

# All Things **SENIOR**

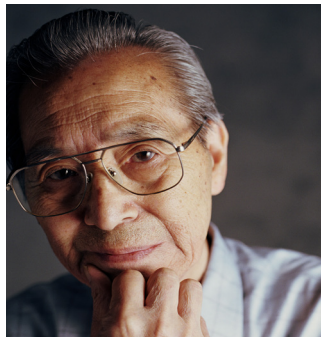


**Valley Area  
Agency On Aging**

*Answers, Action and Advocacy*

January 2018

# Flint Seniors Lives MATTER



**T**he goal of Valley Area Agency on Aging (VAAA) is to assist seniors to remain independent in their own homes. VAAA provides in home services for seniors sixty years and older, in Genesee, Shiawassee and Lapeer Counties. Assistance may include personal care, home delivered meals, homemaking, transportation, information and assistance and resources for their community needs.

Recently the Michigan Health and Endowment Fund (MHEF) awarded VAAA a grant (Flint Seniors Matter) to focus on the needs of seniors affected by the Flint Water Crisis. Although, VAAA serves Genesee, Shiawassee and Lapeer Counties, the grant focuses on the Flint Water Crisis. Seniors living in Flint, parts of Burton and Flint Township can receive services provided by Valley Area Agency on Aging. Services offered have a focus on homebound seniors in the affected areas. Community Workers will be available in the affected communities to assist with the many diverse needs identified through the Flint Water Crisis.

Valley Area Agency on Aging, and the staff of Flint Seniors Lives Matter are committed to the agency's mission:

VAAA provides answers, action and advocacy on care for the elderly and disabled adults of Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee Counties,

by enhancing lives, empowering choice, sustaining independence and supporting caregivers and families.

Sustaining community partnerships is vital to serving the senior population. Community Workers will partner with local health, nutrition and community agencies to provide comprehensive and real time information regarding the water crisis.

Valley Area Agency on Aging's Community Workers are committed to providing information and assistance in the community and in the homes of seniors. Community Workers will present events focused on seniors' wellbeing in senior centers, senior housing complexes and local places of worship. Seniors can expect to see Community Workers providing services geared to the needs of the senior population affected by the Flint Water Crisis.

Valley Area Agency on Aging's Community Workers will assist seniors with resources pertaining to issues related to the Flint Water Crisis. Seniors who may need access to nutrition education, stress counseling, tips for healthy eating, resources, or information and assistance can contact VAAA for their individual needs.

# What We Have Done...

# 2017



**The Flint Water Crisis has allowed the Senior Lives Matter team to provide information and resources to seniors in Flint and portions of Burton Michigan. The task for the team is to listen to seniors and identify services and resources that best fit each individual.**



Through the water crisis several needs were identified, some that were directly related to the crisis, and others as a result of personal contact by the Senior Lives Matter team. The Senior Lives Matter team has provided in-home dietary and stress counseling, referrals for water delivery, transportation, and hosted community outreach events.

Community Workers are providing real time information regarding the water crisis at Flint's City Hall, Hamilton Health Care Clinics, Hurley Medical Center, and at Brennan and Hasslebring Senior Centers. Seniors are provided with information which identify foods that help fight against lead in the body, locations for water distribution or pick-up, and additional services that are specific to the needs of seniors.



We listened to Flint Seniors who related that they were having issues with skin irritation. The Senior Lives Matter team has provided dermatologist recommended lotions at community events and in the homes of seniors. The Community Workers have provided information to over 8,000 people throughout Flint and portions of Burton's communities, visited over 500 homes, and made nearly 1,000 referrals to other community partners. Senior Lives Matter Community Workers have stressed the importance of a healthy diet, and have provided fresh fruits and vegetables, Farmer Market Gift Cards, and transportation to access healthy food choices for seniors.

The Senior Lives Matter Community Workers look forward to assisting Flint Seniors in the 2018 fiscal year. We will be present in the community at the Flint and Burton Senior Centers, Hurley Medical Center, Hamilton Health Care Clinics, and City Hall. It is our goal to be present wherever seniors congregate, so look for us in all the familiar places. We will continually seek more places to serve the senior population.



# STRESS Counseling

As a result of the recent water crisis, free mental health counseling is available to seniors to determine if any stress, anxiety, emotional, or physical needs are present as a result of the water crisis. The water crisis has birthed anxiety, trust issues, paranoia, anger, and distress about how to manage simple Activities of Daily Living (ADL's). Seniors sixty years and older are eligible for counseling services through Valley Area Agency on Aging.

It has been determined that a change in lifestyle as a result of the water crisis could result in stressors such as poor hygiene. Community Workers at Valley Area Agency on Aging will provide counseling services to individuals in their homes, apartment complexes, and centers of worship. The services will be offered to, any and all, seniors who are experiencing any difficulty with stressors in Flint, Flint Townships and parts of Burton. Our trained counselor will provide counseling sessions in the home or in a self-help group setting.

- **ONE ON ONE COUNSELING**
- **GROUP COUNSELING**
- **STRESS MANAGEMENT**

## **VALLEY AREA AGENCY ON AGING**

**225 East Fifth Street  
Suite 200**

**Flint, MI 48502**

**810.249.0833**

**810.239.7671**





# GOT FACTS?

## VITAMIN C / ANTIOXIDANTS:

Foods which contain vitamin C, also contain antioxidants, both of which are helpful for combatting lead in the body. What mainly comes to mind when it comes to these foods are vegetables and fruits. Of course, we should be consuming more vegetables than fruit due to the sugar content of the fruit, however, fruit does have vitamins and fiber that helps to balance out some of the sugar content. Vitamin C is both a water-soluble vitamin and powerful antioxidant, which is helpful and needed to help rid molecules called free-radicals that can be harmful to the body. Vitamin C has many jobs in the body including to maintain skin/joint/bone and blood vessel health, as well as immunity. Vitamin C is just one of the nutrients that helps prevent more major health issues such as cancer and heart disease. We should be consuming vitamin C on a regular daily basis but it should be noted that once vitamin C is cooked (as with most vitamins), some or all of it is lost.

**PROTEIN / IRON:** A lot of the foods that contain protein may also contain some amount of iron (this does not include dairy items as dairy is low in iron even though it contains good protein). There are two different forms of iron: one coming from animal sources such as meat and the other coming from plant sources such as beans/spinach. It is said, that since we are 'animals' ourselves, the iron from animal sources absorbs the best into our bodies, however, plant sources may provide other nutrients we are not getting from meat alone. Protein is needed since every cell in our bodies is made of protein, which builds and maintains our organs/skin/blood vessels/bones/hair/nails, etc. One of the main functions of iron is to provide oxygen throughout the body. Iron is known as one of the main nutrients needed to help combat lead within the body.

**CALCIUM / MAGNESIUM:** Calcium is known as one of the main nutrients, along with vitamin C and iron, to help combat lead within the body. Calcium comes from both plant sources such as dark leafy green veggies like collard greens/lettuce/spinach (also high in magnesium) as well as from animal sources

such as dairy like yogurt/milk/cheese (low in magnesium). Calcium is needed to help muscles contract in the body whereas magnesium is needed to help the muscles relax: this combination of the two is extremely important especially for heart function/rhythm. The two minerals in combination also ensure that the body has the correct building blocks for bones and teeth. It is said, that our consumption of calcium has gone up in comparison with our consumption of magnesium. We need to consume a pretty equal ratio of both in order for them to function properly together and to maintain good health. Other sources of magnesium include nuts/seeds, some of which also happen to contain plant sources of iron. \*Remember that for every unit of pure sugar taken in by the body- it takes 54 units of magnesium to process the sugar.

## COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES:

Complex carbohydrates are foods that contain more complex bonds on a molecular level, such as foods that take longer to break down in the body like non-starchy vegetables and whole grains. Starchy vegetables, like potatoes/corn, tend to break down quickly into sugar in the body unlike non-starchy vegetables. Whole grains include ones that have not been previously broken down into flour and do not raise blood sugar too high all at once, but instead send it through the body in slow spurts. Foods considered whole grains include brown or wild rice /quinoa buckwheat/ millet/barley/whole-rolled oats, etc. We need carbohydrates for fuel and energy but are not biologically meant to run off of 'simple carbs' such as sugar containing foods like sweet drinks, desserts, sugar cereals, white breads and pastas. Since simple carbs break down very quickly in the body, they increase our blood sugar too fast and this leads to too much inflammation in the body which is the start of every disease.

**THE LARGER PICTURE:** The main goal of the food consumed on a regular basis is that it is as close to it's natural state as possible, meaning that it is a 'whole food'. A diet consisting of mostly whole foods as opposed to processed foods will ensure overall health for an extended period of time.

\*For further nutrition information call: 810.249.0833

# GETTING THE LEAD OUT

Dietary Counseling (In Relation to Lead Mitigating Foods)



Healthy eating habits play a major role in reducing the effects of lead in the body. Flint Seniors Lives Matter Community Workers will provide nutrition information at events and in the home to identify actions a person can take to lessen the absorption of lead in the body.

## VITAMIN C

**Vitamin C helps the body absorb iron, a lead fighter. Choose these vitamin C foods:**

- Citrus Fruits & Juices
- Strawberries & other Berries
- Melons, especially Cantaloupe
- Dark Greens
- Tomatoes & Tomato Products
- Sweet & Chili Peppers

## IRON

Iron works with Vitamin C to reduce the effects of lead in the body. Foods that are rich in iron are pumpkin seeds, raisins, dried fruit, potatoes cooked with the skin on, and hot and cold cereals enriched with iron.

**Other foods rich in iron include:**

### RED MEATS

- Pork Chops
- Hamburger
- Steak
- Lamb
- Beef & Pork Liver

### BEANS

- White Beans
- Kidney Beans
- Lentils
- Pinto Beans

### DARK GREENS

- Kale
- Spinach
- Collard Greens
- Turnip & Mustard Greens

### NUTS

- Almonds
- Cashews
- Walnuts

## CALCIUM

Having strong bones is vital to a healthy body. Calcium builds strong bones and helps to prevent lead from entering the bloodstream. **Look for these foods rich in calcium:**

- Milk
- Cheese
- Ice Cream & Frozen Yogurt
- Pudding
- Dark Green Veggies
- Canned Salmon & Sardines
- Rice & Almond Milk with Calcium
- Orange Juice with Calcium
- Waffles with Calcium
- Tofu with Calcium



A regular intake of nutrients is wise and healthy. Eating small meals throughout the day helps prevent lead from leaching into the body. Did you know that many foods also contain water? It's not always possible to drink large amounts of water to meet a senior's water intake need. *Did you know you can eat your water?*

## EAT YOUR WATER

**These foods naturally contain water:**

- Melons
- Peaches
- Apples & Pears
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Iceberg Lettuce



# THINK POSITIVE, THINK RESOURCES!

## INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In addition to the Dietary and Counseling services offered at VAAA, the Community Workers will guide seniors (sixty and over) through neighborhood connections by providing information and assistance, access to resources, and supplies. Here at VAAA, we strive to reach out to an overlooked elderly population who are not able to leave their home or in other words homebound. We accomplish this by:

- Community resources
- Access to food trucks
- Referrals to community partners
- Informational sessions

## TRANSPORTATION

Valley Area Agency on Aging in collaboration with the Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) is able to provide transportation to grocery stores, medical appointments, community health fairs and events. Community Workers are available to the community Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If you or someone you know are interested in services, please give us a call.

## VALLEY AREA AGENCY ON AGING

**225 East Fifth Street**

**Suite 200**

**Flint, MI 48502**

810.249.0833 | 810.239.7671

# QUICK

## REFERENCES

### FLINT CITY HALL

#### Mayor's Office

(810) 766-7346

#### City Administrator's Office

(810) 766-7346 ext 2025

#### City Clerk's Office (Elections)

(810) 766-7413

#### City Council Office

(810) 766-7418

#### City Attorney's Office

(810) 766-7146

[www.cityofflint.com](http://www.cityofflint.com)

#### City of Flint Police

(Non-Emergency)

810-237-6800

#### City of Flint Fire Department

(Non-Emergency)

(810) 762-7336

### MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**125 E Union St**

**Flint MI 48502**

(810) 760-2773

**4809 Clio Rd**

**Flint, MI 48504**

(810) 787-7101

**630 S Saginaw St Ste 3**

**Flint, MI 48502**

(810) 760-7300

### GENESEE COUNTY

#### ELDER ABUSE

(810) 257-3460

### GENESEE COUNTY

#### COMMODITIES

**2727 Lippincott Blvd**

**Flint, MI 48507**

(810) 789-3746

(810) 789-4409

### ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

(810) 780-4163

### VALLEY AREA AGENCY ON AGING

(810) 239-7671

#### Senior Lives Matter

(810) 249-0833

[valleyareaaging.org](http://valleyareaaging.org)





**225 E. FIFTH STREET, SUITE 200  
FLINT, MI 48502**

Water Line: 810.249.0833  
Direct: 810.239.7671

[www.valleyareaaging.org](http://www.valleyareaaging.org)

[www.flintcares.com](http://www.flintcares.com)

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