

THE COMMUNICATOR

A Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging Publication

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Ruth E. Jones, Executive Director

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Expanding COVID-19 vaccination access to all Wyandotte County residents including individuals experiencing homelessness, individuals with physical or intellectual developmental disabilities, and older adults.

FREE COVID-19 VACCINES

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You may contact either Assisted Transportation for your FREE ride to the event at 913-262-5190 and using the **CODE: VAC5**

OR

The Unified Government Transit Department at 913-573-8351 and provide the VAC5 Code.

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2021
11AM - 3PM**

SPONSORED BY:

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
AND
HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

EVENT LOCATION:

**AREA AGENCY ON AGING - COMMUNITY ROOM
849-B N 47TH, KCK 66102
QUESTIONS? CALL US AT 913-573-8531**

NEW MASK MANDATE ISSUED FOR KANSAS CITY, KANSAS AND OTHER PORTIONS OF WYANDOTTE COUNTY

New cases of COVID-19 are surging dramatically in Wyandotte County, and last week the Unified Government Commission took action to try to slow the spread. They approved a new mask order for Kansas City, Kansas and the unincorporated area of Loring in Wyandotte County. The mask order is now in effect through 11:59 pm on September 16, 2021.

The order does not apply to public and private schools and also excludes the cities of Bonner Springs and Edwardsville, Kansas. UG Commissioners opted to leave the decision of mask requirements to school boards and to Bonner Springs and Edwardsville elected officials, respectively.

Below you will find some concerning statistics about the spread of COVID-19 in Wyandotte County:

- ⇒ The rolling 7-day average of cases per day is up to 77 new cases per day – the highest rate since late January 2021, and nine times higher than the average cases per day just two months ago.
- ⇒ The positivity rate (a 7-day rolling average of positive test percentages) has climbed to 32 percent, as high as it was in mid-January 2021, and more than four times higher than the positivity rate in May 2021.
- ⇒ Two-thirds of current positive cases in Wyandotte County are among children and young adults under 40 years of age.
- ⇒ The vast majority of hospitalized cases of COVID-19 are in people who have not been vaccinated.

These healthcare leaders are especially concerned about the presence of the Delta Variant in Wyandotte County and the metro area because it spreads much more easily than other types of COVID. Because of low vaccination rates in Wyandotte County, the Delta Variant is causing significant spread of COVID-19 throughout the community.



Did you know you can hire family and friends to provide your care?

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Want to learn more?

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SINGLE-SHOT COVID-19 VACCINE PROTECTS AGAINST VARIANTS

[newsinhealth.nih.gov](https://www.nih.gov/news-in-health)



Vaccines against COVID-19 were developed early in the pandemic, but the virus has been changing. Now there are different versions, called variants, all over the world. Researchers found that the single-

shot COVID-19 vaccine still protects against new variants.

In a study, volunteers received the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Then researchers took blood samples about two months later. The samples were tested for different cells and antibodies that can fight the disease. The team looked at whether these provided protection against the original virus. They also looked for protection against the alpha, beta and gamma variants.

Overall, the vaccine offered strong protection against both the original virus and the variants. The team found lower amounts of neutralizing antibodies to the variants than to the original virus. These are a type of antibody that can block infections. But other immune responses were similar.

A follow-up study showed protection against other variants, including the delta variant. However, more research is still needed to better understand how the body fights off COVID-19.

Dear Newsletter Recipient:

For years "The Communicator" has served as a vital means for providing seniors in Wyandotte County important information regarding aging news, events, programs, services and much more! The newsletter's continuity depends on your donations for its existence.

Please help us continue to provide this important publication by becoming a sponsor!

Respectfully,
The Newsletter Committee

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Appreciation is extended to the following who have contributed toward the cost of this newsletter.

Larry Crutchfield - Patron
Alice Pollard - Patron
Dorothy Reed - Patron

Names are listed in alphabetical order.

If you would like to contribute to the cost of the newsletter, please make checks payable to:

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Attn: The Communicator
849 North 47th Street, Suite C
Kansas City, Kansas 66102



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By joining our email club, get information before everyone else!

Send an email to:
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TURN UP FLAVOR WITHOUT THE SALT

We all know we should be eating less salt. Most of us consume far more than recommended. We know to skip the salt shaker at the table and to check food labels. While it is essential to the body—the sodium in salt works with potassium to regulate fluids, too much can raise blood pressure, putting the heart at risk. Read on to learn ways to cut back the salt without sacrificing flavor.

Season It Up. Dis into spices to replace salt. Dried spices, like cumin and cinnamon bring bold flavor to dishes, while dried and fresh herbs, like basil and thyme season with subtlety. Experiment with mixed herb and spice blends to jazz up your meals. Choose fresh or powdered onion, garlic and chili peppers, mustards, vinegars and citrus (like lemon, lime, orange or grapefruit) juice, peel or zest.



Cooking Count. Use cooking methods to heighten flavor. Roasting vegetables in the oven or on the grill brings out their natural sweetness and deepens the flavor of animal and plant proteins, like fish and tofu. A quick sear or sauté on the stove top enhances flavor with minimal cook time. Cook with a light coating of olive oil finish with a splash of vinegar or citrus and a garnish of fresh herbs, dried fruits, chopped nuts or citrus zest.

Use Good Ingredients. High quality ingredients pack so much flavor, they hardly need seasoning. Choose the best you can find: in-season fruits and vegetables, flavorful cuts of animal proteins, the freshest fish and seafood, and high-quality healthy fats (extra-virgin olive oil avocado oil).

Give these tips a try. See how quickly your palate prefers less salt, (and broadens your meal planning repertoire).



Holy Smoke BBQ

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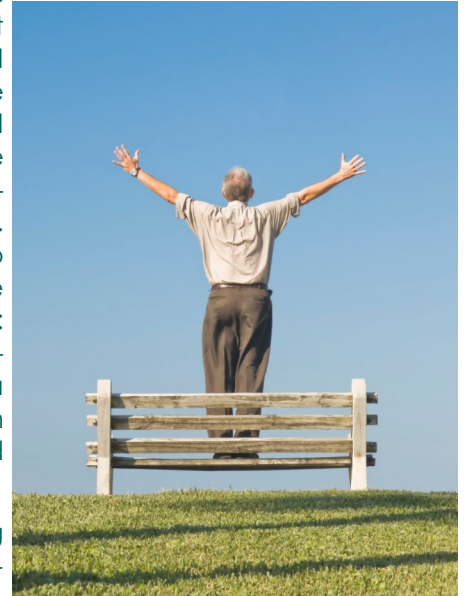
DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ Did you know that bananas grow pointing upwards?
- ◆ Did you know that the average golf ball has 336 dimples?
- ◆ Did you know the word "Strengths" is the longest word in the English language with just one vowel?
- ◆ Did you know 11% of people are left handed?
- ◆ Did you know unless food is mixed with saliva, you can't taste it?
- ◆ Did you know the average person falls asleep in 7 minutes?
- ◆ Did you know lemons contain more sugar than strawberries?
- ◆ Did you know that the word, "dreamt" is the only word that ends in "mt"?
- ◆ Did you know the most commonly used letter in the alphabet is "E"?
- ◆ Did you know sponges hold more cold water than hot?
- ◆ Did you know the average human brain contains around 78% water?
- ◆ Did you know apples are more effective at waking you up in the morning than coffee?
- ◆ Did you know a snail can sleep for 3 years?
- ◆ Did you know there is no butter in buttermilk?

FINDING MEANING AND HAPPINESS IN OLD AGE

cdc.gov

Many people associate aging with the loss of common roles and responsibilities, including less time spent working, parenting, or completing chores around the house. While this newfound freedom can be exciting, it often presents an unexpected challenge - finding different and more personal ways of identifying goals and purpose. After retirement, when we're no longer connected with productivity, it's very hard to adapt to our role. While many people look forward to retirement and empty nest, once the new wears off, this question comes up: "What is the purpose of a life?" In examining their answers, seniors have a valuable chance to reconnect with and even redefine their interests and priorities.



Healthy, positive habits like exercising and socializing provide a strong foundation for finding meaning and happiness in old age. Along with seeking personal contentment, many seniors desire to pass down values and knowledge to their family and younger generations. Variables such as good health, socialization and serving in a volunteering or mentoring role increased happiness even more significantly among seniors.

Often times, the best way for seniors to achieve happiness and purpose lies in looking outside of themselves. Through this approach, you can pass down skills and insights to future generations. For family-oriented seniors, this may consist of creating a book of family recipes, teaching a grandchild how to knit or sew, or even digging into family history and genealogy. These activities offer an opportunity for leaving a family legacy and sharing family stories. If you have never used a computer or tablet before, it's often a source of frustration or intimidation. New technology, such as a fitness tracker, a video communications app, or a speaker for favorite music can be an opportunity to see a whole new world.

Ultimately, new challenges will always be a part of the aging process. Learning to anticipate potential frustrations and looking for ways to learn from them can brighten your world view.

Ultimately, new challenges will always be a part of the aging process. Learning to anticipate potential frustrations and looking for ways to learn from them can brighten your world view.

NEW CONGREGATE MEAL SITE

Opening October 1, 2021

Victory Hills Baptist Church

2010 N. 66th Terrace

Kansas City, KS 66104

Serve Time: 10:30am

Interested? Contact Kamra Cole at 913-573-8568.

ENCOURAGING ELDER INDEPENDENCE:

How Independent Living Fosters Senior Autonomy

Source: *A Place for Mom*

Remember when you walked to the bus stop on your own for the first time? Or when you picked up the keys for your first home or apartment? Growing up, we often see new forms of independence as milestones - whether it's taking our first steps or getting a drivers license.



As aging affects health, mobility and memory, seniors may struggle to feel control over their everyday lives. But senior independence can help older adults maintain a sense of autonomy, even as circumstances change. Some markers of independence, such as driving safely and living alone may not be possible past a certain age or physical condition. However, even basic decision-making and task completion can offer a sense of accomplishment that boosts self-worth and well-being.

Empowering older adults to make daily decisions promotes healthy aging and improves well-being later in life. In fact, older Americans who feel self-sufficient, whether in a senior living community or at home, may be less likely to be diagnosed with chronic conditions and more likely to self-report good health.

One important marker of independence seniors can maintain is daily decision-making. For example, having access to transportation allows seniors to choose where they want to shop and which doctors they'd prefer to visit. An accessible kitchen lets them cook their favorite foods. Encourage seniors in your life to continue their daily routines or make adjustments to best support the retirement lifestyles they deserve.

Senior independence doesn't have to mean being alone. Social isolation and loneliness can lead to poor mental and physical health in seniors. While choosing to age in place may seem like an independent choice, it often limits a senior's social opportunities and increases isolation.

Lack of access to transportation, changing neighborhoods and the death of friends can make it difficult to maintain a social life while living alone. While it may seem counter-intuitive, moving into a senior living community can actually help foster elder independence. These type of communities can provide the resources and amenities older adults need to maintain physical, mental and social autonomy.

Not all elders want to make the move to an independent living community, but there are still ways you can help your loved one stay independent for as long as possible in their own home. Help support your aging relative's independent spirit by encouraging them to remain involved in family life and their favorite activities by:

- Encouraging them to try new things. Many seniors have a set routine. Encourage your loved one to use retirement as an opportunity to shake things up and explore interests they may have not pursued before.
- Promote their feelings of accomplishment. Consider result-oriented projects that can offer a sense of accomplishment, like crafts, redecorating or even spring cleaning. Everyone appreciates the feeling of a job well done.
- As for their input when making decisions and plans. Having a say in daily decisions helps seniors stay independent. Whether its choosing favorite dinners, picking a movie, or planning family outings, give your loved one a chance to contribute.

Whether your loved one chooses to age at home or make the transition to independent living, it's vital to support their autonomy and encourage them to maintain independence.

BEFORE YOU TURN 65, HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE

"Annoying," "difficult" and "frustrating." For anyone who has applied for Medicare, these are the typical words that come to mind when describing the application process. Part of the problem is that there are no easy, one-size-fits-all coverage options. So what can you do to maximize your Medicare coverage while minimizing your expenses and stress? Give yourself plenty of time and ready these top 10 things to know about Medicare before you turn 65.

1. After you turn 65, Medicare is your primary insurer. Do you have another form of insurance? Once you turn 65, Medicare is considered your primary insurer. This is true even if you haven't applied for Medicare yet. It's also true even if you have retiree health insurance, individual health insurance or COBRA. This consideration is an important factor to know and understand because it means that you can't count on your other forms of insurance to pay for your hospital or physician bills once you turn 65. These other insurance companies are considered your secondary insurer.

2. Apply before you turn 65. Applying for Medicare on your 65th birthday is not ideal. You must apply during the initial enrollment period of three months before your 65th birthday. This enrollment period ends four months after your 65th birthday.

3. Choose your plan wisely. You can choose either the original Medicare (Part A) or a Medicare Advantage Plan (Part C). You can also opt for the other parts as mentioned above, like adding prescription drug insurance, for example. What type of Medicare do you want? That really depends on your unique circumstances, so there is no "right" answer here. But, there are some things to consider when choosing between Original Medicare and a Medicare Advantage Plan.

4. If you miss enrollment, you'll have to pay penalties. If you miss the initial enrollment period, you can still sign up for Medicare during the general enrollment period which runs from January 1 - March 31. People who sign up during the general enrollment period will be eligible for coverage the following July. Late enrollment penalties apply for people who miss their initial enrollment period. Depending on the part of Medicare that you apply for, these penalties can vary from 10% for every twelve months you delay enrollment or 1% per month.

5. Medicare coverage is composed of four main parts. When researching Medicare, you'll inevitably come across terms like Part A, Part B, Part D, Medigap, Medicare Supplement and Medicare Advantage Plans. What do these mean?

Medicare Part A - refers to hospital insurance and covers most medically necessary hospital, skilled nursing facility, home health and hospice care.

Medicare Part B - refers to medical insurance and covers most medically necessary doctors' services, preventative care, durable medical equipment, hospital outpatient services, laboratory tests, x-rays, mental health care and home health ambulance services. You pay a monthly premium for this coverage.

Medicare Part C - refers to Medicare Advantage Plan. With these plans, private health insurance companies have contracts with the government. Medicare Advantage Plans are not provided directly by the government like Medicare is. Many resources about Medicare often skip Part C when talking about Medicare benefits because it is not a separate benefit like Parts A, B and D.

Part D - refers to Medicare's prescription drug insurance. Part D is never provided directly by the government and is a separate, optional plan to help cover cost of medication.

6. On Social Security? You may automatically be enrolled in Medicare. If you're on Social Security (which you can begin at age 62), then you should be automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A and/or Part B when you turn 65. It's a good idea to double check that assumption well in advance of your initial enrollment period.

7. Record details about Medicare information. If a government official gives you incorrect information that causes you to miss your initial enrollment period, then you may not have to pay the entire penalty. However, you have to be able to prove that the government official gave you incorrect information. You should record who you spoke to, the date/time, what they said and their contact information each time you speak with a government official about Medicare.

8. Start the application process early. Applying for Medicare is a complicated and lengthy process. How much time should you give yourself to apply? You should start research when you turn 64.

9. You can't enroll in Medicare as a family. Medicare is an individual benefit and each member of your family needs to apply for Medicare separately. There are no family Medicare plans.

10. Can you supplement Medicare with a Medigap Policy? If you can afford it, it is possible to supplement Medicare with a Medicare Supplement Plan, Or "Medigap" policy. These plans will help cover expenses like: Coinsurance (the portion of the money you pay after your insurance has paid your benefit), co-payments (the money you pay each time you seek care), deductibles (money you may pay before your insurance benefits kick in).

Medicare Counselors are available to assist you by dialing 1-800-860-5260. Or, in Wyandotte County at 913-573-8531.

HALLOWEEN LAYERED DIP

INGREDIENTS:

- 16 oz. can of refried beans
- 1/2 cup salsa
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 cup guacamole

GARNISH:

- Lettuce
- Freshly diced tomatoes
- 1/4 cup black olives

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a bowl, mix the beans and salsa.
2. Put the sour cream in a plastic bag. Cut off the end of one corner of the bag.
3. Spread the bean mixture onto a plate. Spread guacamole over the beans.
4. Pipe out a bullseye pattern of sour cream over the guacamole.
5. Run a toothpick through the sour cream from the center.
6. Garnish with lettuce, chopped tomatoes, and black olives. Serve with tortilla chips.
7. Enjoy!



HALLOW - EEKI!

Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

- APPLE
- AUTUMN
- BLACK
- BOBBIN' FOR APPLES
- BONFIRE
- BROOM
- CANDY
- CARVING
- CATS
- CIDER
- COLUMBUS
- CORN
- CORNMAZE
- COSTUME
- ENROLLMENT
- FIREPIT
- FOOTBALL
- GHOSTS
- GOBLINS
- GRANDPARENTS
- HALLOWEEN
- HARVEST
- HAUNTED
- HAYRIDE
- JACK O LANTERN
- LABOR
- LEAVES
- MARSHMALLOWS
- MEDICARE
- ORANGE
- PATRIOT
- PUMPKIN PATCH
- SCARECROW
- SKELETON
- SUMMER
- TRICK OR TREAT
- WITCH

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Wyandotte/Leavenworth

Area Agency on Aging

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SEPTEMBER >>>

LABOR DAY

Monday, September 6, 2021
Unified Government Offices Closed

PATRIOT DAY (ALSO KNOWN AS 9-11)

Saturday, September 11, 2021

GRANDPARENTS DAY

Sunday, September 12, 2021



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Linda Ramirez, Editor

OCTOBER >>>

COLUMBUS DAY

Monday, October 11, 2021

HALLOWEEN

Sunday, October 31, 2021