

THE BUZZ

ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING

MAY 2025



It is the mission of the Ulster County Office for the Aging to assist and empower older adults and their families to live as independently as possible, with dignity and purpose.

Ulster County will strive to reach more older adults and expand upon its current services by bringing them to remote and underserved areas of the County.

This includes new educational health promotion, service enrollment and Senior advocacy program opportunities so they can stay in, and contribute to, their community.

Are you 60 years old or older...

...Need a ride for a medical appointment?

...Would benefit from a nutritious home-delivered meal?

...Need help with legal matters or Medicare questions?

Programs and Services:

- Home-Delivered Meals and Community Café's
 - Legal Services
 - HIICAP Medicare Counselling
 - Home Care Services
 - Transportation for non-emergency Medical appointments via Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) or Neighbor to Neighbor
 - Medical Alert
 - Housing Information
 - Caregiver Support Group and Warm Calls
 - Tai Chi, Mall-Walk, and other Exercise Programs
 - Nutrition Counseling by Registered Dietitian
 - Information and Assistance/NY Connects
- Trained staff are available 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., in person or by phone, to answer questions about available community resources, benefits and entitlements. Call 845-340-3456 for more information.



1003 DEVELOPMENT COURT, KINGSTON, NY 12401 | 845-340-3456 | ULSTERCOUNTYNY.GOV/AGING

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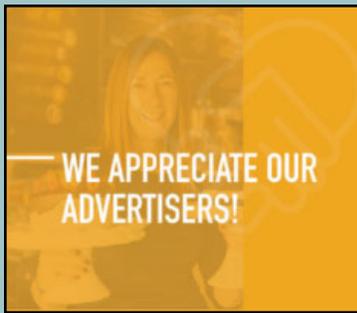


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UCOFA DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Dear Ulster County Older Adults!

We are busy preparing for a busy spring and summer already! The schedules are filling up, we've got lots of folks who want to come talk to you!

Of special note: we have a doctor asking to speak to older adults about falling and fall prevention – May 5 at the Hub - - we have the Department of Homeland Security coming to talk about Emergency Preparedness in May as well – you must register with them, but we can help if you cannot manage it. I've had several groups call and request presentations on certain topics, and if I can speak on them, I am happy to do that. Scams, Tech help and general OFA issues are all in my wheelhouse! Please make sure to check our newsletter each month.

We will be offering legal planning and gardening information, lunch and learns, non-lunch presentations, more exercise classes, and we have been providing more rides than ever before! The need is out there. Please consider volunteering to be a driver as many folks are unable to take themselves to the doctor, or they just may need a one-time ride to a medical appointment. We offer mileage and the satisfaction of being a good neighbor for our folks who need it.

Please consider making a phone call to the Public Service Commission of New York State. 1-800-342-3377. They must receive at least 3,000 complaints or concerns about the rate hike proposals from Central Hudson before they can do anything about it. There is a new proposal to hike the prices up even further. For many of our low-income adults, this is untenable at this point. Use your voice to help the entire group! Don't forget we have a mission to try and improve the tech expertise of older adults who need it – our classes are on Thursdays here at the Senior Hub, and we are willing to come to groups and present as well! Just let us know.

Susan Koppenhaver, Director
Ulster County Office for Aging

Ulster County Office for the Aging Senior Technology Support Classes

Senior Technology Support Classes will be held at the Ulster County Senior Hub in Kingston on Thursday mornings from **10:00 AM to Noon**. Next classes:

May 1: Organizing Your Google Mail, Gmail (Lisa McCormack)

May 8 : General Tech Q&A, Bring your Tech and your Questions

May 15: Windows 11 Settings, Customizing the Windows 11 Computer (Herb Sawtell)

May 22: Using Apple Utilities Suite on iPhone (Patrick Cusack)

May 29: Updates to the Music and Photos Apps on iPhone (John Dowley)

Classes are limited to 15 people. Please call the Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456 to register. If you have registered for a class but find you are unable to attend, please call as soon as possible so we can contact a person on the waitlist.

Social Club at the Hub

In order to develop yet another opportunity to provide caregivers with relief, the Ulster County Office for Aging and Jewish Family Services partnered to design a new pilot respite program. This program, called the Social Club at the Hub provides 5 hours of free respite once a week to caregivers. The Social Club is tailored for those care receivers who are still able to independently complete their own personal care, and can participate in activities.

The Social Club, contracted through Jewish Family Services, offers a weekly program which has music, games, discussion, lunch, social interaction, exercise, and many other innovative programs that help the care receiver get involved and participate in meaningful activities. Caregivers feel that their loved one is safe with us while they get some much needed personal time.

The Kingston Rotary Club grant recognizes worthwhile programs who are enriching the community. By granting some funds to Jewish Family Services for supplies and expenses, the Social Club can continue as a free program for participants. We are very grateful for this recognition!



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The New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program services are made possible through funding from the New York State Office for the Aging and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living.

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CLASSES

MALL WALK WITH THE UCOFA

HUDSON VALLEY MALL
1300 Ulster Avenue, Kingston, NY.
Every Tuesday, 10:00 A.M. sharp!

**We meet by the Food Court at 9:45 A.M.
All are welcome!**

If Kingston City School District is on delay or closed, the mall walk is cancelled.

**All classes below are held at the
Ulster County Senior Hub,
5 Development Court, Kingston, NY
Call the Ulster County Office for the Aging to
register at 845-340-3456.**

UCOFA Weekly Game Day
Wednesdays, 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.

UCOFA Free Chess Classes
Mondays at 11:00 A.M.

If a County Holiday falls on a Monday, Chess Class will meet on Friday at 11:00 A.M. of that week.

UCOFA Craft Corner

Join Ulster County Office for the Aging for Creative Fun!
Each month a new craft. 3rd Friday of the month.
10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

UCOFA Gentle Chair Yoga

Mondays, 9:30 to 10:30 A.M.
First Come-First Served Basis. No Late Entries.
Maximum capacity 35.
Shoes must be worn.

UCOFA Fitness and Fun for All Bands, Balls, Light Weights, and Light Cardio

Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 A.M.
Shoes must be worn.

MEDICARE

MEDICARE COUNSELING

The Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) at the Ulster County Office for the Aging provides free and objective information, counseling, assistance and advocacy on Medicare, private health insurance, and related health coverage.

HIICAP helps people with Medicare, their representatives, or people soon to be eligible for Medicare.

HIICAP Counselors are fluent in all aspects of Medicare and health insurance coverage, including Original Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medicare supplemental plans, and prescription drug coverage.

If you need further information or would like to schedule an in-person or phone appointment with a HIICAP counselor, please call 845-340-3579.

Ulster County Office for the Aging Attorney

The Ulster County Office for the Aging Attorney can provide counseling and referrals for:

- Estate & Long Term Care Planning
- Government Benefits, including Medicaid
- Consumer Issues
- Housing
- Elder Abuse

The Ulster County Office for the Aging Attorney can also prepare the following documents:

- Simple Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Health Care Proxies
- Living Wills

There is no fee for this service, however contributions are gratefully accepted. (Suggested contributions: \$20 - \$100). To make an appointment call the Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456.

The attorney does not go to court on any matter. If immediate assistance is needed, a prospective client may want to contact Legal Services of the Hudson Valley at 845-331-9373.

UCOFA Lunch and Learn for Seniors

May 30: Emergency Preparedness

Presented by Michael Madison, Deputy Director, U.C. Emergency Services
 Shawangunk Senior Center, 70 Main Street, Napanoch, NY.
R.S.V.P. by May 21, 2025

June 11: Dance Xcross Fitness for Boomers and Seniors

Presented by Bryant "Drew" Andrews, Energy Dance Company
 V.F.W. 101 State Route 208 South, New Paltz, NY.
R.S.V.P. by June 3, 2025

Lunch and Learns run Noon to 2:00 P.M.

Free to Ulster County Seniors age 60 and over and includes free lunch with reservation. Space is limited. Call Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456 to R.S.V.P.

Falls Prevention From a Doctor's Perspective

Presented by Dr. Shashowt Ojha, MD
 Chief Resident, Northern Dutchess Hospital Nuvance Health
 May 5, 2025, from 2:00 to 3:00 P.M.
 Ulster County Senior Hub, 5 Development Court, Kingston, NY.
 Free to Ulster County Seniors age 60 Call Ulster County Office for the Aging to R.S.V.P. at 845-340-3456

Senior Prom "Casino Night"

June 5, 2025 from Noon to 2:00 P.M.
 Rosendale Community Center, 1055 Route 32, Rosendale, NY.
 Free to Ulster County Seniors age 60 Call Ulster County Office for the Aging to R.S.V.P. R.S.V.P. by May 27, 2025 at 845-340-3456

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention

(Beginner level)

Tuesdays and Thursdays
 11:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
 Starting May 20, 2025
 Marbletown Town Park
 350 Tongore Road
 Kingston, NY.

Wednesdays and Fridays
 3:00 to 4:00 P.M.
 Starting June 11, 2025
 Ulster County Senior Hub
 5 Development Court
 Kingston, NY.

Classes are twice a week for eight weeks and ask that you be willing to make the commitment to be at all classes twice a week for all eight weeks.

Free to Ulster County Seniors age 60 and over. Space is limited. Call 845-340-3456 to R.S.V.P.



Roman Holiday (1953) starring Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn.

May 20, 2025.
 R.S.V.P. by May 16, 2024.
 Rosendale Theatre, 408 Main Street, Rosendale, NY.
 Movie starts at 1:00 P.M.
 Free to Ulster County Seniors age 60 and over. Call the Office for the Aging to R.S.V.P at 845-340-3456.



Ulster County Veteran Services Agency Transportation

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May 2025 Community Café & Home Delivered Meals Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Meals Prepared by Gateway Hudson Valley Milk is provided. WW = Whole Wheat Menu Subject to Change	Community Café Information and Reservations call: 845-331-2180 For information or Home Delivered Meal Cancellation call: 845-331-2496.	* Sites closed and No HDM deliveries	1 Salisbury Steak w/LS Mushroom Gravy Mashed Potatoes Broccoli WW Roll Juice Cookie	2 Fish Filet Buttered Rice Peas and Carrots WW Bread Pear cup
5 Bruschetta Chicken White Rice Garlic Green Beans WW Bread Fresh Fruit	6 Taco Mix Yellow Rice Corn and Black Beans Rye Bread Chicken and Dumpling Soup Applesauce	7 Meatloaf Mashed Potatoes Mixed Vegetables WW Bread Juice Vanilla Pudding	8 Three Bean Vegetarian Chili w/Sweet Potato Brown Rice Green Beans and Red Pepper WW Roll Fresh Fruit	9 Sweet and Sour Pork Sesame Noodles Broccoli WW Biscuit Peach cup
12 Roast Turkey w/LS Gravy Stuffing Cauliflower WW Roll Juice Mother's Day Dessert Shortcake	13 Salisbury Steak w/LS Gravy Herbed Couscous Geneva Blend Vegetables WW Bread Applesauce	14 Chili Baked Potato w/ Cheddar Cheese Tuscan Blend Vegetables WW Biscuit Fresh Fruit	15 Fish Filet Confetti Rice Capri Blend Vegetables Rye Bread Peach cup	16 Ravioli Marinara Spinach WW Bread Pear cup
19 Pork Chopette w/ LS Sage Gravy Mashed Potatoes Green Beans WW Dinner Roll Applesauce	20 Swedish Meatballs Egg Noodles Spinach WW Bread Juice Cookie	21 Chicken Sandwich Tater Tots Broccoli WW Bread Fresh Fruit	22 Lasagna w/LS Marinara Italian Blend Vegetables Biscuit Pear cup	23 Stuffed Chicken Roasted Red Potatoes Honey Glazed Baby Carrots Rye Bread Peach Cup
* Closed 26 Hamburger Fries Broccoli WW Burger Bun Fresh Fruit Salad (Watermelon)	27 Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce Italian Vegetables WW Bread Mixed Fruit cup	28 Pot Roast w/LS Gravy Mashed Potatoes Peas and Mushrooms WW Biscuit Applesauce	29 Omelet with Red Pepper French Toast Sticks Turkey Sausage Rye Bread Peach cup	30 Mac and Cheese Stewed Tomatoes WW Bread Juice Chocolate Pudding



COMMUNITY CAFÉS

Do you know that Ulster County and the Office for the Aging sponsor multiple meal sites around the County so that Seniors, age 60 and over, can have a free meal?

Come and enjoy good food and socialization! See below for locations and days of the week.

UCOFA Community Café locations:

Ellenville: Trudy Farber Building, 50 Center Street, Ellenville, NY, Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:30.

Kingston: Ulster County Senior Hub, 5 Development Court, Kingston, NY, Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00.

New Paltz: New Paltz Community Center, 3 Veterans Drive, New Paltz, NY, Thursdays, 12:00.

Rosendale: Rosendale Recreation Center, 1055 Route 32, Rosendale, NY, Fridays, 11:30.

Saugerties: Frank D. Greco Senior Center, 207 Market Street, Saugerties, NY, Tuesdays, 11:30.

Woodstock: Mescal Hornbeck Community Center, 56 Rock City Road, Woodstock, NY, Thursdays, 12:30.

Want to try it out? Call Gateway Hudson Valley at 845-331-2180 for more information.

Reservations for registered participants must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Please remember, this is for Ulster County Seniors age 60 and over.

The recommended voluntary contribution for a Community Café meal is \$3.00 per meal but not mandated. All contributions are voluntary and confidential. No one will be denied a meal if they do not contribute. Meals made possible by funds provided by Ulster County Government, NYSOFA, UCOFA and Private funds. Your contributions help keep Senior programs available. Thank you.



HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Home delivered meals can help Seniors stay independent in their own homes. Are you or someone you know, unable to take care of meal preparation?

The Ulster County Office for Aging Home Delivered Meal Program provides a weeks-worth of nutritious frozen meals delivered once a week to Seniors at NO cost.

The meals served are planned by a registered dietitian and each meal provides one-third of a Senior's daily nutritional needs.

Qualified Seniors must be:

- 60 years or age or older
- Ulster County resident with no other supports
- Unable to prepare meals
- Homebound due to incapacity or illness

Voluntary contributions are appreciated. Contributions are confidential and no one will be denied a meal if they do not contribute. The recommended voluntary contribution is \$3.00 per meal. If monthly income is higher than 185% of the federal poverty level (\$2,248 for a 1 person household and \$3,040 for a 2 person household), Seniors are offered the opportunity to contribute the full cost of the meal which is \$ 11.04. Checks payable to Ulster County.

For more information, please call Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456. For home delivered meal cancellation call 845-331-2496.

The Office for the Aging gratefully accepts voluntary contributions. Your contributions help keep Senior programs available. Thank you. This program is made possible by funding from Federal, State, County and/or local contributions.



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06-5324

May is National Stroke Month

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts (or ruptures). When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so it and brain cells die. Being aware of risk factors and knowing your personal risk is the first step in preventing a stroke:

- High blood pressure. A leading risk factor for stroke and a leading cause of stroke. Know your blood pressure and have it regularly checked every year. Normal blood pressure is below 120/80.
- Smoking and vaping. These can lead to damages within the blood vessels, causing a stroke. Don't smoke or vape and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Diabetes. By impacting your body's ability to make or use insulin correctly, diabetes can cause glucose (sugar) to build up in your blood. High glucose levels can damage the body's blood vessels, more than doubling your risk of stroke.
- High cholesterol. High cholesterol increases the risk of blocked arteries. If an artery leading to the brain becomes blocked, it can result in a stroke.
- Physical inactivity and obesity. Being inactive, obese or both can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. Aim to reach and maintain a healthy weight and stay physically active.
- Carotid or other artery disease. A stroke can occur when a carotid artery, which leads to the brain, becomes damaged or blocked by a fatty build up of plaque inside the artery wall, limiting or stopping blood flow.
- Transient ischemic attacks (TIAs). Recognizing and treating TIAs can reduce the risk of a major stroke. TIAs produce stroke-like symptoms, but most have no lasting effects. Recent studies confirm that most TIAs are actually a stroke. Know the warning signs of a TIA and seek emergency medical treatment immediately.
- Atrial fibrillation (AFib) or other heart disease. In AFib, the heart's upper chambers quiver rather than beat in an organized, rhythmic way. This can cause the blood to pool and clot, increasing the risk of stroke. AFib increases the risk of a stroke by five times. People with other types of heart disease also have a higher risk of stroke.
- Certain blood disorders. A high red blood cell count makes clots more likely, raising the risk of stroke. Sickle cell anemia increases stroke risk because the "sickled" cells stick to blood vessel walls and may block arteries.
- Excessive alcohol intake. Drinking an average of more than one drink per day for women or more than two drinks a day for men can increase your risk of a stroke. Binge drinking can also lead to stroke.
- Illegal drug use. Drugs including cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamines and heroin are associated with an increased risk of stroke.
- Sleep apnea. Sleep disordered breathing contributes to the risk of stroke. Sleep apnea increases your risk of having a stroke. Likewise, sleep apnea is more prevalent after a stroke.

But there is good news. Stroke is preventable. In fact, an estimated 80% of strokes may be prevented through making healthy choices. Stroke is treatable. If treated quickly, the most common type of stroke can be treated with no or limited lasting deficits. Finally, stroke is beatable. Stroke rehabilitation can help many patients return to independent living.

Your readiness to spot the stroke warning signs and call 911 could save a life or make the difference between a full recovery and long-term disability. That's why it's so important to learn the stroke warning signs and act **F.A.S.T.:**

F = Face Drooping – Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?

A = Arm Weakness – Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S = Speech Difficulty – Is speech slurred?

T = Time to call 911 – Stroke is an emergency. Every minute counts. Call 911 immediately. Note the time when any of the symptoms first appear.

Other Stroke symptoms to watch for:

- Numbness or weakness of face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech
- Trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Severe headache with no known cause



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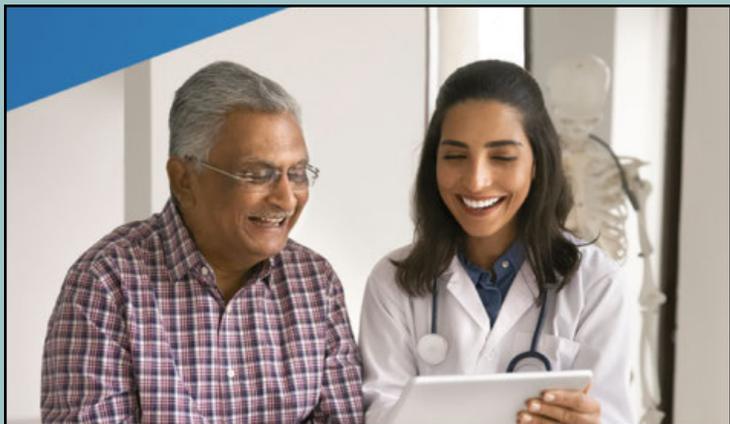
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Springtime activities for Seniors to Enjoy

Get Outdoors and Enjoy Nature

Take a walk in the park, go birdwatching, attend a farmers’ market, or have a picnic with friends or family. Gentle movement outdoors not only lifts your spirits but also helps with mobility and overall health. Remember to wear comfortable shoes and a wide-brimmed hat for sun protection.

Start a Simple Garden

Gardening is a great way to stay active and engaged. Whether you have a large yard or just a few pots on your balcony, planting herbs, flowers, or vegetables can be both therapeutic and rewarding. Caring for indoor plants counts too.

Cleaning for Your Mind and Home

A thorough springtime cleaning can be revitalizing! De-cluttering your space can help clear your mind. Sort through items and donate things you no longer need - this can provide a sense of purpose and organization. Let the fresh air in and enjoy the renewed energy of a tidy home.

Take Up a New Hobby

The season of growth is a great time for personal growth too. Whether it’s birdwatching, sketching flowers, or learning a new craft, hobbies can keep your mind sharp and your days fulfilling.

Seasonal Nutrition

Enjoy springtime’s bounty by adding fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables to your diet, like strawberries, asparagus, and leafy greens. These are packed with nutrients that can boost energy and support your health.

Try New Recipes

Whether you want to cook for guests or try a new recipe for yourself, springtime is the perfect time to experiment with fresh and natural ingredients. There are a number of cooking shows on television to watch, which will provide step-by-step tutorials.

Visit Local Attractions

Be a tourist in your own town! Springtime offers the perfect weather for traveling to local landmarks, historical sites and museums. Check with your local visitor center to see what’s happening in your town, and be sure to take advantage of Senior discounts.



Garden tips for May

- Houseplants can be moved to a spot in the yard once the nights remain above 50 degrees.
- Pick a mild, cloudy afternoon to give your seedlings a smooth transition. Use a hand trowel to dig a spot for them, remove them carefully from their containers, and place them at soil level.
- Frost-hardy vegetables. Go ahead and sow these now. Frost-hardy veggies include broccoli, kale, cauliflower, carrots, beets, and onions.
- Feed hyacinths, tulips, narcissus, and etc. while they are still in growth and making embryo flowers for next year. Cut off faded flowers for tidiness, but don’t remove foliage until it dies down naturally.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Empire State Building opened its doors on May 1, 1931.

Nuts & Seeds for Your Heart and Your Brain

Nuts and Seeds are SUPER NUTRITIOUS FOODS that contain Omega -3 Fatty Acids and other healthy unsaturated fats which can reduce inflammation and promote Heart Health. With 3 to 7 grams of Protein per serving/ounce, nuts and seeds help to fuel muscle maintenance and repair. They also are a great way to help you feel full for weight management.

Nuts and Seeds have another SUPER POWER: They help protect the brain by reducing inflammation. They contain healthy fats and antioxidants that do their anti-inflammation part. Nuts and seeds are also a fiber boost to help with a Healthy Microbiome for overall physical and mental well-being, per Uma Naidoo, MD., Nutritional Psychiatrist and Nutrition Author.

Should you go for raw or roasted Nuts and Seeds? There is really no difference. It is just important to include them into your diet.

You may want to limit and not eat large amounts of these Super Nutritious Foods every day, as they are high in calories. So enjoy a snack of nuts or seeds at about ¼ cup per day. That's about 23 almonds.

Let's look at some choices to keep your heart healthy and brain sharp:

Chia and Flax Seeds - Rich in Omega-3 Fatty Acids.

Walnuts - High in Protein and fiber. Walnuts have been linked to studies for mood elevation.

Pistachios - Researchers at *Loma Linda University* found that Pistachios have a positive impact on brain waves which are critical for cognition and memory.

Almonds - The most potent of nuts for Vitamin E, which assists in promoting reduced incidence of dementia.

Brazil Nuts - A great source of selenium, an antioxidant associated with brain health.

Pine Nuts - Rich in a rare and specific fat called Pinolenic acid, which has been shown to reduce inflammation levels.

Note: if you are allergic to nuts, go for eating seeds to get a great nutrition boost. Pumpkin, Sunflower Flax, Sesame, Chia and Hemp seeds are just a few of the many choices.

From the desk of UCOFA Registered Dietitian: Patricia Ricks, MPA, RD, CDN. Nutrition consults are free to Ulster County Seniors 60 and over. To make a referral, call 845-340-3456.

Caregiver Support Group

Ulster County Office for the Aging (UCOFA) and the Mental Health Association in Ulster County, Inc. (MHA) are offering a support group designed for caregivers seeking support and interaction with other caregivers. The group will also allow caregivers to learn skills, share information, and learn about available resources. Facilitated by MHA of Ulster County, Inc.

Meetings are held at:

MHA of Ulster County Inc.
300 Aaron Court, Kingston, NY
1st & 3rd Thursday of each month:
6:00 to 7:15 P.M.

In-person or via Zoom.

RCAL Conference Room
727 Ulster Avenue, Kingston, NY
2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month:
10:15 to 11:30 A.M.

In-person or via Zoom.

For registration or details, please call the Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456.



A Senior's Guide to Dental Care

The eyes may be the gateway to your soul, but oral health is a window into overall health. "Good dental health not only protects against gum disease, gum inflammation, and tooth loss, but also can protect against many other age-related diseases," says Dr. Len Brennan of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine. "A healthy mouth really can lead to a healthier body."

Poor oral health can have severe consequences. Research has shown that gum inflammation (gingivitis) raises the risk for lung disease, heart disease, blood vessel blockage, and strokes. Two common dental problems many older adults face are sensitive teeth and dry mouth. Tooth sensitivity often occurs when you eat or drink hot or cold food. A typical cause is gum shrinkage, which exposes more of a tooth's root. Grinding your teeth when you sleep also can cause sensitivity, so you may need to use a mouth guard at night. A dry mouth means you produce less saliva, which makes tasting, chewing, swallowing, and even talking difficult. Dry mouth also is a common side effect of many medications and is linked with such health conditions as diabetes, stroke, Alzheimer's, and autoimmune diseases. Because both sensitive teeth and dry mouth have many different causes, check with your dentist to find the source of your problem.

Like other aspects of health care, prevention is the best medicine when it comes to your teeth and gums. "Investing in proper dental care and upkeep is relatively inexpensive," says Dr. Brennan. "Dental treatments are where it can get costly." He recommends seeing your dentist every six months for check-ups, x-rays as needed, and cleanings. In between, you should follow a daily dental hygiene routine to reduce plaque buildup, gingivitis, and cavities. There are three basic steps: rinsing, brushing, and flossing.

Rinsing. Before you brush, rinse with plain water to dislodge food particles. After brushing, you can rinse again with an over-the-counter alcohol-free mouthwash with fluoride, which can help protect against tooth decay. Some products can reduce tooth sensitivity. Ask your pharmacist for a suggestion. If you have trouble controlling plaque, gingivitis, bad breath, or dry mouth, speak with your dentist about a therapeutic mouthwash.

Brushing. Brush at least twice a day for no less than two minutes each time. Choose a toothpaste with the American Dental Association (ADA) Seal of Acceptance, which verifies it contains decay- and plaque-fighting fluoride. Toothpastes come in gel, paste, or powder forms. While the ingredients can differ slightly, all toothpastes contain the same general components: mild abrasives, humectants, flavoring agents, thickening agents, and detergents. Some brands also contain other ingredients that might reduce tooth sensitivity or tartar buildup, prevent enamel erosion, or whiten teeth. Ask your dentist for a recommendation for these specific issues. "Natural" toothpastes also are popular, but again look for the ADA seal.

Select a brush with soft or extra-soft bristles. Replace toothbrushes every three to four months, or more often if the strands are visibly matted or frayed. When brushing, tilt the brush at a 45° angle. Beginning with the upper teeth, take several up-and-down short strokes from the gum line to the bottom of the tooth. Do one tooth at a time before moving on to the next. To clean the inside surfaces of the front teeth, hold the brush vertically and make several up-and-down strokes. Repeat the process for the lower teeth.

If you have arthritis that makes it hard to brush or hold a toothbrush, or if it's difficult to reach the back teeth, invest in grip aids that slide over your brush's handle. Another option is an electric toothbrush. You can get more strokes from the brush's vibrations than from your hand motion. Some brands come with timers that tell you when you've brushed long enough.

Flossing. It doesn't matter if you floss before or after brushing, according to Dr. Brennan. "But also try to floss more than once daily, if possible, preferably after a meal to reduce bacteria buildup in the mouth." You can use either waxed or unwaxed floss. People with particularly tight teeth may find waxed floss easier to use, but both kinds work the same.

"If gum bleeding occurs, that doesn't mean you should stop flossing," says Dr. Brennan. "Instead, just be more gentle around that area." If traditional flossing is difficult, you can try over-the-counter tools, such as dental picks, floss picks, pre-threaded flossers, tiny brushes that reach between the teeth (which are especially helpful to get under crowns and bridges), and water flossers.

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HEAP

845-334-5436

SNAP

845-334-5200

Medicaid

845-334-5175

Central Intake

845-334-5125

Do you know someone who might like to receive The Buzz via email? Have them call the Office for the Aging with their e-mail address.

The Ulster County Office for the Aging is always looking for ways to improve our services and resources to all Seniors across the County. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have feedback, ideas or need additional information regarding our services.



NY Connects
Your Link to Long Term Services and Supports

of Ulster County

(800) 342-9871 (845) 334-5307



NY Connects staff can help link you to long term services and supports, such as home care, transportation and meals.

Our goal is to help you live as independently as you wish to while meeting your medical, social and functional needs that arise from aging or disability.

We can help individuals, families, caregivers, and professionals.

Appointments available at the Ulster County Office for the Aging.

Call 845-340-3456 to make an appointment.

The Alzheimer's Association helpline is available 24/7 by calling (800) 272-3900.