

BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN



DEAR NEIGHBORS,

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month! This month we will discuss the importance of breast cancer screening and who should consider getting screened. We also want to remind folks that COVID-19 infections continue to rise in our community as we enter cooler months. The best way to prevent serious illness related to viruses, including COVID-19, flu, and RSV infections is to get vaccinated. We also discuss the results of the FEED study, a partnership with Moveable Feast to characterize the impact of medically-tailored meals on health-related outcomes among food insecure adults with type 2 diabetes in East Baltimore. We also announce our new in-person DPPs and upcoming Diabetes Awareness Month events.

-The Brancati Center Team

COVID CORNER

Cases of COVID infection are rising in Baltimore, although hospitalizations from COVID still remain low. We expect to continue to see a rise in COVID as we approach winter.

The best way to stay protected from COVID-19 infection is to get vaccinated. Where to get the updated COVID-19 vaccines:

- You can use the locator tool at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find a location near you where COVID vaccines are being administered.
- Baltimore City Health Department will offer vaccine clinics for adults without health insurance. Check out its [website](#) to see specific vaccine clinic dates.
- If you are homebound, you may be able to receive your COVID-19 and flu vaccines at home by calling (443) 984-8650 and follow the prompts to connect to Baltimore City Health Department's At-Home vaccination program.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among American women. Screening for breast cancer with a mammogram is the best way to identify and treat breast cancer early before it grows big enough to cause physical symptoms.

Who should get screened for breast cancer?

Women ages 45 years and older should consider screening for breast cancer with a mammogram. However, the specific time to start screening may be earlier depending on personal risk factors (such as previous abnormal breast findings or family history of breast cancer). An individualized discussion with your healthcare provider will help you decide when to start screening.

Should you perform a self-exam to detect breast cancer?

Breast self-examination has not been shown to prevent breast cancer-related deaths, and self-exam is also not an accurate method to identify early breast tumors. Therefore, it is not recommended that women perform breast self-exams to detect breast cancer.

What are ways to lower breast cancer risk?

- Maintaining an active lifestyle with regular exercise.
- Keeping your weight in a healthy range.
- Limiting alcohol use.
- Breastfeeding after childbirth.

You can learn more about breast cancer on the National Cancer Institute website - <https://www.cancer.gov/types/breast>.





Spotlight:

FEED STUDY (Food and Education Effects on Diabetes)

The Brancati Center team recently completed a pilot study to see if providing healthy meals (from Moveable Feast) and nutrition education in addition to regular care could improve the control of diabetes (hemoglobin A1c values) and other health measures compared to getting regular care alone. Overall, 74 people entered the study and shared information about themselves, their diabetes, and other health issues. Almost 80% of participants (57 people) completed the study. Twenty-seven (27) continued with regular care only. Thirty (30) received the meals and nutrition sessions, and were able to get most of the meals (86%) and attend most of the sessions (more than 4 of the 6).

We found that those getting the meals and nutrition sessions had less worry about getting food (known as food insecurity), and slightly healthier diets during the study. On average, people in both groups had some improvement in their diabetes control. However, getting the meals and nutrition sessions did not improve control of diabetes, or blood pressure, or weight compared to those getting regular care.

We also noted that many people in the study did not have their hemoglobin A1c levels checked outside of the study; despite the fact that this is recommended up to 4 times a year when the hemoglobin A1c is high. We also found that most people (6 out of 10) reported no change in their diabetes medication during the 6 months of the study, and some people (2 out of 10) reported taking less diabetes medication – even though everyone started with high A1c levels.

From this we concluded that while the meals and nutrition sessions helped some, people with diabetes may need more support to really take care of themselves and their diabetes. We have recently applied for another, larger grant designed to provide more wide-ranging care and community resources to people living with diabetes.



FEED STUDY
Food and Education Effects on Diabetes



RESUMING IN-PERSON DPP

The Brancati Center has resumed its first in-person Diabetes Prevention Programs since shifting to remote delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic. In June 2023 we launched in-person Spanish language programs at Mora Crossman Recreation Center and Our Lady of Pompei. Most recently, we launched an English language in-person program in the Brancati Center building on the East Baltimore Hopkins campus this month. It has been a joy to connect to our participants again! We will be offering both in-person and remote options in 2024. If you are interested in joining the program, please contact us at 410-614-2701.

Upcoming Community Events

November is **Diabetes Awareness Month!** Please join us for these events:

November 13th from 9:00-11:30am: Ateaze Senior Center Diabetes Prevention Program Event. Hemoglobin A1c screening will be provided.

November 14th from 9:00-1:00pm: World Diabetes Day Screening and Education Event, Johns Hopkins Outpatient Center

The Sydney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center Education Sessions

Join the Webinar:

**Lung Cancer: What
You Need to Know**

November 21, 2023
at 6:00 pm

REGISTER
HERE

