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116 ASHLAND STREET  
HOURS: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm  
North Adams Council on Aging  
413-662-3125  
spitzercentr@yahoo.com

**DECEMBER 2022**



Our staff would like to extend our sincere wishes for a  
“Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year”.  
May we all find peace in the New Year

“Also extending our best wishes for the observation of the Hanukkah Festival of Lights celebration which begins at nightfall on Dec 18th and ends at nightfall on Dec 26th.”



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Great News from the BRTA

The **BRTA** announced that beginning November 25, 2022 through December 31, 2022 **all BRTA bus and paratransit services** would be **FREE** thanks in part to a grant included in the state budget and awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. We are so grateful to all those that worked so diligently to submit a joint application to all fifteen of the Commonwealth's Regional Transit Authority.

Social Security Announces 8.7 Percent  
Benefit Increase for 2023

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 8.7% in 2023. On average Social Security benefits will increase by more than \$140 per month starting in January.

The 8.7% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 65 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2023. Increased payments to more than 7 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2022.

The Social Security Act ties the annual COKA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Just a reminder that if the schools close during the winter months due to inclement weather, our van will **not** be running. However, our office will be staffed and open.

The Retired Men's Club will be meeting at the center on the first Thursday of the month beginning on January 5, 2023 at 10AM.

WE HAVE A SECRET. During the four weeks of December, we will be holding a Gift Card drawing for anyone who attends lunch. You never know when the drawing will be held and you **must** be present to win. So come on down. To order your lunch, please call Norman at 413-664-9826.

WHAT'S HAPPENINGWeekly programs:

Monday Cribbage - Dec 12th-10AM

Monday Bridge -12:30PM

Tuesday Bingo - 12:10PM

Wednesday Tai Chi -9:30AM

Wednesday Chair Yoga-1PM

Thursday Bingo-12:10PM

Thursday Balance Class-1PM



Thursday December 1st Fallon Health Care Representative 10AM-12PM

Tuesday December 6th-Massage Therapy beginning at 9:30AM. Please call 413-662-3125 to make an appointment. Chair 15 minute - \$20., Table Massage 30 minute-\$40.

Monday December 12th Caregiver Support Group 1PM

Tuesday December 13th Creative Christmas Craft Day @ 10AM. Come and enjoy creating one of the many crafts that will be offered, such as wreaths and garlands. Bring your own wire clothes hanger or you may use our small wreaths.

Wednesday December 14th Super Bingo at Sugar Hill Assisted Living Center in Dalton. Their van will be picking up those wishing to attend at the Spitzer Center at 12:30PM. The bingo will be held from 1:30-2:30. Their residents will also be attending the bingo. Their van will then transport everyone back to the Center around 3PM. Prizes will be awarded. Reservations are required. Call 413-662-3125.

Thursday December 15th Our Annual Christmas Dinner Celebration beginning at 11:30AM. Roger Tincknell will be performing his Holiday Concert—"A Winter Solstice Celebration" at 1PM. Come and enjoy the singing, laughter and dancing. Reservations are required for the luncheon. Call Norman @ 413-664-9826.



MERRY  
CHRISTMAS



Tuesday December 20th Coffee & Muffins and Blood Pressure Screenings 9:30AM

Tuesday December 20th Foot Nurse Appointments 9:30AM

Friday December 23rd Brown Bag 12:30PM

The Center will be closed on Monday December 26th & Monday January 2nd

# DECEMBER 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			<b>1</b> <b>10:00 Fallon Health Care</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	<b>2</b> 10:00 –11:00 Western Mass Food Truck 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch
<b>5</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:30 Bridge	<b>6</b> <b>9:30 Massage Therapy</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo	<b>7</b> 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 1:00 Chair Yoga	<b>8</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	<b>9</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch
<b>12</b> 10:00 Cribbage 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:30 Bridge <b>1:00 Caregiver Support Group</b>	<b>13</b> <b>10:00 Creative X-Mas Craft Day</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo	<b>14</b> 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 1:00 Chair Yoga <b>1:30 Super Bingo at Sugar Hill</b>	<b>15</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels <b>11:30 Christmas Lunch</b> <b>1:00 Roger Tincknell</b> 1:00 Balance Class	<b>16</b> 10:00 –11:00 Western Mass Food Truck 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch
<b>19</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:30 Bridge	<b>20</b> <b>9:30 Foot Nurse</b> <b>9:30 Coffee &amp; Muffins</b> <b>9:30 Blood Pressure Screenings</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo	<b>21</b> 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 1:00 Chair Yoga	<b>22</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	<b>23</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch <b>12:30 Brown Bag</b>
<b>26</b> <b>CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY</b>	<b>27</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo	<b>28</b> 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 1:00 Chair Yoga	<b>29</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	<b>30</b> 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch

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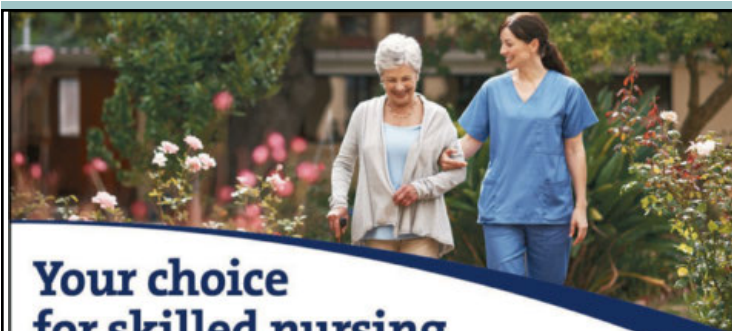


### Cold Weather Immunity Checklist

Though we didn't need to experience a global pandemic to realize how important it is to keep our immune systems tiptop, it turned out to be a powerful reminder of what we need to do to stay healthy. Happily, there are a lot of expert-approved ways to bolster our immunity beyond just washing our hands, which is particularly important in the winter when common colds and seasonal viruses spread more easily. Joseph Khabbaza, M.D., a pulmonary and critical care physician at Cleveland Clinic says here are other ways to keep your immune system strong when the mercury dips.

1. **Get a Good Night's Sleep**—Not only is sleep super important for overall health, it's a key immunity helper because it boosts the body's ability to fight illness. While you're sleeping your body produces cytokines—proteins that direct immune cells to fight inflammation. Don't get enough sleep and you're likelier to be sick longer, research shows. How much sleep is enough? Getting eight hours of sleep a night is a nice goal, but some people need more and others need less sleep says Joseph Khabbaza, M.D. This is why I encourage people to gauge their own sleep needs and understand that everyone has a range of optimal sleep hours for overall health.
2. **Reach for Healthy Foods**—Eating a plant-based diet or foods that are rich in vitamins and minerals with minimal processing is good for your immune system. Fruits, vegetables, nuts, oats—all of these unprocessed foods will keep your immune system healthy and inflammation in check. Khabbaza says, you're going to fight off infection better if you're in a healthier place nutritionally.
3. **Reduce Stress**—It's a challenge to stay zen right now for many reasons, including pandemic's lingering effects. However, taking a yoga class or pausing for 10 minutes to meditate can mitigate some of the stress you're feeling—stress that's doing a number on your immune system. Turns out that stress can even decrease white blood cells (or lymphocytes), which help fight off infection.
4. **Get Moving**—One of the best things for your immune system is to get up and move every day. Maintaining a good exercise regimen during the winter months is crucial for your mental health, it will prompt you to fill your body with healthier foods and it plays a role in helping you sleep better. Khabbaza says, he believes that anyone can exercise in the cold you just have to have the right gear, the right layers and the motivation to get out there.
5. **Reach out to a Friend (or Get a Pet)** - Social connections work wonders to keep our immune systems humming along in a healthy way. This is because spending time with a friend even if you're just laughing or chatting together tells the brain that you're safe and eliminates the possibility of a stressful fight-or-flight response. In addition, interacting with a pet can boost your mood, lower your blood pressure and keep your brain healthy.
6. **Take Your Shots**—Staying up-to-date on CDC recommended vaccines (COVID, flu, pneumonia, shingles—whatever is right for your age) is a must do on your immunity boosting checklist. **"It's critically important"**, Khabbaza says. Vaccinations play a critical role in strengthening your immune system to stave off any viruses you may encounter.





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North Adams Council on Aging, North Adams, MA 06-5145

Daily lunches

- 12/1 Veal Parmesan, penne, peas & pearl onions, bread & mandarin oranges  
 12/2 Frozen, meal pack, Italian Bread, applesauce  
 12/5 Frozen meal, bread, banana  
 12/6 Frozen meal, oat nut bread, apple  
 12/7 Chicken Breast, gravy, mixed greens, bread, fruit cocktail  
 12/8 Baked pollock loin, garlic pot, sliced carrots, bread, tropical fruit mix  
 12/9 Greek chicken casserole, boiled gold pot, Harvard beets, bread, clementine  
 12/12 Chicken cacciatore, brown rice, Tuscan veg, bread, sliced pears  
 12/13 Shepherd's pie, pot, peas & carrots, bread, applesauce  
 12/14 Turkey sausage & cheese taco, pot O'Brien, broccoli florets, bread, banana  
 12/15 Roast beef w/gravy, mashed pot, mixed veg, roll, cherry pie  
 12/16 Ravioli w/meat sauce, carrots, Brussel sprouts, bread, sliced peaches  
 12/19 Baked pollock, scallop pot, mixed veg bread, tropical fruit  
 12/20 Beef stew, boiled gold pot, veg blend, Biscuit, diced pears  
 12/21 Butternut mac & cheese, tom soup, green beans, bread, caramel Bavarian  
 12/22 Roast pork w/gravy, mashed sweet pot, Mixed greens, bread, apple  
 12/23 BBQ chicken breast, mashed pot, lyonnaise carrots, bread, sliced peaches  
**12/26 CLOSED—CHRISTMAS**  
 12/27 Beef Spanish rice, split pea soup, cauli flower, tortilla shell, tropical fruit mix  
 12/28 Turkey with cranberry orange glaze, red pot, asparagus cuts, bread, spiced apples  
 12/29 Veal w/pepper & onion, buttered noodles Capri veg, bread, orange  
 12/30 Yankee pot roast, mashed pot, Italian veg, bread, applesauce

Wild Rice-Stuffed Squash

- 1 cup wild and brown rice blend  
 1 bunch spinach, thick stems discarded, leaves roughly chopped  
 4 small acorn squash (about 4 1/2 lbs total)  
 3 tbsp olive oil, divided  
 Salt and pepper  
 1 large onion, finely chopped  
 2 cloves garlic, pressed  
 2 tsp fresh thyme leaves  
 2 scallions, finely chopped, plus more for serving

1. Place rimmed baking sheet in oven and heat oven to 425 degrees. Cook rice per pkg directions. Remove from heat, place spinach on top of rice, cover pot with clean dishtowel and then lid and let sit 5 minutes.
2. Cut squash 1/2 in. from each pointy end, then halve each through center (this will help them stand straight), scoop out and discard seeds. Rub squash with 1 tbsp oil and season with 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper.
3. Arrange on baking sheet and roast, hollow sides down, until tender, 25-30 minutes.
4. Meanwhile heat remaining 2 tbsp oil in large skillet on medium. Add onion, season with 1/2 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper and cook covered stirring occasionally, 8 minutes.
5. Uncover and cook, stirring occasionally until onion is very tender and beginning to turn golden brown, 6-8 minutes more. Stir in garlic and thyme and cook 2 min; remove from heat.
6. Transfer squash to platter, hollow sides up.
7. Fold spinach and scallions into rice along with onion mixture, then spoon into squash halves. Sprinkle with additional scallions if desired.

