




# VHA Healthy Teaching Kitchens

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# What is HTK?

VA Nutrition and Food Service staff teach hands on and demo only cooking classes that are aimed at:

- ▶ increasing use of fresh foods
- ▶ increasing healthy food choices
- ▶ learning skills to progress toward personal health goals





# Changing the World One Meal at a Time

Helping Veterans reduce or eliminate medications

- ▶ Improved quality of life
- ▶ Saves VA money
- ▶ Fewer hospital admissions
- ▶ Meds for diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, etc., do not cure, they only reduce the symptoms. Diet and exercise are the only way to “cure” these symptoms
  - ▶ **If a 55 year old Veteran gets off of Metformin and lives until 73 years old, this will save just under \$12,000...not to mention money saved from a hospital visit the Veteran does not have to endure**
    - ▶ This will purchase food for Reno, NV cooking classes for 59 years and 11 months

# Success!!

- ▶ NFS Leadership strategic vision for HTK
  - ▶ A solid foundation was built with a very strong long term vision for the future
- ▶ Toolkit and SharePoint
  - ▶ Comprehensive guidance and continuing trainings available on line
  - ▶ Anyone can learn!!
- ▶ Demystify the cooking process
  - ▶ Empowering Veterans to take control of their own health





# Why Does it Work?

## Chefs are the new rock stars!

- ▶ Great demand for Healthy Cooking
- ▶ Veterans want to cook but many don't know how to start
- ▶ Many Veterans feel trapped
  - ▶ How do you get healthy but still rely on restaurant and processed foods?
- ▶ Healthy food can taste good
  - ▶ "Healthy food" and "Healthy recipes" are often not the types of foods that our Veterans want to eat
- ▶ Many Veterans are low income
  - ▶ Cooking at home with whole fresh foods is cheaper than eating out
- ▶ We have the opportunity to redefine healthy foods as tasty foods that people want to eat

# Looking to the Future

- ▶ Questionnaires and evaluations
  - ▶ Single Class and Series
- ▶ Qualitative Data
  - ▶ How often do you eat...?
  - ▶ How confident are you that you can...?
- ▶ Quantitative Data
  - ▶ Weight, BMI, HgbA1c
- ▶ This information will allow us to grow and tailor our program to better help Veterans meet their goals



THANK YOU

➤ QUESTIONS?

