Office for the Aging March 2022

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman and Emmy Award-Winning Actress Susan Lucci Discuss the Importance of Heart Health

Nassau County Executive Bruce A. Blakeman joined Dr. Richard Shlofmitz, EMMY Award-Winning Actress and *New York Times* Best Seller Susan Lucci, Comptroller Elaine Phillips, Legislator Mazi Melesa Pilip, Legislator John Giuffre, and Legislator Thomas McKevitt to honor and celebrate February as Heart Health Awareness month.

County Executive Blakeman announced the dome of the Executive and Legislative Building in Mineola will be lit red to raise awareness for National Heart Health Month, on February 17th reminding residents to put their health first and utilize the great doctors we have here in Nassau County.

New York Times Best Seller Susan Lucci won the EMMY Award for "Best Actress" in May of 1999 and currently serves as the National Ambassador for the Go Red For Women's Movement with the American Heart Association. Back in 2018, Lucci's life forever changed when she found out she had two blocked arteries and needed the surgical placement of stents, and just last year Lucci underwent a second heart procedure.

"While heart disease is the leading killer in Nassau County, we have one of the lowest percentages of deaths by population in New York." County Executive Blakeman said. "We have some of the best medical facilities in the Nation right here in Nassau County, but residents can't be complacent. Lighting the Executive Building red for National Heart Health Month will serve as a reminder for residents to schedule a checkup, and seek help should they feel out of the ordinary." Blakeman concluded.

" I think it is wonderful that we are calling attention to heart health and literally shining light on Heart Disease in Nassau County." EMMY Award-Winning Actress and *New York Times* Best Seller Susan Lucci said. "Being the National Ambassador for the American Heart Association Go Red For Women Movement, I have learned that heart disease is the number one killer of women. More than all cancers combined." She continued " Every 80 seconds 1 woman loses her life to Heart Disease, I commend County Executive Blakeman for helping to shine light on that".

March is Social Work Month

"Social workers have been an integral part of our nation for decades. They played key roles in the Civil Rights and Women's Rights movements and pushed for social programs, including the minimum wage, a 40-hour work week, Social Security and Medicare" (National Association of Social Workers, 2022).

The dramatic growth in the number of adults aged 65 and older, combined with overall population aging, affects not only families and workplaces, but also health care and social service delivery systems. Meeting the needs and leveraging the contributions of an increasingly diverse older population presents both challenges and opportunities to social workers and other service providers. (Aging, 2022)

Caitlyn Inciarrano and Suzanne Goldsmith
Nassau County Office for the Aging Social Workers

The Office for the Aging dedicates their time and resources to serving the ever-growing senior population in Nassau County. They have two licensed social workers on staff and the County partners with various non-profit organizations to provide care and much needed services to older adults in Nassau County. Services provided by our social workers include caregiver support, options counseling, and resource assistance. Keeping our Nassau County residents safe in their homes while growing older continues to be a priority of this office.

Healthy Vision in Seniors

Vision changes occur as you get older, but these changes don't have to affect your lifestyle. Knowing what to expect and when to seek professional care can help you protect your vision. As you reach your 60's and beyond, you need to be aware of the warning signs of age-related eye problems that could cause vision loss.
Many eye diseases have no early warning signs.

Symptoms may develop painlessly, and you may not notice the changes to your vision until the condition is quite advanced. Wise lifestyle choices, regular eye exams and early detection can significantly improve your chances of maintaining good eye health and vision as you age.
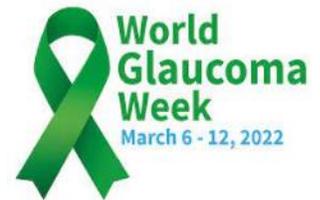
You may not realize that health problems affecting other parts of your body can affect your vision as well. People with diabetes or hypertension (high blood pressure), or who are taking medications that have eye-related side effects, are at

greatest risk for developing vision problems. Regular eye exams are even more important as you reach your senior years. The American Optometric Association recommends annual eye exams for everyone over age 60. See your doctor of optometry immediately if you notice any changes in your vision.

For more information for vision and aging please click here.

Vitamin D: The Sunshine Vitamin

Vitamin D, also known as the "sunshine" vitamin, is a fat-soluble vitamin that comes in two major forms: vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol) and vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol). Vitamin D2 is manufactured and used to fortify foods. Vitamin D3 is found naturally in some animal-based foods and can be synthesized in the skin in response to adequate sun exposure. Commercially manufactured vitamin D supplements can contain either form.

Functions

Vitamin D promotes calcium absorption in the gut, maintains serum, calcium and phosphate concentrations, and assists in bone growth and remodeling. Together with calcium, vitamin D can also help protect older adults from osteoporosis. Without adequate vitamin D, bones can become brittle, thin, or misshapen, leading to osteomalacia in adults.
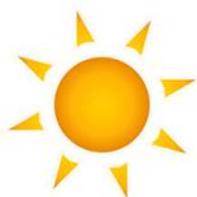
That being said, the epidemiologic evidence and scientific studies illustrating that the effects of vitamin D go beyond bone health are increasing. For example, we see that vitamin D can play an important role in cell growth, neuromuscular and immune function, and inflammation reduction. This suggests that vitamin D may have implications for certain conditions, including cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, depression, rheumatoid arthritis, and Alzheimer's disease. We will look toward future research to clarify vitamin D's role in the human body and implications for disease management.

Always discuss past, current and planned dietary supplementation with a healthcare professional.

Sources of Vitamin D

Vitamin D is naturally present in some foods. Fatty fish, such as salmon and tuna, and fish liver oils are among the best natural sources of vitamin D; small amounts can also be found in some cheeses, egg yolks, and beef liver. Mushrooms can also provide vitamin D.

Fortified foods provide most of the vitamin D in the American diet, beginning with a milk fortification program that was implemented in the US in the 1930s to combat rickets. Vitamin D is also added to some breakfast cereals, orange juice, yogurt, and non-dairy beverages.

Although vitamin D is available in both foods and supplements, sun exposure is the most significant source for most people. An adult wearing a bathing suit exposed to the sun long enough to cause a slight pinkness can get the same amount of vitamin D as someone who ingests a supplement containing 20,000 IU of vitamin D! Interestingly, vitamin D produced by the skin seems to stay in the body longer than vitamin D from dietary sources or supplements.

Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Nassau County

Creative Writing Class at Long Beach Senior Center

Long Beach Senior Center hosts a Creative Writing Class for seniors that meets every Monday from 11:00 a.m. to noon and every week 15 to 30 seniors attend. During the class, the attendees are sharing and respectfully critiquing each other's works. The class is led by instructor Jeri Golus, who has a degree in Secondary Education and English. Jeri hosts the class because she has always been a writer and has great respect for the written word. She believes that everyone has a story to tell. Jeri stresses that everything is always a 'teaching moment' and teaches the craft of writing.

Participant Herb Ross who is 88 years old and has a passion for writing said "under Jeri's guidance, I have been brought to a level that far surpasses anything that I ever could have imagined. She has encouraged me (and I speak on behalf of all of her students) to tap my inner creativity and has motivated me to continue to pursue my love of writing."

Jeri's class helps to stimulate the mind, encourages creativity, and utilizes thoughtful introspection. To find out more about the class please call the Long Beach Senior Center at (516) 432-5555.

Beginning Next Month
Look for our Spotlight on
Veterans Services

March is...

Women's History Month

Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture and society and has been observed annually in the United States since 1987.

National Frozen Food Month

National Frozen Food Month takes a look at all the ways frozen food can make life better. Not only is it convenient, but it can also make life healthier.

Valentine's Day Celebration Oceanside Senior Center

Distribution of COVID Test Kits & Supplies Long Beach Senior Center

Happy 101st Birthday Phoebe! Great Neck Senior Center

To join Office for the Aging's email distribution list please email

seniors@hhsnassaucountyny.us

NASSAU COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Nomination for 2022 Senior Ambassador of the Year Award!

Do you know someone 60 or over who has gone above and beyond volunteering to help in their community?

Do you know someone who has demonstrated outstanding concern and action for human services and community involvement?

Nassau County Office for the Aging is looking for nominees for the 2022 Senior Ambassador of the Year Award! Nomination forms are available now and can be submitted until **April 22,2022!**

BRUCE A. BLAKEMAN
NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE

For More Information contact Caitlyn at 516-227-8900