



# Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

*Senior Adults 2006*  
**Learning for Life**

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The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

## ***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, 9.2% were 65 years or older in 2005 (US Census Bureau).
- Many seniors will remain healthy and active until much older resulting in opportunities for volunteering, nontraditional jobs and recreation. There will also be increased demand for specialized services in housing, education, health and nutrition as a result.
- 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 fraud are growing problems among seniors.
- Poor nutrition in seniors can prolong recovery from illnesses, increase the costs and incidence of institutionalization, and lead to a poorer quality of life. Good nutrition can help lessen the effects of diseases including osteoporosis, obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, certain cancers, gastrointestinal problems, and chronic undernutrition.
- Chronic medical conditions and reduced immunity from aging put seniors at high risk for foodborne illnesses.

## ***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 12,051 senior citizens and 234 personal care home providers with over 14,000 hours of education in 2006.
- The newsletter, "*Senior Sense*," designed for senior citizens and their caregivers, sent out quarterly, reached nearly 7,600 individuals.

## ***Impact on Georgians***

- Of the seniors who participated in weight control education programs, 95% said that those were very helpful to learn healthy nutrition concepts and meal planning practices. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the participants developed their food and nutrition knowledge and most indicated that they plan to follow healthy dietary guidelines. For example, 93% planned to reduce fat intake by frying less; 100% planned to read nutrition labels for calorie and fat content of foods; 91% planned to eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day; and 98% planned to do some type of moderately intense physical activity such as a brisk walk.
- In collaboration with the Oglethorpe County Community Services, almost 180 low-income senior adults

in Oglethorpe County were reached with energy assistance education using simple cost cutting tips prepared by UGA Cooperative Extension. Many of the participants indicated a savings in their gas and electric bills after implementing these tips.

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