

Cordell Christian Home's Resident's Digest

May is Older Americans Month

Living Today for a Better Tomorrow

Cordell, OK - May 27, 2009 - May is Older Americans Month, a great time to bring attention to the issues that affect older adults and create community-wide opportunities to help older Americans improve their quality of life. This year's theme is "Living Today for a Better Tomorrow." As a nation, we must work together to give older adults the tools they need to make healthy decisions.

By 2030, one in every five Americans will be age 65 or older. While the risk of disease increases as we age, poor health is not an inevitable consequence of aging. Many illnesses and disabilities associated with aging are preventable.

Nearly 40% of deaths in America can be attributed to poor health habits such as lack of physical exercise, poor eating habits and smoking. Older Americans can prevent or control chronic disease by adopting healthy habits such as exercising regularly, maintaining a healthy diet and ceasing tobacco use.

The benefits of regular physical activity include weight control; healthy bones, muscles and joints; arthritis relief; reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression; and more. Exercise does not have to be strenuous and is safe for people of all ages. Older Americans can greatly benefit from a regular exercise routine that includes strength, balance, stretching, and endurance exercises.

In addition to a regular exercise routine, good nutrition is vital in maintaining good health. Reducing saturated fats and eating a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, and grains can help out older Americans on the right track to staying healthy.

Tobacco use increases the risk of heart disease and cancer and is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States. Older adults who stop smoking will gain immediate and long-term health benefits.

While it's important for older Americans to have good physical health, it's equally important that they maintain good mental health. Nearly 20% of Americans, age 55 and up experience depression and anxiety disorders.

Studies have shown that engaging in social activities within the community can greatly improve mental health. In fact, research has demonstrated a strong relationship between volunteering and mental health and that volunteering provides older adults with greater benefits than younger volunteers. Benefits include improved mental and physical health, greater life satisfaction, lower rates of depression and lower mortality rates.

The U.S. Administration on Aging and its National Aging Services Network support a number of successful programs throughout the country that are helping older adults live better today and in the future. These programs offer streamlined access to health and long term care information and options and provide home and community-based systems of services that include support for family caregivers. These programs also encourage older people to remain active and make behavioral changes through the increased use of evidence-based disease prevention programs under the Older Americans Act as well as the use of preventive benefits available under Medicare.

To celebrate Older American's Month, the Cordell Christian Home will be having an exciting National Nursing Home Week celebration on Monday, May 11th to Friday, May 15th. Each day will have a specific theme with corresponding activities, games and dress up! The themes for that week will be Sports Spectacular on Monday, Jack Sparrow Day on Tuesday, Back to School on Wednesday, Pajama Party on Thursday, and Gilligan's Island on Friday!

Americans of all ages and backgrounds can celebrate Older Americans Month. Cordell Christian Home invites you to volunteer to assist with activities planned for May and during National Nursing Home Week! By supporting community, state, and national efforts to serve older adults you can enrich the lives of older adults who touch your life. Additionally, actively search out ways you can involve your community's older adults in volunteer efforts, allowing them to share their wisdom, knowledge, and experience with others. By working together, we can improve the health and well being of our Nation's older adults and pave the way for better health as we age.

For more information, please contact Sheryl McComas at (580)832-3371, or via email at Sheryl.Mccomas@cordellchristianhome.org. You may also view the website at www.cordellchristianhome.org.

Cordell Christian Home is a 501(c) 3 fiscally sound organization that has provided high quality housing and services for over 46 years to frail elders in Oklahoma- regardless of race, gender, religious affiliation or economic status. Currently the organization is certified to provide housing and 24-hour skilled nursing care to 95 older adults. The organization has been recognized for its superior delivery of care and work in the area of not-for-profit senior housing.