



# Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

## -Senior Adults 2005

### Learning for Life

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

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### ***The Problem***

- Georgia's senior adult population will nearly triple by the year 2025, with the largest rate of increase among those over 85 years of age (US Census population projections). Of the total population in Georgia, 9.6% were 65 years or older in 2000 (US Census Bureau).
- Many seniors will remain healthy and vital to much older ages resulting in opportunities for volunteering, nontraditional jobs and recreation; there will also be increased demand for specialized services in housing, education, health and nutrition.
- Seniors are seeking to remain independent as long as possible and frequently choose personal care homes for assisted living as it becomes necessary.
- Identity theft and telemarketing frauds are growing problems among seniors.

### ***Research-based Solutions***

- New research findings regarding nutrition, activity levels, caregiving and assistance with activities of daily living are enabling seniors to maintain independence and an enhanced quality of life much longer.

### ***Extension's Role***

- Provide educational programs which allow seniors to meet their changing life needs in housing, financial management, health, nutrition and family care giving.
- Offer seniors opportunities for community involvement as volunteers.

### ***Extension's Contribution to Solving the Problem***

- Family and Consumer Sciences Extension programs reached 16,703 senior citizens and provided 17,145 hours of education in 2005. Of the seniors who participated in family and consumer sciences extension programs, 76% were in nutrition, health and chronic disease prevention education programs; 4% were in food safety educational programs; 12% were in child and family development programs; 2% were in financial management and consumer education programs; and 6% were in housing and indoor air quality education programs.
- Nutrition, food safety, and diabetes education programs reached 862 personal care home providers.
- The newsletter, "*Senior Sense*," designed for senior citizens and their caregivers reached nearly 7,600 individuals.

### ***Impact on Georgians***

- All the seniors who participated in the *Diabetes Education* program said that it was very helpful to learn about managing diabetes. At the end of the training, most of the participants said that they planned to apply recommended practices for controlling their diabetes. For example, 91% planned to keep written records of their blood glucose values, food intake, medicine doses and physical activity; 72% planned to use artificial sweeteners to control their sugar intake; 91% planned to measure their food regularly and 100% planned to use carbohydrate counting to plan meals.
- Of the seniors who participated in foods and nutrition education programs, 91% said that those were very helpful to learn healthy nutrition concepts and meal planning practices. Most of the participants developed their food and nutrition knowledge and said that they plan to follow healthy dietary guidelines. For example, 91% planned to eat at least two servings each day of low-fat dairy products;

80% planned to eat less sodium; 83% planned to eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day; and 77% planned to choose foods they eat based on the food guide pyramid.

- The majority of the seniors who participated in food safety education programs said that they plan to apply safe food handling practices. For example, 80% planned to practice good personal hygiene such as handwashing before and after handling foods and 100% planned to keep their kitchen clean by cleaning up spills and crumbs to prevent roaches.

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