

# MYHAT Quarterly Newsletter



SPRING EDITION 2022



## Spring Sweepstakes Winner

### Nancy Gerbi

Nancy has been a participant in the MYHAT study for 14 years. She currently lives with her grandson and enjoys spending time with her grandkids.

Ms. Gerbi is very proud of her family. She appreciates the help they have been giving her during the pandemic as she becomes accustomed to staying at home out of concern for her health and the safety of others. We would like to thank Nancy for her continued support of the MYHAT study!!

## MEET THE MYHAT INTERVIEWER

### MAHAM AHMED



**Meet the interviewer:** Maham has recently become a MYHAT interviewer! She graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. In the future, she is hoping to pursue a PsyD in Clinical Psychology. Maham was born in Pakistan and moved to Pittsburgh when she was four. She can speak both Urdu and English. When she's not working, she enjoys being at home and playing with her 2-year-old nephew and 1-year-old niece. If she's not with the kids, she's probably reading somewhere, since she also studied English literature at Pitt. Maham looks forward to meeting participants and being a part of a research study focused on health and aging!

3029 Jacks Run Road, Parkside II Building, White Oak, PA 15131  
412-673-0980

## Windowsill Gardening for Beginners



\*When starting a windowsill garden, growers will first need to choose a window that receives bright sunlight. This is especially true in the winter time when a south-facing window may be the best option.

\*To begin growing plants on a windowsill, growers will also need to determine what types of plants they will grow, as well as the appropriate size and shape of their pots for planting. Plants that require full sun may struggle in the windowsill garden. After selecting the plants and containers, carefully fill the pots with potting soil. In doing so, make certain that each container has at least one hole for drainage. Once the pots have been filled with soil, transplant the plant starts or directly sow the seeds into the container.

\*Water the plant well and place it into the windowsill. Water the containers weekly, or as needed. If the container is dry, gently water the base of each plant until the potting mix is well saturated. Avoid overwatering, as this may cause plant stress or the onset of disease.

\*Rotate the containers in the windowsill in order to promote full growth.

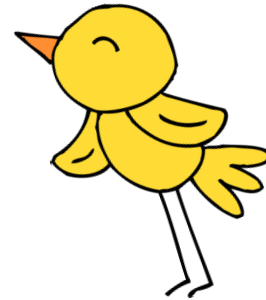
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/hpgen/beginner-windowsill-garden.htm>

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

<https://www.factretriever.com/spring-facts>

\*The first day of spring is called the vernal equinox. The term *vernal* is Latin for “spring” and *equinox* is Latin for “equal night.”

\*The fall and spring equinoxes are the only two times during the year when the sun rises due east and sets due west.



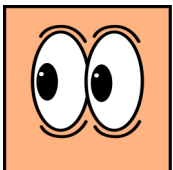
## Seeing is Believing

It is important for everyone to keep eye exams and vision prescriptions up to date so that we can see better, but here is another reason: Good vision may also be partially protective against cognitive decline as we age!

MYHAT Study investigators published a study last year in the *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*, looking at information MYHAT study volunteers provided over the years. The paper showed a link between being able to see well at the first study visit and performance scores on memory and other cognitive tests. Interestingly, this was true not only for cognitive tests that depend on good vision, such as drawing a picture, but also for some verbal tests which do not require vision at all.

Over the next 9 years of annual study visits, better vision at study enrollment was linked to less decline on several memory and cognitive tests – again, including some tests which could be performed well blind-folded!

Health and aging researchers don't know exactly why this is, but the findings are in line with other studies showing a link between intact sensory abilities – seeing and hearing well – and lower risk for future cognitive decline. One possibility is that these are all factors related to general good health. Another possibility is that if people don't hear and see well, they may tend to avoid socializing or keeping up with activities and hobbies, things which are themselves protective against dementia and cognitive decline.



So if you need to update your glasses prescription, like so many of us do, no time like the present!

## **Nutrition Guidelines for Seniors**

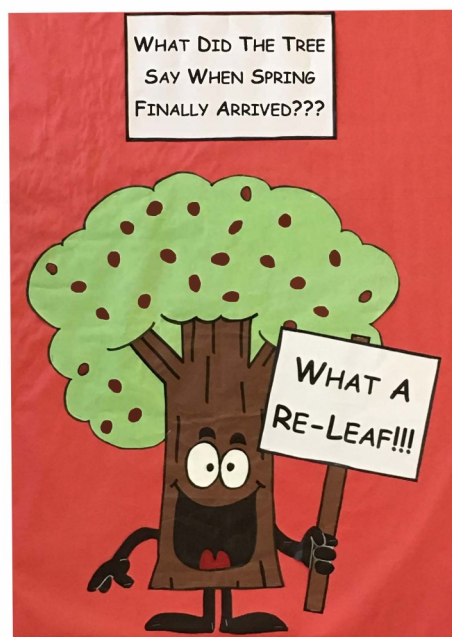
As people age, it's common for their metabolism and digestive systems to slow down. They also tend to become a little less active. Those are some of the main reasons why it's so important to get exercise and eat foods that are healthy. Nutrition for seniors is such a vital topic because knowing what—and how much—to eat can help you maximize your well-being. Depending on your activity level, it's generally recommended that men over the age of 50 should consume 2,000 to 2,800 calories per day. Women over the age of 50 should consume 1,600 to 2,200 calories per day.

But not all calories are created equal. When planning your daily meals, keep the following tips in mind:

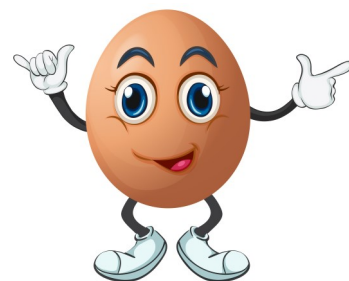
- Include two to three tablespoons of healthy fats—such as extra virgin olive or coconut oil—in your diet each day.
- Consume no more than 1,500 milligrams (mg) of sodium daily.
- Make sure that less than 10 percent of your daily calories come from saturated fat.
- Consume less than 300 mg of cholesterol daily.
- Avoid sugary drinks

In addition, pay attention to the food groups you're eating from. The main food groups include fruits and vegetables, grains, dairy and dairy alternatives, and meat and meat alternatives.

<https://www.greatseniorliving.com/health-wellness/senior-nutrition#grocery-shopping-tips>



## **EGGS—ACTLY**



Lutein and zeaxanthin are body minerals used to maintain the eyes and keep them healthy by protecting them from dangerous light wavelengths. Eggs are an excellent source of these two elements. They reduce retinal deterioration, which decreases the possibility of cataracts developing. Cataracts are the number one cause of most cases of blindness in the elderly.

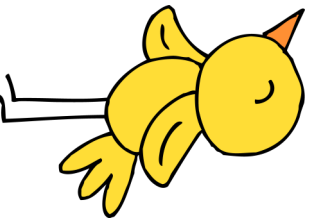
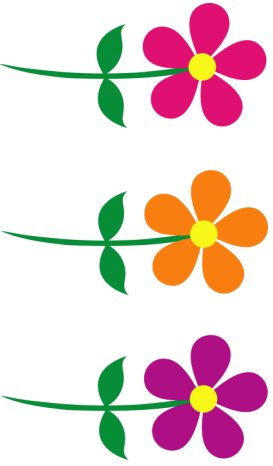
[Why Eggs Are Healthy for the Elderly  
\(homecareassistanceanchorage.com\)](http://homecareassistanceanchorage.com)



# Word Search

S U V N K S N G S B A A V Y T  
 S A L H E K D D G W L F T R U  
 A V W U R S X R R O L X O V B  
 R N I A R Y T K I J E S Q E P  
 G L Z M M X K S X B R H E C E  
 S R E W O L F N U S B S L N L  
 L A T G C G H G S C M O I W S  
 J L Z U A J D E X I U H E Q E  
 S L A S X R C D I D S D A Y E  
 E U W B I O D Z S N R A S G D  
 F L O W E R S E U V K I T E S  
 S E F E R T S N S N K A F E U G  
 K S E I M S A U Q D X G R K C  
 L D B E J H I B S L E B U Y G  
 J P S S V O V Q O K R G R I F

- BASEBALL
- CLOUDS
- FLOWERS
- KITES
- SEEDS
- SUNSHINE
- BEEES
- DAISY
- GARDEN
- NESTS
- SUN
- TREES
- BIRDS
- EASTER
- GRASS
- RAIN
- SUNFLOWERS
- UMBRELLA



NON-PROFIT ORG  
 US POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 PITTSBURGH, PA  
 PERMIT NO 511

University of Pittsburgh  
 MYHAT (Mon–Yough Healthy Aging Team)  
 230 McKee Place  
 Room 214  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
 Return Service Requested

