



the PIONEER

brought to you by NORTH HEMPSTEAD PROJECT INDEPENDENCE

Project Independence is a program designed to support residents 60 and over to continue to enjoy good health and a rewarding quality of life in their own homes and communities.

NEWSLETTER VOL. 17 NO. 2

FALL 2023

Message From Supervisor DeSena:



As the calendar turns to fall and the warm weather of summer fades, I hope you enjoy this new issue of the *Pioneer*. I believe you will find the information contained within very useful. In this issue, important information regarding Medicare Open Enrollment, brain health, nutrition, upcoming events, and important Project Independence programs will be profiled. Additionally, November is Alzheimer's Awareness Month, and this issue contains a special section highlighting this. I hope this latest issue of the *Pioneer* finds you in good health, and I encourage all to utilize the information contained within to continue to support your good health and quality of life.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer S DeSena". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer DeSena
North Hempstead Town Supervisor



Is It Dementia, Alzheimer's, Or Just Normal Aging? Here's how to tell the difference.

By Luca Giliberto, MD, Neurologist • Patricia Scanlon, Writer (Northwell's The Well)



Dear Doctor,

I'm worried about my mother. She's 75, and in relatively good physical health. But lately, she has been more and more forgetful—she's having trouble remembering her grandchildren's names and she's sometimes unable to remember conversations that took place just a few hours before. Could she have dementia, or is this just the normal aging process at work?

Sincerely,

“Concerned Daughter”

Dear Concerned Daughter:

Your question is one that I hear often from family members. Dementia is a clinical syndrome, which involves the loss of memory as well as the loss of other cognitive functions, such as the ability to speak or understand speech, move around in your environment, use objects, and abstract thinking. There are many types of dementia—Alzheimer's disease is the most common.

Dementia is very different from the so-called “normal aging process,” where a person becomes a little bit forgetful. Older people can still solve problems, but “fluid intelligence”—the ability to learn new tricks—declines. For instance, it's much more difficult to learn how to use a computer at 65 than it is at 30.

The brain's processing speed changes, as well. A person can still get things done, but it takes longer, and it's harder to multitask. As long as your mother can go about her day independently—perform daily tasks, shop and use credit cards, etc.—then these changes are all pretty normal. When someone has Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, they eventually become unable to do those things.

When family members come in with their loved one, my first questions are, “How did it start? What was the first sign of a problem? Is it a problem with language, memories, or executive functions?” The answers to these questions will guide me as to which tests to perform for more information.

An MRI of the brain is a very important diagnostic tool. It provides information about the possibility of Alzheimer's disease, but it can also tell if the patient has had strokes and how many they've had. An MRI can also identify a treatable condition called hydrocephalus, which is when an enlargement of the spaces in the brain and an excess of fluid disturbs brain function.

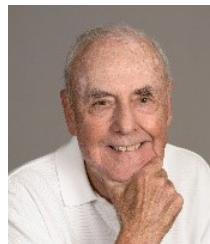
We also have to rule out vitamin deficiencies, because vitamin B1 and B12 deficiencies can sometimes cause dementia-like symptoms, as can hypoactive thyroid. There is also a very extensive list of medications that can cause cognitive defects, including anti-anxiety medications. And the quantity and quality of a person's sleep is fundamental for everyone, especially as we get older. People with a condition called obstructive sleep apnea, which reduces oxygen to the brain in a chronic way, can show signs of cognitive impairment.

There is no cure right now for Alzheimer's disease, but there are medications that can make the symptoms better by improving the function of the brain. And there are several clinical trials going on—here at Northwell as well as at other centers around the country—involving experimental medications that are being tested as potential cures. So it's important to find out quickly if a person does have Alzheimer's disease so they can enroll in a clinical trial. The hope is that with more research, we'll discover better options for treating this disease.



Help Keep Happy Memories Alive!

By Otto Lohse, (Project Independence Volunteer & Co-Host of the PI and You Radio Show)



Happy memories are essential to our mental health. They strengthen our sense of identity and purpose and bond our relationships. Happy memories are an important ingredient in present happiness. We all have lots of sadness that occurs in our lives but if you look at your past, we also have many happy memories. Keeping them alive for future generations to share and enjoy could be a pleasure you can enjoy now. Look back and use your imagination on how to share those happy memories. Here is a small example of one of those moments I had the opportunity to enjoy now and will share with current and future generations.

I discovered this picture a number of years ago and always found it intriguing. From left to right are my father, mother and my father's brother. I always thought the location was Prospect Park, Brooklyn but searched high and low there, not finding the monument. Friends of ours searched and found its location—Cypress and Putnam Avenues in Ridgewood, Queens.

I estimate that this photograph was taken in 1933, approximately 90 years ago. My father was 24 and my mother was 22; they were not married yet. Many thoughts entered my mind.

They did not have a car—how did they get there? What led them to that area? Who took the picture? They were dressed up but not unusual for that era—men wore suits to baseball games.

I thought it would be neat if my uncle's son and I went to that location and took a picture on the same spot they were standing—that is what we did. I am holding the picture taken 90 years ago at that location. There are quite a few differences from 1933, our dress for one, compared to our parents. A gate limited how close we could get to the monument. Parking a car wasn't a challenge then but it was on our visit, lots of traffic.

Their smiles say it all, this was a happy time. Think about how you can keep "Happy Memories" alive.



Get Ready for Medicare Open Enrollment Season Free Medicare Open Enrollment Assistance Through Family and Children's Association (FCA)

By Barry Klitsberg, Nassau County Medicare Counselor, FCA

Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to change their current health plan during the yearly Open Enrollment period (October 15 to December 7). Navigating Medicare and choosing a plan that best meets your needs can be tricky. Our health care

needs change over time, so you should carefully consider your foreseeable health care needs each year. A plan that worked for us previously may not be the best choice going forward.

As we head into the Medicare Open Enrollment season, it is important for people to read mail from their current health plans to see if there are any changes that might impact them for 2024. You should have this notice by October 1. Plans frequently change their premiums, co-pays, deductibles, and formularies. Providers may leave or be added to a plan's network. It is important to keep informed about your coverage. The Medicare & You 2024 booklet, which arrives in homes of all eligible for Medicare

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10 WAYS TO LOVE YOUR BRAIN



START NOW. It's never too late or too early to incorporate healthy habits.



HIT THE BOOKS

Formal education will help reduce risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Take a class at a local college, community center or online.



BUTT OUT

Smoking increases risk of cognitive decline. Quitting smoking can reduce risk to levels comparable to those who have not smoked.



FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke – obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes – negatively impact your cognitive health.



BREAK A SWEAT

Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates heart rate and increases blood flow. Studies have found that physical activity reduces risk of cognitive decline.

Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits. When possible, combine these habits to achieve maximum benefit for the brain and body.

HEADS UP!

Brain injury can raise risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt and use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike.



STUMP YOURSELF

Challenge your mind. Build a piece of furniture. Play games of strategy, like bridge.

BUDDY UP

Staying socially engaged may support brain health. Find ways to be part of your local community or share activities with friends and family.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Some studies link depression with cognitive decline, so seek treatment if you have depression, anxiety or stress.



CATCH SOME ZZZ'S

Not getting enough sleep may result in problems with memory and thinking.



FUEL UP RIGHT

Eat a balanced diet that is higher in vegetables and fruit to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.



Visit alz.org/10ways to learn more.

alzheimer's  association®

THE BRAINS BEHIND SAVING YOURS®



MyPlate Holiday Makeover

With the holidays approaching, we know that many holiday traditions are centered around food. It is important to celebrate traditions. It is also important to make healthier choices while celebrating. Simple swaps and substitutions are a great way to make favorite recipes a little more healthy. That way, you can keep on your path to create better health, and celebrate food traditions, too.

Check out MyPlate's Holiday Makeover below to get started.



The Project Independence and You Radio Show

Congratulations to the Project Independence and You Radio Show for celebrating its 12th anniversary. For the last 12 years, the show has been disseminating important information to our senior residents and to the North Hempstead community.

Tune in to the Project Independence and You Radio Show on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on WCWP 88.1 FM or wcwp.org or download the app to hear interesting discussions and updates with government officials, medical professionals, community organizations and interesting residents. After listening to an informative guest, be sure to listen to the Talk of the Town to find out about updates, programs and what's going on around Town!

If you have any suggestions regarding possible topics or guests, please contact 311 or 516-869-6311.

If you missed an episode, visit www.northhempsteadny.gov/PI-Radio-Shows or on the WCWP Studios YouTube page. Check out full episodes on North Hempstead TV, on Cablevision Channel 18 or 65 or Verizon FIOS Channel 46, visit www.myNHTV.com for up-to-date schedules.

visit choosemyplate.gov for healthier options during the holidays

<p><i>tweak the sweets</i></p> <p>fruits make delicious desserts</p>	<p><i>cheers to good health</i></p> <p>drink water to manage calories</p>
<p><i>bake healthier</i></p> <p>use recipes with pureed fruits instead of butter or oil</p>	<p><i>spice it up</i></p> <p>use spices and herbs instead of sugar and salt</p>
<p><i>brighten your meal</i></p> <p>fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables</p>	<p><i>skim the fat</i></p> <p>try skim evaporated milk instead of heavy cream</p>
<p><i>swap the grains</i></p> <p>choose whole wheat flour instead of white flour</p>	<p><i>go easy on the gravy</i></p> <p>a little bit of gravy goes a long way</p>

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The MIND Diet

What is the MIND Diet?

Mediterranean and DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay

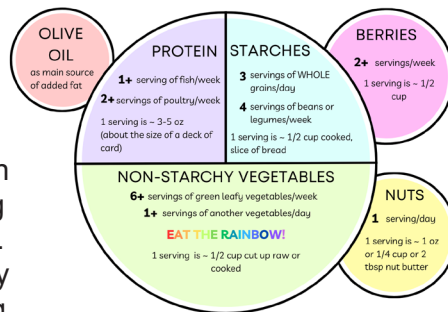
It is a combination of the Mediterranean and DASH diets. The Mediterranean diet is mostly focused on encouraging heart health, and the DASH diet is focused on controlling high blood pressure. The MIND diet aims to reduce dementia and the decline in brain health that often happens as people get older. All three of the diets focus on more plant-based foods and limiting the intake of animal and saturated fat foods. The effects of the MIND diet on cognition showed greater effects than either the Mediterranean or the DASH diet alone.

The MIND diet focuses on 9 foods to include (eat more of). Based on research studies these 9 foods have been classified as “brain healthy”. Participants in the research study with the highest MIND diet scores were shown to have significantly slower rate of cognitive decline compared with those with the lowest scores.

The MIND diet identifies 5 foods in which to limit consumption. These foods are higher in saturated and trans-fat, which have been linked to the increased risk of dementia.

Benefits Of The MIND Diet

The MIND diet is rich in foods containing antioxidants (Vitamin E, flavonoids, carotenoids), and anti-inflammatory (omega-3 fatty acids) molecules which have been shown to be beneficial in reducing oxidative stress and inflammation. Oxidative stress can be caused by numerous things such as smoking, pollution, and chronic stress. The body’s response to this damage is inflammation. Chronic inflammation can ultimately lead to more damage and create a vicious cycle. These antioxidants and anti-inflammatories help to fight off this oxidative stress and reduce the amount of inflammation in the body.



Foods to Focus On
Whole grain, Vegetables, Green leafy vegetables
Nuts, Beans, Berries, Poultry, Fish, Olive oil

Foods to Limit
Sweets and pastries, Red meats, Fried foods,
Butter and margarine, Cheese

IMPORTANT NUTRIENTS

Vitamin E

Sunflower seeds, almonds, collard greens, spinach, pumpkin, red bell peppers, mango

Folate

Dark green leafy vegetables, beans, peanuts, fresh fruits, eggs, foods fortified with folic acid

Omega-3 fatty acids

Fish (oily fish), walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds

Carotenoids

Orange and yellow vegetables, tomatoes, red bell peppers

Flavonoids

Onion, grapes, peaches, berries, tea, lemons, soy

Fiber

Oatmeal, chia seeds, blueberries, quinoa, whole wheat products, almonds, fruits with edible skins

Olive oil



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Nassau County

HOW TO SHOP FOR THE MIND DIET ON A BUDGET

Frozen fruits and vegetables are just as nutritious as fresh and will last longer. Check for refined sugars, or added sugars on the nutrition label and ingredients. Avoid packages with “sweetened” on it.

Protein options such as poultry and fish can be bought in bulk, packaged into servings and frozen for later use. Canned versions are just as nutritious and provide a less expensive option. Beans are a great plant protein and often less expensive. When buying canned just be sure to check the label for low sodium or no sodium added, looking for < 140 mg of sodium per serving.

Nuts can be bought in bulk and stored for up to 6 months. The halves, or pieces may also provide a cheaper option.



Project Independence Social Work & Nursing Services

The PI social work and nurse team are available for appointments via the phone, office and in the home.

If you would like to connect or schedule an appointment with a PI Social Worker or a PI Nurse, please call 311 or 516-869-6311.

PI Transportation Program

The Project Independence Taxi service provides discounted taxi rides for medical appointments and free trips to local grocery stores for Town of North Hempstead seniors 60+ and those with disabilities 21+.

Please call 311 or 516-869-6311 to learn more about the PI Taxi service or to book your taxi reservation.

Project Independence Exercise Classes

Project Independence offers various FREE exercise classes including Yoga, Line Dancing, Low Impact Aerobics, Tai-Chi, Zumba Gold, Fitness and more! Register today for a class. Space is extremely limited and classes fill up fast!

The PI exercise classes are also broadcasted on the Town's public access television station, North Hempstead TV. Channel 65 on Cablevision or Channel 46 Verizon FIOS. Classes air Monday through Sunday, 10 a.m., 1 p.m., and 6 p.m. You can also visit: www.mynhtv.com/fitness to watch the classes online. For a complete schedule of classes visit: www.mynhtv.com/schedule.

North Hempstead Project Independence invites all Town residents 60 and over. If you are interested in

participating or have any questions, please call 311 or 516-869-6311.

Veterans Caseworker

Are you a veteran or know of one who would like assistance with benefits and services?

The Town of North Hempstead has a veteran caseworker who can help connect you to what you are entitled to as a veteran, regardless of age, branch of service or time served. Connect to the veterans caseworker via phone, in-person office visit or in your own home.

Wherever you served, whenever you served, whatever your discharge status, the Town of North Hempstead Veterans Caseworker can help connect you!

- * Initial assessment of the veteran's situation and needs.
- * Review of services and entitlements the veteran may be eligible for.
- * Assistance with applying for veterans services.
- * Information, referrals and connection to various veterans agencies.
- * Widows, widowers, and children of veterans are encouraged to meet with the veterans caseworker to explore any services they may be entitled to.

Thank You To Our Veterans

Friday, November 3 at 11 a.m. at Clinton G. Martin Park, New Hyde Park (Event is held outdoors in a tent)

Veterans from all branches of the military and their spouses are invited to join us for a complimentary lunch, resources, and giveaways to express our heartfelt gratitude for their service. Please call 311 or 516-869-6311 to RSVP.

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by late September, contains valuable information about Medicare benefits and a description of changes for next year. Medicare beneficiaries should review their coverage during the Open Enrollment period to determine if their current coverage is still the right one for them.

Medicare beneficiaries who are in a Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO or PPO) and do not change their plan by December 7 will have an additional opportunity to switch Medicare Advantage plans between January 1 and March 31.

The Medicare website (www.medicare.gov) can help you reevaluate and compare available plans.

If you do not have access to a computer and need assistance, Family and Children's Association (FCA) can help guide you through the process with free help available by calling its Nassau County Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) at 516-485-3754. One of our counselors will be happy to assist you. FCA's HIICAP is a free service that has trained counselors who can provide you with unbiased expertise on what Medicare plan can best meet your individual needs. You can also visit the SMART Van at Clinton G. Martin Park on Tuesday, November 14 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. for assistance.



Town of North Hempstead
 220 Plandome Road
 Manhasset, NY 11030

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Upcoming Project Independence Social Groups Programs

Mens Group Fridays-10:30 a.m., Hillside Public Library

Project Independence Social Discussion Group Thursdays at 11:30 a.m., Zoom

Blankets of Love Tuesdays at 1 p.m., Clinton G. Martin Park

Golden Hearts Bingo & Blood Pressure Screenings Thursdays at 12 p.m., Roslyn Community Center

Fridays at YWC (Exercise for Balance and Strength, The Power of Music on your Health, What in the World is Going On? & Color Me Calm, Heart-to-Heart Bingo and Blood Pressure Screenings, Brain Games) at 9:30 a.m., "Yes We Can" Community Center

Bridge Program-Beginner Class & Intermediate Class Wednesdays at 10 a.m.-11 a.m. (Beginner), 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (Intermediate), "Yes We Can" Community Center

Call 311 or 516-869-6311 for schedule and to register.

Join a Project Independence Advisory Committee-Get Connected and Make a Difference!

Come and discuss the needs of Town residents 60 and over, offer suggestions for new programs, learn about services available in the community and make new friends! Meetings are at 10 a.m. and meet both in person and virtual.

November 15, Clinton G. Martin Park

December 13, Clinton G. Martin Park
 PI Holiday Party

Registration is required. Call 311 or 516-869-6311 to register for the in person or Zoom advisory meeting option.

SMART Van

Family and Children's Association (FCA) Senior Mobile Access to Resources & Technology

Technology doesn't have to be difficult! FCA's new SMART Van will be stopping at Clinton G. Martin Park providing:

- Technological training
- Connection to resources
- Informal counseling
- Medicare open enrollment assistance and more!

Tuesday, November 14 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Clinton G. Martin Park.

NO APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED.

Please call 311 or 516-869-6311 for more information.

S.T.O.P (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants) Program

Sunday, November 19 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at North Hempstead Beach Park

The S.T.O.P. (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants) program offers residents for North Hempstead the opportunity to dispose of their household hazardous waste in an environmentally friendly manner and shredding services.

Upcoming St. Francis Outreach Bus: Free Health Screenings

The screenings include a brief cardiac history, blood pressure, simple blood test for Cholesterol, and Diabetes screenings with appropriate patient education and referrals as needed for clients above the age of 18.

NO APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED.

Flu Shots may be available at certain locations. Dates and protocol are subject to change.

Please call 311 or 516-869-6311 before going to a location.

Screenings are from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Monday, November 13
 Port Washington Adult Activities Center

Tuesday, November 21
 Great Neck Social Center

Tuesday, November 28
 Fuschillo Park

Wednesday, December 6
 Magnolia Gardens

Thursday, December 7
 Manhasset Valley Residence

If you are interested in receiving monthly updates about all things going on in Project Independence and throughout the town, call 311 or 516-869-6311 to sign up for the monthly email newsletter.



Town Supervisor
Jennifer DeSena



Council Member,
 District 1
Robert J. Troiano, Jr.



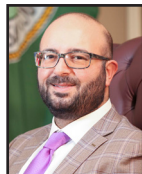
Council Member,
 District 2
Peter Zuckerman



Council Member,
 District 3
Dennis J. Walsh



Council Member,
 District 4
Veronica Lurvey



Council Member,
 District 5
David A. Adhami



Council Member,
 District 6
Mariann Dalimonte



Town Clerk
Ragini Srivastava



Receiver of Taxes
Charles Berman

Call 311 or visit www.northhempsteadny.gov for more Town information.

STAY CONNECTED

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