



SOUTH CENTRAL ADULT SERVICES

Griggs County

NEWSLETTER

3 steps to better eye health in 2021

(BPT) - January is Glaucoma Awareness Month, a great opportunity to spread the word about a disease that affects more than 3 million people in the United States. Since glaucoma often strikes without symptoms and can cause significant vision loss before a person notices changes in their eyesight, it's critical to learn what you can do to protect your eyes.

Taking steps to protect your vision is more challenging this year because of the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our daily lives. January is also typically a time of flux in health insurance coverage with plan changes, deductible and co-pay resets, and prescription plan updates. However, despite these challenges, protecting your vision should remain a priority.

Here are three things you can do to take control of your eye health this month.

1. Schedule an annual eye exam. Early detection and treatment are paramount to managing glaucoma and other vision-threatening conditions. That's why it's critical to have an annual eye exam, particularly if you're over the age of 40. Since some forms of

glaucoma are inherited, it's also important to talk with family members to see if there is any history of the disease within your family. It may not be something your family members have talked about before! This will be

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Latest Medicare scam: Don't divulge your ID number when a stranger calls

'Dangerous' fraud schemes are targeting older Americans

by Katherine Skiba, AARP

If you're on Medicare, be aware: You will **not** be receiving a new chip card to replace your paper ID card. If somebody tells you that, they're lying. It's the latest Medicare scam.

A 73-year-old widow in a small town in North Dakota learned about it the hard way. Early in September, a man called unexpectedly and offered her a plastic chip card to replace her paper Medicare ID.

A chip card, the size of a debit or credit card, contains a microchip to encrypt transactions for

greater data security. But protecting your data is the last thing bad actors want. Often they aim to defraud the taxpayer-financed Medicare program — or to steal your identity and rip you off.

Personal questions, and many of them

Unfortunately, this widow gave the scammer her Medicare number, which officials say should only be provided to health care professionals whom you trust, such as doctors, pharmacists and insurers.

"To take advantage of somebody who is older, that's disgraceful," said Jennifer Wolff, 64, the vic-

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Griggs County Birthdays & Anniversaries

COOPERSTOWN

JANUARY

Birthdays

Faye Vigesaa: 1/10
 DeVon Larson: 1/11
 Elmer Gronneberg: 1/28
 Del Chaput: 1/30

Anniversaries

Bebe & Curtis McCardle: 1/22

FEBRUARY

Birthdays

Donna Olson: 2/14
 Avis Pittenger: 2/15
 Gloris Gronneberg: 2/20
 Wade Faul: 2/23
 Bennett Michaelis: 2/25
 Connie Loudon: 2/26
 Joan Rhone: 2/26

No anniversaries

HANNAFORD

JANUARY

No birthdays or anniversaries

FEBRUARY

No birthdays

Anniversaries

Erleen & Warren Staley: 2/11

BINFORD

JANUARY

Birthdays

Wayne King: 1/12

No anniversaries

FEBRUARY

No birthdays or anniversaries

SUTTON

JANUARY

Birthdays

Alan Jacobson: 1/8
 Cynthia Thompson: 1/15

No anniversaries

FEBRUARY

Birthdays

Imogene McGee: 2/7

No anniversaries



EBT/SNAP



(Food Stamps)

We would like to remind all meal recipients (congregate, frozen and home-delivered meals) that EBT/SNAP cards may be used for your meal contributions.

Please call Deb Andreasen, 797-3330 for more info.

Transportation Services Griggs County

Transportation is available to citizens of all ages, and for all purposes, on the following days each month:

Cooperstown:

Monday—Friday
(\$1.00 round trip + \$.50 per stop)

Hannaford, Binford, Sutton:
on call (\$3.00)

To Jamestown:
1st & 3rd Tuesdays (\$8.00)

To Fargo:
Thursdays (\$10.00)

To Valley City:
2nd Tuesday (\$8.00)

Please make Fargo appointments on Thursdays after 9 AM.

The bus may go to Grand Forks, Mayville, Hillsboro, or other locations on the 4th Tuesday, upon request, if available. (\$10.00)

For information, or to reserve a ride call Deb : 701-789-7155

Outreach Worker, Deb at:
701-789-7155

Or the senior center: 701-797-3330

GRIGGS COUNTY MONTHLY MEETINGS

COOPERSTOWN SENIOR CENTER

No meetings until Spring

BINFORD SENIOR CENTER

No meetings until Spring

SUTTON SENIOR CENTER

No meetings until Spring

FREE IN-HOME SERVICES FOR SENIORS

Provided by Lutheran Social Services
Senior Companions

- Bringing smiles & laughter
- Empowering seniors to remain living independently
- Helping relieve loneliness and encouraging activity
- Providing respite care for
 - family caregivers

**Contact Andrea at
(800) 450-1510 for more info.**

CREATIVE COOKING



Spinach Artichoke Baked Chicken

Prep: 5-10 mins Cook: 23-29 mins

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (14-ounce) can or jar artichoke hearts packed in water
- 4 ounces cream cheese
- 8 ounces sour cream
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 1 1/2 cups shredded Italian-blend cheese (4 ounces), divided
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts (about 4)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F.
2. Drain and coarsely chop 1 can or jar artichoke hearts. Cube 4 ounces cream cheese and place in a large microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on HIGH until very soft, about 30 seconds. Add the chopped artichoke hearts, sour cream, baby spinach, 1/2 cup of the shredded Italian cheese, Dijon mustard, and garlic powder, and stir to combine.
3. Pound chicken breasts one at a time: Place 1 chicken breast in a gallon-sized zip-top bag and pound with a rolling pin or the flat side of a meat mallet to an even 1/2-inch thickness.
4. Place the chicken breasts in a baking dish large enough to fit them in a single layer and season all over with kosher salt and ground black pepper. Spread the spinach-artichoke mixture over the chicken in an even layer.
5. Bake until the chicken is cooked through and registers 165°F on an instant-read thermometer, 20 to 25 minutes.
6. Remove the baking dish from the oven. Heat the oven to broil. Sprinkle the chicken with the remaining shredded Italian cheese. Broil until the cheese is melted and lightly browned, about 3 to 4 minutes.



Oreo Valentine Truffles

Prep: 30 mins Cook: 2 mins

INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 (14.3-ounce) package Red Velvet Oreo cookies (Or any flavor you prefer)
- 12 ounces white chocolate chips or white candy melts
- 1 tablespoon vegetable shortening
- 2 drops pink food coloring
- 1/4 cup sprinkles

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut 8 ounces cream cheese into cubes and let sit at room temperature until softened, at least 30 minutes. Meanwhile, line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Place 1 package Oreo cookies in a food processor fitted with the blade attachment. Pulse into fine crumbs, about 10 (2-second) pulses. Add the cream cheese and pulse until combined and the mixture forms a ball. Scoop the mixture into tablespoon portions and roll each one into a ball. Place on the baking sheet. Refrigerate until set, at least 1 hour.
3. Place 12 ounces white chocolate chips or candy melts in a medium microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on HIGH in 30-second bursts, stirring between each burst, until melted, 1 1/2 to 2 minutes total. Add 1 tablespoon shortening and 2 drops pink food coloring, and stir to combine.
4. Working with one at a time, drop each truffle ball into the pink mixture and thoroughly coat. Remove with a fork, let the excess drip off, and return to the baking sheet. Sprinkle each truffle with sprinkles as soon as it's coated -- you'll need about 1/4 cup total.
5. Once all the Oreo balls are coated, refrigerate until the chocolate is firm, at least 10 minutes.

RECIPE NOTES

Storage: Leftovers can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

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Valuable information to share with your eye doctor during your exam.

"Glaucoma Awareness Month is a great time for a candid conversation about glaucoma within your family," says Tom Brunner, president and CEO of the Glaucoma Research Foundation. "If you have a family history of glaucoma you may be at higher risk for developing the condition. The earlier glaucoma is detected, the more manageable the disease may be to treat."

2. Maintain your current eye care plan. While the pandemic has caused many people to consider delaying in-person medical appointments, it's very important to keep scheduled office visits if you have been diagnosed with glaucoma. Your eye doctor needs to see you periodically to ensure that your vision is stable and adjust your treatment plan if needed.

If you are concerned about the safety of in-person office visits, you may be pleasantly surprised by the comprehensive steps your eye care provider has taken to help keep you safe. When you make your appointment, the office staff will let you know about any new safety protocols and requirements.

"Social distancing and other protective measures are changing the in-office patient experience," says Dr. Richard Lewis, a practicing glaucoma specialist and chief medical officer at Aerie Pharmaceuticals. "Among the steps we have taken at my practice are plastic shielding on the instruments, requiring staff and patients to wear masks, and minimizing waiting room and exam room 'chair' time."

It's also important to continue taking prescribed medi-

cations as part of your ongoing glaucoma care. One common reason why people stop taking their medications is because of the cost. The key is to understand your prescription benefits, particularly what medicines are covered, as well as when annual deductible resets and co-pay adjustments occur.

When filling your prescriptions, it may also help to shop around. The price for a medication can vary from one pharmacy to the next, with preferred pharmacies associated with your health plan usually offering the more competitive price. If you are on a Medicare Part D drug plan that doesn't cover your medication, your doctor may be able to submit a prior authorization to allow you to get it. In addition, if you have commercial insurance and are taking a brand medication, the pharmaceutical company may be able to assist you financially in the form of prescription savings programs.

3. Understand your treatment options. Ongoing scientific research and clinical development in the field of glaucoma have brought forward an array of new medical interventions. In fact, today your eye doctor has more options to treat glaucoma and provide personalized care than ever before. Become your own advocate by learning about all the treatment options that are available and discussing your specific needs with your doctor.

A valuable starting point is "Understanding and Living with Glaucoma," a free booklet published by the Glaucoma Research Foundation. It can be downloaded or ordered at www.glaucoma.org/booklet. The foundation's website also offers a wealth of resources to help you take control of your eye health during Glaucoma Awareness Month and beyond.

Congregate Meals

Due to COVID-19, congregate meals have been suspended until further notice.

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New Year's baby
Martin Luther King Jr.
Champagne
Snowplow
Valentine's Day
Calendar
Sugar cookies
Groundhog Day

Abraham Lincoln
Heart
Snowflake
Balloons
Engagement
Presidents' Day
Cuddling
Ball drop

Candles
Mardi Gras
Comfort food
Beaded necklace
Masquerade
Times Square

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FREE IN-HOME SERVICES FOR AREA SENIORS

Provided by Lutheran Social Services Senior Companions

- Bringing smiles & laughter
- Empowering seniors to remain living independently
- Helping relieve loneliness and encouraging activity
- Providing respite care for family Caregivers

Contact Andrea at (800) 450-1510 or Deb at (701) 797-3330 for more info.

Gift Certificates now available!

Looking for a gift for the person who has everything? Let us help you out with a gift certificate for South Central Adult Services congregate meals.



Call **701-797-3330** today!

FOOT CARE CLINIC **JANUARY & FEBRUARY**

Foot In The Door Clinics will begin again in January. She has not set dates yet; if you would like an appointment, call Holly Vigesaa at 701-214-2957. The cost is \$30.



Frozen Meals Available

Frozen meals are available to elderly people who are unable to shop and prepare meals, and where hot home-delivered meals are not available every day. The meals are labeled with instructions for heating. A serving of bread, butter, milk, and dessert is included for each meal. A wide variety of entrees are available. Contact Deb at 789-7155 or the Senior Center, 797-3330, for more information.

South Central Adult Services Council, Inc.

makes available all services without regard to race, color, national origin, or handicap, and is subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title V Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and all related laws and regulations. The South Central Adult Services Council, Inc., is an Equal Opportunity Employer. South Central Adult Services Council, Inc. holds quarterly board meetings on the 3rd Monday of February, May, August & November. All meetings are open to the public at 139 2nd Ave SE in Valley City, ND. Call in advance to reserve a meal at 1-800-472-0031.

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tim's sister, who alerted AARP's Fraud Watch Network helpline, 1-877-908-3360, about the scam. The victim is not being identified for this story.

Wolff knew the caller was a scammer from the get-go. She works with a local hospital and community health center, visiting older folks in their homes to ensure they have the services and equipment they need. Her work led her to suspect that the caller asked about her sister's physical attributes, such as her height, weight and pants size, because he wanted to cheat the government by billing for unneeded durable medical equipment (DME).

Scam calls go out statewide

The North Dakota widow is not alone. About 40 or 50 other residents in the state recently received similar calls, and a number of them also divulged their Medicare numbers, said Assistant Attorney General Parrell Grossman, who directs the Consumer Protection & Antitrust Division in the state attorney general's office.

A consumer alert to North Dakotans is going out soon, said Grossman, who called the scam "particularly dangerous" since some consumers gave up what he called "unique" and "important" identifiers.

He urged scam victims to file complaints. "We've heard every variation, every angle, every pitch ... and more often than not, we immediately know that there's something suspicious, and that it is likely a scam."

Criminals rarely target a single state, so it's important to be aware of this crime no matter where you live. A couple of Tennessee residents have reported similar scam calls, said Samantha Fisher, spokeswoman for the state attorney general.

At the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), a spokesperson said Wednesday that the agency is aware of the scam. Once a beneficiary divulges his or her Medicare number, it is used to bill fraudulent claims, he said.

"Medicare will never call beneficiaries to ask for or check" their Med-

icare number, he added.

Criminals follow the news

Medicare, the federal health insurance program for people 65 and older and people with disabilities, has been a target of criminals since it started in July 1965. With more than 62 million current Medicare recipients, it's a target-rich environment for liars, cheats and thieves. Medicare cards were changed beginning in 2018, when an 11-digit alphanumeric account numbers called Medicare Beneficiary Identifiers (MBIs), replaced the 9-digit Social Security numbers that had identified enrollees.

Scammers "are on the move, developing ways to take advantage of any confusion that may be related to the transition," the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) warned as the new cards were being rolled out. Some scammers asked beneficiaries to pay for a new card; others threatened to cancel people's health coverage if they didn't share their new number. The FCC said then that stolen data could be used to file fake claims or fill prescriptions or be sold on the dark web, where crooks buy and sell things.

Grossman, the assistant attorney general, urges consumers to be skeptical about unsolicited contacts. "Never believe it when someone reaches out and says they're with the Social Security Administration or Medicare, because it is likely not true," he said. "They wouldn't call you out of the blue." Instead call a real phone number for Medicare, either its regional or national headquarters in Washington, he advised.

Just. Hang. Up.

Wolff, whose sister was victimized, echoes the advice of law enforcement experts on what to do when a stranger calls and asks for personal information: Hang up. "Be suspicious of those phone calls that come unsolicited. Have a high index of suspicion," she said. "Don't try to be nice or polite or whatever. Just hang up the phone." Scam callers "are not being polite to you, so you don't want to be polite to them."

South Central Adult Services

**serves the counties of
Barnes, LaMoure, Foster,
Logan, McIntosh & Griggs**

**701-845-4300 or
1-800-472-0031**

**Check out our website:
www.southcentralseniors.org**

Cooperstown Senior
Citizens Center
911 Burrel Avenue SE
Cooperstown, ND 58425
701-797-3330

Binford Senior Citizens Center
306 Whinery Street
Binford, ND 58416
701-676-2323

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