

*AHCL 2024*

Program of Work

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## 2024 PROGRAM OF WORK

### CITIZENSHIP AND OUTREACH

1. Juneteenth: The History of a New Holiday
2. Homelessness Among Older Adults
3. Project: Collect and Donate Items to a Homeless Shelter
4. Celebrate: Participate in a local Juneteenth Celebration Service

### ENVIRONMENT:

1. Indoor Plants that are Hard to Kill
2. Climate Change: Allergens and Pollen
3. Project: Purchase an Aloe Vera plant and share leaves from it with club members for planting – Check in for updates on growth and development in 6 months.
4. Celebrate: National House Plant Appreciation Day, January 10

### FAMILY LIFE

1. Reverse Mortgages
2. Internet Safety
3. Project: Develop and distribute to members a list of safety tips for social media, internet shopping and email.
4. Celebrate: National Smile Day, October 3 on social media. You can encourage people to post selfies of their smiles, to make a random person smile or you can post jokes to engage your audience.

### HOMEMAKING SKILLS

1. Batch Cooking for Beginners
2. Ten Ideas for Creating a Cozy Guest Room.
3. Project: Have Members exchange recipe cards for batch cooking ideas
4. Celebrate: National Food Day October 24

### HEALTH AND NUTRITION

1. Women's Heart Health
2. Eat for a Powerful Heart
3. Be Antibiotics Aware from CDC.gov
4. Project: Participate in a Virtual Walk ([worldwalking.org](http://worldwalking.org)), AHA Heart Walk or challenge members to a specific walk daily walk/step goal.
5. Celebrate: National Wear Red Day February 2, 2024

### MARKETING (PROMOTIONS)

1. Ways to Increase Membership in Your Club
2. Project: Plan a Brunch or Tea with club members and invited guests. Have a program of club activities and recruit new members.
3. Celebrate: AHCL Week October 9-16

## **Juneteenth: The History of a New Holiday**

Juneteenth, an annual commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States after the Civil War, has been celebrated by African Americans since the late 1800s.

### **How Did Juneteenth Begin?**

On “Freedom’s Eve” or the eve of January 1, 1863, the first Watch Night service took place. On that night, enslaved and free African Americans gathered in churches and private homes across the country awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. At the stroke of the midnight, prayers were answered as all enslaved people in Confederate States were declared legally free. Union soldiers, many of whom were black, marched onto plantations and across cities in the south reading small copies of the Emancipation Proclamation spreading the news of freedom in Confederate States. Only through the Thirteenth Amendment did the emancipation end slavery throughout the United States.

But not everyone in the Confederate territory would immediately be free. Even though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective in 1863, it could not be implemented in places still under confederate control. As a result, in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas, enslaved people would not be free until much later. Freedom finally came on June 19, 1865, when the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. This was two and a half years after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. This day came to be known as “Juneteenth,” by the newly freed people in Texas.

### **Juneteenth and Society**

In the early years, little interest existed outside the African American community in participation in the celebration. In some cases, there was outwardly exhibited resistance by barring the use of public property for festivities. Most of the festivities found themselves out in rural areas around rivers and creeks that could provide for additional activities such as fishing, horseback riding and barbecues. Often church grounds were the site for such activities. Eventually, as African Americans became landowners, land was donated and dedicated for these festivities. One of the earliest documented land purchases in the name of Juneteenth was organized by Rev. Jack Yates. This fund-raising effort yielded \$1000.00 and made possible the purchase of Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas. In Mexia, Texas, the local Juneteenth organization purchased Booker T. Washington Park, which became the Juneteenth celebration site in 1898. There are accounts of Juneteenth activities being interrupted and halted by white landowners demanding that their laborers return to work. However, it seems most allowed their workers the day off and some even made donations of food and money. For decades these annual celebrations flourished, growing continuously with each passing year. In Booker T. Washington Park, as many as 20,000 African American once attended during a week, making that celebration one of the state’s largest.

*(Juneteenth – 2)*

### **Juneteenth Celebration Decline**

Economic and cultural forces led to a decline in Juneteenth activities and participants beginning in the early 1900's. Classroom and textbook education in lieu of traditional home and family-taught practices stifled the interest of the youth due to less emphasis and detail on the lives of former slaves. Classroom textbooks proclaimed Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, as the date signaling the ending of slavery and mentioned little or nothing of the impact of General Granger's arrival on June 19<sup>th</sup>. The Depression forced many people off the farms and into the cities to find work. In these urban environments, employers were less eager to grant leave to celebrate this date. Thus, unless June 19 fell on a weekend or holiday, there were very few participants available. July 4<sup>th</sup> was already the established Independence holiday and a rise in patriotism steered more toward this celebration.

### **Resurgence**

The Civil Rights movement of the 50's and 60's yielded both positive and negative results for the Juneteenth celebrations. While it pulled many African American youth away and into the struggle for racial equality, many linked these struggles to the historical struggles of their ancestors. This was evidenced by student demonstrators involved in the Atlanta civil rights campaign in the early 1960's who wore Juneteenth freedom buttons. Again, in 1968, Juneteenth received another strong resurgence through the Poor Peoples march to Washington D. C. Rev. Abernathy called for people of all races, creeds, economic levels and professions to come to Washington to show support for the poor. Many of these attendees returned home and initiated Juneteenth celebrations in areas previously absent of such activities. In fact, two of the largest Juneteenth celebrations founded after this march are now held in Milwaukee and Minneapolis.

### **Texas Blazes the Trail**

On January 1, 1980, Juneteenth became an official state holiday through the efforts of Al Edwards, an African American state legislator. The successful passage of this bill marked Juneteenth as the first emancipation celebration granted official state recognition. Edwards has since actively sought to spread the observance of Juneteenth across America.

### **Juneteenth in Modern Times**

Today, the observance of Juneteenth is enjoying a phenomenal growth rate within communities and organizations throughout the country. Institutions such as the Smithsonian, the Henry Ford Museum and others have begun sponsoring Juneteenth-centered activities. In recent years, several local and national Juneteenth organizations have arisen to take their place alongside older organizations. Their mission is to promote and cultivate knowledge and appreciation of African America history and culture. Today, Juneteenth celebrates African American Freedom and achievement, while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all cultures. As it takes on a more national, symbolic and even global perspective, the event of 1865 in Texas is not forgotten, for all of the roots tie back to this fertile soil from which a national day of pride is growing.

On June 17, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law establishing June 19<sup>th</sup> as Juneteenth National Independence Day, a new federal holiday.

## Homelessness Among Older Adults from AARP

Without a place to hang his hat, Jason Rozelle, 57, started sleeping in his Nissan Infiniti last summer. In the middle of upscale Olathe, Kansas, Rozelle was homeless. He parked overnight at a gas station, and during the day scanned job listings on his laptop at the library. He has applied for “at least 100” positions without luck. Using food stamps, Rozelle bought Walmart chicken sandwiches or heated ramen noodles in the gas station microwave. A church gave him \$20 a pop for gas, and sometimes food. Rozelle is a prime example of what experts warn is an alarming phenomenon: The number of older Americans without a permanent roof over their heads is growing.

Elder homelessness “is increasing dramatically right now,” says Jeff Olivet, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). “Seniors over the age of 55 are likely the fastest-growing group of people experiencing homelessness ... and for many of them, it is first-time homelessness.” The reasons are complex. As the population ages, more people are at risk of poverty, more will survive the death of a partner and more will subsist on limited incomes while housing costs skyrocket in many communities. Pandemic housing protections and assistance have mostly expired. In addition, many people with stagnant incomes are of retirement age or working part-time, hourly jobs or positions with little potential for raises, Olivet says.

The growing number of people without a place to live, across all ages, is so significant that on Dec. 19 President Biden released a federal strategic plan to reduce homelessness by 25 percent by 2025. The plan, created by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, will address a lack of affordable housing, help people in crisis and prevent people from losing their homes in the first place. And it pays particular attention to those who are most seriously affected — people of color, veterans, those who are disabled and older adults.

“There’s been a creeping trend over the last several years where we’re seeing many more older adults who are homeless”, says Richard Cho at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). From 2009 to 2017, the number of homeless people ages 51 to 61 grew from 14 percent of the homeless population nationally to close to 18 percent, Cho says. The percentage of people 62 or older that are homeless nearly doubled. The spike in unhoused older folks has been called the graying of America’s homeless.

Economics, in part, explains what plunges people into dire straits. Rent and home prices have skyrocketed, and the country has seen the highest inflation in 40 years. That’s on top of a longtime shortage of affordable housing in the U.S. — a crunch that has a disproportionately negative impact on older adults. The pandemic has had an impact too: Most of the emergency eviction bans have ended or are timing out. Meanwhile, the safety net for older Americans is fraying.

For example, in Hartford, Connecticut, the pandemic prompted an influx of newcomers from other cities. At the same time, corporations bought up older apartment buildings, converting them into luxury properties and replacing the city's "mom-and-pop" landlords who charged reasonable rents.

Housing officials often note the various reasons older adults are without permanent housing. Consider San Francisco, the finance and tech hub where the average monthly rent for a one-bedroom apartment was \$3,428, according to Rent.com. The city has wrestled with homelessness for years, which across the U.S. disproportionately hits people of color.

But the issue goes beyond the financial bottom line. Studies show that older unhoused people have problems performing daily activities and have greater difficulty with walking, vision and hearing, and falls and frailty compared to the general population," says Shireen McSpadden, of San Francisco's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. She adds that "they're much more likely to suffer from cognitive impairments, compared to younger homeless adults." The problem is so significant that San Francisco is planning a shelter for older adults and people with disabilities. "The facility will not have bunk beds, which pose fall risks, and may feature roll-in showers for individuals in wheelchairs", she says.

Whether unhoused people bed down in an abandoned building or on a park bench or under a tent, they tend to be exposed to the elements, eat poorly, sleep fitfully, skip medications and shun doctors and dentists. "Homelessness pummels the body, says Margot Kushel, M.D., a professor at the University of California San Francisco who has led longitudinal studies on unhoused, older adults. Her catchphrase: "Fifty is the new 75" when it comes to people without a permanent place to reside. "Moreover," says Kushel, who also is director of UCSF's Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative, "their circumstances trigger anxiety and depression, leading some to self-medicate with alcohol or drugs."

Jeff Olivet of USICH makes these suggestions of how you can help.

1. Educate yourself on the realities of homelessness.
2. Advocate at all levels of government for "adequate resources to address this problem."
3. Donate to effective, local organizations "doing good workaround solutions to homelessness."
4. Roll up your sleeves and volunteer for these groups.

## Part 1: How to stop killing your plants.

1. **Consider the Light.** Your cute cactus isn't going to look adorable for very long if you perch it in a low-light, north-facing window. Figure out what kind of light you get, then choose plants that fit the bill:
  - a. South-facing windows provide the most light, and therefore the most options when it comes to plants. Plants can be situated far away from the window and still receive a good amount of light.
  - b. East-facing windows provide a good amount of light in the early hours. You'll want to choose a moderate-light plant and situate it close to the window.
  - c. West-facing windows also provide a good amount of light, but in the afternoon, which means more heat. You'll want to choose a moderate-light plant that can withstand a good amount of sun.
  - d. North-facing windows provide the lowest light. You'll want to choose a low-light plant and situate it close to the window.
  - e. No Windows - Choose a low-light plant or invest in some artificial light.
2. **Build a Humidity Tray.** Tropical plants, like crotons or succulents, crave constant humidity, especially in the dry, cool months. Keep them hydrated by building a DIY humidity tray. Line a waterproof metal or plastic tray with pebbles and fill with water until the stones are almost submerged. Place your pots on top. The evaporation will keep leaves healthy and help deter pests. Refill whenever you see the water line dipping low.
3. **Water Right.** Chances are your plant is thirsty if the first inch of soil is dry, or the leaves are wilting.
4. **Don't Forget Them.** Set yourself a reminder (on your calendar or phone) to water them regularly.
5. **Dust Leaves.** Use a damp cloth to wipe grime off the leaves. Clean leaves are better able to photosynthesize, and you might kill some pests in the process.
6. **Drain Them Well.** Make sure your pots have drainage holes in the bottom. This will prevent roots from rotting because of sitting water. Nest them in a saucer to collect extra drips.

## Part II. 10 Indoor Plants that are hard to kill.

1. Heartleaf Philodendron. Drought Tolerant
2. Dragon Tree. Needs Good Drainage
3. Jade Plant. Tolerates indirect sun and little water
4. Cacti
5. Pony-tail Palm
6. Mother-in-Law's Tongue. It thrives in full sun or partial shade. Prefers dry air and soil. Rarely needs repotting. Ideal for beginners
7. ZZ Plant. It practically thrives on neglect. It is forgiving if you forget to water, tolerates low light, and rarely needs fertilization.
8. Spider Plant
9. Peace Lilly. Will droop noticeably when it needs water.
10. Pothos. Thrives on neglect.

## Climate Change: Allergens and Pollen

Climate change could potentially lead to both higher pollen concentration and longer pollen seasons, causing more people to suffer more health effects from pollen and other allergens.

Pollen is an airborne allergen that can affect our health. Pollen grains are tiny “seeds” dispersed from flowering plants, trees and weeds. The amount and type of pollen in the air depends on the season and geographic region. Though pollen counts are typically higher during warmer seasons, some plants pollinate year-round.

Climate change could also lead to shifts in precipitation patterns, more frost-free days, warmer seasonal temperatures, and more carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere. These changes can affect:

- When the pollen season starts and ends and how long it lasts each year,
- How much pollen plants create and how much is in the air,
- How pollen affects our health (the “allergenicity” of pollen),
- How much pollen we are exposed to and
- Our risk of experiencing allergy symptoms.

Pollen exposure can trigger various allergic reactions, which occur when allergens like pollen enter your body and your immune system mistakenly identifies them as a threat. If you have hay fever, or allergic rhinitis, your body, responds to the allergen by releasing chemicals that can cause symptoms in the nose. Symptoms of allergic rhinitis can occur during certain seasons or year-round, depending on the allergen, and affects as many as 60 million people per year in the United States. Symptoms from allergic rhinitis include sneezing, runny nose, and congestion.

Pollen exposure can also trigger symptoms of allergic conjunctivitis. Allergic conjunctivitis is the inflammation of the lining of the eye (conjunctiva) due to exposure to allergens like those in pollen. Allergic conjunctivitis is found in up to 30% of the general population and in as many as 7 out of 10 patients with allergic rhinitis. Symptoms from allergic conjunctivitis include red, watery, or itchy eyes.

People with respiratory illnesses like asthma may be more sensitive to pollen. Exposure to pollen has been linked to asthma attacks and increases in hospital admissions for respiratory illness. Medical costs linked with pollen exceed \$3 billion every year, with nearly half of those costs being linked to prescription medicine. Higher pollen concentration and longer pollen seasons can also make you sensitive to allergens. This can trigger asthma episodes in individuals with asthma and diminish productive work and school days.

Extreme rainfall and rising temperatures also can contribute to poor indoor air quality. For example, they can cause an increase in the growth of mold indoors, which may lead to worsened respiratory conditions for people with asthma and/or mold allergic and heightened challenges in maintaining adequate asthma control.



# Reverse Mortgages

## How Reverse Mortgages Work

If you're 62 or older, you might qualify for a reverse mortgage. With a reverse mortgage, the amount of money you can borrow is based on how much equity you have in your home. (Your equity is how much money you could get for your home if you sold it, minus what you owe on your mortgage.) While a reverse mortgage lets you access your equity without selling your house right away, it can be financially risky:

1. **A reverse mortgage increases your debt and can use up your equity.** While the amount is based on your equity, you're still borrowing the money and paying the lender a fee and interest. Your debt keeps going up (and your equity keeps going down) because interest is added to your balance every month. This can use up much – or even all – of your equity.
2. **A reverse mortgage can limit your options down the road.** Generally, a reverse mortgage must be paid back when you die or move from the home. You could use up your equity, so you get nothing when you or your estate eventually sells the home. That means you could come up short if you want to move to a smaller home, an assisted living facility, or to another locale to be closer to family.
3. **A reverse mortgage can be an expensive way to borrow.** The fees and other costs to borrow money this way can be higher than other alternatives like a home equity loan or home equity line of credit.

## To qualify for the most common reverse mortgages, you must

- Be 62 or older
- Live in the property the majority of your time.
- Have paid off a substantial amount of your mortgage.
- Have enough funds to keep paying expenses related to the property because you're still responsible for taxes, insurance, repairs, and homeowner association fees.
- Participate in a counseling session with a counselor approved by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Apply and be approved by a lender, and
- Not have any outstanding federal debt, like unpaid taxes.

Typically, the money you get through the reverse mortgage is tax-free and won't affect your Social Security or Medicare benefits. Generally, you, your spouse, co-borrower, or your estate repays the loan when you die, sell your home, or move out.

(Reverse Mortgages-2)

## **How reverse mortgages are different from regular mortgages, home equity loans, and home equity lines of credit (HELOCs)**

With a regular mortgage, you borrow a lump sum of money and make monthly payments to your lender to pay it back. Part of your payment goes towards the principal (the amount you borrowed) and part goes to paying the interest. Your equity grows, and the balance of what you owe goes down over time.

With a reverse mortgage, you borrow money from the lender, based on the amount of equity you have in your home. The lender may send you the funds from the reverse mortgage in one lump sum payment, a series of monthly payments, or some combination of those. But no matter how the money gets distributed to you, the lender adds interest each month to the balance you owe (the principal). That means your balance goes up over time, increasing the amount you pay, and you have less and less equity in your home.

### **Things To Consider Before You Get a Reverse Mortgage**

1. How a reverse mortgage could affect your family. Find out if your spouse will be able to stay in the home after you die.
2. What your heirs will owe. Before you agree to a reverse mortgage, check to be sure it has what's called a "non-recourse" clause. Most reverse mortgages have this clause — it means that you, or your estate, can't owe more than the value of your home when the loan becomes due, and the home is sold.
3. How long you plan to stay in your home. The costs and fees for some reverse mortgages may be more expensive if you stay in the home a short time, and if you borrow a small amount of money.

## Internet Safety

You are scrolling through Facebook or Instagram, and an ad pops up for the perfect holiday gift or maybe a little present for yourself: a sweater in your favorite color or a great gadget for making your beloved sugar cookies. It's uncanny how social media sites know you so well- but it is no accident. They customize ads by tracking your online activity. The problem is that what you see isn't always what you [get](#)<sup>[GR2]</sup>.

It's easy to fall for these scams. Some ads impersonate legitimate online retailers and drive you to **Look for a physical address and phone number**. If there is no address on the company's website or if the seller is based overseas, think twice about buying. You risk not only a long wait to receive your purchase but also high shipping fees for any returns.

- 1. Read the fine print:** Look for spelling errors and odd disclaimers. Also, make sure there are privacy and returns policies. Check all fees, including return shipping and restocking charges, and make sure you have at least 30 days to make a return.
- 2. Hunt for signs of trouble:** Do an online search for the company's name and "reviews," "complaints" and "scam." Also check the Better Business Bureau, at [bbb.org](http://bbb.org), and reviews sites such as [TrustPilot.com](http://TrustPilot.com). The problem of fake reviews is so rampant that the FTC is considering updating its guidelines.
- 3. Consider another seller:** Look for the product, or a similar one, on a website you trust. Check reviews and think about buying the product on that site if you have concerns.
- 4. Pay with a credit card.** You can dispute charges and get money back if the item never comes or you're unsatisfied and the company doesn't help you resolve your issue. The FTC wants consumers never to buy anything from an online retailer that requires payment with gift cards, money transfers (such as via Western Union) or cryptocurrency. Such a demand is a huge red flag.

### [Six Tactics used by Scammers](#)<sup>[GR3]</sup>

- 1. They Establish Camaraderie:** "So sorry to hear about the loss of your husband. You know, my own wife passed away last year as well. It's been hard." **The Trick:** Scammers will parrot back the target's religion, political affiliation, military background or life situation to get the target to feel "he's just like me." Then we tend to lower our defenses and are much more likely to follow their lead.
- 2. They Play on Your Aversion to Loss:"** You have won the sweepstakes! You are now rich! But if you don't act fast..." **The Trick:** Many people have a deep-seated fear of missing out (FOMO, in internet jargon) on good opportunities, given how infrequently they appear.
- 3. They Flatter You:** "I can tell you know a lot about finance, so you know how much money you can make in cryptocurrency if you manage the risks." **The Trick:** Usually at the beginning, it's a lot of "Love Bombing". That lends itself to a sense of connection and trust. "If this person likes me, well then I can trust this person,"
- 4. They Make You Feel Anxious:** "This malware means your bank account has been compromised. Someone can steal from it very easily." **The Trick:** "We live in this age of anxiety, where there are so many actual existential fears. It's easy to get people to say, "All right, what do I have to do to make this one go away?"
- 5. They Create Instant Terror:"** Grandpa, help! I've been arrested and need money for bail right away!" **The Trick:** When you are afraid, the emotional part of your brain takes over the cognitive part of your brain. In such moments of powerful emotion, you are far more likely to think you hear a loved one's voice and to fall for a scam.
- 6. They intimidate you:** "I'm with the police: you've missed jury duty again. Either pay a \$900.00 fine now or go to jail." **The Trick:** They present themselves as a feared authority (say, a cop, IRS officer or Medicare rep). Technology makes it so easy now to pretend to be someone you're not.

## Ten Ideas for Creating a Cozy Guest Room

The most essential part of an inviting or cozy guest room is that it must be clean and uncluttered. Scrub every nook and cranny, clean all the bedding and air out the pillows. Keep most personal items out of this room. The room should have a very fresh and clean look with some open space. Guests usually bring a lot of things with them and can fill up a room quickly with their own stuff.

1. **Fresh Bedding:** You can opt for white sheets, blankets and quilts. You can wash and bleach them and they look new. Purchase the best sheets that you can afford-there is a difference. Wash and make up the bed a couple of days before your guest arrive. They will appreciate a freshly made bed. Bedding that has been in the linen closet or on a bed for a while loses its fresh smell.
2. **Lighting near the Bed:** this is a must... even if you have overhead lighting, a nice light and side table is a basic essential. Many people like to read before they go to sleep.
3. **Fluffy Towels:** Having fluffy clean towels ready for your guests, save them from rooting around the bathroom or having to ask you. White towels are easy to launder and it's so easy to find fabulous high-quality ones at deeply discounted prices. White towels are always on sale! You can keep the towels in the guest's room in a wicker cart. The bottom shelf has a basket with extra magazines. Put a few small bottles of water on the bottom shelf the day the guest/s arrive and replace them as needed.
4. **Clocks and Outlets near the Bed:** Although, most of us don't need a clock because we have smartphones, when we have older guests, they may appreciate a clock in the room. It's important to have enough outlets and plugs near the bed for phones and other electronics.
5. **A Place to put Suitcase and Clothing:** Even if you use the guest room closet for "off-season" clothes, leave room for guests' clothes. Don't forget to supply nice hangers too. Guests staying more than one night will appreciate a chest with empty drawers. Living out of a suitcase for days on end can be messy business. Have a luggage rack for your guest also.
6. **Reading Materials:** Leave magazines or books in a basket by the bed. Keep lots of brochures, maps and information about your historic area for your guest.
7. **Tissues and Incidentals:** Keep a box of tissue by the bed. Leave trial sized incidentals that guests may have forgotten, like shampoo, toothpaste, hairspray, elastic bands, etc. in a box in the guest room closet.
8. **Wastepaper Basket:** Put one in every guest room and empty it every day.
9. **Personal Touches:** Flowers are a MUST even if they are a \$5.00 grocery store bouquet or good-looking weeds gathered along the roadside. They are the universal sign of welcome!
10. **Snacks and bottles of water.** You can also put a little basket of goodies, smoked almonds, dark chocolate, granola in the guest room. Some guests are just not comfortable raiding the refrigerator.

## Batch Cooking for Beginners

Batch cooking (also called Meal-Prep) is a simple way to prepare your weekly or monthly meals in advance. By cooking more than one portion and freezing them, you can thaw and use a different dish every day as a healthy meal when you want to save time. It can also be used for those of you who are cooking for one. You can prepare several of your favorite meals and freeze in single portions for future meals.

Batch cooking freezer meals allows you to have a pre-cooked, homemade dinner available whenever you need it. It is much cheaper cooking your own meals than buying store-bought readymade meals. Homemade meals are far healthier because you're in control of everything that's added to the dish. You can also adjust your meals to suit your family's dietary requirements, such as nut allergies, gluten, and lactose intolerance. Batch cooking means you can avoid salt, sugars and unhealthy preservatives and additives. You can hide blended vegetables into the sauces of most healthy freezer meals to ensure that your family is getting an extra portion of vegetables at every meal. It's a great way to use portion control when you are watching your weight. A batch can be any size. Batch is a generic name for making more than one portion of food to store in your freezer for eating later. If you preserve food in jars or freezer containers, then you already do this! This can be once a month cooking or making more than you need for each meal and freezing the leftovers. It is up to you how much you want to cook and freeze.

You will need to decide if you prefer to make extra portions when you are preparing a meal for dinner or whether you would prefer to spend an afternoon batch cooking all your meals for the freezer. Before doing either one, check your freezer space, you'll need somewhere for the meals to go once they are prepared.

### Tips to Get Started

- 1. Make a plan.** Decide which recipes you're going to cook and how much you want to make. Make sure you have enough space in your fridge or freezer. Stews, soups and pasta bakes are classic freezable dishes. You can also freeze part of a meal, such as meatballs to eat with fresh pasta.
- 2. Containers.** It's not much fun doing a big cook up to find there aren't enough containers. Prepare enough freezer-safe containers or bags in the right sizes before getting started.
- 3. Under-cook some ingredients.** Your meals will get a second round of cooking when they're reheated, so slightly under-cook vegetables to prevent them from going mushy. The same goes for rice and pasta.
- 4. Cool foods.** Let your dishes cool before freezing. This avoids heating up other foods in your freezer.
- 5. Labels.** Label your meals with the name and date. Frozen food is hard to identify. Most foods keep well for about three months, so add the date too so you know when it needs to be eaten.
- 6. Freeze in usable portions.** Unless you plan on eating the same stew six meals in a row consider the portion size you will need for a meal and freeze it in appropriate containers.

*(Batch Cooking – 2)*

- 7. Defrost in the fridge overnight.** Defrost your food in the fridge overnight, then pop it in the oven or reheat on the stove to warm it fully.
- 8. Gift to someone in need.** A pre-made meal can make a big difference, whether you're gifting it to someone who is time-poor, in a tough spot or you just want to spread the love of home-cooking! If you're in a position where you can, why not consider batch cooking a regular meal so you have extra food ready to gift or cook something especially for a person in need that they can easily freeze.

Now your freezer is stocked with healthy homemade dishes ready to serve in no time.

You can also freeze some mashed root vegetables such as carrot, turnip and or potatoes as a side dish or serve with a salad or rice.

Enjoy!

### **How To Bulk Up Your Freezer Meals**

It can be expensive to buy a lot of meat when batch cooking. So, it's a good idea to bulk out your meat dishes with some suitable fillers. The healthiest way to bulk out meals is to add some beans or lentils to the recipes. Beans and pulses (edible seeds of plants sometimes called legumes) are high in protein and fiber and keep you fuller for longer. They are also super cheap!

Add one cup of beans per food dish and approximately 1 cup of lentils per meal.

- Chickpeas are fabulous in soups and curries.
- Butterbeans are great in tomato-based sauces.
- Red kidney beans are great for chilis and lasagna.
- Haricot beans are great for everything from chili, lasagna, pasta dishes and curry.
- Lentils are perfect in curries, chili, lasagna, soups.
- All these ideas are great for vegan batch cooking too.

### **Batch Cooking Ideas**

- Lasagna or Spaghetti
- Chicken Casserole
- Chili
- Breakfast Casserole
- Chipotle Brown Rice Bowls
- Vegan Burritos
- Sausage and Tortellini soup

## **Women's Heart Health: Understand symptoms and risk factors.**

Heart disease may be considered by some to be more of a problem for men. However, it's the most common cause of death for both men and women in the United States. Because some heart disease symptoms in women can differ from those in men, women may not recognize they have a problem. Doctors have known for years that men and women experience heart disease somewhat differently. It's long been clear for instance that before menopause, women are less likely to develop heart disease than men. This is thanks to the protection estrogen provides, and it's a key reason why the average age for heart attacks is 63 for men but 72 for women. Women catch up quickly though, making heart disease the leading cause of death for both sexes overall during non-pandemic times.

But new research is changing cardiologists' understanding of heart disease in women. With women, doctors have for some time been taught to look for "atypical" signs, including heartburn, back pain, or pain that is burning, stabbing or resembles indigestion. With men, they expect more "typical" symptoms, including chest, jaw or arm pain, pain that radiates to one of the arms, neck, jaw or back: nausea, vomiting, sweating or palpitations. But recent research shows women are just as likely to experience the "classic" signs as men. A study of nearly 2,000 patients published recently in the journal of the American Heart Association found that a woman's most common symptoms were chest pain and aches radiating down the left arm.

Younger women are at a greater risk of death. Women have fewer heart attacks than men, but they tend to fare worse from a heart attack. A study by the Mayo clinic showed that women who are hospitalized with a heart attack are less likely than men to receive life-saving treatments, such as angioplasty or mechanical circulatory support. Researchers speculate that doctors may hold back on these treatments because they believe women will not fare as well during such surgeries. The researchers also discovered that women under the age of 65 were more likely than a man to die from a heart attack- especially when they suffered from a type in which the coronary artery is significantly but not completely blocked.

More menopause symptoms may mean more risk. While it's long been known that the plummeting estrogen levels of menopause reduce the hormone's protection of the heart, new research shows that greater suffering from menopause's hot flashes or sleep disturbances may signal greater cardiovascular risks. When researchers from medical centers across the country followed women ages 50 to 79 for a median of seven years, they found a link between having one or more moderate or severe menopause symptoms and increased risk of heart attack or stroke. Researchers speculate that severe hot flashes are associated with artery stiffness, inflammation and vascular problems, which are linked to heart disease. In addition, bothersome menopause symptoms may compromise women's ability to get adequate exercise and sleep, in turn harming heart health.

Heart risks also increase during perimenopause. New research from the American Heart Association shows that the hormonal shifts that occur during perimenopause- the years preceding menopause- set the stage for heart disease. As women transition, they experience many changes that, when taken together, increase their risk for heart disease.

### **What can you do?**

1. Stop Smoking
2. Eat a healthy diet.
3. Exercise and maintain a healthy weight.
4. Manage stress.
5. Avoid or limit alcohol.
6. Manage other health conditions (especially high blood pressure and diabetes)
7. Get regular check-ups and lab work.

## Eat for a Powerful Heart

Your heart doctor may ask if you are avoiding saturated fat or what you are doing to control your weight. But doctors seldom ask, “Are you taking care of your muscles?” We lose about 5 percent of our total muscles mass every decade after age 30. But science shows that those who retain muscles as they age lower their risk of metabolic syndrome, obesity, diabetes and inflammation- all risk factors for heart disease.

That’s why AARP developed the Whole-Body Reset, a program designed to stop and reverse age-related muscles loss and weight gain. The primary cause of age-related muscles loss is “anabolic resistance”- essentially, we can’t turn the protein we eat into muscles as efficiently as we did when we were younger. In order to overcome this resistance, we need higher doses of protein at each meal-25 grams at a time for women or 30 grams for men. Anything less than that and your body remains in muscle-loss mode. Fat starts to win out, and heart health suffers.

In addition, to protein, we need a mix of high-fiber grains, high nutrient fruits and vegetables, and healthy fats to keep heart- harming, fat-promoting inflammation under control. Here’s your plan.

1. Eat 25 to 30 grams of protein at each meal, breakfast, lunch and dinner. Make sure every snack you eat has at least some protein as well (cheese on that cracker, peanut butter with that apple). Women should aim for at least 75 to 100 grams of total protein every day, while men should shoot for at least 90 to 120 grams.
2. Up your intake of high fiber grains, cereals and beans. In one study following 2,735 people, women who ate the least amount of fiber were 2.9 times as likely to die from inflammatory diseases such as heart disease. And research has found that for every additional 10 grams of fiber you eat per day, you reduce your risk of stroke by 12 percent.
3. Eat more colorful fruits and vegetables. Aim for eight to 10 small servings a day. Fruits and vegetables provide fiber, as well as vitamins, minerals and thousands of micronutrients called phytochemical. As we age, our ability to extract these nutrients from food diminishes- and that’s another reason why inflammation increases.
4. Enjoy healthy fats and oils from seafood, nuts, seeds, olives and avocado. Two servings a day will help keep you lean and sharp, whether you’re enjoying a serving of salmon, a spoonful of peanut butter, some chips and guacamole, or toasty bread dipped in extra-virgin oil.
5. Focus on fortified dairy. Worry more about getting enough calcium-rich dairy than about whether it’s low- fat or not. One study found that those who ate three servings of whole-fat dairy had lower risks of heart disease and stroke than those who ate one serving. Dairy also delivers muscle-building protein.
6. Don’t drink your calories (or chemicals). In particular, don’t think that you are doing yourself a favor by drinking diet soda. They’ve been linked to an increased risk of heart disease, dementia and stroke. Keep it simple with filtered water, sparkling water, tea/or coffee (it’s fine to add a little milk).



## Be Antibiotics Aware from CDC.gov

**Antibiotic resistance** is one of the most urgent threats to the public's health. Antibiotic resistance happens when germs, like bacteria and fungi, develop the ability to defeat the drugs designed to kill them. That means the germs are not killed and continue to grow. More than 2.8 million antibiotic-resistant infections occur in the United States each year, and more than 35,000 people die as a result.

Antibiotics can save lives, but any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects and contribute to the development of antibiotic resistance. Each year, at least 28% of antibiotics are prescribed unnecessarily in U.S. doctors' offices and emergency rooms (ERs), which makes improving antibiotic prescribing and use a national priority.

Helping healthcare professionals improve the way they prescribe antibiotics, and improving the way we take antibiotics, helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that these life-saving drugs will be available for future generations.

**When are Antibiotics Needed** Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria, but even some bacterial infections get better without antibiotics. We rely on antibiotics to treat serious, life-threatening conditions such as pneumonia and sepsis, the body's extreme response to an infection. Effective antibiotics are also needed for people who are at high risk for developing infections. Some of those at high risk for infections include patients undergoing surgery, patients with end-stage kidney disease, or patients receiving cancer therapy (chemotherapy).

### When Antibiotics Aren't Needed

Antibiotics DO NOT work on viruses, such as those that cause colds, flu, or COVID-19. Antibiotics also are not needed for many sinus infections and some ear infections.

When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still cause harm. Common side effects of antibiotics can include:

- Rash
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Yeast infections

More serious side effects can include:

- *Clostridioides difficile* infection (also called *difficile* or *C. diff*), which causes severe diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death.
- Severe and life-threatening allergic reactions, such as wheezing, hives, shortness of breath, and anaphylaxis (which also includes feeling like your throat is closing or choking, or your voice is changing)

### What You Can Do to Feel Better

- Ask your healthcare professional about the best way to feel better while your body fights off the virus.
- If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed. Talk with your healthcare professional if you have any questions about your antibiotics.
- Talk with your healthcare professional if you develop any side effects, especially severe diarrhea, since that could be a *C. diff.* infection, which needs to be treated immediately.
- Do your best to stay healthy and keep others healthy:
  - Clean hands by washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
  - Stay home when sick!
  - Get recommended vaccines, such as the flu vaccine.

## Marketing: Ways to increase Membership in your Club

As leaders in your club one of your many responsibilities is growth. Since our clubs are non-profit organizations, there are many benefits which we can use to increase membership. Having a loyal base of supporters can be useful when it comes to planning events, fundraising, public speaking and much more. There is a lot in it for members also. Non-profit membership programs create engagement opportunities for members. It can be a chance for those involved to meet like-minded individuals and contribute to a cause.

You can increase your membership and motivate your club members by asking every member of the club to always keep a club brochure neatly placed in their purse. They should intentionally pull it out of their purse when they are having breakfast, lunch or eating out with friends. They will know when it is appropriate to do this. That brochure will become a conversation piece in which someone will show some interest. Invite them to your club meeting. In addition to the above, place an ad in the local newspaper about the things your clubs have done and events you have hosted including pictures.

### Eight More Ways to Increase Your Club Membership

- 1 Make joining easy:** Have you ever tried to sign up for a service and the application process was difficult to understand? Ensuring your membership program has an easy application process and a prominent spot on your website's navigation bar makes it seamless for new members to join.
- 2. Host open events:** An open event is an event organized by your nonprofit that's open to anyone, not existing members. People join membership organizations that they share a common interest with. Hosting open events allows non-members to see what your organization offers. By hosting an open event your organization will give non-members an idea of what they could expect if they joined.
- 3. Keep current members engaged:** The more you engage with your current members, the more likely they will be to promote your organization to others. Thank your members regularly and let them know that their hard work is very important. Hosting member-only events can engage current members and make them feel more appreciated. If you can keep your members happy for a long time, you will attract more people and donations.
- 4. Give members a button or pin and encourage them to wear it.** Make sure it's stylish so members will be more likely to wear it, and people will ask what it's about.
- 5. Invite people to club and county event (and pay for their ticket).** Sometimes people need to see the fun side before all the business.
- 6. Send your newsletter out to prospective members and friends.** Let them know about all your activities and projects.
- 7. Challenge your club members to help recruit one member each in a given amount of time.** After that challenge has been completed have a 'Victory' celebration and go out to lunch. You will know how to reward the ones that fulfilled their challenge and the ones that did not.
- 8. Give away something free to new members:** The chance to win a prize always attracts interest.