



5 Tips for Healthier Dining



When he was a seventh grader in Washington, D.C., Daniel Thomas wrote in an essay that when he grew up, he wanted to cook for the presi-

dent of the United States. And he's done exactly that. The 30-year-old chef first learned to cook from the ladies at his father's church when he was 3 years old, and he was catering dinners for clients by the time he was 17. He has cooked for members of Congress, former President Obama and Vice President Biden, as well as celebrities from Aretha Franklin to Miss America, while working as a head chef of the U.S. Senate's executive dining room and the head banquet and catering chef for the U.S. Capitol.

But the thing he's most proud of has nothing to do with politicians or other boldface names in the news. Rather, it is about helping his father avoid diabetes.

"My grandparents were borderline diabetics, and when I was in my first year of college, my dad [Weldon, now 62] was told he was borderline diabetic," says Thomas, who calls his father — now retired from the Air Force and a pastor — "my biggest role model and inspiration."

By 2006, when Thomas was accepted into the Culinary Institute of America, one of the nation's most prestigious cooking schools, his father needed to test his blood sugar level daily.

So when Thomas began studying nutrition as part of his curriculum, he started helping his father improve his diet. "He would ask me, 'Is this OK to eat? Can I eat this?' and I would make suggestions."

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NEKAAA NEWS

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Northeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging
1803 Oregon Street
Hiawatha, KS 66434-2256

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Older Adults Are Still Skipping Vaccinations

Louise Abate first noticed an itchy tingle near her hairline. The pain started a day or two later as a blistering rash swept down from her scalp onto her forehead. “My eye was so swollen I couldn’t open it,” she said. Shingles. Ms. Abate, 76, a retired casino supervisor in Rio Rancho, N.M., had had the disease twice before, in her 60s, but the episode three years ago hit particularly hard.

Long after the rash healed, which took about three weeks, she suffered the complication called postherpetic neuralgia — lingering nerve pain that can last for months or even, as in her case, years. “I get up every day, and it’s there,” she said. “I go to sleep, and it’s there.” She had heard something about a shingles vaccine, but “I really didn’t pay attention,” Ms. Abate confessed. And she is hardly unusual.

It’s an ongoing and vexing public health problem: People once vigilant about vaccinating their children aren’t nearly as careful about protecting themselves as they age, even though diseases like influenza, pneumonia and shingles (a.k.a. herpes zoster) are particularly dangerous for older people.

“Trying to prevent, these common and often debilitating conditions, is incredibly important for older adults,” said Dr. Carolyn Bridges, associate director for adult immunization at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Yet in the C.D.C.’s 2014 and 2015 reports on vaccination coverage, she said, “we really didn’t see much change.”

Most Americans over 65 get an annual flu shot, but the proportion actually declined a few percentage points last season to about 63 percent. The C.D.C. estimates that of the 226,000 people hospitalized for flu in an average year, 50 percent to 70 percent are over 65; so are the great majority of those who die from it. “Older adults take the brunt,” Dr. Bridges said.

Similarly, in 2014, about 61 percent of older adults had received one or both of the two pneumococcal vaccines, which protect against

infections that can lead to pneumonia and meningitis. That represented no improvement, leaving millions of older people still vulnerable.

About 58 percent of older people had been vaccinated against tetanus during the past 10 years, but only 14 percent had received the recommended dose of the Tdap vaccine against tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough. It’s especially important for grandparents and others

who have contact with infants too young to be vaccinated. And elders have been particularly slow to take advantage of the shingles vaccine. The Food and Drug Administration approved it a decade ago, and the C.D.C. recommends it for those over 60, including those who’ve already had shingles.

Coverage has climbed steadily, but in 2014 it had still reached only 31 percent of those over 65. As with nearly all of these vaccines, older whites were more likely to have been vaccinated than other races.

Why these missed opportunities? “Vaccines are less likely to be routinely incorporated in adult medical practice,” Dr. Bridges said. “Every time a child comes in, a pediatrician makes sure they’re up to date.”

Older adults often have medical issues that take precedence during brief office visits. They also see specialists who are more focused on cardiology or oncology, than on flu and shingles. Seniors and their caregivers should request vaccinations; the C.D.C. publishes guidelines and a quiz that explain which ones are recommended. Zostavax, the current shingles vaccine, reduces the risk of the disease in adults over 60 by half, and the incidence of postherpetic neuralgia by twothirds.

The Affordable Care Act requires private insurers to cover Zostavax without co pays

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for people older than 60, and many cover it for policyholders over 50. But Medicare beneficiaries find that, unlike the flu and pneumococcal vaccines, which are covered under Part B and often administered in physicians’ offices, Zostavax and Tdap are covered under Part D.

Physicians can’t easily bill for Part D reimbursement, so they often send patients to pharmacies, which can. But because Part D involves a welter of different plans and formularies, some requiring patients to pay for the vaccine and then seek reimbursement, the cost and copays can discourage use. Zostavax, at about \$200 a dose, is the most expensive adult vaccine. This landscape could change drastically in a year or so. In October, the pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline submitted a new shingles vaccine for F.D.A. approval.

International studies indicate that the newcomer, Shingrix, is far more effective than the current vaccine, reducing the incidence of shingles by 90 percent.

Moreover, the effectiveness doesn’t appear to decrease among older age groups, as Zostavax’s does.

Shingrix has its own drawbacks. For one, it requires a second injected dose several months after the first; some people won’t follow up. The manufacturer has yet to set a price, and unless Congress changes the law, any new vaccine will face the same Part D billing complications. But if the F.D.A. approves it, and the C.D.C. recommends its use (which triggers insurance coverage), Shingrix may also prevent a lot of shingles cases — but only if older adults are actually vaccinated.

They don’t have a great track record.

Public health leaders don’t want older adults waiting to see what the F.D.A. does. One million Americans will get shingles in the coming year; the C.D.C. wants seniors to get vaccinated now.

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The changes in his father’s health were dramatic: He lost four pants sizes — “no more big papa bear tummy,” Thomas says with a laugh — and began walking regularly on the treadmill and swimming at the Y. “He felt so much better and had so much more energy, he went back to school and earned a doctor of ministry,” Thomas adds proudly. Best of all, his father no longer needs the daily blood sugar tests.

Thomas, who now cooks for private clients and is AARP’s Healthy Living chef, says he believes that “everyone should eat like they have diabetes. It works.” He offers these five easy tips for making healthier choices:

- **Don’t eat past 7 p.m.** It’s better for your digestion and metabolism. If you start feeling hungry later, have a healthy snack such as nuts or fruit.
- **Low-carb your burger.** Get rid of the bottom bun and eat the burger open-faced. “That one little change slashes the amount of empty carbs.”
- **Keep nuts in your glove compartment.** Stuck in traffic and feeling hungry? High-protein nuts will keep you from stopping for junk food.
- **Do the avocado mash.** Spread it instead of mayo on whole wheat bread for healthy fat, fiber and vitamins.
- **Nix the noodles in your chicken soup.** Add quinoa or barley to boost protein and fiber. Serve with chopped fresh cilantro or parsley, a squirt of lime juice and a little hot pepper.

Tax Volunteers Needed

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) is an IRS-sponsored program that offers free tax help to anyone making \$54,000 or less, including the elderly, the disabled and those having limited English proficiency. Volunteers assisting with the VITA Program just want to help in their communities.

Certified volunteers, sponsored by the Northeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging, receive free training to help prepare tax returns in Brown and other counties.

Online training is available through Link & Learn Taxes and Understanding Taxes. These online courses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via IRS.gov, and allow volunteers to take courses and obtain certification at their own pace.

Contact Kevin at NEKAAA (785-742-7152) for how to begin volunteering.

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The Latest Antiaging Foods
5 healthy edibles you should be devouring now

Everyone grows older, but there is a way you can add years to your life: Make smarter food choices. Helping you to do just that is the arrival of spring on March 20, which will usher in a crop of healthy foods we’ve come to associate with warmer months. Indeed, the following five fruits and vegetables are the best antiaging edibles the season has to offer. They will not only make you feel better, but they may help you look better, as well.

Beets

This ruby gem boasts so many healthy benefits, it absolutely has to find a way into your shopping cart, whether or not you like its earthy flavor. A fiber-rich food, beets contain an amino acid called betaine that can help lower your blood pressure, reduce your risk of inflammation, and help prevent and reduce the accumulation of fat in the liver. Win-win-win. When it comes to aging, beets contain powerful antioxidants that help keep skin supple and youthful and carotenoids that can ward off the macular degeneration that occurs as you grow older.

Asparagus

Asparagus not only boosts heart health, thanks to its vitamin K (which prevents blood clots), but this succulent vegetable also contains a special antioxidant called glutathione that’s believed to help slow down the aging process. What’s more, the veggie’s other key vitamins, B9 and B12, may help ward off cognitive decline. Indeed, a study from Tufts University found that older adults with higher levels of folate and B12 — which is harder to absorb as you age — performed better on cognitive tests than those with lower levels. If that weren’t enough, asparagus is

also rich in lycopene, which has been found to protect the prostate and help lower the risk of prostate cancer.

Carrots

Carrots are rich in beta-carotene, which actually gets its name from the classic vegetable. The body converts this beta-carotene into vitamin A, which in carrots is called retinol, an ingredient found in many antiaging creams. Along with being good for your skin and hair, vitamin A helps support your im-

mune system, preserves good vision and may help fight cancer.

Strawberries

This delicious fruit is an excellent source of vitamin C, which is thought to help lower cancer risk. In addition, the alpha hydroxy acid in strawberries helps get rid

of dead skin cells, making skin look more youthful. Indeed, a study by MCP Hahnemann University School of Medicine in Pennsylvania found that treatments with alpha hydroxy acids might reverse the signs of aging. Strawberries also are high in fiber and help balance blood sugar, and the polyphenols they contain support immunity and healthy cell renewal.

Radishes

Radishes don’t generally spring to mind when one thinks about healthy superfoods in the same way as kale might. But this root vegetable has a lot to brag about. Acting as a major detoxifier, it contains a long list of healthy nutrients — everything from folate to copper to potassium to magnesium. Studies have shown that radishes fight cancer while getting rid of all those nasty toxins in the liver. If that weren’t enough, they have vitamins A, C and K, which boost cell production and repair.




Five Ingredient Recipe

- Ingredients:
- 1 lb lean ground beef
 - 1/2 medium onion, chopped
 - 1 (10 1/2 ounce) can condensed cream of celery soup
 - frozen tater tots
 - 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Brown ground beef.
3. Saute onion.
4. In a casserole dish, combine ground beef, sauteed onion, cream of celery soup.
5. Top mixture with tater tots.
6. Sprinkle shredded cheddar cheese over top of tater tots.
7. Bake in oven for 30-40 minutes.

SHICK SHICK Volunteers Needed







The Northeast Kansas Area Agency of Aging (NEKAAA) is recruiting new Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) Counselors to help our seven counties. SHICK is free, unbiased, confidential, and available to anyone with questions about Medicare. A SHICK volunteer receives comprehensive training in a variety of areas including: Medicare A & B, Supplemental plans, prescription insurance, employer coverage, Medicaid, and a variety of related programs and insurances. The expertise provided by these volunteers is an essential service to our

local communities—and the training they receive is always a great complement to the work they already are doing. Whether someone is interested in volunteering to broaden their ability to assist their community, or simply to gain a better understanding of Senior Health and wellness, the SHICK program could be just what they are looking for. The SHICK program would not be able to serve the Medicare beneficiaries of Kansas if it were not for the volunteers here in northeast Kansas. If you know someone who is interested in learning more, contact us today. If you wish to help with the SHICK program, give Kevin Kneisley a call at 800-883-2549.




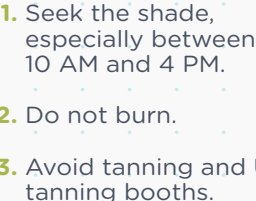
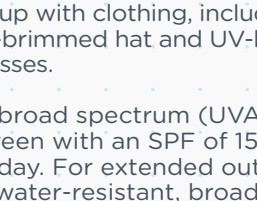
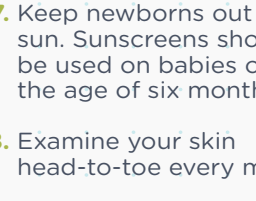

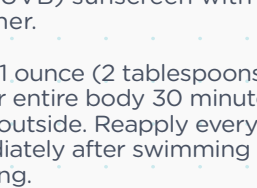


THE MINI SKIN CANCER PREVENTION HANDBOOK

The Facts About Skin Cancer

 <p>1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer in the course of a lifetime.</p>	 <p>>5 Your risk for developing melanoma doubles if you have had more than five sunburns.</p>
 <p>1 person dies of melanoma every hour.</p>	 <p>Regular daily use of SPF 15 or higher sunscreen reduces risk of melanoma by 50%.</p>
 <p>Nearly 50% of Americans who live to age 65 will have skin cancer at least once.</p>	 <p>0 - 35yrs People who first use a tanning bed before age 35 increase their risk for melanoma by 75%.</p>

How to Protect Your Skin

 <p>1. Seek the shade, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM.</p>	 <p>4. Cover up with clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses.</p>	 <p>7. Keep newborns out of the sun. Sunscreens should be used on babies over the age of six months.</p>
 <p>3. Avoid tanning and UV tanning booths.</p>	 <p>6. Apply 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.</p>	 <p>8. Examine your skin head-to-toe every month.</p>
 <p>5. Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant, broad-spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.</p>	 <p>9. See your physician every year for a professional skin exam.</p>	

