

NUTRITION IS POWER

NUTRITION & ANEMIA AWARENESS MONTH

WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Community,

Welcome to the first 2026 issue of the NAACP Health & Wellness Committee Newsletter. This year, we are committed to empowering our community with practical, evidence-based information that improves everyday health.

March is Nutrition & Anemia Awareness Month. What we eat directly impacts our energy, heart health, pregnancy outcomes, and long-term wellness. Unfortunately, nutrition gaps and iron deficiency continue to affect Black women, children, and older adults disproportionately.

This month, we focus on simple and affordable strategies that strengthen families and promote health equity throughout Hampton Roads. Remember - small changes create powerful results.

-NAACP Health & Wellness Committee



Interested in Joining the Health & Wellness Committee?
Let Us Know



WHY NUTRITION MATTERS

Healthy eating helps:

- Lower heart disease risk
- Reduce diabetes risk
- Improve energy levels
- Strengthen immunity
- Support brain health



Access to healthy food is a key Social Determinant of Health

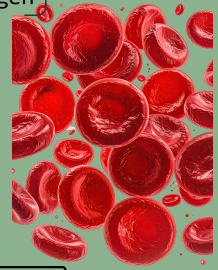
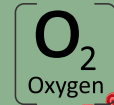
WHAT IS ANEMIA?

Anemia happens when your body doesn't have enough healthy red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout your body.

Red blood cells contain hemoglobin, a protein that moves oxygen from your lungs to your tissues.

Iron helps your body make hemoglobin. Without enough iron, your body can't produce enough healthy red blood cells, which can lead to iron-deficiency anemia.

To learn more visit: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/anemia>



ANEMIA BY THE NUMBERS

9-10%

Of U.S. women
(15-49)
have iron deficiency

2x

Black women have nearly
2X higher prevalence than
White women

1 in 6

Adults over 65
experience
anemia

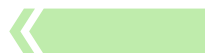
2-3%

Of children (1-5) have iron
deficiency anemia

40%

Of children under 5
globally are affected

COMMON SYMPTOMS



- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Pale skin
- Cold hands & feet



If symptoms persist, consult a healthcare provider.



IRON-RICH FOODS

- Lean Red Meat • Chicken • Turkey • Fish
- Spinach & Leafy Greens • Beans & Lentils • Tofu • Fortified Cereals • Pumpkin Seeds

Pair with Vitamin C-rich foods like oranges, bell peppers, and strawberries for increased absorption

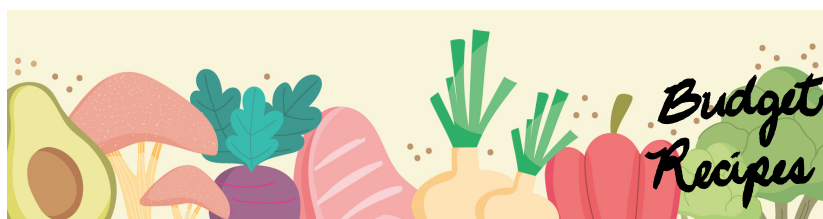


NUTRITION CORNER



Nutrition is not about expensive foods; it's about smart choices. Affordable foods can be extremely nutrient-dense. Healthy eating means choosing foods that provide essential nutrients:

- Iron (prevents anemia)
- Fiber (supports heart and gut health)
- Protein (builds muscle and stabilizes energy)
- Healthy Fats (support brain function)
- Vitamins & Minerals (strengthen immunity)



Budget Recipes

Sweet Potato & Black Bean Taco Bowl

Iron-Rich & Budget-Friendly

Ingredients:

Sweet potatoes (cubed), black beans, brown rice, cumin, chili powder, olive oil, lime.

Quick Steps:

Roast sweet potatoes (400°F, 20–25 mins).

Warm black beans with spices.

Layer rice + sweet potatoes + beans.

Finish with fresh lime juice.

Black beans provide plant-based iron, and lime juice helps your body absorb it better

2026		MARCH				
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

MARCH EVENTS

Nutrition and the Cancer Journey

March 17, 2026 | 10 am-11 am

An educational session focused on how nutrition supports healing, energy, and overall health. This event includes practical guidance on nutrient-rich foods and how diet impacts recovery and long-term wellness. Hosted by Sentara Brock Cancer Center (Norfolk – accessible to Virginia Beach residents).

Event Link:

<https://www.sentara.com/classes-and-events/Event-Search/Nutrition-and-the-Cancer-Journey-949>

Virginia Beach Farmers Market

March 21, 2026 | 10 AM – 4 PM

Kick off the spring season at the Virginia Beach Farmers Market with a celebration of local agriculture. Enjoy fresh produce, local food vendors, artisan products, live music, and family-friendly activities while supporting healthy eating and local farmers.

Event Link:

<https://agriculture.virginiabeach.gov/farmers-market>

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

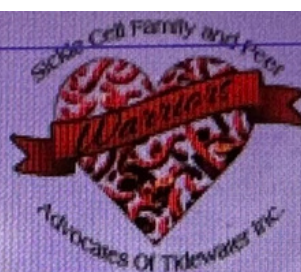


- **H.O.P.E.S Free Clinic (Norfolk, VA)** – Volunteer-run free clinic for preventive care and basic screenings: <https://www.odu.edu/virginia-health-sciences/community-engaged-learning/hopes>
- **Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia & Eastern Shore** – fresh produce, SNAP support: <https://foodbankonline.org/>
- **Sentara Mobile Care Unit** – Community health screenings: <https://www.sentara.com/hospitalslocations/sentara-community-care/sentara-mobile-care>
- **Bon Secours Car-A-Van** – free mobile health clinic that offers primary care services to uninsured adults and children: <https://www.bonsecours.com/locations/community-services/hampton-roads/care-a-van>



READY TO START?

Take one small step today—Add one iron-rich food this week. Schedule a screening. Share this newsletter. Nutrition is Power. Stronger Families. Healthier Community.



PRESENTS

Sickle Cell caregiver Symposium

Saturday, March 14, 2026 | 10:00am - 2:00pm

Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library

4100 Virginia Beach Blvd. • Virginia Beach, VA 23452

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Featured Speakers



William Owen, MD

Hematology &
Oncology
CHKD



Dr. Timothy S. Pike

General Internal
Medicine
EVMS



Sheri Reed

Patient & Community
Education Liaison



Hermionne Johnson

MSN, BSN, RN



Tracey Green

Caregiver Advocate



Deborah Juniper-Frye

Grief Care Consulting

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Please RSVP : scfpa.tidewater@gmail.com