

# Healthy Aging Today



## Featured Stories

2	Why We Sleep— By Dr. Bob McGrew
3	Life is Too Short Not to Volunteer
4	“Stay Informed While Staying Indoors” Newsletter
5	Insert in response to COVID-19
6	Eat Right When Money is Tight
7	Senior Spotlight
8	It’s Time To Get Moving!

## Don’t Fail—Prevent Falls

The National Council on Aging has deemed September 21-25 Fall Prevention Awareness Week. The goal is to raise awareness to prevent falls. Fall Prevention activities can start now by answering true or false to these statements:

- True or False?** A natural part of aging is falling.
- True or False?** Reducing activities will prevent falling.
- True or False?** Muscle strength & flexibility can’t be recovered.
- True or False?** Getting my vision checked yearly prevents falls.
- True or False?** Taking medication doesn’t increase my risk of falling.

**If you answered TRUE to any of the above statements, please continue reading.**

*The fact is falls can be avoided and older adults can control their risk.*

Exercising, managing your medications, having your vision checked and making your living environment safe are all steps you can take to prevent a fall. The following articles in this newsletter can help you lead a better quality of life. To assess the safety of your home please contact the Healthy Aging Association (209) 525-4670 and order a “Home Safety Checklist” to be mailed to you.

By the way if you answered False to all the statements above you are correct—keep up the good work!

Source: <https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-prevention-awareness-week/general-resources/infographics-bandouts/>

## Be Smart! Get Your Flu Shot!

Seasonal Influenza (Flu) starts ramping up in October. Most of the time flu activity peaks between December and February, although activity can last as late as March. If you are 65 or older and have chronic health conditions you are at high risk. Get a flu shot as soon as they are available because vaccinations are the best way to prevent the flu. Add healthy habits such as social distancing, using hand sanitizer, wearing a mask and you’ll be highly protected during the winter months.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/65over.htm>

## Why Do We Sleep? - Dr. Robert McGrew, MD

What is the most taken-for-granted daily activity affecting our health? Sleep! Lots is written about nutrition and exercise, but sleep is often ignored. However, good restful sleep is as important for your well being as are healthy meals and daily exercise.



**What are the benefits of sleep?** There are 2 main types of sleep. REM (rapid eye movement) sleep occurs mainly in the 2nd half of the night's sleep and is when we dream. It is good for mental health (less up and down moods), sound judgment (reducing impulsiveness), and creativity. Deep non-REM sleep predominates in the 1st half of the night, and it is good for consolidating our memories (remembering things is good!).

In both types of sleep, your brain is flushing out the waste from the prior day's activities. This is very important for clearer thinking the next day, and for preventing or diminishing Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias.

How much sleep do you absolutely need? 7 hours nightly is the bare minimum, with 8 to 9 hours recommended. And that's referring to the time that you're really asleep, not when you're going to sleep or waking up in the middle of the night (e.g., bathroom breaks).

### **Here are 4 suggestions to get more sleep, and improve sleep quality:**

- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day. Stay in bed for at least 8 hours.
- Avoid caffeine after Noon. Limit yourself to 1 drink of alcohol, consumed prior to 7pm.
- Relax before bed. Don't watch the TV news or read important things before bed.
- Keep your bedroom dark & cool. Don't look at the clock or cell phone while in bed!

For more information, see Matthew Walker's excellent book, *Why We Sleep*.



## All About H<sub>2</sub>O

Water provides many health benefits to our bodies such as aiding with digestion of food, absorbing nutrients from food, and getting rid of unused waste. While we may lose our sense of thirst as we age or take medications that may affect our intake of fluids, it is still very important to make sure we are staying hydrated.

### **Here are some ways to help get enough fluids throughout the day:**

- Don't wait until you are thirsty to start drinking water or other fluids.
- Have a glass of water, low fat or fat free milk or 100 percent juice with each meal.
- Drink a full glass of water when you take your medications.
- Drink a glass of water before exercising.
- Add fruits like lemon, lime or strawberries to your water for added flavor.

Source: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/getting-enough-fluids>

## Life is Too Short Not to Volunteer

Are you tired of being cooped up at home? What are some ways to start feeling alive again? How about volunteering? Older adults are a vast bank of knowledge, experience and skills that can have a positive impact on the aging community.



The Healthy Aging Association has volunteer opportunities that vary in times needed from one-day events, once monthly or twice-weekly. Activities can range from reminder calls that can be done from your own home to teaching small groups fall prevention programs. Free trainings are available for the dedicated individuals. Safety protocols including wearing masks, gloves and social distancing will be implemented to keep volunteers protected. Volunteer Orientations are being planned to help you find the right fit. If you are feeling the emotions to make a difference, please call (209) 525-4670. That's a good start!

## Using Zoom, FaceTime, Skype?

Some of you may be overwhelmed by having to use your computer or smartphone to talk with family and friends. Does it get frustrating looking for icons or buttons? Do you consider it a victory if you can turn on your computer or find the internet browser? Here's 4 tips to help you have the best video chat experience:

1. **Use the most updated computer/phone:** The newer models have a camera and all the tools that are needed.
2. **Improve your sound:** Use earphones preferably with a built in microphone to carry your voice clearly.
3. **Frame your look:** To make you look younger (instead of viewing a double-chin) Place your camera eye the same level as your eye sight. Have your lighting in front of you lighting up your face instead of behind you.
4. Lastly, **patience, patience, patience!** Sometimes it is difficult to see the cursor on the monitor or locate the function buttons. Take a deep breath and do the best you can. Think of the experience as improving your cognitive ability and eye-hand coordination. Don't get discouraged because the time you share with family and friends is priceless!

*Source: 2020 May, AARP Bulletin. p.39*

## Take Action Prevent Falls

Are you an older adult who has fallen or are at risk of falling? Do you need injury prevention solutions added to your home?

If so, we may be able to help!



Please see the following eligibility guidelines to see if you qualify:

- Are you at least 60 years of age or disabled?
- Have you had a fall or at risk for falling?
- Do you meet the following household income guidelines?

Monthly One Person  
\$1,926.00 or less

Monthly Two Persons  
\$2,607.00 or less



If you qualify and are interested in learning more about this limited time service, please contact Healthy Aging Association at (209) 525-4670

*Interview process begins  
August 1, 2020*

The next two pages are from the July 2020, "Stay Informed While Staying Indoors" COVID-19 Newsletter. To be added to this special mailing list please call (209)525-4670.

## Stay Informed While Staying Indoors

### Stay Engaged and Moving!

Healthy Aging Association is offering multiple ways to keep you active during this pandemic, such as walking, online classes and at home resources! For information on Young at Heart Fitness Classes please view the Healthy Aging Today Newsletter, page 8.



### Food Planning during COVID-19 using MyPlate

MyPlate, created by the USDA, has come up with a few helpful precautions to keep you and your family safe and prepared with information on food planning, including what to buy, how much to buy, and preparation tips.



- Check what you have at home before going to the grocery store to limit the number of trips and avoid overspending.
- Make a shopping list to stay focused and keep your shopping trip short.
- Utilize in-store pickup, curbside pickup, or delivery offered by grocery stores.
- Buy only enough food for your household for 2 weeks.
- Plan for a mix of fresh, frozen, and shelf-stable foods.

Visit <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/> for more information. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

### COVID Contact Tracer Scam Alert

Be on guard that there are scammers who send email, text messages or call people, pretending to be coronavirus contact tracers and trick people into providing personal information. Scammers deceive people into believing they have come in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. They then ask for private, healthcare and financial information.



Here are some tips for scam calls:

- Never give out personal information like your social security number, Medicare number or bank account information because legitimate contact tracers will never ask for personal information.
- Screen your calls against unfamiliar numbers and let them go to voicemail, if it is important, they will leave a message.
- If you get a suspicious call about coronavirus contact tracers, please report it to Senior Medicare Patrol at their toll-free hotline 855-613-7080.

### Beat the Heat

With hot summer days ahead here are some reminders to prevent heat related illness.

- Drink more water than usual and do not wait until you are thirsty to start drinking water.
- Check on friends or neighbors and have someone do the same for you.
- Try not to use the stove or oven to cook - it will make your house hotter.



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## Stay Connected - California Phones

Using our telephone to stay connected with our friends, family, doctors, and caregivers is essential during this pandemic. But if you or someone you know struggles with using a telephone or cell phone because of hearing, vision, mobility, memory or speech difficulties, staying connected could be challenging. California Phones provides FREE specialized home telephones and cell phone amplifiers that make using a phone easy again. Please call 1-800-806-1191 to request an application or visit their website at [californiaphones.org](http://californiaphones.org).

## Senior Meals Available

The Stanislaus County Area Agency on Aging is helping those in need of receiving nutritious meals. Seniors 60 or older that are interested in the Senior Meals Program may call for more information or register to pick-up food by calling the Senior Information Line at (209)558-8698.

*Eating healthy food leads to a healthier body and mind!*



## Clean, Separate, Cook & Chill

Here are some helpful reminders from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to help you and your loved ones practice food safety.



**Clean:** Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water before, during and after preparing food and before eating. Wash utensils, cutting boards, and countertops with hot, soapy water. Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water. It is not recommended to use bleach, running water is sufficient.



**Cook:** Make sure food is cooked safely by checking the color, texture, and the internal temperature with a thermometer.



**Separate:** To prevent cross-contamination use separate cutting boards and plates for raw meat, poultry, and seafood. When shopping and storing keep meat, poultry and seafood away from other foods.



**Chill:** Refrigerate food properly. Keep your refrigerator at 40°F or below. Refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Bacteria can multiply if food is left to thaw on the counter.

For more information on food safety visit [www.who.int](http://www.who.int) or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

*En español por favor llame (209)558-8698*

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**For Senior Information and Assistance contact (209)558-8698**

## Caregiver Corner

Caring for a loved one is always challenging, with the Coronavirus Pandemic adding to the usual responsibilities. Social isolation measures with limited access to respite services adds to the stress of caring for someone.

**Here are some suggestions for handling the special challenges many caregivers experience at this extraordinary time:**

- Help your loved one remember to wash their hands by posting signs for the bathrooms. Have hand sanitizer available throughout the home.
- Reduce trips to the pharmacy by requesting home delivery or a higher quantity of medications, when permitted.
- Make alternative plans for managing your loved one's care if respite is unavailable.
- For in-home care from an agency, request detailed information about the protocols the agency uses to maintain the health of their workers and protection for their customers.
- If a loved one is staying in a care facility, maintain good communication with the staff and access alternative ways to connect with your loved one when regular visits aren't allowed.
- Access assistance from organizations such as the Alzheimer's Association via their 24-hour hot line, 1-800-272-3900, or on-line, [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).

For various resources in Stanislaus County call **209-558-8698**. The Family Caregiver Support Program is available to provide respite and assistive devices.

## Eat Right When Money is Tight

While the cost of food at the grocery stores may be rising, here are a few ways to help stretch your food dollars through planning, budgeting, and making smart food choices.

- Try planning your weekly meals by using current ads and coupons to give you the best value for your money.
- Compare store brands with name brands along with size and quantity of the packaging, you may experience the same quality for less.
- Try dividing foods into meal-size packages if you buy in large amounts and freeze them for later use.

If you are looking to get more fruits and vegetables in your meals but find it challenging to buy the foods you need at the store, the 'Go Green for Seniors' Green Bag Program may be able to help. Individuals who are at least 60 years old and/or disabled and who meet a gross income requirement are eligible for this program to receive a 10 pound bag of fruits and vegetables every month! For more information please call Healthy Aging Association at (209)525-4670.

Source: <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/snap/EatRightWhenMoney'sTight.pdf>

**'Go Green for Seniors' Made Possible By:**



## Meetings Continue through Webinars

The Senior Coalition Of Stanislaus County resumed their monthly gatherings beginning May 26 virtually by Zoom and will continue to meet virtually to ensure the safety of its participants.



### **New Developments:**

**Thrive Local Community Network launched in June - building healthier communities together.** A coordinated care network group of health and social care providers has launched. Partners in the network are connected through Unite Us' shared technology platform to work together in real time to support the complex needs of local individuals and families. The network contains partners who provide a broad range of services such as housing, employment, food assistance, behavioral health, utilities, and more. As a network partners, you can:

- Easily refer and connect your clients to local services they need.
- Improve your clients' health and well-being through strengthened collaboration with partners offering a wide array of services.
- Improve organizational capacity through accurate referrals and access to a wealth of data on local service delivery.
- Track the outcomes of all referrals and services delivered for your clients.
- Identify gaps in services to proactively address barriers to care and increase health equity in your community.

Interested organizations can request to join at [UniteUs.com/join](https://uniteus.com/join). For more information call: Marie Sanchez (209)556-2139 at Kaiser Permanente or contact Adriana Taylor at [adriana@uniteus.com](mailto:adriana@uniteus.com).

**Master Plan on Aging** for info email [EngAGE@aging.ca.gov](mailto:EngAGE@aging.ca.gov)

*The Senior Coalition of Stanislaus County is supported by The SCAN Foundation*

## **You Are Not Alone**

Social isolation and loneliness can lead to health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease and even death. Loneliness can occur in many situations with loss of a spouse or partner, separation from friends or family, retirement, loss of mobility or lack of transportation.

Call the Friendship Line California 1-888-670-1360. This 24-hour, toll-free life line is for those over 60. The phone line is staffed by friendly specialists who provide emotional support, grief support, and active suicide intervention. Just a call can help you feel better!

## **Senior Spotlight**



Isabel, an 83 year old participant of the Young at Heart Fall Prevention Strength Training Class is a shining example of positivity during these challenging times. Before this pandemic Isabel looked forward to her twice weekly classes where she got to talk with friends, exercise regularly, and surround herself with kindhearted people. Just before the "stay at home" order was released Isabel experienced a fall outside a store and was able to get up by herself with only a few scratches and continued into the store. She believes she was able to get up because she exercises regularly in the Young at Heart classes.

While Isabel is finding ways to keep her body moving, with our in person classes temporarily cancelled, she looks forward to the day she can see her friends in class because as she said,

**“Young at Heart has brought so much joy to my life”.**

# It's Time To Get Moving!

During this unique time of our lives, physical activity has decreased or been completely removed from many of our lives. It has taken the back seat since all parks, gyms, and senior centers were closed temporarily. Right now, you may be feeling more aches, pains, and health issues due to moving less over these few months of social distancing. However, you can feel better and improve your physical well-being through exercise even if you have never exercised before. Research shows that it's not about how old you are, it's about how much you move. It is recommended that older adults do at least 2.5—5 hours of physical activity each week. Physical activity should focus on postural alignment which may help you start feeling better and moving with more confidence. Proper postural alignment helps with everything from cardiovascular health to relieving joint and arthritis pain. Here are two tips from the American Council on Exercise to help you get started or get back to exercising.

- 1) **Rethink Fitness**—Find meaning in why you are moving. For example, can you transition from a seated to standing position without assistance? How do you feel when you get out of your car? Find a program that helps make these movements easier, like Young at Heart Strength Training, or Tai Chi. Contact Healthy Aging for more details (209)525-4670.
- 2) **Make Exercise a Fun Habit**—Choose an activity that you enjoy, can do with friends, and that you can schedule into each week.

“Bottom Line: The earlier you start the better, so start moving today!”

*Source: acefitness.org—blog: “You’re Never Too Old to Start Enjoying the Benefits of Being Physically Active, May 26, 2020*

## *Young at Heart Sponsors*



Anthem Blue Cross Foundation



## Be “Young at Heart”

As the state and county continues to open services again, we are looking forward to the day when our current participants and new participants are in our fitness classes again. The Young at Heart Strength Training classes help our participants maintain mobility, improve flexibility, and reduce the risk of falls. These classes can be done from a seated or standing position and can accommodate most levels of fitness.

If you are not quite ready to get back out there, Healthy Aging Association is currently offering online “live” classes twice a week. The online fitness classes utilize the platform, Zoom. If you have never used Zoom before, do not fear we have a document to walk you through it and staff members available to assist you as you log in to the class for the first time. If joining these classes sounds like something that would motivate you, please contact us at (209)525-4670 for more details.



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