

# Bits & Pieces

June 2012

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**As Older Adults See It - Or Don't See It**

Do older adults see things differently than other members of society? While their psychological vision is improved with their eyes of experience and wisdom, their physical vision, cataracts, macular degeneration, dulling or yellowing of colors, and floaters.

Declining vision is not the only physical malady that affects older adults. Others include arthritis, loss of hearing, and problems with balance and mobility. We all know persons, or may even be one of them, who fit into this category. We can be of great service to ourselves and to others if we become aware of possible physical changes that may lie ahead.

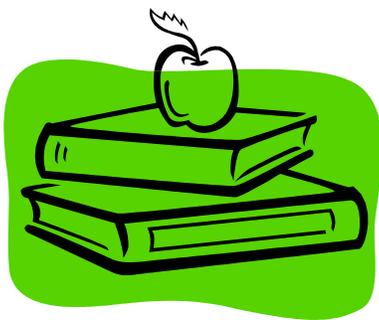
Assistive devices can also be of great help in keeping older persons independent and in their homes for as long as possible. Most of us are familiar with telephone amplifiers, magnifying glasses, and grab bars. Many, many more are available, and this market continues to grow. Examples of assistive devices in the kitchen are tea kettles that shut off automatically and are cold to the touch, bold face timers that are big enough to see and loud enough to hear, and specially designed cutting boards for persons who have the use of only on arm.



As people age, their home environment needs to be more supportive to compensate for their limitations or disabilities. A significant number of elderly live in housing that has deteriorated, lacks supportive features, or presents barriers to mobility. These types of problems make it difficult to safely carry out activities such as cooking meals, bathing, climbing stairs, reading or doing housework.

Universal housing, however, can help eliminate these problems. The goal of universal housing is that it be supportive, adaptable, and accessible. A universal house would include features such as wheelchair-accessible entryways, kitchens, and bathrooms; single lever faucets; nonslip flooring; easy to reach temperature controls; antiscald devices; and grab bars.

Source: Marilyn Sebesta,  
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Sincerely,

Leicia Redwine  
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### **Peanut Butter Dip**



#### *Ingredients:*

½ cup vanilla flavored yogurt  
½ cup creamy peanut butter  
¼ cup miniature chocolate chips  
1 teaspoon cinnamon

#### *Directions:*

Mix all ingredients and serve with apples, celery or pretzels.

### **Neely's Famed Veggie Dip**



#### *Ingredients:*

½ cup reduced fat sour cream  
1 cup Hellman's reduced fat mayonnaise  
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese  
½ Tablespoon Parmesan cheese  
½ Tablespoon dried parsley  
½ Tablespoon dried onion  
½ teaspoon sugar  
¼ teaspoon garlic salt  
seasoning salt to taste

#### *Directions:*

Mix all ingredients and refrigerate overnight. Serve with a variety of vegetables.

### **Char's Fruit Dip**



#### *Ingredients:*

½ cup low-fat sour cream  
1 cup skim milk  
1 package instant vanilla pudding  
8 ounces crushed pineapple (don't drain)  
1 cup shredded coconut

#### *Directions:*

Mix all ingredients and place in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before serving.

## **Caring for the Caregiver**

Many are faced with caring for a spouse or parent. If you are in this situation it is important that you remember to take care of yourself. Here are a few suggestions for "caregivers" self management.

- ✓ Accept the person with dementia for who he is instead of trying to restore him to who he was.
- ✓ You have as much right to a life as does the person you are caring for.
- ✓ To the extent that you feel the need and are able to do so, take time for yourself.
- ✓ To the extent compatible with your values and the needs of the person with AD, develop a separate life of your own.
- ✓ Begin thinking of ways to have others share the caregiving with you, such as becoming part of a group that is supportive of you, whether it be an Alzheimer's Association support group or an informal group of caregivers.
- ✓ Include your children; they don't need to be protected and usually want to know how they can be involved.
- ✓ If you feel depressed, seek treatment. You'll feel better and you'll do better job or providing care.
- ✓ Try not to endanger your own health.
- ✓ Remember that if you fail to take care of yourself, there may be no one else left to care for your loved one.

## **Get in Line**

When a car is out of alignment, it causes excessive and uneven wear and tear on its tires. The same thing is true of our bodies. If the body is not properly aligned, muscles, joints, and ligaments are stressed. This can lead to pain in the back, hips and knees. Check in a mirror if you have good posture:



- ◇ Neutral spine, without slumping forward at the shoulders or waist.
- ◇ Knees slightly bent, never locked.
- ◇ Abdominal muscles tight; gently suck in the stomach.
- ◇ Head centered over the body.
- ◇ Weight evenly distributed between the feet, not over one hip.

See a physical therapist to teach proper standing, sitting, walking, and lifting techniques to spare the joints from extra wear and tear.

## Identifying Nutrition Misinformation

Every day we are faced with endless amount of nutrition information. Unfortunately, some of this information is more misinformation than fact. Following nutrition misinformation can cost both your wallet and your health. The next time you hear or read about a new dietary supplement, weight loss diet or other information related to nutrition and health, ask yourself whether the information:

1. promises a quick fix to a health problem;
2. Makes claims that sound too good to be true;
3. Is based on the use of testimonials, not science;
4. Makes dramatic statements that are refuted by reputable scientific organizations;
5. Identifies "good" and "bad" foods;
6. Includes recommendations that are used to help sell a product;
7. Is based on a single study and/or research that has not been published in peer-review journals;
8. Does not warn about any potential side effects of the diet or supplement that is being promoted;
9. Ignores the fact that people respond differently to diets; or
10. Encourages megadoses of vitamins and minerals.



If the answer to any of the above is "YES", you may not be getting the right nutrition information you need. In fact, you may want to look elsewhere for information.

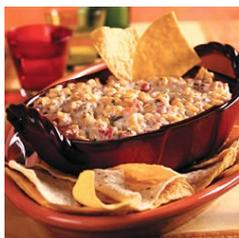
## Where to Go For Reliable Nutrition Information

Reliable sources of nutrition information include government agencies like the United States Department of Agriculture, professional organizations, including the American Dietetic Association, and your local Agrilife Extension Office.

### Hot Corn Dip

#### *Ingredients:*

- 1 (15 ounce) can white corn
- 1 (15 ounce) can yellow corn
- 1 (10 ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chili peppers, drained
- 1 (8 ounce) package reduced fat cream cheese, diced and softened
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- chopped fresh cilantro to taste

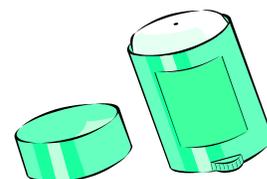


#### *Directions:*

Preheat oven to 350°F degrees

1. In medium baking dish, mix white corn, yellow corn, diced tomatoes, with green chili peppers, cream cheese, chili powder, garlic powder, and cilantro.
2. Bake in the preheated oven 30 minutes or until hot and bubbly.

### Don't Believe Rumors that Antiperspirants and Deodorants Cause Breast Cancer



Most good studies over the years have not found a link. One concern has been that paraben preservatives in antiperspirants and deodorants could migrate into breast tissue and cause cancer. However, a new English study in the Journal of Applied Toxicology found that women who never used these products had similar levels of paraben residues in their breast tissue as users. Parabens are added to many cosmetic, pharmaceutical and food products, and have been detected in nearly all human blood and urine samples. It's thought that parabens may increase cancer risk because of their weak estrogenic activity, but so far there has been no convincing evidence to support this claim.

### Make Sure Your Shoes are Big Enough



About one out of four adults wears the wrong-size shoes. Feet grow longer and wider with every passing decade, especially if you gain weight, so your shoe size at age 60 will almost certainly be larger than it was at 40. With age, your feet lose padding, flatten and are more susceptible to problems that can be worsened by too-tight shoes.

## Time Worn Habits To Break

### Lining the Oven with foil

Placing aluminum foil directly on the bottom of your oven can trap heat and throw off oven performance, and might even void the manufacturer's warranty. The foil can also melt, which can damage the oven or even cause a fire.

#### **Instead**

Use a sheet of heavy-duty foil (a few inch bigger than the cooking pan) on the rack below the one you're using. It will catch drips and allow heat to circulate.

### Relying on pop-up Thermometers

They are calibrated to pop at 180 Degrees Fahrenheit, past the ideal temperature for turkey.

#### **Instead**

Use a meat thermometer to check for doneness. For a turkey, insert it into the innermost part of the thigh and wing, and into the thickest part of the breast. Remember that food continues to cook for a few minutes after it has been removed from the oven.

### Leaving mats in the Sink

A rubber mat provides a cushion when you're washing glasses and dishes, but leaving it in a stainless-steel sink can trap water underneath and cause rust and pitting. Similarly, steel wool can scratch the surface and leave steel particles, which will rust, in the sink's surface.

#### **Instead**

Remove the mat (and any sponges) after each use, rinse the sink thoroughly, and allow the sink to dry.

### Using Cooking Spray On Nonstick Pans

Cooking spray can damage the coating on nonstick pans, which could cause food to stick. Very high heat can also break down the coating.

#### **Instead**

Use nonstick pans on low or medium heat - without spray.

### Washing Certain Plastics in the Dishwasher

High heat can degrade polycarbonate, a hard, translucent plastic that was commonly used in food containers, baby bottles, and sippy cups. That can cause bisphenol A, or BPA, to leach into food and drinks. Some studies have linked BPA exposure to health problems.

#### **Instead**

Minimize leaching by hand-washing those plastics, and consider using alternatives.

Source: Consumer Report 02/2012

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