



Commission on Aging

SENIOR UPDATE
AREA AGENCY ON AGING
ADVISORY COMMISSION ON AGING
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April/May/June 2022

Senior Update

The Eyes and Ears of Alameda County Seniors

OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH



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AGE MY WAY: MAY 2022

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM). In 2022, ACL will be focusing on aging in place – how older adults can plan to stay in their homes and live independently in their communities for as long as possible. The 2022 theme is *Age My Way*, an opportunity for all of us to explore the many ways older adults can remain in and be involved with their communities.

While *Age My Way* will look different for each person, here are common things everyone can consider:

Planning: Think about what you will need and want in the future, from home and community-based services to community activities that interest you.

Engagement: Remain involved and contribute to your community through work, volunteer, and/or civic participation opportunities.

Access: Make home improvements and modifications, use assistive technologies, and customize supports to help you better age in place.

Connection: Maintain social activities and relationships to combat social isolation and stay connected to your community.





SENIOR WELLNESS:

The Best Tips for Health in Spring

After a long and sometimes dark winter, you might feel inspired to make changes to enhance your health. If that is the case, read on to find out how you can rejuvenate your life this spring.

Take Yourself in for a Tune Up

To keep your body running at peak performance, it needs regular maintenance: a spring tune-up, so to speak. Get your weight, blood pressure, and glucose and cholesterol levels checked out by your primary-care physician, who can also book you for other relevant tests.

Put on Your Walking Shoes

Health-wise, it's one of the best physical activities for seniors – its considerable benefits include controlling blood sugar, supporting bone and heart health and improving sleep.

Take an Exercise Class

Consider Yoga, Pilates or Tai Chi, all of which can improve balance and flexibility and decrease your chances of falling. Aquafit is another fun and social way to increase physical fitness, one that can be especially suitable if you have arthritis or chronic pain.

Get Outside and Garden

In springtime, a highlight of many seniors' lives is gardening, which brings a multitude of health benefits. For starters, tending to a garden can boost your level of Vitamin D, which can, in turn, help reduce the risk of bone problems and fractures.

Lighten Up Your Diet

Many healthy fruits and veggies, like asparagus, peas, lettuce, and strawberries come into season in the spring, making it the perfect time to replace heavier winter meals with salads, light soups or other lightly cooked fare.

Drink Lots of Water

Dehydration can adversely affect memory and concentration and increase fatigue; it can also lead to serious complications such as increased risk of falls.

Dress for the Weather

Spring is one of those in-between seasons -- some days are weather-perfect, while others are a little too hot or a little too brisk.

Watch for Allergies

Springtime can mean the beginning of allergies for people who react badly to grass and pollen. Keep an eye on the weather. Untreated allergies aren't just uncomfortable--they can lead to breathing problems, sinus infections, and colds. Check with your doctor for allergy-relief remedies.

Whether you're living in a senior community already, living independently, living with a family member, or caring for one, these spring health tips are worth taking into account.

NUTRITION GUIDELINES FOR SENIORS



As people age, it's common for their metabolism and digestive systems to slow down. They also tend to become a little less active. Those are some of the main reasons why it's so important to get exercise and eat foods that are healthy. Nutrition for seniors is such a vital topic because knowing what—and how much—to eat can help you maximize your well-being. Depending on your activity level, it's generally recommended that men over the age of 50 should consume 2,000 to 2,800 calories per day.

Women over the age of 50 should consume 1,600 to 2,200 calories per day. But not all calories are created equal. When planning your daily meals, keep the following tips in mind: Include two to three tablespoons of healthy fats—such as extra virgin olive or coconut oil—in your diet each day.

- ◆ Consume no more than 1,500 milligrams (mg) of sodium daily.
- Make sure that less than 10 percent of your daily calories come from saturated fat.
- Consume less than 300 mg of cholesterol daily.

The main food groups include fruits and vegetables, grains, dairy and dairy alternatives, and meat and meat alternatives. Each food group is discussed in more detail below.

Fruits and vegetables: It's recommended that you eat seven servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Be sure to frequently choose varieties that are dark green, bright orange, and yellow.

Grains: It's recommended that you eat six or seven servings of grains each day. Choose whole-grain products more often, such as whole-wheat foods, brown rice, or oatmeal.

Dairy and dairy alternatives: It's recommended that you consume three servings of dairy or dairy alternatives every day. Choose low-fat options more often, and look for products that are fortified with calcium and vitamin D.

Meat and meat alternatives: It's recommended that you have two or three servings of meat or meat alternatives per day. Choose lean cuts of meat or low-fat meat alternatives more often than higher-fat options. Snack on nuts and seeds, and add them to your cereal, muffins, salads, and yogurt.

Add a low-sugar protein powder to your smoothies. In addition to the food groups, think about your fluid intake so that you can avoid the potential [complications of dehydration](#). In seniors, thirst sensations often become weaker, so make a conscious effort to consume the amount of fluids your doctor recommends. For some seniors, that means consuming a minimum of nine to 12 cups of fluids per day. Those fluids can include liquids like water, tea, pure fruit juice, and milk. To help yourself consume that amount, drink a glass of water as soon as you wake up, always have a glass or bottle of water with you, and include a glass of water or a cup of tea with your meals. Avoid sugary drinks.



National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) exists to inspire, educate and empower the public and providers about the importance of advance care planning. NHDD is an initiative to encourage patients to express their wishes regarding healthcare and for providers and facilities to respect those wishes, whatever they may be.

NHDD was founded in 2008 by [Nathan Kottkamp](#), a Virginia-based health care lawyer, to provide clear, concise, and consistent information on healthcare decision-making to both the public and providers/facilities through the widespread availability and dissemination of simple, free, and uniform tools (not just forms) to guide the process. Plan ahead for your important healthcare decisions. Find the documents you need now, complete them, and put them where they are easily accessible. Discuss your decisions with your loved ones. Let them know where your documents are in the event you have a healthcare event. Encourage other family members to complete an advance directive. Don't place the burden of these decisions on your loved ones.



SAVE THE DATE—JUNE 15

WHY WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY IS IMPORTANT

Older Americans may be unable to advocate for themselves: Many seniors are not in a place to stand up for themselves, whether it's because they're physically frail or because they're scared of speaking up and fear repercussions. It's crucial for all of us to be on the lookout for signs of elder abuse, and to speak up if something seems wrong. **Seniors deserve our respect and our attention:** In so many cultures, elders are revered—and rightfully so. Their experiences, memories, and perspective on life are valued for the lessons that younger folks can learn. And if older people aren't encouraged to pass along the skills and wisdom they have accumulated during their lives, then the culture as a whole suffers. We owe it to older generations to ensure that their so-called Golden Years are not tarnished by neglect. **It reminds us to look out for each other:** It's easy to see bad things and not say anything—whether that's senior abuse or a mugging on the street. But this holiday reminds us just how important it is to look after, and look out for, our fellow humans. It reminds us to exercise compassion on a daily basis, and care about others rather than just ourselves.

Lily Chang

Alameda County Public Health



ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

Do you know what healthcare treatments you **would** and **would not** want if you could not speak for yourself? Do your loved ones know what your wishes are?

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is a process that supports adults in understanding and sharing their personal values and preferences regarding future medical care. Many believe that a sudden illness or accident would not happen to them, or they that would think about ACP when the crisis happens. The truth is that ACP is important at any stage of life, the discussion needs to happen *before* a crisis, and it is up to YOU to initiate the conversation with your loved ones about the values that you've reflected upon and decisions that you have made.

An Advance Directive (AD) is a legal document that helps you tell doctors and your loved ones in detail how you want to be treated if you cannot speak for yourself. It lays out life-sustaining treatment options and asks you name a decision maker (sometimes called "healthcare proxy or agent," "healthcare surrogate," or "durable power of attorney for healthcare") over the age of 18 that you trust and who knows you well. Lawyers are not needed; just two witnesses or a notary would do. Your AD doesn't expire, and it can be updated as needed.

A Physician Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) is a physician order for the types of interventions healthcare professionals would take outside of the hospital. In an emergency, there is no time for anyone involved to sit and think about whether Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) would help or not. It's either do it or do not. That is why a POLST is important. Do you want emergency personnel to attempt CPR if you are not breathing? How about situations where you have difficulty breathing? You may want to have this conversation with your physician.

Alameda County's *Getting the Most out of Life and Care Partners* (GMOL/CP) program address racial and cultural disparities in access to life care planning among the County's low-income older adult population. GMOL/CP supports underserved sick, frail and terminally ill elders and their care providers in Alameda County through deep listening and goals of care conversations to support them to complete ADs. GMOL/CP also supports existing community partners to document their own healthcare decisions so that they could, in turn, support patients and consumers to access advance health care planning resources. GMOL/CP strives to provide much needed information to the public, reduce the number of tragedies that occur when a patient's wishes are unknown and ensure that patients receive care consistent with their preferences.

For further information contact: Getting the Most Out of Life (GMOL):

Gettingthemostoutoflife.org or call (510) 577-3517.

COMMISSIONER'S—WHAT DO THEY DO?

The Alameda County Advisory Commission on Aging (ACA) advises and provides information to the Board of Supervisors and the [Area Agency on Aging \(AAA\)](#). The commission is made up of representatives concerned about the needs and interests of elders in Alameda County. The commission works in concert with the staff of the AAA to develop, plan, and administer programs designed to assist elders and their caregivers in the county.

The ACA reviews requests for funding from local community-based organizations and provides recommendations for funding to the Board of Supervisors. The commission also reviews and recommends the AAA's countywide area plan and year-end reports. Each commissioner serves on one of the following committees: Health & Safety, Public Relations, Legislative Advocacy, or Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Advisory.

The commission includes 21 members, who are appointed by the Board of Supervisors or Alameda County Mayor's Conference. Members may serve a maximum of two, four-year terms.



Tara Marino, SOS Meals

SOS Meals on Wheels: What Makes Our Meals a Healthy Choice?

Every week, our kitchen produces, packs, and delivers over 8,000 meals to homebound seniors in Oakland, San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, and Hayward. The meals are balanced, colorful, and nutritious. Monthly menus and recipes are developed by our registered dietitian and head chef and follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, meeting 1/3 of seniors' daily nutrition needs. Menus are reviewed and approved by a county dietitian as well.

SOS Meals on Wheels recipients are offered a vegetarian or regular menu and there are meal substitutions and delivery modifications for seniors who don't eat fish, pork and/or beef.

By the numbers-What's included in the meals?

15 grams: the minimum amount of protein included in each meal.

700 mg: the average amount of sodium in the meals.

2 servings: at least 2 servings of vegetables, equivalent to 1 cup cooked.

1 serving: at least 1 serving of fruit. This is one medium piece of fruit or ½ cup diced fruit.

25 mg: the amount of vitamin C provided in each meal. Vitamin C is found in fruits and vegetables such as broccoli, oranges, spinach, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kiwi, and strawberries.

233 mcg: the amount of vitamin A provided in the meals 3-4 times a week. Vitamin A is found in items such as sweet potatoes, collard greens, carrots, and winter squash.

7 grams: the average amount of fiber provided each day. Fiber is found in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

8 ounces: once cup of low-fat 1% milk, providing calcium, protein, vitamin D and vitamin A. An example of one of our meals Creole Baked Fish with Rice Pilaf, Mixed Vegetables, Brussels Sprouts, Banana, and Milk.



1. Things to keep in mind before selecting a destination

- There's nothing to say when a traveler's mind wishes to visit the beaches, mountains, or a forest. However, picking the right destination according to the season is a key factor in understanding how to plan a trip successfully.
- Check out the best time to visit all destinations. Usually, the ideal season to visit beaches and mountains is completely different.
- Consider the cost factor while picking a destination. Some places are more enjoyable in a luxury budget than others. Going to a luxury destination during the shoulder season (a few weeks before or after the official 'busy season') can result in some good discounts on hotels and flights.
- Safety of travelers is a prime concern people should address before starting on their journey (especially solo female travelers). Ease of accessibility or lack thereof is also a factor that can sway the decision of visiting a destination or not. Generally, the popular destinations have a lot of daily flights, trains, and good highway infrastructure to support the tourist influx.

2. Decide the duration of your trip

There is a fine line between getting bored and enjoying every moment at a destination. However, no destination has a predefined ideal duration. It often depends on the touring plans and purpose of the visit of the travelers. This is a key aspect of your **trip planning** which can help your itinerary and budget both.

3. Book flights, train, or bus tickets, and accommodation

After the ideation is complete, booking tickets for your flight, train or bus transfer well in advance is an important step in learning how to plan your trip to perfection. Since flight and train tickets are subject to availability and prices rise over time, getting the bookings done a few months in advance will help you avoid additional costs on your initial budget.

4. Pack diligently and make all the necessary adjustments

After the bookings are done, it is always advisable for your **trip planning** to pack your stuff keeping in mind the destination and the influence of external factors on it.

5. Bring needed health documents and medications.

6. Have fun, stay safe and be aware of your surroundings.

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SSA has launched a brand new website, take a look at the new user friendly layout and services search engine at <http://alamedacountysocialservices.org>

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The Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, along with The Center for Independent Living and Community Resources for Independent Living working to be a reemerging ADRC to promote and provide easy, uniform, and streamlined access to a broad array of services, support, and advocacy for individuals seeking long-term supports and services (LTSS) and information about LTSS.

SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

CELEBRATE • INNOVATE • EDUCATE



Senior Nutrition Program 50th Anniversary

Through the Older American Act, the [Senior Nutrition Program](#) has been dedicated to meeting the nutritional, wellness, and social needs of older adults since 1972.

Celebrate: Celebrate the accomplishments of your local program.

Innovate: Innovate to support older adults in your community.

Educate: Educate the community on services and for older adults.

Upcoming Meetings:

Advisory Commission on Aging

- ♦ Monday, April 11, 2022, 9:30 AM
- ♦ Monday, May 9, 2022, 9:30 AM
- ♦ Monday, June 13, 2022, 9:30 AM

Information & Assistance Roundtable

- ♦ Friday, May 27, 2022, 10:00 AM

Email aaa@acgov.org for a Zoom link to the meetings.