



# Sandoval County Senior Program Administration

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## CENTER LOCATION

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Hours of Operation:  
Monday—Friday 8-5pm

## Sponsorship

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Sandoval County Commission and  
Non Metro New Mexico  
Economic Development District  
Area Agency on Aging

## ADMINISTRATION STAFF

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

## Health & Wellness

August is National Wellness Month, and it's a perfect time to focus on taking care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally. Especially during these stressful times, it's important to make self-care, healthy eating, and stress management a priority in order to feel better than ever! Make it a goal to try one of these 8 ways to boost your wellness each day.

**Exercise.** Just 30 minutes of exercise per day can be a major mood-booster. Not only does it benefit your mental health, it keeps you at a healthy weight, gives you more energy, and assists with pain management.

**Drink more water.** Hydration is so important for your body, especially during these hot summer months. Water helps transport nutrients to give you energy, and even lubricates your joints. It's the key to digestion, clearer skin, and even weight loss!

**Spend time outside.** Fresh air can do a mind and body good, especially if you're exercising outdoors. Spending time in nature can improve your memory, lower your blood pressure, and boost your mood.

**Practice deep breathing.** Stress and anxiety can impact your breathing without you even realizing it, causing you to take shallow breaths, or even holding your breath for a period of time, causing your body to tense-up. Practicing deep breathing techniques, and concentrating on breathing from your diaphragm, can make a big difference.

**Get enough sleep.** Sleep is a huge factor in our mental and physical well-being. Getting an adequate amount of sleep each night helps keep your weight in check, your risk of depression and anxiety low, your memory sharp, your immune system strong, and so much more.

**Take a social media break.** With information constantly being thrown at us via social media, it's important that we take time each day to disconnect from technology in order to boost our mental and physical health. A digital detox can help with anxiety, sleep, mood, and lots more. Aim to put your phone away one hour before bedtime to allow your brain to wind-down before falling asleep.

**Call a friend or family member.** Now that social distancing is part of our daily lives, it's more important than ever to stay connected to those we love. Friends and family play a huge role in our mental health, and social connection can be an instant mood-booster. Make it a goal to call or video chat with someone important to you every day, even if it's just for 5 minutes!

Health & Wellness continued

**Cut back on sugar and load up on fruits and veggies.** The average American consumes 22 teaspoons of sugar each day, and much of it is hidden in salad dressings, alcohol, coffee creamer, etc. Sugar depletes your energy and makes you feel tired and grumpy (afternoon slump anyone?) If you have a sweet tooth, you can still satisfy it by swapping your sugary sweets for juicy peaches, plump blueberries, or MightyMeals' Roasted Sweet Potatoes. Your body and mind will thank you for it!

## Nutrition

### The Importance of Nutrition for Aging Adults

It's not unusual for people to experience some type of malnutrition. Statistics estimate that up to 16 percent of seniors have protein deficiencies. When including possible mineral and vitamin deficits, dietary malnutrition cases occur in up to 35 percent of adults over the age of 65. Seniors have unique nutritional needs to ensure their ongoing health, vitality, and quality of life.

Malnutrition in older adults can lead to a variety of issues that include:

- Anemia
- Cognitive impairment
- Depression
- General fatigue
- Muscle weakness, which could lead to falls
- Weakened immune systems, leading to poor wound healing or susceptibility to infections
- Weight loss

Nutritional deficiencies can impact your health, wellbeing, and overall quality of life.

Take a look at the importance of nutrition.

#### Physiological Changes

The changes that occur within the human body with age may affect nutritional intake and overall health. Seniors with hearing loss may not be able to enjoy meaningful conversations with significant others or family members, making mealtimes unpleasant. After they lose their sense of smell or taste, foods are no longer appealing, which decreases appetite. Aging adults might also make poor food choices.

Nutrition continued

Seniors often lack the energy they enjoyed during their younger years, since metabolic rate and physical activity decrease with age. Dental issues may lead seniors to avoid eating in general or stay away from certain foods. Constipation, gastritis, and delayed stomach emptying may lead older adults to avoid eating fruits or vegetables that contain vital nutrients. Cognitive impairment diminishes the ability to prepare nutritious meals or choose healthy foods.

Other factors to consider include an inability to go grocery shopping due to safety concerns, a lack of transportation, or financial limitations. Eating alone may contribute to a loss of interest in meal preparation. Stress or grieving over the loss of a loved one may reduce appetite.

Eating Plans

The Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommend USDA food pattern or the DASH diet to ensure you receive an adequate amount of nutrients every day. According to the USDA food plan, you should daily consume:

- 1½ to 2½ cups of fruits
- 2 to 3½ cups of vegetables
- 5 to 10 ounces of whole grains
- 5 to 7 ounces of protein
- 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free dairy products
- 5 to 8 teaspoons of healthy fats

### **Dietary Solutions**

If you suspect malnutrition in yourself or loved one you will need to start by finding out the underlying cause. For those who habitually make poor food choices, I encourage better food options. If you don't consume enough calories I encourage you to snack on healthy foods or eat several smaller meals throughout the day. Vitamin or mineral deficiencies can be corrected with over-the-counter supplements. Increased physical activity stimulates appetite and offers cardiovascular and musculoskeletal benefits. Try sharing and the making of meals a social event with friends, sharing the cost and work together what a wonderful way to spend time.

### **Don't forget the foods that are straight up SUPERFOOD**

Tumeric Almonds Blueberries Ginger Kale Mushrooms Spinach Salmon Seaweed  
 Avocados Eggs Garlic Quinoa Green Tea Oats Olive Oil Broccoli Coffee  
 Pomegranates Beetroots Lentils Pumpkins Acai Berries Cocoa Chia Seeds  
 Greek Yogurt Cauliflower Chili peppers Tomatoes Chickpeas

## Staying Active

Injuries from falls and car crashes are more common as we age. These injuries can have devastating effects. But these injuries can be prevented so you can stay healthy and independent longer.

### **Preventing a Fall**

More than 1 in 4 older adults report falling each year this results in about 36 million falls.

1. Falls can cause serious injuries such as broken bones or a head or brain injury.
2. But falls are not a normal part of aging they can be prevented.

You can take action to prevent falling and stay independent longer. There are simple steps you can take to keep yourself from falling and to stay healthy and independent longer.

### **Speak up.**

- Tell your doctor if you have fallen, if you feel unsteady when standing or walking, or if you are afraid you might fall.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review the medicines you take. Some medicines might make you dizzy or sleepy which can increase your risk of falling.
- Have an eye doctor check your eyes at least once a year and update your eyeglasses as needed.
- Have your doctor check your feet at least once a year and discuss proper footwear to reduce your risk of falling.
- Ask your doctor about health conditions like depression, osteoporosis, or hypotension that can increase your risk for falling.

### **Stay active.**

- Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance, like Tai Chi.

### **Make your home safer.**

- Get rid of trip hazards like throw rugs, and keep floors clutter free.
- Brighten your home with extra lighting or brighter light bulbs.
- Install grab bars in the bathroom(s) next to the toilet and inside and outside of your bathtub or shower.
- Install handrails on both sides of staircases.

Staying Active continued

### **Preventing a Motor Vehicle Crash**

Driving helps older adults stay mobile and independent. But the risk of being injured in a traffic crash increases as we age.

As we age, declines in vision and cognitive function (ability to reason and remember), as well as physical changes, might affect our driving abilities. You can take action to stay safer on the road and stay independent longer. There are simple steps you can take to stay safe on the road.

#### **Drive when conditions are safest.**

- Drive during daylight and in good weather.
- Conditions such as poor weather (like rain or snow) and driving at night increase your chance of a crash.

#### **Never drink and drive.**

- Alcohol reduces coordination, impairs judgement, and increases the risk of being in a crash.

#### **Plan your drive.**

- Before you drive, find the safest route with well-lit streets, intersections with left-turn signals, and easy parking.

#### **Watch your distance.**

- Leave a large following distance between your car and the car in front of you. You may experience delayed reflexes or slower reaction time as you age.

#### **Don't drive distracted.**

- Avoid distractions in your car, such as listening to a loud radio, talking or texting on your phone, and eating.

#### **Get a ride.**

- Consider alternatives to driving, such as riding with a friend or family member, taking a ride share service, or using public transportation if possible.

Taking other steps off the road can keep you driving safer, longer.

#### **Speak up.**

- Discuss your ability to continue driving with your healthcare providers.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review the medicines you take. Some medicines might make you dizzy, sleepy, or slow your reaction time. This can increase your risk for a car crash.
- Have your eyes checked at least once a year. Poor vision can increase your risk of a car crash.

#### **Keep moving.**

- Follow a regular activity program to increase strength and flexibility.