

COVID-19 Vaccine Provides Hope

By Senior Public Relations Specialist Brandy Gallagher

This is truly an exciting and memorable time in history. In an effort to swiftly vaccinate Alaska Native and American Indian people, Southcentral Foundation began offering COVID-19 vaccines to customer-owners ages 16 and older in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Anchorage area in January. SCF is excited to offer this highly effective vaccine to help protect the community and stop the COVID-19 pandemic.

Operation Warp Speed allocated vaccines to be distributed to Tribes, similar to how separate allocations were made for Veterans Health Administration, Department of Defense, and Bureau of Prisons, in addition to vaccine allocations from the State of Alaska. These allocations allowed SCF to expand the age group quickly for Alaska Native and American Indian people.

“I decided to get the COVID-19 vaccine because I want to help educate the Alaska Native Community,” said SCF Outpatient Pediatrics Registered Nurse Case Manager Don Johnson. “I hope to help fight disinformation surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine, and I am doing my part in helping take care of my community.”

The vaccination effort for Alaska Native and American Indian people has been an extraordinary feat supported by many organizations and people across Alaska. COVID-19 vaccines were distributed by plane and snowmachine to clinics supported by SCF throughout the state.

The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have shown effectiveness over 90% after receiving both doses. The Pfizer vaccine requires a second dose

17 - 21 days after the first, and the Moderna vaccine requires a second dose 28 days after the first.

It is still possible to contract COVID-19 after receiving the vaccine, but the illness will be less severe. Additionally, the vaccines will not give you COVID-19 or give you a positive test as they do not contain the live virus.

Side effects including an



Southcentral Foundation Outpatient Pediatrics Registered Nurse Case Manager Don Johnson receives the COVID-19 vaccine.

achy arm, fatigue, headache, and fever are common after receiving the first dose and indicates the vaccine is working. This should not deter an individual from receiving the second dose. If symptoms such as these are a deterrent for you, please do not seek to receive the first dose, as vaccine is limited and is only effective with completion of the two-dose series.

The COVID-19 vaccine is an important tool to help end the pandemic; however, many people will need to be vaccinated. Herd immunity occurs when most people are immune to an infection, and the virus cannot spread quickly. Vaccination increases the immunity of those who have received the vaccine. Herd immunity will occur when roughly 75 - 80% of the population have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Global vaccination will be challenging, and the effect will not be immediate, but the vaccine shows promise for 2021.

Originally from Utqiagvik, Johnson said, “People still need to mask up, physical distance, and sanitize as much as possible. This is all science-based protocol but won’t work unless we all do it together. Collaboratively, we can end this pandemic.”



The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have shown effectiveness over 90% after receiving both doses.



SCF Public Relations Assistant Gabby St. Clair after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

Building defenses against COVID-19 is a community effort, you are a key part of that defense. Protect yourself and your loved ones by learning the facts and getting vaccinated. If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, please contact your primary care provider.

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Vision

A Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

Mission

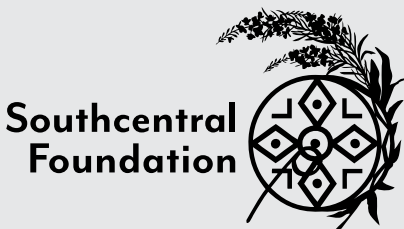
Working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services.

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Lisa Wade Appointed to the SCF Board of Directors

By Technical Writer Uinita Mauigoo



Lisa Wade, a preserver of Alaska Native cultures, is Southcentral Foundation's newest board member.

Whether it is empowering Indigenous youth, or igniting systematic change, people are used to seeing Lisa Wade on the front lines.

The list of roles and contributions Wade bears is immeasurable: Tribal leader, child advocate, director, educator, Tribal court judge, among many others. Now Wade can add another hat to the burgeoning list: Southcentral Foundation Board Member.

Wade has an already established history with SCF. The winner of the 2019 SCF Partnership Award, she has served as a partner with SCF on many collaborations over several years. Wade is no stranger to SCF's mission, and works together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services.

"Lisa Wade is a tireless advocate for the Alaska Native Community.

We welcome her and look forward to her perspective on the Southcentral Foundation Board of Directors," said SCF Board Chairman James Segura.

Wade's work and passion has particularly impacted the stewards of our future: the youth.

Wade spearheaded changes within the educational system through her role as an education, health and social services director for the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council. The Ya Ne Dah Ah School, founded in 1992 to preserve Ahtna Athabascan culture, has benefited from a myriad of initiatives such as health education, that Wade developed through partnerships. She has created several resources for children and the community to advance through cultural, mental, spiritual, and academic education, as well.

With a steady eye toward the prosperity of good health for Alaska Native people, Wade has been instrumental in the development of the *Benteh Nuutah* Valley Native Primary Care Center. She has also contributed to the successes of the VNPCC through bringing in more customer-owners, expanding its services, and implementing process improvements. Wade has also managed the *C'eyiits' Hwnax* Life House Community Health Center in Sutton.

A preserver of Alaska Native cultures, Wade's vision is steeped in Ahtna Athabascan traditions and values. Through several roles within her community, such as board member for Mat-Su Health Foundation, board member for Alaska Family Services, and Mat-Su Racial Equity Dialogues workshop facilitator, Wade and has created and implemented systems that challenge and change the precursors of racism and colonialism.

With a warrior like Wade named to the SCF Board of Directors, it is easy to envision a Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness within this generation — and many more to come.

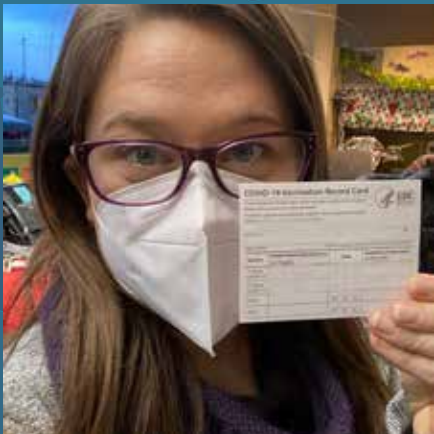


Lisa Wade's work and passion has particularly impacted the stewards of our future: the youth.



Lisa Wade accepts a Partnership Award at the 23rd Annual Gathering.

COVID-19 Vaccine: Protecting the Community is a Shared Responsibility



Jessica Mute
Benteh Nuutah Valley Native Primary Care Center OB-GYN Registered Nurse Case Manager

"As a registered nurse who works with pregnant women, I got the vaccine to protect customer-owners and the next generation of customer-owners."



Katherine Bourdukofsky

"I am happy and thankful for all care givers – and most importantly I have hope for the future."



Sophie Minich
Cook Inlet Region, Inc. President and CEO

"Getting our community and our economy back on track starts with a simple act of taking steps to protect our community, like masking up and getting vaccinated!"



Brandon Delkittie
Southcentral Foundation Physical Therapy and Exercise Administrative Support

"The COVID-19 vaccine empowers us, assists in building protection, and keeps the community safe."

Shelter Clinic Receives Community Service Award

By SCF Public Relations



The Sullivan Arena Clinic has required collaboration between its key partners: the shelter operator Bean's Café, along with Providence Health Services Alaska, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center, and Southcentral Foundation.

On-site health care at the Sullivan Arena was recognized as a significant contribution to public health by the Alaska Public Health Association. The Alaska Community Service Award for Health is presented annually at the Alaska Health Summit. Past recipients include the Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance, Covenant House, Southcentral Foundation's Family Wellness Warriors Initiative, and many others working to improve the health of Alaskans. This year's ceremony was held virtually, during a live conference themed "Public Health During Changing Times."

The Sullivan Arena Clinic was borne out of necessity during this pandemic year. A year ago, the Municipality of Anchorage, along with community partners, took steps to reduce the density of people staying in shelters to limit the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Once the Sullivan Arena was opened as a mass shelter, the need for on-site health care for the 350 people in residence became apparent.

"The COVID-19 crisis has made efforts to support vulnerable individuals more vital than ever," said Sonda Tetpon, an SCF administrator working closely with the shelter clinic partnership. "The logistics of physical distancing and infection control had an unintended consequence of

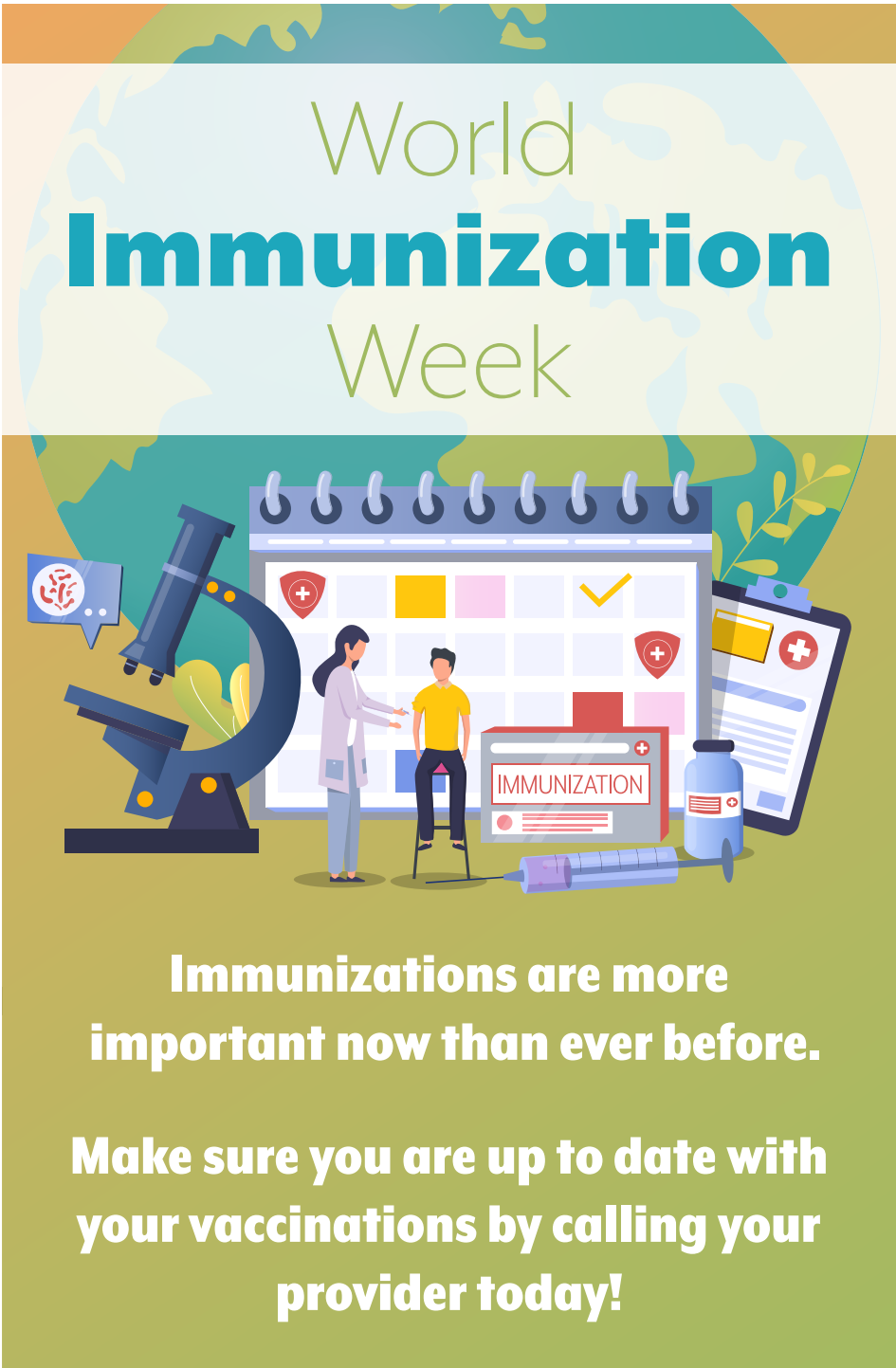
hundreds of individuals experiencing homelessness losing easy access to basic medical care."

"It was important to us to bring the services to the people," said Denise Coslett, SCF's clinical director for the shelter clinic. "Additionally, we have assisted hundreds of vulnerable individuals reconnect with the health care system as a medical home."

To be successful in its impact, the Sullivan Arena Clinic has required collaboration between its key partners: the shelter operator Bean's Café, along with Providence Health Services Alaska, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center, and SCF. SCF has leveraged years of experience operating the medical clinic at Brother Francis Shelter.

"Through this amazing partnership, we are able to provide greater access to care and continuity of services," said Tetpon. The Sullivan Arena Clinic has offered acute and chronic medical care, medication management, crisis intervention, mental health therapy, medically assisted detox, and substance use disorder treatment since it opened last summer.

"It reminds us that we can do more together, than we can do apart," said SCF interim President/CEO April Kyle.



World Immunization Week

Immunizations are more important now than ever before.

Make sure you are up to date with your vaccinations by calling your provider today!

Keeping Your Child Healthy with Well-Child Visits

By Senior Public Relations Specialist Brandy Gallagher

Scheduling well-child visits is essential to track your child’s growth and development, create a space to discuss any concerns, receive recommended vaccines, and discuss common risks and pitfalls to watch out for in the future.

Lifting their head, sitting, crawling, walking, smiling, talking, and rolling over are just a few physical milestones your child’s pediatrician may look for during the assessment. The pediatrician also evaluates height, weight, hearing, eyesight, and much more to ensure your child’s growth and development are on track.

Scheduling your child’s vaccines will help protect your child against preventable diseases. “Vaccines are carefully developed to prevent disease and lessen its effects. It makes sense to get them as early as possible so your family can have the best protection from very serious diseases,” said Pediatrician Dwight Parker, MD. Contagious diseases can spread fast, especially in children’s environments where they are touching, playing, chewing, and so forth. It’s particularly important to protect children against preventable diseases as schools and communities change capacities and guidelines.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports a drop in well-child visits and recommended childhood vaccinations. It is imperative to remain vigilant in your child’s health care journey. There are safety and health precautions in place to protect you and your child during health care visits. Additionally, visits can be scheduled via phone or video teleconference to meet the needs of customer-owners. Connect with your child’s pediatrician to see what visits may be recommended to ensure they grow and thrive!



Routine well-child visits can offer peace of mind.

Stay on Track

Suggested Schedule for Vaccinations



Birth:	Hep B
6 weeks - 2 months:	Hep B, DTaP, IPV, Rotavirus, PCV13, Hib
4 months:	Hep B, DTaP, IPV, Rotavirus, PCV13, Hib
6 months:	Hep B, DTaP, IPV, Rotavirus, PCV13
12 months:	MMR, Varicella, Hib, PCV13
15 months:	DTaP, Hep A
2 years:	Hep A
4 - 6 years:	DTaP, IPV, MMR, Varicella
11 years:	Tdap, HPV, MCV4
12 years:	HPV
16 years:	MCV4

It is recommended that children ages 6 months and older receive the influenza vaccination every flu season. It is important to stay on track with your child’s immunization schedule. Check with your provider to ensure they are up to date. In Anchorage, call (907) 729-1000 to contact Southcentral Foundation Pediatrics.

Staying Grounded During Uncertainty

As Southcentral Foundation shares COVID-19 updates and information about staying physically healthy, it is important to remember to stay emotionally healthy too.

SCF hopes that providing these small tips and reminders will help everyone continue to manage and support overall well-being.

Two ideas to start the week:



1. Be mindful of the pull of fear.

Keep things in perspective. Mindfully direct and guide thoughts away from panic mode, and stay focused on what you can control.

2. Try a mindful exercise as you wash your hands.

As you use deep breathing and allow intentional breaths to wash away negative thoughts, repeat the phrases below.

May I be happy, may I be safe.

May I be healthy, may I be at peace.

May my loved ones be happy, may my loved ones be safe.

May my loved ones be healthy, may they be at peace.

May our community be happy, may our community be safe.

May our community be healthy, may our community be at peace.

The Journey Through Life is Always Worth Living

By SCF Public Relations

On the journey through life, there are ups and downs, bringing stress and success. Some days, the journey may feel like things are too much to manage. It's normal to have a bad day. When those hard times come along, speak out and connect with those around you.

If you are struggling with feeling hopeless and lonely, as if no one understands, please know that you are not alone. You matter. It is crucial to recognize your mental health is essential for life's journey. You do not have to face a crisis alone.

Southcentral Foundation is committed to providing a comprehensive approach to fighting suicide and supporting customer-owners.

According to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, suicide is a leading preventable cause of death in Alaska. Between 2012 – 2017, over 1,000 people around Alaska have completed suicide, and the suicide rate for Alaska Native males is over six times the national average as of 2015.

SCF has resources to assist customer-owners develop coping strategies, create safety plans, and connect with mental health professionals. SCF offers a variety of specialized services for customer-owners to receive help and guidance.

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and SCF provide suicide prevention trainings in Alaska. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a two-day intensive workshop that teaches effective suicide intervention skills. A half-day training, called safeTALK, teaches participants to recognize basic suicide warning signs and ways to connect at-risk individuals to intervention services.

The safeTALK training is for anyone 15 and older. safeTALK provides the skills and tools necessary to help identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connects them to appropriate resources. ASIST equips participants



Southcentral Foundation has resources to assist customer-owners develop coping strategies, create safety plans, and connect with mental health professionals.

to respond with knowledge and competency to people who are at risk of suicide. Those who attend ASIST learn and practice skills in identifying and responding to people with an immediate risk of suicide.

If you or someone you know is contemplating suicide, know that you are not alone, and you can reach out for help. Wherever you are in your journey, SCF will meet you there.

Connection is the solution.

For more information, contact SCF's Behavioral Health Support Services at (907) 729-5260, or visit southcentralfoundation.com/services/behavioral-health. For immediate assistance in crisis, text the Crisis Text Line at 741-741. #ListenShareConnect

Cook Inlet Tribal Council Expands Substance Misuse Treatment Services

By CITC Recovery Services

In pursuit of greater service for the community, Cook Inlet Tribal Council is offering a new clinically managed low-intensity residential treatment program. This new recovery service is part of Chanlyut, which means “new beginnings” in Dena’ina Athabascan. Chanlyut was designed with the intent to support program participants in interacting within a healthy community, building a worldview founded in traditional values, promoting a bigger-than-self mindset, and enhancing a strong mind, body, and spirit.

Chanlyut is an 18-bed, 24-hour structured-care facility located on Dena’ina lands in the Municipality of Anchorage. The program offers process-based and psychoeducational clinical programming, work therapy and vocational readiness preparation, and cultural and traditional healing practices. This 24-hour support facility is equipped with trained clinical and support staff to assist those struggling with addiction. The average length of stay for treatment is typically between 4-6 weeks with options for vocational training and work therapy programming.

If you believe you or someone you know would benefit from Chanlyut’s services, please call the CITC intervention team at (907) 793-3200.

The team is happy to share more about available services and discuss if Chanlyut, or another recovery services program, would be the right fit for you.



Cook Inlet Tribal Council employees from the Chanlyut program.

CITC OFFERING NEW RECOVERY SERVICES

**NOW AVAILABLE:
CLINICALLY MANAGED
LOW-INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL
TREATMENT PROGRAM**

Offering 24 hour support and structure with trained clinical and support staff to assist those struggling with addiction.

Average length of stay for treatment runs between 4-6 weeks.

Vocational training and work therapy programming.

Application and more information found at:

<https://www.citci.org/recovery/>

Call and speak with our intake staff at:
(907)793-3600



4TH ANNUAL Tikahtnu Plants Symposium



SAVE THE DATE

The Tikahtnu Plants Symposium promotes Indigenous knowledge about Alaskan plants in combination with hands-on activities, encouraging a holistic approach to wellness.

Aug. 3 - 5

For more information, contact
Traditional Healing Clinic
at (907) 729-4958.

COVID-19 VACCINE



COVID-19 vaccines are available for empaneled customer-owners and their household members at the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center and *Benteh Nuutah* Valley Native Primary Care Center. The vaccine is available for ages 16 and older, ages 16 and 17 require parental consent.

Anchorage Native Primary Care Center
Empaneled customer-owners and their household members can contact their primary care provider or call (907) 729-3300 to make an appointment.

***Benteh Nuutah* Valley Native Primary Care Center**
Customer-owners and household members of empaneled customer-owners can call (907) 631-7600 to schedule an appointment.

Alaska Native Youth: Rising From 10,000 Years of Strength

By FWWI Learning and Development Advisor Lu-Anne Haukaas and FWWI Learning and Development Associate Polly Andrews

Southcentral Foundation’s Family Wellness Warriors Initiative employees connected virtually and enjoyed tea with Elder community members while listening intently to their wisdom and stories. As conversations with Elders often transpire, their attention turned to the next generation. Through Zoom videoconferencing, they encouraged this generation to create safe, healthy environments for the next generation to flourish, fully confident and deeply rooted in who they are.

Jim Labelle, Sr., University of Alaska Anchorage professor, said healthy adults must remind our youth that they have a community that is willing to be there, love them, and share in their pain. Labelle, an Inupiaq Elder, gave a gentle reminder of the power of sharing story: “talking is healing.” Labelle, who is also an expert in historical trauma and resilience, said that identity is rooted in the strength and knowledge of 10,000 years of Alaska Native brilliance, survival, and adaptability. He added, “If we can survive 10,000 years, we can survive this recent change.”

Labelle’s wisdom was echoed by Alfred Quijance, Elder advisor and FWWI committee member, who said although times have changed, and ancient tradition has evolved. “We can still create environments that teach our youth about their sacredness, their purpose, and their responsibility to others,” said Quijance, who is a longtime SCF employee of Sugpiaq descent. He emphasized listening to youth in ways that are gentle and free of judgement is an important part of healthy relationships.

Learning about the customs and practices of Alaska Native culture is a way to teach this. “If we teach our youth how to eat their own natural food,” Quijance shared, “eventually they will hunt their natural food.” In this lies a shared responsibility for the community to come together in ways that support our youth and end cycles of abuse. This is not a new concept, but one that knows the whispers of ancient days. Traditionally, Quijance said, the whole village stepped in to care for the family when a serious issue arose. Still today, strength has its source in community and relationship.

When asked what a shared responsibility looks like in our modern time, SCF Vice President of Executive and Tribal Services Ileen Sylvester, a Tribal member of the Native Village of Ekwok, reminisced about her childhood. She remembers as a young girl, her father returning home from the fishing boat. “When he was home, he would sit us down on the couch and talk to us about life,” she said. Shared responsibility to Sylvester includes leaders who are willing to stand out front and use their voices while modeling healthy community for youth. “Today my siblings and I laugh when we notice that we’re doing the same thing with our children and grandchildren.”

SCF’s RAISE Program, designed to develop leadership skills in Alaska Native and American Indian youth 14 - 19 years old, is one of many programs that Sylvester oversees. Alaska Native and American Indian youth are uncovering their voices and exploring their futures. “If we could surround them with support and let them know we believe in them and their goals, it can change a young person’s life,” said Sylvester, who is a Yup’ik, Athabascan and Aleut descendant.

She highlights that part of the success of the program is bringing together a community of youth interns and Alaska Native leadership representing diverse backgrounds and experience, to model the picture of success. “We’ve been able to connect the generations, bring everyone together, build relationships, and lifelong relationships.” From this, Sylvester has seen many intern alumni move on to higher education and leadership positions throughout SCF and credits the program’s whole-person wellness approach to supporting youth. “It’s the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness that we help instill in our youth. It takes all of that to change our future.”

While the future may seem uncertain at times, what is certain and unshaken is the 10,000-year-old foundation Elders and ancestors have given us. By sharing responsibility, by sharing our stories, we ensure that foundation lasts for generations to come.

Clinic Contact Information:

In an emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

To contact the Alaska Native Medical Center Emergency Department, please call (907) 729-1729 or visit 4315 Diplomacy Drive, Anchorage.

	PRIMARY	AFTER HOURS/URGENT
Anchorage Native Primary Care Center	(907) 729-3300	(907) 729-1729
Benteh Nuutah Valley Native Primary Care Center	(907) 631-7800	(907) 729-1729
C'eyiits' Hwnax Life House Community Health Center	(907) 631-7665	(907) 891-3750 / 911 Urgent
Eklutna Village Clinic	(907) 688-6031	911 Urgent
Indian Creek Health Clinic	(907) 583-2461	(907) 230-4899
Igiugig Community Health Clinic	(907) 533-3207	(907) 533-6020
Kokhanok Community Health Clinic	(907) 282-2203	(907) 282-4121
McGrath Regional Health Center	(907) 524-3299	911 Urgent
Junior “Doc” Gregory Memorial Clinic Nikolai Clinic	(907) 239-2328	(907) 293-2328
Nilavena Subregional Health Center	(907) 571-1818	(907) 571-7111
Nondalton Community Health Clinic	(907) 294-2238	(907) 294-2238
Pedro Bay Community Health Clinic	(907) 850-2229	(907) 850-4019
Lake Clark Wellness Center and Port Alsworth Health Center	(907) 781-2256	(907) 891-3750
St. Paul Community Health Center	(907) 546-8300	(907) 546-4202 / 911 Urgent
Takotna Clinic	(907) 524-3299	(907) 298-2214

2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Information

Southcentral Foundation is offering different levels of operations and staffing for programs and departments based on many factors, including paying attention to guidance from health authorities and local officials.

For the most current and updated information about SCF program and department status, please visit www.southcentralfoundation.com/covid-19

Warming Weather Brings Seasonal Road Hazards

By Public Relations Specialist Addison Arave

It's that time of year again: break-up season. This is a time marked by melting snow, slushy streets, and flying gravel left over from winterized roads. Although safety should always be a priority when driving, it is especially important between winter and spring, when the partially melted ice and snow can create dangerous road conditions.

Studded tires can provide traction and stability in the winter. But, in the absence of snow and ice, they can tear up concrete, creating rough and gravelly roads. Continued driving with studded tires on exposed concrete can create potholes. If an unlucky vehicle runs over a deep one, its alignment could suffer the consequences. While the Alaska Department of Transportation and Municipality of Anchorage are continually working to fill potholes, it is safest to drive with caution to avoid costly repairs.

Fixing an alignment can be expensive, but a car accident might break the bank, or worse. According to the Federal Highway Administration, over 1,300 people are killed, and more than 116,800 people are injured in vehicle crashes on snowy, slushy, or icy pavement annually. During break-up season, there may still be icy spots on the road, so please use caution.

One of the more exciting aspects of break-up season is the Alaska wildlife that begins to emerge. Animal sightings signify warming weather and the summer months to come; however, the animals also pose an additional hazard while driving. Be cautious, be alert, and watch for unsuspecting wildlife that may wander into the road.

For current road conditions and weather watches on major roads and highways, visit 511.alaska.gov.



Lose to Win Program Partners with CDC

By Health Educators Velda Miller and Caroline Wolkoff

The Lose to Win Program is exclusive to Southcentral Foundation and is available for all customer-owners. If you are working toward weight management, are overweight, prediabetic, or had gestational diabetes in prior pregnancy, Lose to Win can offers the tools and guidance you need to live a healthier life. This program can lower your risk of having a heart attack or stroke, improve your health, help you feel more energetic and motivated, and possibly reverse your prediabetes diagnosis.

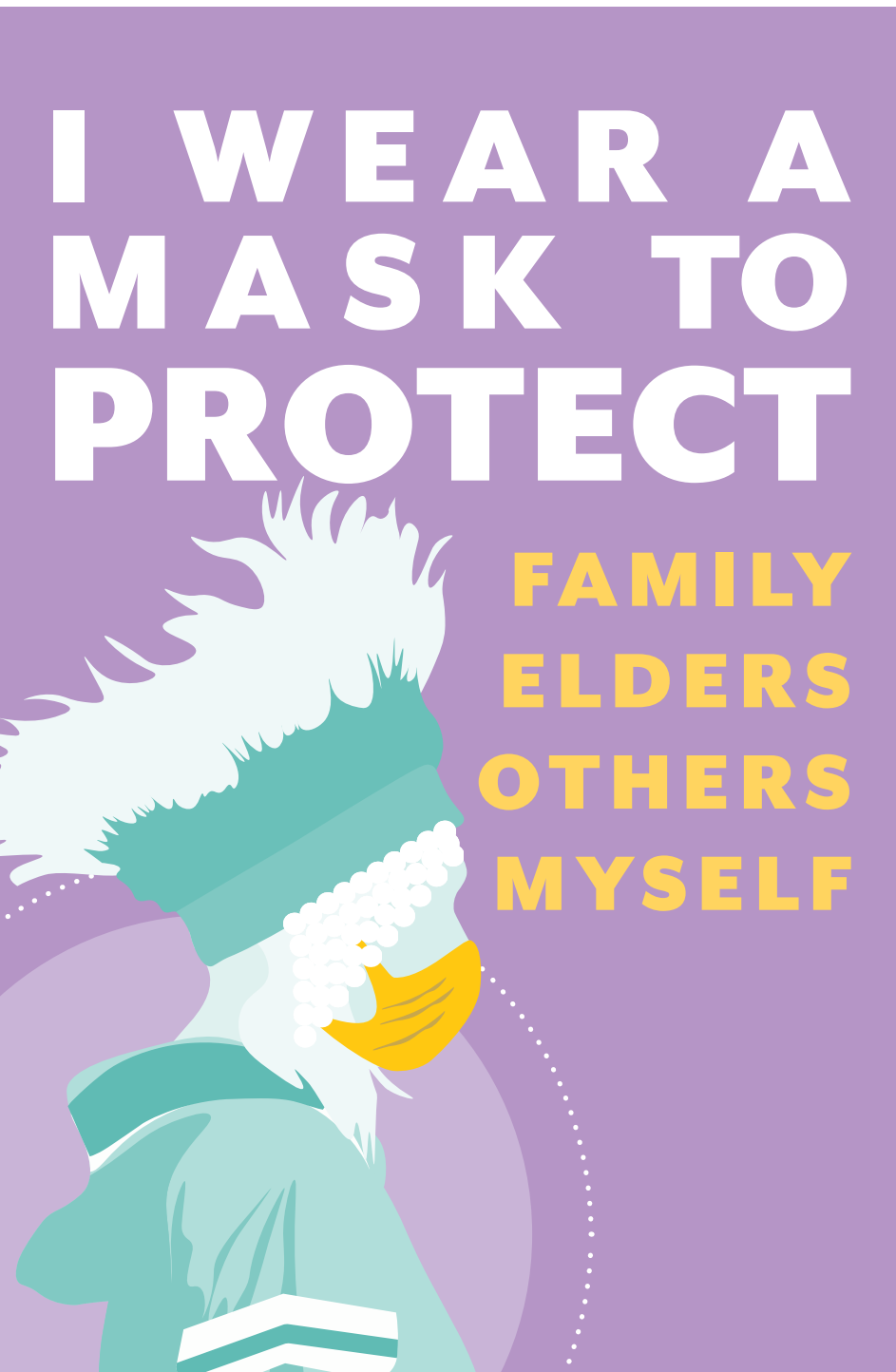
SCF Health Education's Lose to Win Program is working toward being a recognized partner by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the National Diabetes Prevention Program. This research-based program's goal is to assist individuals reduce their risk of Type 2 diabetes and improve overall health during the course of a year.

SCF Health Education has offered the Lose to Win Program for over a decade. The program offers classes, resources, and a team of providers with which to connect. The program also includes monthly challenges offered through My AK Wellness, a free online health resource, during the 12 months of the program to keep participants actively involved in wellness activities.

The American Medical Association and the CDC are promoting these diabetes prevention programs because the programs are one of the most effective ways to prevent or delay Type 2 diabetes in the United States.

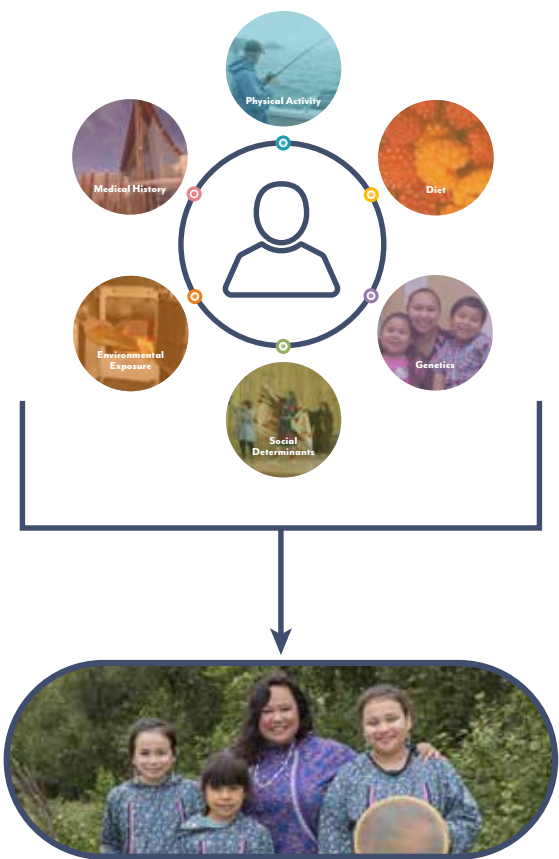
A year may seem like a large commitment, but learning new habits, gaining new skills, and learning about nutrition and movement takes time. This is a lifestyle change program, not a fad diet or quick fix.

To sign up for the next session or for questions, call the Lose to Win Program at (907) 729-2689 or email scflosetowin@scf.cc.



Exploring Alaska Native and American Indian Perspectives on Precision Medicine Research

By Brianna Sauraq Smith and Alex Viera



A new area of health research, Precision Medicine Research, uses an approach that generates data on how a person's genes, lifestyle, family history, and environment affect a person's health over a lifetime. PMR also highlights how the person responds to health care treatments.

Since there is a lack of insight on how customer-owners and Southcentral Foundation stakeholders view crucial aspects of PMR, SCF Research Department is continuing to hold listening sessions to hear the perspectives of customer-owners,

SCF providers, and members of Alaska Native and American Indian communities on how to best conduct health research within SCF. The scope of the listening sessions include questions about participation in extensive research projects that use samples and data from Alaska Native people and other populations.

SCF participates in extensive conversations about the potential of available health research and its possible uses with Alaska Native and

American Indian communities across the nation. Through the use of a grant funded by the National Human Genome Research Institute, community-engaged research about views toward precision medicine regarding Alaska Native and American Indian people is the core of more than a decade of collaboration within the Northwest-Alaska Pharmacogenomics Research Network.

The project involves a partnership among three Alaska Native and American Indian communities in Alaska and Montana, their respective Tribal health departments/organizations, researchers at the University of Washington, SCF, the Oregon Health and Sciences University, and the University of Montana. Together, the Tribal health departments and organizations – SCF, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Tribal Health Department – serve more than 100 Tribes in Alaska and Montana.

In June 2019, a cross-site deliberation research project for the partnership convened. This was an opportunity for leaders from the three health systems that serve American Indian and Alaska Native people to discuss the role of Tribal governance and PMR. The findings from this project will inform the design of future PRM projects in Alaska Native and American Indian health care systems.

SCF, along with university and community partners, will convene a national meeting to further identify principles and approaches to guide PMR within Alaska Native and American Indian communities in early 2021. SCF Research Department works together with customer-owners to improve delivery of care and achieve wellness through health and related services. This project furthers that mission by amplifying customer-owner voices in the development of future research and support of research projects that directly benefit the health and well-being of customer-owners.

Southcentral Foundation Learning Circles



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Southcentral Foundation will continue to evaluate learning circle services in the coming months, and schedules may be subject to change. Currently, Family Wellness Warriors Initiative is offering the following learning circles virtually through Zoom video conferencing:

Stress Reduction and Relaxation

Thursdays, 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Meeting ID: 290 027 9397
Passcode: FWWILC!20

Na Tia Sukan: Recovery Support

Monday thru Friday, 1 - 2:15 p.m.
Meeting ID: 929 1269 8799
Password: FWWILC!20

Thursdays, 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Meeting ID: 959 7381 1073
Password: FWWILC!20

www.southcentralfoundation.com/learning-circles

REGISTER NOW!



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VIRTUAL
Nuka
CONFERENCE

JUNE 14-16, 2021

Join Southcentral Foundation's summer line-up of events, including the Virtual Nuka Conference, Integrated Care Team Webinar, and Introduction to Core Concepts.

Visit www.SCFNuka.com for more information.
If you have questions, please contact us at (907) 729-6852
or email SCFNukaEvent@southcentralfoundation.com



Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month



Are you Alaska Native or American Indian?
Are you over the age of 40?
Do you have a family history of cancer?

Colorectal cancer often has no symptoms. Talk with your provider about colorectal screening options.

PREVENTABLE | TREATABLE | BEATABLE



VIRTUAL SNUGGLE TIME

Wednesdays, noon - 1 p.m.
Zoom Meeting: bit.ly/scfsnuggletimeak

Virtual Snuggle Time is a peer support group for parents with infants. Learn about your baby's growth and development, receive breastfeeding support, and connect and share stories as you share in the joys and challenges of parenting. An infant feeding specialist and a behavioral health consultant will be there to facilitate and assist you. Email NewGenerations@southcentralfoundation.com for questions or issues connecting to Virtual Snuggle Time.

For more information, please contact
New Generations Project
(907) 729-7430 | southcentralfoundation.com

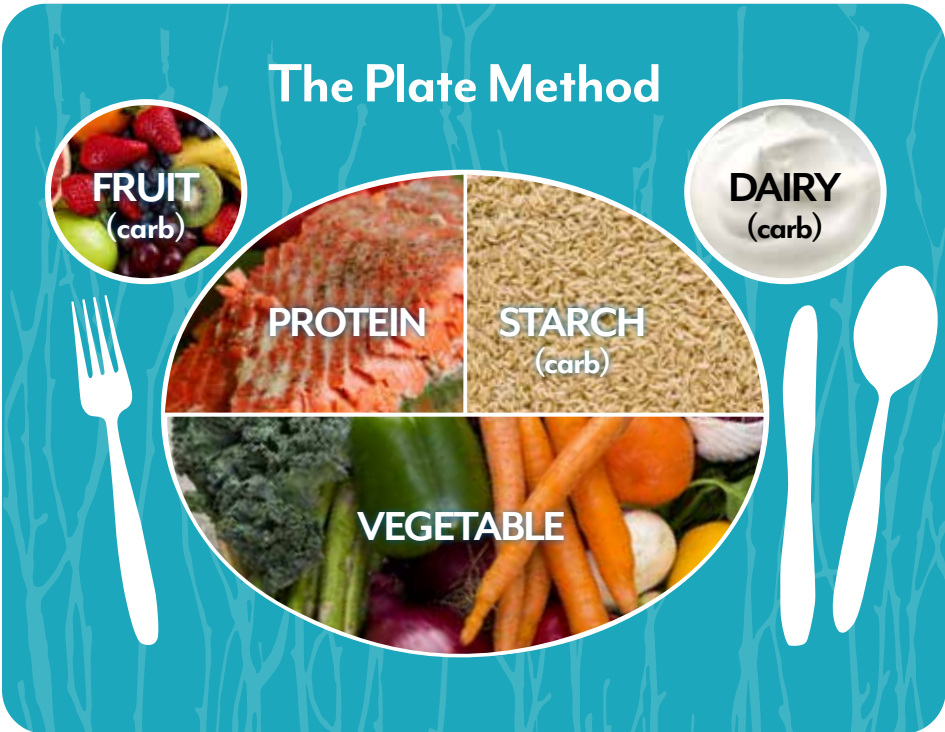
Pediatric Nutrition When Hunkering Down

By Registered Dietitian Pam Horan

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected our lives in so many ways. Some impacts have been more obvious than others. One impact health care professionals are concerned about is childhood weight gain. Many pediatricians and other health professionals are seeing children who are gaining weight faster than they are growing. For years health professionals have been concerned with rapid weight gain in children because of it leading to Type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, and fatty liver. These are conditions that may lead to a shorter life, particularly when developed in childhood.

If you feel that rapid weight gain is a concern for your child, check out these five tips below to see if one or more can be implemented into your household.

- Use the plate method. The plate method is a simple method to help plan a balanced meal. With the plate method you divide your plate into four equal-sized sections. One of those sections is your protein, one is your starch and the other half of the plate is your fruits and vegetables. Dairy is included as a side, often as a glass of milk or a topping on one of the items on the plate.
- Plan snacks. Try to limit snack foods like chips, fruit snacks, and imitation cheese crackers. Instead, focus more on whole foods that are close to how nature made them. If you do not serve fruit or dairy with dinner, then offering fruit with yogurt as a snack is a great option.
- Encourage play time. Children are recommended to get an hour of active play, most days of the week, and limit screen time to no more than 1 - 2 hours a day. Now that the weather is cold and COVID-19 numbers are concerning, you may not be interested or able to participate in your usual activities. For fun and low-cost ideas, check out these 87 active indoor game and activities from the What Mom's Love blog. Visit <https://whatmomslove.com/kids/active-indoor-games-activities-for-kids-to-burn-energy> to learn more.



- Stop the sugary drinks. Soda and juice are the biggest contributors of sugar in most children's diet. If your child drinks soda or juice regularly, getting rid of this extra sugar may be enough to curb rapid weight gain.
- Remember help is out there. Southcentral Foundation has a large team of registered dietitians to support you and your family. While we cannot be in your homes each day to help prepare meals, we can help you with goals setting and identifying practical changes for your family dynamics.

For more information, contact your integrated care team to schedule an appointment with your team dietitian.

Methods to Lower Your Risk for Colon Cancer

By Medical Director Dr. David Lessens

Given the significant disruptions to the foodways, activities, and routines of daily life that have occurred among Alaska Native people in recent generations, and given that colon cancer rates in our community are higher than in any other ethnicity in the U.S., digestive health should be a priority for every person of Alaska Native descent.

Although colon cancer occurs from a web of interwoven causes, and we have no control over our genetic heritage, genes are not destiny. Two out of three individuals diagnosed with colon cancer have no known family history.¹ The high rates of colon cancer in Alaska Native people are being driven by the major changes in the environment — especially with regard to food — over which we can take some control.

There are no lifestyle changes that have been proven to decrease the risk of dying from colon cancer; however, those who avoid colon cancer often share common lifestyle patterns. These include²:

- Maintaining a body mass index of less than 30 and a trim abdomen. Losing inches off your waist may be more meaningful for your health than losing pounds.
- Eating a plant-forward, fiber-rich diet that is not too high in calories and contains little or no processed meats (i.e., cold cuts, bacon, sausage). Getting adequate amounts of fiber (more than 34 grams per day for men or 28 for women) or optimal amounts (more than 50 grams per day) may play a key role in colon cancer prevention, though studies using supplemental fiber have had mixed results.
- Avoiding tobacco products. It is never too late to quit!
- Getting recommended amounts of physical activity. Aim to get 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week. It should be energetic enough that it makes you breathe faster and gets your heart pumping.
- Drinking less alcohol. This translates to two or less drinks per day for men and one or less for women.

- Focusing on getting adequate vitamin D and calcium. Vitamin D deficiency and insufficient calcium intake are much more common in those who develop colon cancer. While supplementing with vitamin D has not been shown to decrease rates of colon cancer, calcium supplementation, especially in combination with adequate vitamin D levels, has been shown to decrease the risk of recurrent polyps.³ Given that maintaining adequate vitamin D levels may be an important part of maintaining wellness, work with your primary care provider to understand when testing and supplementation may be appropriate.

Other than adopting these healthy routines, getting recommended screening exams are proven to help to reduce one's chances of dying from colon cancer. For Alaska Native people, screening for average-risk individuals begins at age 40. This recommendation is based on local data that considers colon cancer's disproportionate burden on Alaska Native people, as national guidelines often recommend starting between the ages of 45 to 50 years. The two available screening tests — colonoscopy and the stool-based fecal immunochemical test (FIT) — are both effective, but a colonoscopy is recommended as the primary option because it allows for polyp removal and customized follow-up intervals.

Embodying the strengths and positive lifestyles of previous generations, along with using effective screening exams, will help our families and communities keep colon cancer from derailing our health journeys.

¹ <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/reducing-your-risk-for-colon-cancer>

² <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/colon-cancer/colon-cancer-prevention>

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2947820>

Preventing Heart Disease with Smart Choices

By SCF Public Relations

Weighing less than a pound, the heart beats about 115,000 times a day, pumping 2,000 gallons of blood every day. Heart disease, also called cardiovascular disease, is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. For American Indian and Alaska Native people, Asian American, and Pacific Islanders, occurrence of heart disease is second only to cancer.

Heart disease can be prevented by making smart choices — exercising regularly, eating healthy, and appropriately managing health conditions. Avoid foods with a lot of added sugar as they contribute extra calories to your diet and provide little nutritional value. Incorporating fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes (beans) helps increase natural fiber to reduce cardiovascular risk factors. High sodium in your diet can raise your blood pressure — a major risk factor for heart disease. Prepackaged foods and fast foods are known to contain large amounts of hidden sodium (salt). When preparing home cooked meals, read nutrition labels and opt to use reduced sodium products and seasonings.

Physical activity is crucial as it helps lower your risk of heart disease and high blood pressure, helps manage weight, lowers cholesterol, and gives you more energy. Giving yourself at least 30 minutes of activity a day can greatly reduce your chances of heart disease. Staying tobacco-free or quitting tobacco will also reduce your risks, as smoking is a leading cause of heart disease. Smoking can raise triglycerides and damage cells that line the blood vessels. Choosing to quit tobacco is one of the best choices you can make for your health. Quitting tobacco is a process, and every step toward quitting is a success!

Reducing your stress can also support your journey to heart health. Dedicate 15 minutes a day for yourself and try to understand what causes your stress. You can also try muscle relaxation, meditation, deep breathing, bath, or steam.

It is not just what you eat that can affect your heart health but the amount of sleep you get. Seven to nine hours of sleep is optimal to give

your body the rest and relaxation it needs. Sleep or poor-quality sleep may increase the risk of health problems, including cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and obesity.

Prevention through education is critical in the fight against heart disease. Early detection is vital — it can help to save your life or the lives of loved ones. A heart attack happens when the blood supply to the heart is cut off. Cells in the heart muscle that do not receive enough oxygen-carrying blood begin to die. Know the warning signs and symptoms of a heart attack so you can act fast. As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain. Some of the significant warning signs include:

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Discomfort in the areas of the upper body
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea, lightheadedness, or cold sweats

For more information on methods to improve heart health, talk with your primary care team. It is essential to recognize the signs of a heart attack and to act immediately by calling 911. To find ways to raise awareness against heart health or donate to heart health research, visit heart.org



Healthier food choices and daily exercise is the best way to #LoveYourHeart.

Sources: Heart.org, cdc.gov, healthline.com

Food and Nutrition: What You Need to Know for Healthy Aging

By Seth N. Anderson MS, RD

Why is good nutrition important for healthy aging?

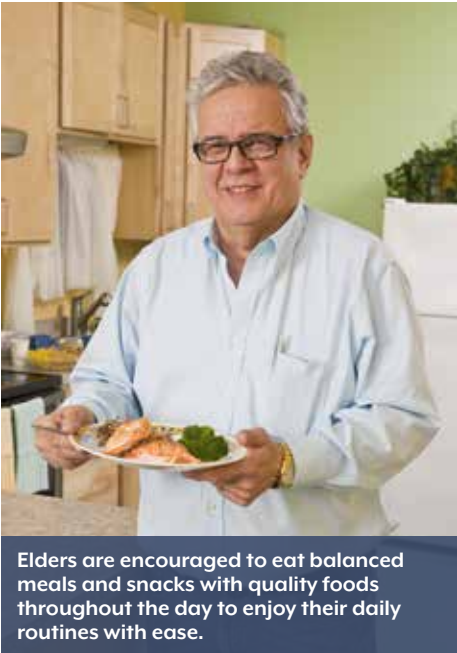
Optimizing what, how, when, and why we eat is important for aging Elders. As Elders age, nutritional needs and bodies change. Fueling bodies properly helps to prevent the risk of falls, chronic diseases like diabetes, and nutrient deficiencies. Elders can enjoy daily activities with ease by having balanced meals and snacks while adding quality foods that ensure our bodies are nourished. Learn about body changes that occur in aging and some quality nutrients to include with meals and snacks that support aging well.

How Body Changes Affect Eating in Aging

- Body composition changes – decreased muscle while fat increases over time
- Sensory changes — smells and tastes tend to decrease
- Appetite decreases
- Feeling full from a smaller portion of food is common
- Breaking down food and taking in nutrients is decreased
- Issues with chewing and swallowing certain foods can occur
- Cooking and preparing meals can become difficult

Quality Nutrients to Consider

When meal planning, it is important to include the following quality nutrients. Protein – getting enough protein in meals and snacks can help to keep Elders strong. Some traditional foods rich in protein are salmon, caribou, moose, deer, shellfish, whale, and seal. Taking at least 800 IU a



Elders are encouraged to eat balanced meals and snacks with quality foods throughout the day to enjoy their daily routines with ease.

day of vitamin D supplements will help to keep bones strong. Calcium-rich foods such as dairy, beans, and fortified foods also support bone health. Alaskan foods rich in calcium are salmon, dandelion greens, stinging nettles, and currants. B vitamins are known to help keep energy levels up, and can be found in fruits, vegetables, beans, eggs, and meat to help stay healthy. Staying hydrated by drinking enough fluids and water is also important as we age; aim for at least 6.5 cups per day.

Food Insecurity and Hunger:

About 12% of the population in Alaska are food insecure, meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of nutritious foods. Older adults are one of the vulnerable populations at risk for food insecurity. Inadequate nutrition increases the chance of poor health and wellbeing. The affordability of food, transportation, and the ability to cook and prepare food could be barriers leading to hunger and poor nutrition.

Southcentral Foundation has services to support Elder customer-owners. SCF Health Education assists with health coaching. Customer-owners can learn more about healthy activities and eating habits by participating in learning circles, such as Lose to Win. Community resource specialists are accessible during provider appointments to talk more about resources for which Elder customer-owners might be eligible. Organizations like Meals on Wheels and Food Bank of Alaska offer meal assistance to older adults.

For more information about food and nutrition to aid in aging well, contact your provider to speak to a dietitian.

Out of an abundance of caution and in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance on social distancing for higher-risk populations,

Southcentral Foundation has suspended all in-program activities at the Elder Program.

For more information, call the Elder Program at (907) 729-6500.

WORD SEARCH

T U O R P S S A R G Q E P V A
V T S O I L E S N B A U E M L
S E S S A L G N U S D G O T L
Q K G G H N G D T D E O A F E
I S N Z E B S E L T L O F L R
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BLOOM
BLOSSOM
BOOTS
BREAK
BUD
BUNNY
BUTTERFLIES
CLEANING
EASTER
EGGS
FLOWERS
FRUITS
GARDEN
GEESE
GRASS
GROW

MELTING
PLANTS
PUDDLES
RAIN
RAINBOWS
RAINCOAT
RUBBER
SOIL
SPRING
SPROUT
SUNGLASSES
SUNSHINE
UMBRELLA
VEGETABLES
WATER

Important Phone Numbers

Alaska Native Medical Center.....	(907) 563-2662	Food Bank of Alaska	(907) 272-3663
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)	(907) 272-1444	People Mover	(907) 343-4536
Anchorage Police Department (non-emergency).....	(907) 786-8500	Salvation Army Meals on Wheels	(907) 349-0613
Anchor Rides.....	(907) 343-2550	Senior Benefits	(907) 352-4150
Cook Inlet Housing Authority	(907) 793-3000	Southcentral Foundation	(907) 729-4955
Division of Public Assistance	(907) 269-6599	SCF Elder Program Event Hotline.....	(907) 729-6588