

Welcome to the e-Newsletter

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Message from Minister of State for Seniors



I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season, full of laughter and fond memories with loved ones. As we start a new year, I'd like to take some time to reflect on the past several months and my time as Minister of State for Seniors.

I've enjoyed traveling around the province listening to seniors and organizations that support them. I got in the holiday spirit by caroling with members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police at Greystone Manor in Maple Ridge and helped serve up dinner at the Rotary Club of Cranbrook's annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Dinner and Dance. I also traveled to smaller communities like 100 Mile House, Greenwood, Grand Forks, Elkford, Sparwood and Jaffray, listening and conversing with seniors and their families. Everywhere I go I hear similar stories about what we're doing right in British Columbia for seniors and what we need to work on.

The B.C. government is working with seniors and families to improve care for older adults around the province. We are planning with seniors, not for them, making sure they can stay in their homes and communities as long as possible with the expansion of the Better at Home program and encouraging seniors to help other seniors.

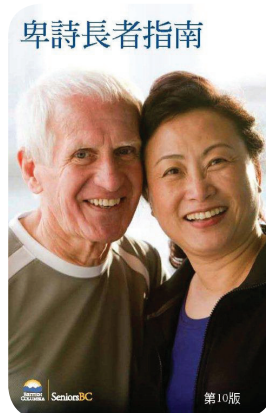
Through the Seniors Action Plan, released last year, government is building a more accessible, transparent and accountable approach to seniors' care. Many actions from this plan were completed in 2012, including providing easier access to information online and in print with redesigned SeniorsBC and Home and Community Care websites and a new edition of the BC Seniors' Guide in English, French, Punjabi and Chinese. More information on the Seniors Action Plan can be found online www.gov.bc.ca/seniorsactionplan.

I'm looking forward to hearing more from seniors and their families in 2013 as we work together to build a brighter future for all British Columbians.

Sincerely,
Ralph Sultan
Minister of State for Seniors

10th Edition of the BC Seniors' Guide Translated Guides - Multi-language

The recently updated BC Seniors' Guide (10th edition) was released October 4th, 2012 and has been well received with over 72,146 guides distributed to date. The BC Seniors' Guide has been translated and is now available in Punjabi, Chinese and French. To order a free copy please call 250-952-3181 in the Victoria area, elsewhere in BC toll free 1-877-952-3181 Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You can also download a PDF copy from the newly enhanced SeniorsBC website at: www.seniorsbc.ca/seniorsguide.



Minister John Yap, Minister Ralph Sultan, Federal Minister Alice Wong, MLA Linda Reid, MLA Rob Howard and Mr. Kai Fun Kam at the launch of the Chinese version of the BC Seniors Guide at the Aberdeen Centre in Richmond, BC on December 17, 2012.

More Better at Home Sites Announced

Starting this spring, seniors in B.C. communities will benefit from Better at Home, the United Way of the Lower Mainland's ground-breaking program to support seniors' independence. The first five communities are Kamloops, Langley, New Westminster, Penticton, and the Sunshine Coast. Some services are expected to be available by February 2013.

As part of Improving Care for B.C. Seniors: An Action Plan, the B.C. Government provided the United Way with \$15 million to establish and manage Better at Home. This community initiative is a key part of the provincial Seniors Action Plan to respond to the needs of seniors and an aging population in B.C.

Better at Home is designed to help seniors age 65 and older live in their homes longer among friends, family and neighbours by providing simple services such as transportation to appointments, housekeeping, snow shoveling, yard work, and friendly visiting. The services are delivered by local non-profit organizations, using a mix of volunteers and paid workers. Seniors who receive services will pay a fee based on their income.

Non-profit organizations are selected through a community engagement process to develop and deliver the Better at Home program in their community. The first five agencies selected to implement Better at Home are:

- Kamloops – Seniors Outreach Society.
- Langley – Langley Senior Resources Society.
- New Westminster – Seniors Services Society.
- Penticton (also serving Naramata and the Red Wing and West Bench areas) – Penticton and District Community Resources Society in partnership with South Okanagan Seniors Wellness Society.
- Sunshine Coast (serving Sechelt, Pender Harbour and Gibsons) – Sunshine Coast Community Services Society.

The Community Action for Seniors' Independence (CASI) pilots, which were implemented in five communities – Dawson Creek, Maple Ridge, Osoyoos, Surrey/Newton and Vancouver/Renfrew-Collingwood – will transition from CASI to Better at Home sites.

For more information on Better at Home, see the Better at Home website at: www.betterathome.ca.



In addition, the United Way has announced the following remaining communities as potential Better at Home sites:

Abbotsford
Ashcroft/Logan Lake/
Cache Creek
Burnaby–2 locations
Campbell River
Castlegar
Central Okanagan, including Kelowna
Chilliwack
Comox
Courtenay
Cowichan Tribes
Cranbrook
Delta
Duncan/Cowichan Region
Esquimalt
Fort Langley/Aldergrove
Gitxsan
Hope
Mission
Nanaimo
North Shore
Parksville
Pemberton/Whistler/
Mount Currie
Port Hardy
Port Alberni
Powell River
Prince George
Quesnel
Richmond–2 locations
Saanich
Salmon Arm
Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and Tsleil-Waututh Nation
Surrey–3 locations, including CASI site in Surrey/Newton
Terrace/Kitimat
Tri-Cities
Vancouver - seven locations: Hastings, Kerrisdale/Oakridge, Kitsilano, Mount Pleasant, Renfrew/Collingwood (CASI site), Vancouver South, and West End.
Vernon
Victoria
Williams Lake, including Lac La Hache, Horsefly, McLeese Lake, 150 Mile House and Likely



Seniors' Fall Prevention

Did you know that falls are the leading cause of injury and loss of independence among seniors? Although the risk factors increase with age, falls are not an inevitable part of aging. Without prevention efforts, about one third of people aged 65 years and over typically fall once or more than once each year. Falls usually happen due to the combined effects of factors that can be prevented, and the more risk factors a person has, the greater their chances of falling. Many falls can be prevented, and there are many resources available to help seniors stay healthy and independent as long as possible.

Are you or your family members at risk of falls?

To find out, take the online interactive survey: [Are You at Risk of Falling?](#)

Key Ways to Prevent Falls

Here are six key ways to help you or your loved ones reduce the risk of a fall:

Increase physical activity and muscle strength.

Physical strength is particularly important to keep mobile and prevent falls and injury. Exercise is good for your heart and circulation, as well as your bones, muscles and balance. It also helps to maintain a healthy weight and mental well-being.

Improve mobility and balance.

Keeping mobile and improving balance are particularly important to help prevent falls and injury, as individuals with low mobility levels and impaired balance are at higher fall risk. Maintaining or improving these can also increase overall health and independence.

Ensure adequate levels of vitamin D and calcium, through diet and supplements.

As you get older, it is particularly important to keep up your calcium and vitamin D intake to maintain strong bones and muscles.

Have regular vision check-ups and correct vision problems.

Regular eye exams are important to address vision problems, as poor vision can increase the risk of a fall.

Review all medications with a doctor or pharmacist.

Taking multiple medications is linked to falls - the greater the number of medications a person takes, the greater the risk of any kind of adverse reaction from a medication, including falls. Some drugs in particular, such as sedatives, are more likely to increase the risk of falling.

Reduce trip and slip hazards in the home or outdoors.

Paying attention to our surroundings helps us to be safe in our homes and communities. Many falls happen to active, healthy older adults as well as individuals with impaired mobility.

For additional information, including suggestions and resources for these key ways to prevent falls, visit the SeniorsBC fall prevention website at: www.seniorsbc.ca/fallprevention.



BC Seniors' Fall Prevention Awareness Week

The sixth annual Seniors' Fall Prevention Awareness Week was held November 5-11, 2012.

During this week, the BC Fall and Injury Prevention Coalition, health care providers, and seniors organizations across BC held presentations, screenings, and workshops to raise awareness among older adults and their families and caregivers, elder care professionals, and the general public about fall prevention and ways to reduce fall risk.



Honourable Ralph Sultan, Minister of State for Seniors, joined Dr. Fabio Feldman's Safety Superheroes team with staff and students in Fraser Health during Seniors' Fall Prevention Awareness Week, November 7, 2012.

Watch the video: Fall Prevention Awareness

To learn more about these and other events, visit the awareness week website at:

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/prevention/fallpreventionawarenessweek.html>.



Twenty-seven BC communities receive age-friendly grants

Seniors in 27 communities throughout BC will benefit from new programs or tools that will result from age-friendly planning and project grants awarded to local governments.

"This year's grant recipients have recognized the importance of ensuring that communities and businesses meet the needs of residents of all ages," said Minister of State for Seniors Ralph Sultan. "Successful projects focus on a wide range of supports to make life easier for older residents. Many of these programs are supporting seniors to remain socially active and connected to their communities and are helping to reduce isolation, which is one of the top issues that I hear from seniors across B.C. when I meet with them."

The age-friendly planning and project grant program is a partnership between the government of B.C. and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). Grants of up to \$20,000 are provided through UBCM to help establish, or continue, a variety of projects that support healthy, active aging.

Since 2007, 117 B.C. communities have received funding to support age-friendly planning and projects. Examples include age-friendly assessments, ensuring services are more accessible, supporting transportation and social connection to help prevent social isolation, and improving the community by increasing garden and green space.

The age-friendly grant program is one aspect of Age-friendly BC, which focuses on providing communities with support, information and recognition to help meet the needs of an aging population. Local governments can achieve age-friendly recognition and officially become an Age-friendly BC community once they have completed four basic steps that focus on community engagement, commitment, assessment and action.

For more information about Age-friendly B.C., please visit: www.seniorsbc.ca/agefriendly.



Becoming an Age-friendly Community: Local Government Guide



Healthy
FamiliesBC





This **Old-Fashioned Meatloaf** is delicious – and even tastier if you add shredded cheese. Serve it with a baked potato and our broccoli salad and with fruit for dessert. If you have leftovers, pop a portion in the freezer for another time or enjoy it the next day cold in a sandwich.

INGREDIENTS

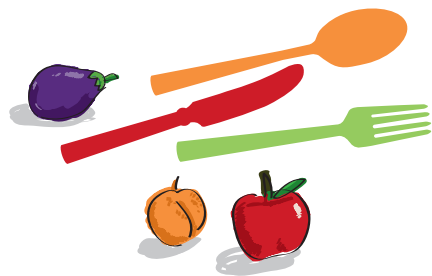
- ½ pound (220 g) lean ground beef
- ½ cup (125 mL) low-fat milk (skim or 1%)
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup (60 mL) rolled oats (regular or quick cooking)
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) chopped onion
- ¼ cup (60 mL) grated carrot
- ¼ cup (60 mL) low-fat shredded cheddar cheese

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Break egg into medium mixing bowl and beat with fork.
3. Add meat, milk, rolled oats, onion, carrot and cheese and mix together well with a large spoon.
4. Pack meat mixture into small loaf pan or small casserole dish.
5. Combine ketchup, brown sugar and mustard in a cup. Spread over top of meat mixture.
6. Bake about 30 to 45 minutes, or until the meat is fully cooked (no longer pink, and loaf begins to get a bit crusty on the edges).

Thanks to Linda Quilty of Vancouver, B.C.

(We cut this recipe down and revised it slightly to make it even healthier.)



SERVES: 3

Preparation Time: 20 Minutes

Cooking Time: 30 to 40 Minutes

TOPPING:

- 1 tbsp (15 mL) ketchup
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) brown sugar
- 1 tsp (5 mL) mustard, prepared

GOOD TO KNOW

Per Serving:

Calories: 255 Protein: 20 G Fat: 11 G

Carbohydrate: 15 G Fibre: 1.4 G

Sodium: 225 MGS Calcium: 143 MGS

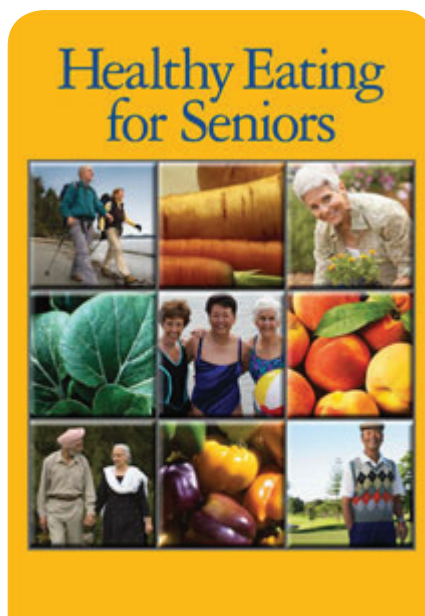
HOW TO ORDER YOUR COPY OF THE HEALTHY EATING FOR SENIORS HANDBOOK

The Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook is available in English, French, Chinese and Punjabi and includes tasty recipes for smaller portions, advice on how to cut salt and fat from a diet, tips on how to read food labels, and much more. Recipes and tips have been adjusted to suit ethnic populations. To order a free copy please call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 or download a copy from:

www.seniors.ca/healthyeating

The Healthy Eating for Seniors audio book is also available at all public libraries in B.C.

Source: Healthy Eating for Seniors Handbook



Provincial Dementia Action Plan

Many of us know, or knew, someone whose life was affected by dementia, whether a friend, neighbour, or family member. It could have been our grandfather who bounced us on his knee when we were young and told us stories, who later had trouble knowing who we were. It could have been our father or mother who drove the family across the country without a map who later in life got lost going to the store. It could be our spouse who has always been a good provider, and who can't read anymore or drive the car. Between 60,000 and 70,000 British Columbians live with dementia. Many more family and friends are caregivers for people with dementia and their lives can be deeply affected by this disease.



Dementia is a chronic, progressive disease of the brain that affects memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation, learning capacity, language, judgment, and overall day-to-day function. There are different types of dementia with different symptoms but they all result in a progressive decline in a person's ability to function daily at work or home, and in their relationships with others. This means that a person with dementia will move through stages of the disease over time. In the mild stage of dementia, a person may be able to function independently around the house while needing help with some tasks and decisions. A person with moderate dementia may need supervision and greater assistance with routine daily tasks, and may not be able to make health and legal decisions for themselves. In the severe stage of dementia, a person has significant loss of memory, language and living skills and needs full assistance with all activities of daily living. Thankfully, much can be done at each stage to improve the daily living experience of the person with dementia and their family.

Improvements in care can make an important difference in the lives of people with dementia. People with symptoms of dementia who are diagnosed early in their illness can benefit from a variety of health and social service programs available in communities across British Columbia. The Provincial Dementia Action Plan for British Columbia (the action plan) outlines the province's roadmap for improved, person-centred dementia care. It is in line with health system and service redesign work currently underway across B.C. that is aiming to deliver sustainable, quality services to meet the needs of individuals and their families. The action plan has been designed with the goal of increasing individual, community and health service capacity to assist people with dementia and their families to remain at home in the community for as long as possible, by providing early and effective care and support.

The action plan has three priorities with actions for implementation over the next two years:

- Priority 1 – Support Prevention and Early Intervention
- Priority 2 – Ensure Quality Person-Centred Dementia Care
- Priority 3 – Strengthen System Capacity and Accountability

Many of the actions are underway, including First Link™, delivered by the Alzheimer Society of B.C., and which had access to up to \$1 million in provincial funding for 2010, 2011 and 2012. First Link™ is an early intervention service that helps individuals and families affected by dementia to connect with educational and social programs and community supports and services. Significant research investments have also been made including \$25 million to University of B.C. Hospital's Brain Research Centre, \$15 million to the Pacific Alzheimer Research Foundation, and \$34 million in drug coverage to the Alzheimer's Drug Therapy Initiative.

To find out more about the Provincial Dementia Action Plan, read it online at: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2012/dementia-action-plan.pdf>.

For more information about dementia, visit these websites:

- HealthLink BC at: www.healthlinkbc.ca/kb/content/major/uf4984.html
- The Alzheimer Society of British Columbia at: www.alzheimerbc.org

Planning and Preparing for a Healthy Future

If you have ever faced a sudden change in your life that you are not prepared for, you know how stressful that can be. Now imagine how much more difficult it would be to make changes when you are older and may have fewer options.

The Ministry of Health is creating tools to help individuals and families plan and prepare for their senior years. These tools will support people to plan and prepare for future needs in various aspects of their lives including advance care planning, community engagement, fall prevention, finances, health and healthy living, housing, lifelong learning, mental health, protection from elder abuse and neglect, and mobility.

Supporting older British Columbians to plan and prepare for changes that come with age will help them better cope with changes and prevent the stress and associated health impacts of dealing with change in a crisis situation. Having a plan and being prepared gives seniors more control over their decisions and options. Since 2011, the Ministry has reviewed evidence and engaged seniors, seniors groups and other stakeholders to determine the issues relating to planning, and the topics and tools best suited to support seniors in their planning. The research and consultation revealed that:

- Most Canadians have undertaken very little formal planning for their senior years;
- There is not a widespread awareness of the need to plan for healthy aging; and
- Resources and tools on planning are not always easily accessible, or available in a coordinated manner.

The Ministry has embarked on several activities to raise awareness about the need for individuals to plan, and provide initial information and tools to help British Columbians get started. This includes:

- Having questions in each section of the recently released BC Seniors' Guide (10th edition) launched in September 2012 to get seniors thinking about planning for their lifestyle, health, home, getting around, money, and safety and security.
- Providing a new Planning for Healthy Aging section on SeniorsBC.ca.
- Engaging a partner organization to create and market more comprehensive tools and information to support British Columbians in planning and raise awareness of the need to plan. Proposals are being sought until February 1, 2013, from qualified proponents through BC Bid.