



# The Senior Sentinel

## Happy Father's Day! June 19th

### The 38th Senior Luncheon

We would like to thank everyone who came and celebrated *Wizard of Oz* style at the Senior Luncheon. Thank you to all that volunteered to make the day a great success.

*Four lucky winners won the Split the Pot of \$300 each!*

**Tom Sheffer from Waterford**

**Bonnie Lu Brenhm form Mechanicville**

**Florence Lenz from Ballston Spa**

**Tim Prout from Halfmoon**

### Gather and Dine Meal Sites

**60+ Dining Program**— Serves a nutritional meal noon time meal at the locations listed throughout Saratoga County. Meals are served Monday through Friday. Reservations must be made at least one day in advance by NOON. A suggested contribution is \$2.00 per meal, all person's age 60 or older served regardless of their ability to contribute. Guest pay \$ 8.00 per meal. For more information, call (518) 363-4020.

*Milton ~ 310 Northline Rd, Ballston Spa ~ (518)884-0163*

*Clifton Park ~ 6 Clifton Commons Ct., Clifton Park ~ (518) 383-1343*

*Corinth ~ 22 Hamilton Ave, Corinth ~ (518) 654-2040*

*Galway ~ 5910 Route 147, Galway ~ (518) 882-6070*

*Halfmoon ~ 285 Lower Newton Rd, Waterford ~ (518) 371-3892*

*Mechanicville ~ 178 N. Main Str., Mechanicville ~ (518) 664-7877*

*Moreau ~ 144 Main Str., South Glens Falls ~ (518) 792-6007*

*Saratoga Springs ~ 5 Williams Str, Saratoga Springs ~ (518) 584-1621*

From Our Dietitian:

## What's For Lunch?

With the lazy days of summer soon upon us and increasing food costs, it can be easy to say let's skip lunch or just grab fast food. Lunch provides energy to get us through the mid-day slump and contributes important nutrients to our diets. It may also help to control cravings and reduce the chance of mindless snacking. For most individuals, lunch is just as important as breakfast.

While fast food may seem inexpensive, it can add up financially and physically. A fast-food meal (complete with sandwich, drink and a side) may cost up to \$7.00 or greater at some fast-food chains. In addition to being expensive, these meals often contain more calories, sugar, fat and sodium with less vitamins, minerals and fiber than food we might eat from home. Also, when we eat foods that are high in salt, fat, and sugar, our taste buds get accustomed to them, causing us to crave them more than we might otherwise.

Additional benefits to including lunch can be opportunities to spread our nutrients and calories out over the course of the day. For the best protein utilization, it is recommended that we consume approximately 25-30 grams per meal rather than protein excess at just one or two meals. Distributing calories throughout the day helps with hunger and blood sugar control. Certain nutrients such as some water-soluble vitamins and the mineral calcium for example, can only be absorbed in certain amounts at one time. For those with limited volume tolerance at meals, eating more frequently can help them obtain more nutrients and calories when needed. Having a large plate of food at one meal, may appear overwhelming and limit healthy eating.

A healthy lunch doesn't have to be expensive or overly processed. With a little planning, you can save money in addition to reducing intake of excess calories, fat, sugar and salt. Below are some thrifty lunch ideas that will cost less than a few dollars each:

- Drink Water: Staying hydrated reduces fatigue to get you through the day.
- Eat your leftovers: Pack food in a micro-wave safe container and enjoy the meal twice. Use leftover veggies, meats, and grains to make a quick wrap, soup, or an omelet
- Include Protein: Healthy lean protein sources can include a hard-boiled egg, canned tuna or salmon, beans, low fat cheese, lean meats such as chicken. Consume these protein foods with whole grain bread, crackers or toast, and a side of raw veggies and fruit.
- Include Whole Grains: Make a whole wheat wrap with your favorite hummus and chopped veggies. Use whole grain crackers with string cheese, raw veggies and seasonal fruit. Use whole grain bread for a quick sandwich. Cooked leftover whole grains freeze well and can be eaten as a side or as mentioned added to a soup or wrap. Cooked grains also make a nice addition to salads and grain bowls with veggies, and a protein source
- Keep It Simple: Enjoy a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on whole grain bread, a side of Greek yogurt and an apple or grapes.
- Try bean soup with whole grain crackers and a side salad.
- Add canned beans or tuna to a large green salad and enjoy with a side of fruit.
- Enjoy a Light Dessert, make a yogurt parfait with Greek yogurt, frozen fruit and chopped nuts.
- Consider Having Lunch at a Senior Dining Site: Senior Congregate dining sites offer nutritious meals that are friendly on the budget asking for a small voluntary contribution if able. Seeing familiar faces and developing friendships is an added bonus at that!!

## *Health Benefits of Pets for Seniors*

Besides the obvious benefit to having a pet - unconditional love and limitless affection. But there are also health benefits to living with a dog or cat that are not as well-known, particularly for older adults.

According to the CDC, pets “ increase opportunities for exercise and outdoor activities, better cognitive function in older adults, and more opportunities to socialize.” Having a pet is also linked to health benefits such as decreased blood pressure , cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels. Pet ownership is even associated with reduced feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and PTSD.

Below is a list of some of the physical and mental health benefits that pets bring to older adults.

1. **Pets make their owners feel needed.** Caring for a living being gives our lives purpose and helps establish a routine that adds structure to our days. The mutual bond can help improve physical and mental health for humans and pets.
2. **Pets help their owners form connections with other people.** Pets are undoubtedly great companions, but they also help their humans make connections with other people and build a social support network, which has health benefits as well.
3. **Pets help relieve feelings of loneliness and isolation.** The company of a pet can help people feel less lonely. Not only can pets provide reassuring nuzzles and emotional support, they are the perfect companions for older adults who live alone. In fact, research has found that older adults who reported owning a pet were 36% less likely to report loneliness than older adults who don't have pets.
4. **Pets help people be mindful.** Pets live in the here and now, without worry about the future or thoughts about the past. Playing or cuddling with your dog or cat can help you do the same. A study shows that 87% of people feel more relaxed after spending time with a pet. And for people who tend to spiral into worry, the same study found that pets help them live in the moment, and stay mindful.
5. **Pets can speed up recovery.** A positive outlook can speed recovery after an illness or injury. Pets are so good that helping us see the bright side that many hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and long-term care centers have established pet visitation programs for patients. A study AARP conducted found that 70% of older adults said their pets helps them cope with physical or emotional symptoms and 46% said their pets help take their mind off of pain.
6. **Pets help improve fitness.** Pets give you a clear reason to walk every day, and that rain-or-shine accountability can help you form a lasting exercise habit. Even a low-intensity daily 20-minute walk can improve heart health, lower blood pressure, and relieve stress.

*Reprinted from: Cigna*

***Did you know...*** Saratoga County Department of Aging and Youth partnered with Saratoga County Animal Shelter that waives adoption fees for all Saratoga County Seniors.

### **Robotic Animals**

While assisted therapy and the benefits of pets have been analyzed in numerous scientific studies, real animals may not always be the appropriate choice for an older adult. That's where robotic pets literally come into play.

These pets are designed to help reduce feelings of loneliness. While some believe that robot pets can't compete with real animals, the companionship they provide to older adults cannot be denied.

New Yorkers can use discount code NYS20 at <http://joyforall.com> for a 20% discount on a companion pet.

