Sandoval County Senior Program Administration

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CENTER LOCATION

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Sponsorship
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Non Metro New Mexico
Economic Development District
Area Agency on Aging

 Hours of Operation:
Monday—Friday 8-5pm

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All Sites individualize their newsletters to their local area information, activities calendars and games.

Sandoval County Senior Program
Administration
There’s more to leading a healthy lifestyle than following an eating and exercise plan. Finding happiness in your everyday life can also make a positive impact on your overall health. According to a study in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, happiness has a positive effect in lowering cortisol levels, the stress hormone that is related to health conditions like type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and autoimmune diseases. But if you aren’t feeling that happy on a daily basis, what can be done to change that?

1. **Make your first thought of the day a happy one.** “When we look at ourselves in the mirror every morning and think of all the things we want to change, that’s a choice we make,” says Bernstein. “Make the commitment to think differently about yourself and make happiness the first thing of the day.” She recommends listening to music to begin your morning instead of watching TV. Create a positive, uplifting playlist to help boost your mood and brighten your spirit. If you have a few minutes, sit still and meditate while listening to a song or two.

2. **Snap out of a negative mindset.** Plagued by undesirable or destructive thoughts about yourself or others? Bernstein recommends employing her “Snap Out of It” meditation technique, in which you wear a rubber band on your wrist, and whenever you start to think negative thoughts about yourself or towards another person, flick the rubber band against your arm. This will literally help you “snap” out of the negative thoughts.

3. **Unleash your inner child.** Whenever you feel stressed about your responsibilities and commitments, unplug from the world, shut off your computer and phone, and tap into your inner child. When we become more childlike, we grow our capacity for curiosity and creativity. Bernstein recommends taking a dream break during the day, in which you sit alone and spend five to 10 minutes thinking your way into a cool experience you’d always hoped to have. “Open up to silliness and having more fun. That childlike energy brings us a much more positive perspective and releases tension,” Bernstein says.
4. **Sleep to restore your mind.** Sleep is essential to optimal health, but people often forget that it is also a spiritual practice that benefits us mentally and emotionally. Lacking essential shut-eye is another way we block happiness from our lives. To help you get a restful night of sleep, Bernstein recommends using this simple Kundalini breathing technique: Sit up straight on your bed and breathe in using a U breath (Pucker your mouth as if you were holding a quarter between your lips.). Breathe in and exhale through your nose. Continue this cycle of breath for one minute.

### 5 Myths about Exercise and Aging

**Myth 1: There’s no point to exercising. I’m going to get old anyway.**
**Fact:** Exercise and strength training helps you look and feel younger and stay active longer. Regular physical activity lowers your risk for a variety of conditions, including Alzheimer’s and dementia, heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, high blood pressure, and obesity.

**Myth 2: Older people shouldn’t exercise. They should save their strength and rest.**
**Fact:** Research shows that a sedentary lifestyle is unhealthy for adults over 50. Inactivity often causes older adults to lose the ability to do things on their own and can lead to more hospitalizations, doctor visits, and use of medicines for illnesses.

**Myth 3: Exercise puts me at risk of falling down.**
**Fact:** Regular exercise, by building strength and stamina, prevents loss of bone mass and improves balance, actually reducing your risk of falling.

**Myth 4: It’s too late. I’m already too old to start exercising.**
**Fact:** You’re never too old to exercise! If you’ve never exercised before, or it’s been a while, start with light walking and other gentle activities.

**Myth 5: I’m disabled. I can’t exercise sitting down.**
**Fact:** Chair-bound people face special challenges but can lift light weights, stretch, and do chair aerobics to increase range of motion, improve muscle tone, and promote cardiovascular health.
Nutrition

Food Safety Education Necessary for Older Adults
www.everydayhealth.com

With fading senses of sight and smell, seniors face a higher risk of foodborne illness. New research encourages better training for healthcare workers, so they can educate the elderly on food safety and prevent such infections.

Fear of falling, a heart attack, a stroke — those might top the list of health concerns for seniors who live alone and the people who care for them. But foodborne illness, a common problem among the elderly, merits higher placement on that list.

Most of us rely on our senses to red flag raw or undercooked food. If something looks or smells bad, we throw it away. We check expiration dates on product labels. We also remember to keep things refrigerated when necessary. But as we age, some of those senses and instincts dull. Poor eyesight, dementia, and reduced sense of smell all contribute to the high risk of foodborne illness for seniors. Additionally, an older adult’s stomach might already be more sensitive, due to firming of the digestive tract.

In addition to properly handling, storing, and cooking food, dietary recommendations for seniors include avoiding raw or undercooked seafood, foods that contain raw eggs, and soft cheeses like feta and brie.

**Food Poisoning and Safe Food Handling - Prevention**

You can prevent most cases of food poisoning by being careful when you prepare and store food. Wash your hands and working surfaces while preparing food, cook foods to safe temperatures, and refrigerate foods promptly. Be especially careful when you cook or heat perishable foods, such as eggs, meats, poultry, fish, shellfish, milk, and milk products. Also take extra care if you have an impaired immune system, or are preparing foods for children or older people.
Nutrition continued

The following steps can help prevent food poisoning (adapted from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

**Shop safely.** Bag raw meat, poultry, and fish separately from other food items. Young children can get sick from touching packaged poultry, so don't allow them to touch or play with packages of poultry in your grocery cart.

**Prepare foods safely.** Wash your hands before and after handling food. Wash fruits, vegetables, and cutting boards. Follow procedures for safe home canning to avoid contamination.

**Store foods safely.** Cook, refrigerate, or freeze meat, poultry, eggs, fish, and ready-to-eat foods within 2 hours. Make sure your refrigerator is set at 40°F (4°C) or colder.

**Cook foods safely.** Use a clean meat thermometer to make sure that foods are cooked to a safe temperature. Reheat leftovers to at least 165°F (74°C). Don't eat undercooked hamburger. And be aware of the risk of food poisoning from raw fish (including sushi), clams, and oysters.

**Serve foods safely.** Keep cooked hot foods hot [140°F (60°C) or above] and cold foods cold [40°F (4°C) or below].

**Follow labels on food packaging.** These labels provide information about when to use the food and how to store it.

**When in doubt, throw it out.** If you aren't sure if a food is safe, don't eat it. Reheating food that is contaminated won't make it safe. Don't taste suspicious food. It may smell and look fine but still may not be safe to eat.
VA Caregiver Supports

Roberta Gonzales LISW, is a Caregiver Support Coordinator with the Albuquerque VA. Her number is 265-1711 ext 2469

You may know that VA provides benefits and services for Veterans, but did you know that VA also has a number of services designed specifically to support you in your role as a Family Caregiver? VA values your commitment as a partner in our pledge to care for those who have "borne the battle," and we have several support and service options designed with you in mind. The programs are available both in and out of your home to help you care for the Veteran you love and for yourself. Caregiver Support Asking for help isn't always easy – especially if you're not exactly sure what kind of support would be the best fit for your needs. Learn more about how VA's trained professionals can help you find the services and support that are right for you and the Veteran you care for.

Caregiver Support Line
With VA's Caregiver Support Line – 1-855-260-3274 – assistance is just a quick phone call away. Whether you're in need of immediate assistance or have questions about what services you may be eligible for, the caring licensed professionals who answer the support line can: Tell you about the assistance available from VA. Help you access services. Connect you with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA Medical Center near you. Just listen, if that's what you need right now. If you're just getting started with VA, calling the Caregiver Support Line is a great first step to take to learn more about the support that's available to you.

Caregiver Support Coordinator
Your local Caregiver Support Coordinator is a licensed professional who can support you by matching you with services for which you are eligible, and providing you with valuable information about resources that can help you stay smart, strong and organized as you care for the Veteran you love.

Peer Support for Caregivers
VA has developed a Caregiver Peer Support Mentoring Program to connect Caregivers to one another, to provide support, and to learn from each other. Peer Support Mentoring provides an opportunity for Caregivers to share their experience, wisdom, skills and passion with each other and benefit from the guidance of others. Caregivers of Veterans of all eras are eligible to participate in the VA Caregiver Peer Support Mentoring Program, , and letter

Sandoval County Senior Program
Frail and Elderly continued

Program, both as Mentors and as Mentees. Mentors and Mentees communicate using email, telephone, and letter writing depending on what works best for both of them. Mentors receive training before being paired with another Caregiver and are volunteers with their local VA medical center Voluntary Services Department. Caregivers participating in the Caregiver Peer Support Mentoring Program agree to participate for 6 months, but many participate for much longer. Not sure if you are ready for this, but would like to try it out? VA also offers a one-time connection through the Compassionate Connections Program for those Caregivers who many need some brief support from an experienced Mentor but are not ready or able to commit to a longer-term mentoring relationship.

Caregiver Services
Below are descriptions of various services available to Family Caregivers of Veterans. If you'd like additional information or are interested in signing up for any of the services listed below, contact VA's Caregiver Support Line or your local Caregiver Support Coordinator for assistance.

**Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) Centers**
ADHC Centers are a safe and active environment with constant supervision designed for Veterans to get out of the home and participate in activities. It is a time for the Veteran you care for to socialize with other Veterans while you, the Family Caregiver, get some time for yourself. ADHC Centers employ caring professionals who will assess a Veteran's rehabilitation needs and help a Veteran accomplish various tasks so he or she can maintain or regain personal independence and dignity. The Veteran you care for will participate in rehabilitation based on his or her specific health assessment during the day (ADHC centers are generally open Monday through Friday during normal business hours). The ADHC Centers emphasize a partnership with you, the Veteran you care for and Centers' staffs.

**Homemaker and Home Health Aide Program.**
Feeding and bathing another person can be very stressful, physically tasking, and time-consuming for you. Often times, taking care of a Veteran's needs leaves no time for you to take care of your own needs. The Homemaker and Home Health Aide Program is designed to help a Veteran with personal care needs. Your local VA medical center can help arrange for a home health aide who will come to your home on a regular schedule to allow you time to take care of your own needs. Caring for yourself helps you stay strong for yourself and the Veteran you care for.
Frail and Elderly continued

**Respite Care.**
As a Family Caregiver, it can be hard to find time for a much-needed break from your daily routine and care responsibilities so that you have some time for yourself. Respite is time for relaxing and renewing your own energy, and respite care can provide you with the time to do that. If a Veteran requires a Caregiver, you are eligible to receive up to 30 days of respite care per year. The care can be offered in a variety of settings including at your home or through temporary placement of a Veteran at a VA Community Living Center, a VA-contracted Community Residential Care Facility, or an Adult Day Health Care Center. Respite care may also be provided in response to a Family Caregiver's unexpected hospitalization, a need to go out of town, or a family emergency. Staying strong for your Veteran means staying strong yourself. By taking an opportunity to be refreshed through respite care, you may be amazed at how your fresh outlook will help you and your Veteran.

http://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/support_services.asp

Hi fellow seniors, my name is Marta Chavez and I am the new Volunteer Services Coordinator for Sandoval County. I have a dozen years of experience working with seniors through out New Mexico. I am excited to put my Volunteer leadership skills to action with the Volunteer Program. Mike my husband of 35 years and myself are long time Rio Rancho residents.

I will be visiting the sites and volunteer stations in the near future and look forward to meeting all of you.

Happy Birthday to all RSVP/FGP/SCP and SEP Volunteers who are celebrating a Birthday in the month of July!