



The Bottom Line

Walla Walla Senior Center Current Hours/Operations:

Please see our website for further updates at wallawallaseniorcenter.org

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- **CENTER OPENING HOURS**
8am-3pm
Monday through Thursday.
- **CONGREGATE DINING**
11:30 - 1pm
See menu for serving days (pg. 8).
- **SENIOR-TO-GO-MEALS VIA DRIVE-THRU**
10:30am - 11:30am Tuesdays ONLY. You may pick up 1 hot and 2 frozen meals.
- **MEALS ON WHEELS**
(509) 527-3775 ext 1.
- **VOICECARE EMERGENCY RESPONSE BUTTONS**
By appt, call (509) 527-3775 ext 2. See ad on last page.
- **ADULT DAY CENTER - RESPITE CARE**
(509) 527-3775 ext 3. See page 6 for more info.



Life Advice for Younger Generations

Pg. 5

What Advice Would You Give?

NEW!

The Walla Walla Senior Center Community Table

Pg. 6-7

The Power of Eating Together

NEW!

Adult Day Center Scholarship Fund

Pg. 10-11

Funding for Those Under 60

And More!

Read On To Find Out

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GRANT FROM ARCORA FOUNDATION



Thank you

ARCORA
Foundation

Bending the Arc of Oral Health Toward Equity

for a grant to provide 5,800 meals to seniors across Southeast Washington!

We are grateful for a grant from Arcora Foundation that will provide our clients with 5,800 meals across our 6 nutrition sites in Walla Walla, Asotin, Garfield, and Columbia Counties. Like the Walla Walla Senior Center, Arcora Foundation values programs—like those that increase access to healthy food—that support good oral and overall health. This partnership is crucial to helping us make sure that all older adults in our communities have nutritious and delicious meals in 2024. Thank you, Arcora Foundation!

WE ❤️ MONTHLY DONORS

Become a Walla Walla Senior Center Champion with our new recurring donation option. You select how often (weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly) and the start date (this is helpful for you to organize your finances!) We hope you will consider signing up today on our website at: wallawallaseniorcenter.org/donate.

AARP TAX AIDE IS BACK!

This year, you can make an appointment for AARP's Tax Aide services online. Book your appointment now by going to this link on your smartphone or computer: <https://tinyurl.com/wwta23> or contact 509-593-8257



Or, scan this code with your smartphone's camera to make your appointment.



AARP Foundation

TAX-AIDE

Free tax assistance for those who need it most

WALLA WALLA SENIOR CENTER, INC.

720 Sprague St.
Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 527-3775
Fax: (509) 527-3776
wallawallaseniorcenter.org

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The Walla Walla Senior Center does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission, access to, treatment or employment in its programs and activities.

Southeast Washington Aging and Long Term Care Council of Governments is a funding agency. Walla Walla Senior Center, Inc. does not discriminate in providing services on the grounds of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability.

WALLA WALLA SENIOR CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to empower older adults to live healthy and happy lives through programs that work to combat hunger and social isolation.



M.E.L.T. FITNESS

FEBRUARY 7, 14, 21, 28 (WEDNESDAYS) 6PM-7PM; \$40 FOR ALL SESSIONS, OR \$12 PER SESSION

MELT fitness is back! M.E.L.T. (which stands for Myofascial Energetic Lengthen Technique) is a gentle, self-treatment technique used to enhance mobility, stability and performance. This class will teach participants how to rehydrate connective tissue (fascia) and balance the nervous system. The MELT Method is designed to relieve aches and pains in the body brought on by over and under use of muscles and connective tissues, injuries, surgery and aging. MELT helps reduce inflammation, ease chronic neck and low back pain, improve alignment, strength, and even breathing. MELT is easy to learn and will help you remain active, healthy and pain free.

You must sign up on the City of Walla Walla Parks and Rec page.



Music



Education



Fitness



Community



Art

And more to come!



Join the Walla Walla Senior Center Board of Directors!



We are now accepting applications to join the Walla Walla Senior Center Board of Directors. This is a great opportunity to get involved with your community and be a part of an important cause. You do not need to be a Senior Center participant to apply - everyone is welcome!

Learn more on our website at wallallaseniorcenter.org/board and if you are interested, download an application on that same page or pick one up at our Center at 720 Sprague St.



MORNING COFFEE

Join us for your morning coffee here at the Center.
Donations appreciated.

**MONDAY-THURSDAY
8AM-10AM**

GAME AREA

Join others at the East end of the dining room for games and cards. Choose from those supplied by the Center, or bring your own!

**MONDAY-THURSDAY
8AM-3PM**



Every week

At the Walla Walla Senior Center...

BRIDGE!

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1pm



CARD GROUPS

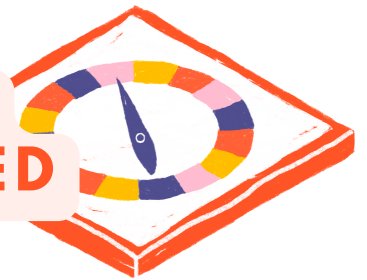
PINOCHLE!

Mondays at 1pm - Experienced players
Wednesdays at 1pm - Learners*

**Sign up for the learners group by
Tuesday at the front desk**

NEW! LEARN TO PLAY PINOCHLE!

GAMES WITH FRED



Do you like playing card and board games? Fred hosts a game event in which he brings different games to play and to teach. Play old favorites and learn new ones! This program is free and open to all.

CALL FRED AT 509.676.8103 FOR HIS WEEKLY GAME SCHEDULE

LIFE ADVICE FOR YOUNGER GENERATIONS

Article via 60plusclub.com.au

These pieces of advice have been compiled by **60PlusClub** based in Australia. They asked their readers what they would say to someone younger than them based on their wisdom, life lessons and experience. Do you agree with what they've shared? Add your own at the end.

- “Don’t be so quick to judge. Give people a chance to show you who they are. Be in the moment so that when someone gives you a deep insight you are present to acknowledge it and remember it. The two most important things that we are here to do: love one another and forgive one another. If we can spend our lives trying to master those two things then we will have had a life well lived!” Beverly, 70, International
- “Years go by in the blink of an eye. Don’t marry young. Live your life. Go places. Do things. If you have the means or not. Pack a bag and go wherever you can afford to go. While you have no dependents, don’t buy stuff. Any stuff. See the world. Look through travel magazines and pick a spot. GO!”
- “Don’t take life so seriously. Even if things seem dark and hopeless, try to laugh at how ridiculous life is.”
- “A true friend will come running if you call them at 12am; everyone else is just an acquaintance.”
- “Children grow up way too fast. Make the most of the time you have with them.”
- “If you’re getting overwhelmed by life, just return to the immediate present moment and savor all that is beautiful and comforting. Take a deep breath, relax.”
- “Eat and exercise like you’re a diabetic heart patient with a stroke – so you never actually become one.”
- “I’m 81 years old. One thing that brings you happiness in old age that is hard for a young person to understand, is how my life has played out, I got the chance. By the time you’re 81, you know dozens of people that died much younger, in their 30’s and 40’s and 50’s from accidents, suicide, rare diseases, you name it. So just by being alive still, my heart fills with gratefulness that I got at least 81 years to experience life. When I was young, I would have thought that sounded pathetic, to be so easily made happy that waking up and having chats, or reading the paper, or walking outside would fill me with joy. When you’re young, that’s never enough. You feel like you need to leave your mark and make a big name for yourself. But a funny thing happens as you age. You live long enough to see some people you know become big shots, became rich or famous in some way, but most aren’t made much happier by it, and some become lost when the notoriety fades. And then loving life for the small things starts to shift from feeling pathetic and small, to feeling wise and full. In fact, if life has taught me anything, it’s that the reason we’re here is to be present with the privilege of each moment, as much as possible. Thinking about your goals tomorrow matter of course, and cherishing yesterday’s memories. But more than anything, I think what has kept me healthy and happy is appreciating the privilege of each moment. When you’re a little kid, that’s how you think. You appreciate recess at school, or going down a sliding board, or a walk through the woods. **DON’T LOSE THAT.** That, whatever that is, is the reason we’re here. Being connected to small moments so strongly that they feel large. If you can do that well, you can enjoy being 80 as much as 40 or 20.” WP, 81.

• My advice for younger generations: _____

Send us your advice to admin@wallawallaseniorcenter.org or drop it by the Center to be featured in next month’s newsletter. Please share your first name and age, or request to remain anonymous.

NEW!

The Walla Walla Senior Center Community Table



WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY TABLE?

The Community Table is a new designated table at the Senior Center during congregative dining hours. By sitting at the table, it is understood that you are open to chatting with someone who wants to do the same. The Community Table builds friendships through food and conversation. It's a great way to get to know other Senior Center participants.

There's only one rule: act with respect. Treat your new companion(s) as you'd like to be treated.

IT ALL BEGINS WITH "HELLO"...

Communities are built one conversation at a time. Feel free to chat about whatever you wish. If you get stuck, we will supply some ideas to get the conversation flowing again.

THE POWER OF THE COMMUNITY TABLE AND EATING WITH OTHERS

The Walla Walla Senior Center Community Table was first conceived when Jane Kaminsky, the Nutrition Program director, was attending one of our fundraiser dinners last year.

She noticed a man come in and sit alone. "He left his house that night to come to the Waffle Feed by himself. He came in and he got his waffle and he went and sat at a table alone." All around him were groups of people laughing and chatting.

"It really grabbed my attention," she goes on, "this man had chosen to come have a strawberry waffle instead of eat alone at home and yet he was eating alone at the Senior Center." Jane happened to be leaving at that point, so she asked another participant to go sit

with him. The next day, she heard that they had had a great conversation.

"I have noticed over the years I have worked here that there are some people who come in and are very social, beep-bopping from table to table, enjoying lots of socialization, etc., but I have also noticed that there are people or even couples that come in alone that are more reserved but that would also like someone to visit with."

There are different personality types: the ones that feel comfortable going up to strangers and asking if they can join, and the ones that don't. Jane explains that many people don't know how to go about approaching a stranger. It can be scary!

We believe that people would come together if we could create the right structure and the right context for that to happen in, hence the creation of our very own Community Table.

Of course, community tables exist across the world - we didn't invent this. But we are taking other models we have seen and molding it to fit our center.

What we have designed allows people to connect with others who are interested in meeting new people while allowing those who wish to eat alone to do so, too. Sometimes you don't know if someone wants company or not. The Community Table makes it clear that you are open to conversation.

"Socialization is part of our mission," Jane explains. "Many of our participants live alone and don't have someone to talk to during the day. Coming out to lunch might be the only time they have to visit with someone."

As it turns out, having consistent social connection is vital to our well-being. In fact, a recent study found that loneliness is as detrimental as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It's very important to us to help people be as social as they want to be at our center.

Science shows that happiness stems from our connections with others. However, many of us can feel antisocial at times. It's too easy to just go sit by yourself in the dining room. Sometimes, we need a little encouragement to start up a conversation with someone.

There's tons of research that shows that eating with others nourishes us beyond the food we are consuming.

To help get the Community Table going, Jane has asked some willing participants to act as "ambassadors" who, when they see that someone goes to sit at the Community Table, will go and sit with them so no one will find themselves alone there.

"This table is a starting point. Next time, they may see each other in line and say hi. The next week, they may decide to meet at noon in the dining room, or whatever it may be." As the saying goes, "Sit as Strangers, Leave as Friends." It may sound cheesy, but it's true!

The Community Table benefits everyone because you may develop a friendship with someone you otherwise would never think to approach.

So, we urge you to give the Community Table a try the next time you come in for a meal, regardless if it's your first day or your 100th. You never know, you might end up with a new friend for life, you may learn about something you have never heard of, or you may get to share something about yourself that you never would have been able to if you had not been courageous enough to sit at the Community Table. Together, we can bring people together and deepen relationships.

If you would like to become a Community Table ambassador, please speak to Jane.



Senior Round Table Menu

2024

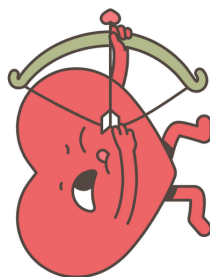
FEBRUARY

Walla Walla Senior Center

MONDAY

MOW = MEALS ON WHEELS IN HOUSE = CONGREGATE DINING ROOM

TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY

FRIDAY

5 CHICKEN FRIED BEEF STEAK
POTATOES
VEGETABLE
FRUIT
ROLL
COOKIE

6 LASAGNA
GARLIC BREAD
FRUIT
MOW: VEGETABLE
COLESLAW
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

7 HAMBURGER WITH BUN
LETTUCE, TOMATO,
ONION
VEGETABLE
POTATOES, CAKE
IN HOUSE: ICE CREAM

8 TACO SOUP
FRUIT, ROLL
COOKIE
MOW: VEGETABLE
GREEN SALAD
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

CLOSED

12 MEATLOAF & GRAVY
POTATOES
VEGETABLES
BREAD
FRUIT
COOKIE

13 ROAST BEEF
ROASTED POTATOES
ROLL, COOKIE
MOW: VEGETABLE
FRUIT
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

14 SALISBURY STEAK
MASHED POTATOES
VEGETABLE
FRUIT
BREAD
BROWNIE



15 HEARTY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP
FRUIT, ROLL, COOKIE
MOW: VEGETABLE
GREEN SALAD
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

CLOSED

19 **CLOSED**

20 SWEDISH MEATBALLS
OVER NOODLES
FRUIT, COOKIE
MOW: VEGETABLE
PEA SALAD
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

21 TURKEY & GRAVY
STUFFING
POTATOES
GREEN BEANS
ROLL
PUMPKIN BAR

22 CLAM CHOWDER
FRUIT, CORN BREAD
COOKIE
MOW: VEGETABLE
COLESLAW
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

CLOSED

26 CHILI & CHEESE TOPPED
POTATO
VEGETABLE
BREAD
FRUIT
COOKIE

27 CHICKEN & DUMPLINGS
FRUIT, BREAD
BROWNIE
MOW: VEGETABLE
CORN SALAD
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

28 **MOW: BAKED FISH**
VEGETABLE
CORN BREAD
GREEN SALAD
IN HOUSE: HAYSTACKS
FRUIT, COOKIE

29 SAUSAGE & WHITE BEAN SOUP
FRUIT, ROLL, COOKIE
MOW: VEGETABLE
SPINACH SALAD
IN HOUSE: SALAD BAR

CLOSED

Free for persons 60+ years. Donations appreciated. Under 60 years \$7 charge. **Hours: Mon-Thur 11:30-1:00.** Substitutions may occasionally occur. Milk served with all meals. Vegetarian option daily. *Be advised that our food may have come into contact or contain peanuts, tree nuts, soy, milk, eggs, wheat, shellfish or fish.



**NUTRITION PROGRAM
MEALS-ON-WHEELS
MEALS IN CONGREGATE
SETTINGS**

Serving Home Delivered, Meals-on-Wheels and meals in Congregate settings to Seniors in Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties of SE Washington State for 50 years.



**Jane Kaminsky
Nutrition Director**

720 Sprague St
Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 527-3775 ext. 1
(509) 527-3776 Fax
srt@wallawallaseniorcenter.org



Chicken and Sausage Gumbo

Ingredients: (serves 6)

Recipe & photo via delish.com

- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- 3/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. mustard powder
- 1/2 tsp. cayenne
- 1 1/2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 4 thighs)
- Vegetable oil (1 tbsp. + 1 cup, divided)
- 12 oz. andouille sausage, sliced into coins
- 6 1/2 c. low-sodium chicken broth, divided
- 1 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 large green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 green onions, sliced (whites and greens separated)
- 2 tbsp. fresh thyme, chopped
- Steamed white rice or potato salad

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, combine the salt, paprika, pepper, garlic powder, mustard powder, and cayenne. In a large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Pat the chicken thighs dry and season all over with 1 tbsp plus 2 tsp of spice mixture. Sear the chicken thighs in the hot oil, turning occasionally for even browning, until cooked through, about 12 minutes. (The chicken should have a brown crust on both sides.) Transfer the chicken to a large bowl.
2. Add the sausage to the same pot and cook until it starts to brown slightly and the edges begin to curl, about 3 minutes. Transfer the sausage to the bowl with the chicken.
3. Add 1/2 cup of chicken broth and deglaze the pot, using a wooden spoon to scrape up any browned bits left behind. Pour the deglazing liquid over the chicken and sausage and set aside to cool.
4. Make the roux: Wipe the pot clean and return to medium-high heat. Add remaining 1 cup oil and heat until you start to see wisps of smoke. Add the flour all at once, reduce heat to medium-low, and whisk continuously. Continue cooking and occasionally whisking, allowing the roux to darken until it reaches a deep brown, milk chocolate color, about 20-25 minutes. (The texture should resemble wet sand.)
5. As soon as the roux is done, add the onion, bell pepper, celery, bay leaves and a big pinch of salt. Increase the heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently to keep the roux from burning. Add garlic, scallion whites, and thyme, and cook for an additional 1 minute. Whisk in the remaining 6 cups chicken broth.
6. Using clean fingers or a fork, shred the chicken into bite sized pieces, then return the chicken, sausage, and deglazing liquid to the pot. Bring everything to a simmer and cover. Allow the gumbo to simmer for at least 1 hour (and up to 4 hours) to give the flavors a chance to meld. Remove bay leaves and top with green onions before serving.

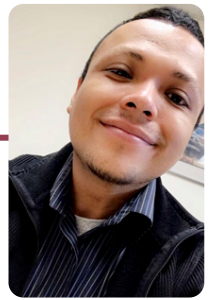




Adult Day Center & Family Support

(509) 527-3775 ext 3
adc@wallawallaseniorcenter.org
wwadc.org

Alex Sanchez,
Program Manager



The Walla Walla Adult Day Center has an important message for you!

In years past (especially after pandemic shutdowns), we have seen the need in our valley to open the doors of our Walla Walla Adult Day Center program to more individuals needing socialization in a community-type setting. Historically, the Adult Day Center has been a program where adults over the age of 60 could access social services, meal services, community engagement and socialization with others in a caring and judgment-free environment. For these participants, our program receives funding through the state of WA and our Veterans Affairs office, helping our participants cover the cost of attending our program. Thanks to these funding partnerships, most of our participants pay little to nothing out of pocket.

What about those under 60 who need a place to go for social connection and assistance?

We are delighted to announce the start of the Adult Day Center Scholarship Fund, to assist in covering program costs for those under the age of 60 that wish to participate in our program.

For our younger community members, 18-59 years of age, the out-of-pocket costs to attend our program have been a hurdle. With this new Scholarship Fund, these individuals will be able to attend our program at 0%, 25%, 50% or 75% of the cost, making it as easy as possible for those under 60 and their families to be a part of the Adult Day Center.



The Adult Day Center is located at the Center at the Park in Walla Walla. Our facility serves adults who have memory challenges, physical disabilities, and socialization needs. We provide a safe and stimulating environment. Call or email us!



Thank you to everyone who donated during our Adult Day Center direct mail fundraiser to build this Fund. And, a special thanks to the Wildhorse Foundation for a grant to help get the whole project off the ground. We appreciate everyone's support so much!

Developing this Fund has been a total team and community-wide effort. Contributing to this Fund directly benefits individuals in need of this service that does not exist elsewhere in our community. If you wish to support this ongoing fund, the ADC would graciously accept your donations.

WILDHORSE FOUNDATION

How to apply for the Adult Day Center Scholarship Fund:

If you know someone under 60 who would be interested in the Adult Day Center:

- 1) We invite you to first learn more about the program and the Scholarship Fund eligibility requirements on our website at wwadc.org/scholarship
- 2) If you think the potential applicant would be a good fit, fill out the Scholarship Fund Application which can be found on that same page. The application can be filled out digitally or you can print it and fill it out by hand.
- 3) Submit the completed application via email to adc@wallawallaseniorcenter.org or drop it by our center at **720 Sprague St.**
- 4) The ADC manager will review the application and reach out to you. During initial contact, an appointment will be made to assess the potential new ADC participant. Assessments are performed in one of the following ways: The potential participant may come in for a trial day of our services, OR, a home visit can be made by our program director.
- 5) If you, the applicant, and the ADC manager would like to move forward, the manager will recommend the applicant to our Scholarship Fund Committee who will do a final review of the application and we will go from there!

YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER FOR IN-HOME CARE



Elevating Your Quality of Life

Are you or a loved one in need of personalized, compassionate care? Look no further! Serengeti Care's dedicated caregivers are here to provide top-notch in-home care tailored to your unique needs.

Compassionate Caregivers

Comfort of Home

Independence

One-on-One Attention

Skilled Professionals

Your comfort and happiness are our priorities. Contact us today to learn more about how we can make a difference in your life.



509-730-0644

serengeticare.com

briannad@serengeticare.com

Date Pudding

By G.G. Ellis

FROM OUR SENIOR CENTER COOKBOOK... (P. 76)

- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 3 T. flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- pinch of salt
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 c. dates, cut up
- 1 c. walnuts, chopped

Mix well together and bake in a 9x9in. pan. Bake at 300-325 degrees for 40 minutes. Serve with whip cream.

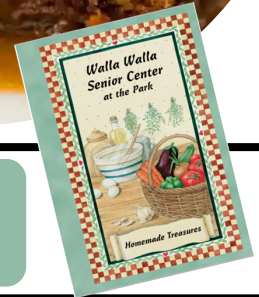


Great gift idea!

Walla Walla Senior Center Cookbook

PICK UP YOUR COPY TODAY!

Purchase your copy (\$10/each) at the Center or give us a call at (509) 527-3775



ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION®

Caregiver Support Group Facilitator Needed!!

Are you looking for a new volunteer opportunity?

Support Group Facilitators create a safe, open environment where people share their feelings, thoughts and experiences in a combined effort to better cope with and manage the shared problems of dementia. All training is included.

For more information call Alexis Bonoff at (509)312-4579

Memory Café Open!

We are very excited to announce that the Walla Walla Memory Café is now open! At a Memory Café, persons living with Alzheimer's or other dementias and their loved ones enjoy socializing in a relaxed café setting. There is no set agenda. Families and friends meet and socialize in an environment that is accepting and non-judgmental. No RSVP required.

The Memory Café will meet the 2nd Monday of the month
10am – 12pm



Hot Mama's Espresso
1447 W Pine St, Walla Walla, WA 99362
Facilitator Kay Lehmann (509)520 -1046

Alzheimer's Association - 24/7 Helpline
800.272.3900

Walla Walla Senior Center

SALON

Haircut

- Women - \$30
- Men - \$18
- Cut, shampoo, and blow dry - \$35-\$40

Perm

- Starts at \$65

Nails

- Basic (cut and file) - \$10
- Manicure - \$20
- Foot care (soak, cut, and file) - \$18



***Prices are for ages 60 and over. Schedule your appointment by calling (509) 240-6034**

NUTRITION PROFESSOR ANSWERS: DOES CHICKEN SOUP REALLY HELP WHEN YOU'RE SICK?

By Colby Teeman via freethink.com

Preparing a bowl of chicken soup for a loved one when they're sick has been a common practice throughout the world for centuries. Today, generations from virtually every culture swear to the benefits of chicken soup. In the U.S., the dish is typically made with noodles, but different cultures prepare the soothing remedy their own way.

Chicken soup as a therapy can be traced back to 60 A.D. and Pedanius Dioscorides, an army surgeon who served under the Roman emperor Nero, and whose five-volume medical encyclopedia was consulted by early healers for more than a millennium. But the origins of chicken soup go back thousands of years earlier, to ancient China.

So, with cold and flu season in full swing, it's worth asking: Is there any science to back the belief that it helps? Or does chicken soup serve as just a comforting placebo, that is, providing psychological benefit while we're sick, without an actual therapeutic benefit?

As a registered dietitian and professor of dietetics and nutrition, I'm well aware of the appeal of chicken soup: the warmth of the broth and the rich, savory flavors of the chicken, vegetables and noodles. What gives the soup that distinctive taste is "umami" – the fifth category of taste sensations, along with sweet, salty, sour and bitter. It is often described as having a "meaty" taste.

IMPROVED APPETITE, BETTER DIGESTION

All that makes sense, because amino acids are the building blocks of proteins, and the amino acid glutamate is found in foods with the umami taste. Not all umami foods are meat or poultry, however; cheese, mushrooms, miso and soy sauce have it too.

Studies show that taste, it turns out, is critical to the healing properties of chicken soup. When I see patients with upper respiratory illnesses, I notice many of them are suddenly eating less or not eating at all. This is because acute illnesses ignite

an inflammatory response that can decrease your appetite. Not feeling like eating means you're unlikely to get the nutrition you need, which is hardly an optimal recipe for immune health and recovery from illness.

But evidence suggests that the umami taste in chicken soup may help spur a bigger appetite. Participants in one study said they felt hungrier after their first taste of a soup with umami flavor added in by researchers.

Other studies say umami may also improve nutrient digestion. Once our brains sense umami through the taste receptors on our tongues, our bodies prime our digestive tracts to absorb protein more easily.

This can reduce gastrointestinal symptoms, which many people experience when they're under the weather. Although most people don't associate upper respiratory infections with gastrointestinal symptoms, research in children has found that the flu virus increased abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea symptoms.

MAY REDUCE INFLAMMATION AND STUFFY NOSE

Inflammation is part of the body's natural response to injury or illness; inflammation occurs when white blood cells migrate to inflamed tissue to assist with healing. When this inflammatory process occurs in the upper airway, it results in common cold and flu symptoms, such as a stuffy or runny nose, sneezing, coughing and thickened mucus.

Conversely, lower white blood cell activity in the nasal passages can reduce inflammation. And interestingly, research shows that chicken soup can in fact lower the number of white blood cells traveling to inflamed tissues. It does this by directly inhibiting the ability of neutrophils, a type of white blood cell, to travel to the inflamed tissue.

KEY INGREDIENTS

To truly understand the soothing and healing effects of chicken soup, it's important to consider the soup's ingredients. Not all chicken soups are packed with nutritious healing properties. For instance, the ultraprocessed canned versions of chicken soup, both with and without noodles, lack many of the antioxidants found in homemade versions. Most canned versions of chicken soup are nearly devoid of hearty vegetables.

The core nutrients in homemade versions of the soup are what set these varieties apart from canned versions. Chicken provides the body with a complete source of protein to combat infection. Vegetables supply a wide array of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. If prepared the American way, noodles provide an easily digestible source of carbohydrate that your body uses for energy and recovery.

Even the warmth of chicken soup can help. Drinking the liquid and inhaling the vapors increase the temperature of nasal and respiratory passages, which loosens the thick mucus that often accompanies respiratory illnesses. Compared with hot water alone, studies show chicken soup is more effective at loosening mucus.

The herbs and spices sometimes used in chicken soup, such as pepper and garlic, also loosen mucus. The broth, which contains water and electrolytes, helps with rehydration.

So, to maximize the health benefits of chicken soup, I recommend a homemade variety, which can be prepared with carrots, celery, fresh garlic, herbs and spices, to name a few ingredients. But if you need a more convenient option, look at the ingredients and nutrition facts label, and choose soups with a variety of vegetables over an ultraprocessed, nutrient-depleted kind.

In short, the latest science suggests that chicken soup – though not an out-and-out cure for colds and flu – really helps with healing. Looks like Grandma was right again.



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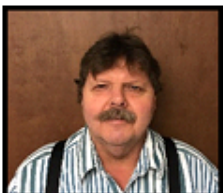
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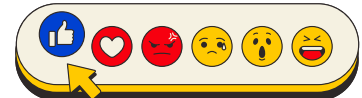


MONTHLY BRAIN TEASER

What do you throw out when you want to use it but take in when you don't want to use it?

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Riddles via parade.com

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"The whole world is a series of miracles, but we're so used to them we call them ordinary things."

(Hans Christian Andersen)



Brain teaser answer: An anchor