with diabetes? *Quickly count hands and determine if the number is over half, etc.* With so many people having this chronic disease, it is important that we all are familiar with its care.

For some people with diabetes, their diabetes can be controlled with food and exercise; others may also need medication. You will find many ideas about food and diabetes in the newsletter like:

- Eating an apple, pear or blueberries every day has been shown in a study to reduce the risk of diabetes by 23%; page 1.
- Eating more white than brown rice increases risk; page 3.
- The Mediterranean diet is more effective at lowering blood sugar and losing weight for a diabetic than other diets; page 2.

Are those new ideas for you? What other tips have your doctor or dietitian shared with you about food and diabetes?

Now let's talk about exercise and diabetes. It is good to know that walking is just overall good for your health in so many ways. For instance:

- It may help you live longer; page 2.
- It helps control chronic disease specifically by controlling blood pressure, cholesterol, heart disease and risk of diabetes, and does it better than running.<sup>2</sup>

*Cont. on page 2*

<sup>1</sup> Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. March, 2013

<sup>2</sup> Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology, March, 2013

*Presentation Continued from from page 1*

- It only takes a small amount of exertion to benefit you. As little as 3500 steps, or approximately a total of 1.5 miles a day, or 45 minutes at 2 mph.

But do you walk? You do not have to answer that in front of the group! I know there are many barriers to walking. But as we read in the newsletter (page 3) your health can benefit from starting a new habit at any time in your life.

Let's break into small groups around our table. Groups of at least 5-6 people. *(Note suggestions for teaching different sizes of groups in the May 2013, Leader's Guide.)*

**Here are your group directions:**

**The questions is: what stops you or someone you know, from taking a daily walk?**

In your group, each person should think of 2-3 answers. You can write them in the margin of your newsletter. After 2-3 minutes, ask the group to play charades. One person at a time in the small group will act out the barrier and the rest of the group will guess the answer. Each small group should vote on the 'best' actor. After everyone has done one barrier, ask the people with the 'best' answers to come to the front of the room and act out the barrier for the whole group to guess. The small group members will refrain from answering when their person is acting.

*Not everyone will be comfortable as an actor in the exercise activity. Encourage all participants to do the acting in the small group and save the outgoing actors for the large group activity.*

Now for the problem solving. After each best barrier is acted out, ask the whole group what a person could do if this is a barrier?

**Desired Action:**

Participants will become aware of the importance of both food and exercise to help control chronic conditions like diabetes.

Sample Barriers / Opportunities	
I hurt (arthritis, etc.)	Plan exercise after medication; select your best time of day
Afraid of dogs	Map of path without dogs
Afraid of falling	Walk on flat surface; use a walking stick Consider taking a Matter of Balance Class
Seasonal changes	Dress appropriately; have an inside & outside regular path
Just lazy	Find a walking friend who is motivated

**Sample Actions for Participants:**

Barriers selected in the activity are natural actions. Suggest they select one of their barriers to improve.

1. I will ask a grandchild to help me map a ten minute walk beginning and ending at my home. I will use the map to complete a walk at least two times this next week.
2. I will ask a friend or neighbor, that I know is lonely, to go on a walk to the park with me tomorrow.
3. For the rest of this week, I will keep a diary of my pain that would stop my walking and select the best time for me to take a walk.



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## Snack Demonstration

### Brown Rice Salad

1 cup uncooked brown rice, (cooked according to packaging directions and cooled)

1 carrot, cubed

1 stalk celery, finely chopped

2 green onions, chopped

1/3 cup walnuts, chopped

1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped (optional)

Ground pepper

#### Dressing

1/4 cup red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon lemon juice

3-4 tablespoons vegetable oil

Freshly ground pepper

*Try other flavored vinegar in place of the red wine vinegar.*

Mix first 6 ingredients in bowl. In separate bowl, whisk dressing ingredients together. Toss altogether and chill. Makes 6 one-third cup servings.

203 Calories; 17 g Carbohydrates; 4 g protein; 10 g fat; 14 mg sodium; 166 mg potassium; 17 mcg folate; 2 g fiber; 24 mg calcium

#### Teaching Points

- One cup of uncooked rice will equal approximately three cups.
- Leftover celery can be used for a snack or in a simple evening meal when peanut butter is added.
- If you have a patio garden, grow a little parsley. It is a great addition to many tomato type dishes.
- The sodium is very low for this dish. Make sure if you use a pre-packaged brown rice you check the sodium.
- If you are using a carbohydrate counting diet, one serving would be one carbohydrate choice.
- This recipe supports the Mediterranean Diet with more vegetables and whole grains, healthy oils and fresh herbs.





**Chef Charles  
Says...**

# Leader's Guide

## Newsletter Order Form

**June 2013**

Please read the newsletter and leader's guide to answer the following questions. Then submit your order.

1. T or F If you complete the same distance, walking and running provide the same benefits.

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2. T or F Brown rice and apples may reduce the risk of diabetes. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name one barrier that stops you from walking or exercising.

\_\_\_\_\_

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Congregate Meal Site Participants

\_\_\_\_\_

The incentive for April-June is a flashlight magnet. If you did not receive yours in April, please indicate how many are needed.

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**Return to:** Marilyn Jones,  
IDPH, Lucas Building, 4th Floor  
321 E. 12th Street,  
Des Moines, IA 50319

or by FAX 515-281-4913.

#### **Answers**

1. True
2. True
3. Multiple answers

**For questions, call Marilyn at 800-532-1579 or 515-281-6047.**