

## HEALTH—Diabetes education reaches rural Idahoans during ‘head-to-toe’ clinics

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FROM 1997 TO 2006, the rates of diabetes in Idaho increased from 4 percent to 6.8 percent, mirroring a national increase. Approximately 72,000 Idaho adults had diabetes, according to a 2006 Idaho Bureau of Health Policy and Vital Statistics survey, and another 80,000 Idaho adults had been warned by physicians they were “pre-diabetic.”

Research shows that losing moderate amounts of weight, eating a healthy diet, and being physically active can prevent and even roll back health problems related to Type 2 diabetes. Those problems can include heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, pregnancy complications, lower limb amputations, as well as death related to flu and pneumonia.

Because diabetes strikes Idahoans wherever they live, education on diabetes prevention and control is following them to small towns and rural areas that are short on doctors and health-care organizations.

In the Magic Valley, University of Idaho Extension educator Rhea Lanting is teaming with South Central District Health, volunteer ophthalmologists, registered dietitians, certified diabetes educators, and the Lions Club to help Idahoans manage the potentially dangerous condition. At “Head to Toe” clinics sponsored by this Magic Valley Diabetes Coalition, Lanting teaches participants how to plan meals with the Idaho Plate Method.

Using this simple no-measurements approach—taught by UI Extension educators statewide—consumers devote a quarter of a 9-inch plate to meat, fish, or another protein; a quarter to a bread, starch, or grain, and a half to vegetables. Then they add a piece of fruit and a glass of milk on the side.

“It’s very important for us to be involved in issues that are very important for our communities, and this is an opportunity to reach a lot of people with diabetes in rural areas who don’t often get out to classes,” says Lanting. At a Diabetes Expo in Jerome in October, she taught label-reading in both Spanish and English because—especially for diabetics—“you have to read it before you eat it.”

At South Central District Health, education specialist Susie Beem says of Idahoans reached during the past two years, “We want them to get as much information and education as possible.”

## Should you buy long-term care insurance?

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NURSING HOME CARE costs averaged more than \$57,000 a year in Idaho during 2007, and assisted living costs averaged \$40,000 a year. So, is long-term care insurance right for you? Answers are not easy. But a comprehensive survey and report focusing on Idaho in 2007 can help you decide.

University of Idaho Extension educator Lyle Hansen in Jerome County worked with Cathy McDougall of AARP Idaho and Genii Hamilton and Nora Wells of the Idaho Department of Insurance to conduct the first survey of Idaho nursing home and assisted living facilities. Findings are summarized

along with do’s and don’ts at the URL above. Title of the 22-page document is *Idahoans Guide to Long-term Care Insurance and Services Prices*.

The report lists nursing facilities by city and includes phone numbers and private and semi-private room costs for each. It also lists companies offering long-term care insurance in Idaho and monthly premiums for people aged 55 to 70 as of spring 2007.

Consumers who want a free hard copy of the guide can call AARP Idaho at (208) 855-4002. For information on free upcoming long-term care seminars, call Hansen at (208) 324-7578.

## Safer-food classes prepare Idaho teens for first-time jobs

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SINCE 2002, 6,984 Idaho high school students have completed a nine-lesson curriculum on food safety in food-service employment, and 5,131 have scored high enough on its exam to earn an Idaho Department of Health and Welfare-approved food safety and sanitation certificate.

Developed by University of Idaho Extension, *Ready, Set, Food Safe* has been taught by 60 teachers or UI Extension educator-teacher teams in 312 Idaho classrooms to help prepare teens for the food-service jobs that bring in extra money. Teens with the certificate are most likely to get jobs, sometimes with higher pay.

A recent curriculum revision includes not only updates to the Idaho Food Code but also popular songs modified with food-safety lyrics. Imagine “Stayin’ Alive,” “We Are the Microbes,” “Fifty Ways to Eat Your Oysters,” and “Who Left the Food Out?”

### DID YOU KNOW?

**69%**  
OF AMERICANS AGE 65 AND OLDER WILL NEED LONG-TERM CARE IN THEIR LIFETIMES. MOST CARE IS PROVIDED AT HOME. MORE THAN 80% OF THIS GROUP SPEND NO TIME OR ONE YEAR OR LESS IN A NURSING HOME. ONLY 13% SPEND MORE THAN TWO YEARS IN A NURSING HOME.

Source: Kemper, Komisar & Alexih; Inquiry; Vol.42, Winter 2005/2006