



Montclair State University

College of Education and Human Services
Department of Health and Nutrition Sciences

Hudson County Nutrition and Wellness Programs

(973) 655-6868

Montclair State University provides nutrition support and wellness programs such as nutrition education, counseling, and food safety, as well as, wellness exercises to older adults (60+ years of age) in Hudson County, NJ, in partnership with the Hudson County Area Agency on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services.

Four times per year program nutritionists visit each of the 22 sites where older adults gather for lunch and social activities. The nutritionists present a current nutrition topic tailored to the needs of the older adult population. There are approximately 400-550 senior participants each quarter. Learning opportunities are enhanced with interactive games and activities with the senior participants. Topical brochures are provided for future reference as the seniors make changes to improve their dietary habits and lifestyles for overall health. Free nutrition counseling is offered to the older adults during each of the nutritionist's site visits.

The program provides the approximately 2000 homebound older adults, who receive their lunches through Meals-on-Wheels, with quarterly brochures on pertinent nutrition-related topics. Nutrition counseling is offered to many of these Home Delivered Meal (HDM) clients through telephone calls by the program nutritionists. Follow-up information is mailed to the seniors as needed.

The Hudson County Nutrition and Wellness Programs sponsor two health fairs per year at various Hudson County senior sites. Vendors offering senior services participate and the program provides activities such as BMI and waist-to-hip ratio calculations, balance testing, cooking demonstrations and taste testing, Tai Chi demonstrations, chair exercises and the like. Participates enjoy the education, counseling, and free gifts.

Food safety is a continuing concern and the visiting program nutritionist conducts safety checks of the site kitchen at each visit. In addition, nutritionists continually monitor the self-prep kitchens for adherence to food safety rules. Bi-annual inservice workshops are offered for senior program directors, site managers, lunch assistants, and all food handlers. Here, the Hudson

County Nutrition and Wellness Program educators conduct lectures and activities aimed at educating and stressing the importance of adherence to food safety techniques.

Wellness is the newest component added to the program. Exercise instructors and Tai Chi Master lead the older adults in age-tailored physical activity aimed at improving their balance and agility. Approximately 4000 contact hours are made between the participants and program wellness instructors annually through eighteen weekly classes. After the class, older adults have the opportunity for one-on-one wellness counseling with the instructor. In addition, the program sponsors physical assessments including blood pressure, glucose testing, and cholesterol levels measurements by community health nurses on three occasions throughout each year.

For more information about the program please call Shahla M. Wunderlich, PhD, RD, Director or Michelle O'Malley, MS, Administrator at (973) 655-6868.