



Kansas Currents

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

Central Kansas Extension District

centralkansas.ksu.edu

July—August 2026

District Extension Agent:

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Family & Community
Wellness

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Adult Development
and Aging



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Join us at the Fair

Ottawa County Fair – July 14-18

Fair Theme: Stars, Stripes, and Summer Nights



Tri-Rivers Fair – July 30 – August 2

Fair Theme: Stars, Stripes, and Summer Nights

Medicare GLP-1 Bridge Program (2026–2027)

What You Need to Know

What Is It?

A temporary program (July 1, 2026 – December 31, 2027) that provides access to select weight-loss medications for eligible Medicare beneficiaries.



Why This Matters

- Expands access to effective weight-loss medications
- Reduces out-of-pocket costs
- Supports management of chronic health conditions

Who Is Eligible?

- Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage with drug coverage
- Prescription from a healthcare provider
- Meets BMI and health criteria
- Prior authorization required

Covered Medications

- Wegovy®
- Zepbound® (KwikPen)
- Foundayo®

Cost

- \$50 per month
- Does not count toward Part D out-of-pocket limits

Key Differences

- Separate from standard Medicare drug coverage
- Weight-loss drugs typically not covered under Medicare

After 2027

- Program is temporary and may inform future Medicare coverage decisions.

- **What Should You Do?**

- Talk with your healthcare provider
- Watch for Medicare updates
- Contact a SHICK counselor for help:

Melissa Schrag / Extension Agent / 785-309-5850

Heat Safety for Older Adults (65+)

Why Older Adults Are at Risk:

- Harder to adjust to temperature changes
- More chronic health conditions
- Medications may affect body cooling

Stay Safe in the Heat:

Stay Cool: Use air conditioning, visit cooling centers, avoid ovens/stoves, don't rely on fans alone.

Stay Hydrated: Drink more water and don't wait until thirsty.

Dress Smart: Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.

Cool Down: Take cool showers or baths.

Rest: Avoid strenuous activities.

Caregiver Checklist:

- Are they drinking enough water?
- Do they have access to air conditioning?
- Do they know how to stay cool?
- Are they showing signs of heat stress?

Warning Signs – Get Help Immediately:

- Muscle cramps
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting



Grilling Food Safely

✓ Separate Raw & Cooked Foods

- Use separate plates, utensils, and cutting boards.
- Never place cooked food on a plate that held raw meat.

✓ Keep Food at Safe Temperatures

- Keep raw meat refrigerated until ready to grill.
- Keep cooked foods at **140°F or higher** until served.

✓ Handle Leftovers Safely

- Refrigerate within **2 hours** (1 hour if above 90°F).
- Reheat leftovers to **165°F**.

When in doubt, throw it out!

USDA
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Is it done yet? You can't tell just by looking!

Use a food thermometer to check for the safe minimum internal temperature.

Fish	Red Meat	Ground Meat	Egg Dishes	Poultry
145°F	145°F (with a 3-minute rest time)	160°F	160°F	165°F
	Beef, Pork, Veal & Lamb (Steaks, Roasts & Chops)	Beef, Pork, Veal & Lamb (Ground)		Turkey, Chicken & Duck (Whole, Pieces & Ground)

Have more questions? Visit our website at www.FSIS.USDA.gov
or contact the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) or MPHotline@usda.gov

Serve up Safe Homemade Ice Cream

The heat of summer is a bit cooler with a dish of cold ice cream. A special treat in itself, but can be more special when homemade ice cream is the star. While ice cream is a cold product, it can support the growth of bacteria that could cause foodborne illness.

Eggs are a key ingredient in traditional homemade ice cream. They help add rich flavor, a light yellow color, help prevent crystallization and add a smooth creamy texture. But raw or undercooked eggs that are contaminated with *Salmonella* can survive cold temperatures and lead to foodborne illness.

To make homemade ice cream safely, here are some tips from University of Minnesota Extension.

Cooked egg base

- To make a cooked egg base: mix eggs and milk to make a custard base and then cook gently to an internal temperature of 160°F. This temperature will destroy *Salmonella*, if present.
- Use a food thermometer to check the mixture temperature. At this temperature, the mixture will coat a metal spoon. Try to resist the temptation to taste-test when the custard is not fully cooked!
- After cooking, chill the custard thoroughly before freezing.

Egg substitutes

Egg substitute products also may be used. You may have to experiment with each recipe to determine the correct amount to add.

Pasteurized eggs

Another option is to use pasteurized eggs in recipes which call for uncooked eggs. Pasteurized shell eggs are available at some supermarkets and cost more. Commercial pasteurization of eggs is a heat process at low temperatures. It destroys *Salmonella* bacteria that may be present. Pasteurization has a small effect on flavor, nutritional content and functional properties of eggs.

Egg-less Ice Cream

There are many homemade ice cream recipes without eggs, and these would be a good option for those allergic to eggs.



No-churn ice cream mixtures are easy to make and simply frozen in a deep pan or container.

Simply Produce

Simply Produce is a produce bundle program between Central Kansas District and Gene's Heartland Foods in Minneapolis.

Community members can purchase produce bundles containing fresh fruits and vegetables for \$15+tax at any register located at Gene's in Minneapolis. Contents in the monthly bundles do vary from month to month.



July – Program paused during July due to Ottawa County Fair

August purchase dates: August 13-18. Pick-up date and time: Friday, August 21 12-12:30 p.m.

September purchase dates: September 10-15. Pick-up date and time: Friday, September 18 12-12:30 p.m.

Purchasing location: Gene's Heartland Foods located at 218 W 3rd, Minneapolis.

Pick up location: Community Bible Church located at 929 N. Rothsay, Minneapolis.

Shelf Life of Mrs. Wages Mixes

Mrs. Wages® makes several packaged mixes to help make home canning easy and quick. All of their mixes for canning use the water bath canning method. But do the mixes have a shelf life?

According to the Mrs. Wages® Frequently Asked Questions website:

“On the side of every Mrs. Wages® pouch is an 8 digit code that you can use to determine when the product was produced, and you will find it stamped into packet, for example B2181A23. The B identifies the facility that produced the mix. The number, which follows, represents the last digit of the year the mix was produced, e.g., a 2 would indicate 2012. The next three numbers indicate which day out of 365 days in the year, the mix was produced. So if the number is 181, it means the product was mixed on June 29th as this is the 181st day of the year. The final 3 digits are used by Kent Precision Foods to indicate the batch code. For optimal performance, we recommend using Mrs. Wages® Pickle, Tomato, Fruit mixes and Fruit Pectins within 24 months of the day and year, it was produced.”

Raise a Glass to Wellness

A glass of water is one of the most refreshing beverages you can enjoy. Water helps regulate body temperature, lubricate joints, transport nutrients, and remove waste. Even mild dehydration can lead to fatigue, headaches, dizziness, and decreased performance. When you're active or spending time in the heat, your body loses fluids more quickly through sweat, making it even more important to replace what you lose.

Staying hydrated doesn't have to be complicated. Small habits can make a big difference. Here are some tips:

- **Drink water regularly.** Don't wait until you're thirsty. Sip water throughout the day.
- **Start early.** Drinking water first thing in the morning helps rehydrate your body, supports digestion, and improves mental focus.
- **Carry a water bottle.** Keep it within reach as a reminder to drink often, and wash it daily.
- **Adjust for activity and heat.** Drink more fluids when you're exercising or spending time outdoors.
- **Check your urine color.** Pale yellow usually means you're well hydrated; darker-colored urine may signal that you need more fluids.
- **Eat hydrating foods.** Fruits and vegetables such as watermelon, cucumbers, oranges, and strawberries have high water content.

With the current hot and humid weather, it's important to watch for signs of heat exhaustion, which can occur when your body loses excessive amounts of water and salt through sweat. During heat exhaustion, your body can become overwhelmed by heat and may no longer cool itself effectively. Common signs and symptoms include dizziness, weakness, muscle cramps, heavy sweating, nausea, headache, fatigue, fainting, and skin that is pale, cool, and moist.

If you recognize symptoms of heat exhaustion, stop the activity and rest immediately. Move to a shaded area, air-conditioned space, or cool room. Drink cool, non-alcoholic beverages, splash yourself with cool water, and place a cold, wet towel around your neck. If heat exhaustion is left untreated, it can progress to heat stroke, a medical emergency that requires immediate medical attention.

For a special summer treat that everyone can enjoy, try non-alcoholic sangria. Use any combination of juices and fruits you like, and change it with the seasons by incorporating fresh, in-season produce.

Medicare Trivia



What share of all primary care physicians (excluding pediatricians) report that they are accepting Medicare patients in their practice

45%

72%

93%

60%

Answer:

According to a large, national survey of non-pediatric primary care physicians, most doctors (93%) report that they accept Medicare patients into their practice—the same rate that accepts patients with private, non-capitated insurance, such as plans with preferred provider organizations.

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