



Green Ridge House Gazette

February is American Heart Month

Heart health awareness is more important than ever, as **public health officials have been warning about the relationship between Covid19 and heart disease.**

In most cases heart disease is preventable when people adopt a healthy lifestyle. Healthy behaviors include not smoking, getting at least 2 hours of moderate physical activity a week, getting regular checkups at the doctor, and maintaining a healthy weight, blood sugar, and cholesterol. However, during the Covid19 pandemic, people in lockdown had less healthy habits, such as eating poorly, drinking more alcohol, and not exercising. People also delayed or avoided going to the hospitals for heart conditions and even heart attacks and strokes, which meant worse outcomes. Not only have there been more deaths from heart disease during the pandemic, but **people who have serious heart conditions are also at higher risk for severe illness from Covid19 or “long Covid.”**

This February, engage in heart-healthy behaviors like taking walks, eating heart healthy foods that are low in fat and sugar, or simply help raise awareness and support the fight against heart disease on National Wear Red Day!

Friday, February 3 is National Wear Red Day to raise awareness against heart disease.



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Emergency Preparedness

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When an emergency happens, you should try to remember the three phases that comes with an emergency: **Phase 1. Prepare, Phase 2. Respond, and Phase 3. Recover.** In this article I will share some tips on how to be prepared in case of an in-home emergency.

Prepare. It is important to make sure your home fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are installed and properly checked at least 2 times a year. Try to keep a fire extinguisher in a reachable place in areas of your home such as living room, kitchens, bedrooms and bathrooms. A house alarm, or and in some cases a personal light weight alarm such as a pendant or bracelet that connects directly to emergency responders are good to have. Try to always have a phone accessible; whether it's a house phone or a cell phone, one should be in every commonly used space. It is also important to keep areas such as hallways clear of clutter and to have accessible lightning in the area. Having things such as canned goods, non-perishable items, bottled water, flashlights, batteries and an emergency kit are also good to keep around the house in an accessible place. You can put a tag on your refrigerator with your basic information on it for first responders in case of a situation where you cannot verbally tell them yourself. Come up with a safety plan and safety route that best fits you and let a close family member or friend know exactly what your plan and route is in case you have an emergency.

Respond and Recover. Follow your safety plan and use your route. In any emergency try to remain calm and contact emergency personnel as soon as possible. Remember every individual may handle the same emergency in a different way and the recovery process can also be different. It can take seconds for an emergency to happen and anywhere from minutes to years to recover from one.

Extreme weather calls for specific preparations and responses. Read on to learn more about how to survive through very hot or very cold weather.



In case of very cold conditions remember to heat your home safely. Your heating system should be checked at least once a year. If using a space heater follow the manufacturer's instructions. Try to keep extra blankets, scarfs, gloves, hats and winter coats on hand. Always keep heating source away from furniture, drapes and bedding. Do not use an extension cord to plug in space heaters. Conserve your heat by constantly opening doors, cover windows and keeping unused rooms closed. Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip constantly. Eat a well-balanced meal and stay away from caffeinated drinks and alcoholic drinks as they cause the body to lose heat fast.

When in very hot conditions stay cool, stay hydrated and stay informed. Drink more water than usual. Wear lightweight loose light-colored clothing. Try not to use oven or stove top when cooking and avoid hot meals. Take a cool shower or bath.

If possible, always have a family member or friend to check on you in any winter storm or extreme hot conditions.

Free At-Home Covid19 Tests Available Again

As Covid19 variants cause case numbers to rise again, the federal government's free Covid19 test kit ordering program is back after briefly shutting down in September 2022. As of December 2022, every home in the U.S. can once again order up to four free at-home Covid19 test kits on [covidtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov). **As before, the tests are completely free—there are no shipping costs and you do not need to enter a credit card number.**

If you want to order tests but need computer or internet access, or need help navigating online, contact the Service Coordinator at **301-412-2480**.

Renter's Tax Credit

The Renters' Tax Credit Program provides a direct check payment of up to \$1000 to renters who meet certain requirements. If you are a senior or disabled adult who has paid more than a specified amount in rent for your income level last year, you may qualify for a tax credit. Income requirements and details for a workshop will come out early February—keep an eye on the table in the lobby!



Congregate Meal Program Changes

Beginning January 18, 2023, the Congregate Meal Program will be returning to its original, pre-Covid19 format! Participants will be able to pick up a pre-packed hot meal 3 days a week (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays) in the Green Ridge House Dining Room. The current weekly delivery of frozen meal packs will end.



A suggested donation of \$3 per meal is encouraged.

Contact the Service Coordinator at **301-412-2480** or Marvel Brown at **301-474-1135** to register or for more details.

Another Congregate Meal Program site is the Greenbelt Community Center, which serves meals 2 days per week (Mondays and Wednesdays). For more information contact Carrie Hannigan at **240-542-2058**.

Ongoing Events at Green Ridge House

Grocery Distribution: Mondays from 1 PM – 1:30 PM in the Dining Room, when available.

Monthly Produce Delivery: Every third Thursday of the month.

Chair Yoga Class: Thursdays from 10 AM – 11 AM in the Community Room.

Wii Interactive Games: Thursdays from 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM in the Community Room.

Glenda's Chat and Chew: Every fourth Tuesday of the month at 2:30 PM in the Community Room.

Arts for the Aging: Every fourth Wednesday of the month at 2 PM in the Community Room.

NEW! Tai Chi: Wednesdays from 10 AM – 11 AM in the Community Room. Come get your body moving! **Starts January 25.**

The Strong Seniors Gym Class will return! More announcements to come.

