



# Sandoval County Senior Program Administration

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## CENTER LOCATION

MAY 2023

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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**

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

## Health & Wellness

### **Know Your Risk for Stroke**

Anyone can have a stroke at any age. But certain things can increase your chances of having a stroke. The best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from a stroke is to understand your risk and how to control it.

While you can't control your age or family history, you can take steps to lower your chances of having a stroke.

#### **What health conditions increase the risk for stroke?**

Many common medical conditions can increase your chances of having a stroke. Work with your health care team to control your risk.

#### **Previous stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA)**

If you have already had a stroke or a transient ischemic attack (TIA), also known as a "mini-stroke," your chances of having another stroke are higher.

#### **High blood pressure**

High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke. It occurs when the pressure of the blood in your arteries and other blood vessels is too high.

There are often no symptoms of high blood pressure. Get your blood pressure checked often. If you have high blood pressure, lowering your blood pressure through lifestyle changes or medicine can also lower your risk for stroke.

#### **High cholesterol**

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance made by the liver or found in certain foods. Your liver makes enough for your body's needs, but we often get more cholesterol from the foods we eat. If we take in more cholesterol than the body can use, the extra cholesterol can build up in the arteries, including those of the brain. This can lead to narrowing of the arteries, stroke, and other problems.

A blood test can tell your doctor if you have high levels of cholesterol and triglycerides (a related kind of fat) in your blood.

#### **Heart disease**

Common heart disorders can increase your risk for stroke. For example, coronary artery disease increases your risk for stroke, because plaque builds up in the arteries and blocks the flow of oxygen-rich blood to the brain.

Other heart conditions, such as heart valve defects, irregular heartbeat (including atrial fibrillation), and enlarged heart chambers, can cause blood clots that may break loose and cause a stroke.

Health & Wellness continued

### **Diabetes**

Diabetes increases your risk for stroke. Diabetes causes sugars to build up in the blood and prevent oxygen and nutrients from getting to the various parts of your body, including your brain. High blood pressure is also common in people with diabetes. High blood pressure is the leading cause of stroke and is the main cause for increased risk of stroke among people with diabetes.

Talk to your doctor about ways to keep diabetes under control.

### **Obesity**

Obesity is excess body fat. Obesity is linked to higher “bad” cholesterol and triglyceride levels and to lower “good” cholesterol levels. Obesity can also lead to high blood pressure and diabetes.

### **Sickle cell disease**

Sickle cell disease is a blood disorder linked to ischemic stroke that affects mainly Black children. The disease causes some red blood cells to form an abnormal sickle shape. A stroke can happen if sickle cells get stuck in a blood vessel and block the flow of blood to the brain.

### **What behaviors increase the risk for stroke?**

Your lifestyle choices can increase your risk for stroke. The good news is that healthy behaviors can lower your risk for stroke.

Talk with your health care team about making changes to your lifestyle.

**Eating a diet high in saturated fats, trans fat, and cholesterol** has been linked to stroke and related conditions, such as heart disease. Also, getting too much salt (sodium) in the diet can raise blood pressure levels.

**Not getting enough physical activity** can lead to other health conditions that can raise the risk for stroke. These health conditions include obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes. Regular physical activity can lower your chances for stroke.

**Drinking too much alcohol** can raise blood pressure levels and the risk for stroke. It also increases levels of triglycerides, a form of fat in your blood that can harden your arteries.

- Women should have no more than one drink a day.
- Men should have no more than two drinks a day.

**Tobacco use** increases the risk for stroke.

- Cigarette smoking can damage the heart and blood vessels, increasing your risk for stroke.
- Nicotine raises blood pressure.
- Carbon monoxide from cigarette smoke reduces the amount of oxygen that your blood can carry.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke can make you more likely to have a stroke.

Health & Wellness continued

### **Family history and other characteristics that increase risk for stroke**

Family members share genes, behaviors, lifestyles, and environments that can influence their health and their risk for disease. Stroke risk can be higher in some families than in others, and your chances of having a stroke can go up or down depending on your age, sex, and race or ethnicity.

#### **Genetics and family history**

When members of a family pass traits from one generation to another through genes, that process is called heredity.

**Genetic factors** likely play some role in high blood pressure, stroke, and other related conditions. Several genetic disorders can cause a stroke, including sickle cell disease. People with a family history of stroke are also likely to share common environments and other potential factors that increase their risk. The chances for stroke can increase even more when heredity combines with unhealthy lifestyle choices, such as smoking cigarettes and eating an unhealthy diet. Find out more about genetics and disease on CDC's Office of Public Health Genomics website.

**Family health history** is a record of the diseases and health conditions that happen in your family. Family health history is a useful tool for understanding health risks and preventing health problems.

#### **Age**

The older you are, the more likely you are to have a stroke. The chance of having a stroke about doubles every 10 years after age 55. Although stroke is common among older adults, many people younger than 65 years also have strokes.

In fact, about one in seven strokes occur in adolescents and young adults ages 15 to 49.3 Experts think younger people are having more strokes because more young people have obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

#### **Sex**

Stroke is more common in women than men, and women of all ages are more likely than men to die from stroke.



# Nutrition

## Food and Mood

Have you ever felt hangry (hungry + angry)? Food and mood have an effect on one another. Understand how they interact so you can make good diet choices and avoid emotional or impulse eating.

Maybe it's no coincidence that food and mood are just a letter apart; the two are peas in a pod. Think about it: you stick to a giant dinner salad on a "winning it" kind of day, and reach for a tub of ice cream after a bad date or a frustrating day at work.

It's a delicate relationship, and it can spin out of control if you're not careful. Let's look at the food-mood relationship, and how to set it right again when it goes wrong.

### The First Craving

Even if you maintain a healthy diet, it's normal to desire high calorie, unhealthy treats when stressed or depressed. This makes sense: your body wants to fuel up for fight-or-flight mode when times get tough, but it can mistake the stress of fighting traffic on the freeway for fighting predators on the savanna. It's no wonder a whole pizza, a plate piled with fried chicken, or a chocolate milkshake can seem like a cure for a downer of a day--there's a reason it's called "comfort food."

### Vicious Cycle

A cheat meal every now and then can be okay, but if you use food to battle the blues, you're going to lose the war. Research shows that foods full of fat and sugar only increase the likelihood of depression and anxiety, and that means you'll only want more sugary junk to fight the new bad mood. This cycle is a feedback loop.

### The Downward Spiral

If the consumption of fats and sugar goes on too long, your body will adapt to it, and think it's normal. Then, when you try to start eating right, you could throw off your system and further increase anxiety and depression, trapping you in a cycle of bad eating to try to maintain happiness. It's a terrible place to be.

### Breaking the Cycle

There's a way avoid the downward spiral; you're not trapped. In the same way that unhealthy comfort food can keep you feeling low, healthy food can boost you up. In one study, the happiness that came from eating eight portions of fruits and vegetables a day was equal to the joy experienced by an unemployed person finding a job. That's a huge lift in attitude!

### Things Keep Looking Up

When you're happier, you're more likely to crave healthy foods. In one study, participants watching a happy movie opted for grapes, while those watching a sad movie reached for the popcorn. It's easier to stay healthy when you stay happy. And don't forget, eating healthier helps you stay happier.

Nutrition continued

### **Up, Up, and Away!**

The best part? There are long term mental health effects to eating well. Research has shown that healthy choices, like the Mediterranean diet, full of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, can help keep depression at bay, stabilizing mood and keeping you out of the danger zone where it feels like only a cupcake will save the day.

### **Good Mood Foods**

There are some specific foods to keep an eye on to boost your mood:

**Fruits and Vegetables** -- An apple a day keeps the doctor away--and maybe the psychiatrist, too. As noted, fruits and veg have been linked to higher levels of happiness.

**Omega-3 Fatty Acids** – This is the good stuff, found in foods like fish and nut oils. Low Omega-3 fatty acids have been correlated to depression and impulsivity. Getting plenty of this in your diet keeps your levels high, that's a good thing.

**Chocolate** – As a special treat, chocolate may have properties that improve mood and even reduce tension. But remember, the key is to choose real chocolate (dark is best), and in moderation.

Start Now: Break the Bad Mood/ Bad Food Cycle

Stock up on convenient and healthy snacks, like bananas or individual bags of nuts or carrots. Keep them within easy reach at home, work and in the car. Now, the next time a craving or bad mood hits, you can reach for some mood-boosting goodness.

Now eat right, so you'll be in the mood to be healthy for good!

## **Staying Active**

### **Exercise helps ease arthritis pain and stiffness**

When starting an arthritis exercise program, know what to do and how much to do for best results.

Everyone needs exercise, but it's especially important for people with arthritis. Exercise increases strength and makes moving easier. Exercise reduces joint pain and helps fight tiredness.

Of course, when joints are stiff and painful, the thought of walking around the block or swimming a few laps might seem like too much. There's no need to run a marathon or swim for miles. Even moderate exercise can ease pain and help you stay at a healthy weight. In short, when arthritis tries to slow you down, exercise can keep you moving.

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Staying Active continued

**Why exercise is needed?**

The right kinds of exercise can improve health and fitness without hurting joints. Combined with a treatment program, exercise can add to quality of life. And it can:

- Strengthen muscles around joints.
- Help maintain bone strength.
- Increase energy.
- Make it easier to sleep well.
- Help control weight.
- Improve balance.
- Improve mood.

Bones need strong muscles for support. Not exercising weakens those supporting muscles. Weak muscles put more stress on joints.

**Check with your health care provider first**

Talk to your care provider about making exercise a part of your treatment. The best exercises depend on the type of arthritis and which joints the arthritis is in. A member of your health care team, such as a physical therapist, can work with you to find the exercise plan that's best for you.

**Exercises for arthritis**

Exercises for arthritis might include exercises that put joints through their full range of motion and strengthening exercises. Exercise that raises heart rate, known as aerobic exercise, is also important.

**Range-of-motion exercises**

These exercises lessen stiffness and put joints through their full range of motion. Examples of these exercises are stretching arms up high or rolling shoulders forward and backward. Most of these exercises can be done every day.

**Strengthening exercises**

These exercises help build strong muscles that can support and protect the joints. Weight training is an example of exercise that can help build and keep muscle strength. Using resistance bands, hand weights or machines can help build strength.

Weight training should be done every other day for at least two days a week. It should include all the major muscles in the body.

**Aerobic exercise**

Exercises that raise heart rate, known as aerobic exercises, help with overall fitness. They can improve heart and lung health, help control weight, and increase energy.

Examples of aerobic exercises that are easy on joints include walking, bicycling, swimming and water aerobics. Try to work up to 150 minutes of somewhat hard aerobic exercise every week. You can exercise 10 minutes at a time if that's easier on your joints.

Staying Active continued

It's best to do moderate aerobic activity most days of the week. But even a couple of days a week can help. Exercise at a rate at which breathing is harder than usual while still being able to talk.

### **Other activities**

Any movement, no matter how small, can help. Daily activities such as mowing the lawn, raking leaves and walking the dog count.

Exercises that focus on how the body moves, such as gentle forms of yoga or tai chi, also can help. They can improve balance and posture, prevent falls, and ease tenseness.

If you're in an exercise class, tell your teacher about your arthritis. Listen to your body. Don't do anything that causes pain.

### **Tips to protect your joints**

If you haven't exercised in a while, start slowly. Don't push yourself too hard — that can overwork muscles and make joint pain worse.

#### **Consider these tips:**

- **Keep the impact low.** Low-impact exercises help keep joint stress low while you move. Examples include stationary or recumbent bicycling, elliptical trainer workouts, or exercise in the water.
- **Use heat.** Heat can relax joints and muscles and lessen pain before exercise. Deliver the heat with warm towels, hot packs or a shower. The temperature should be warm, not painfully hot. Use for about 20 minutes.
- **Move gently.** Move joints gently at first to warm up. You might begin with range-of-motion exercises for 5 to 10 minutes before you move on to strengthening or aerobic exercises.
- **Go slowly.** Exercise with slow and easy movements. If you feel pain, take a break. Sharp pain and pain that's worse than the usual joint pain might mean something is wrong. Slow down if you see swelling or redness in your joints.
- **Ice afterward.** Use ice on your joints for up to 20 minutes as needed after activity. This is even more important if your joints are swollen.
- **Listen to your body.** Don't push too hard. Build up slowly. Add more and harder exercise as you get stronger.

### **Don't overdo**

You might feel some pain and stiffness after exercise if you haven't been active for a while. In general, if pain lasts more than two hours after exercise, you might be pushing too hard. You might need to exercise less often or for less time. Talk to your health care provider about how to know when pain is a sign of something more serious.

If you have rheumatoid arthritis, ask your provider if you should exercise during flares. You might work through your joint flares by doing only range-of-motion exercises. Or you might exercise in water. Even during a flare, it's good to keep your body moving.



## Volunteer

RSVP Mileage and Meal Reimbursement Benefit was just completed by our outstanding program assistant, Lynn Garcia-Smith. This reimbursement will cover the last quarter, January, February and March of 2023, and will be paid out hitting your mailbox by early May. A couple of reminders about this reimbursement and Volunteer timesheets.

**Please make sure that all time sheets are submitted to the volunteer office by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month.** This allows Lynn time to process all of the paperwork monthly, insuring that when it is time to submit the quarterly reimbursement to the Counties AP team, the reimbursement is complete, accurate and submitted in a timely manner.

**When you receive your check in April, please remember to cash it or deposit it to your bank.** The AP team at the county is always asking about volunteers who have not cashed their checks. Additionally, to be part of the RSVP program, you don't have to request the quarterly reimbursement, but it is a program requirement that a timesheet is submitted showing hours worked at your volunteer site. This is the required documentation for insurance coverage and volunteer appreciation events and gifts.

Finally, AmeriCorps Seniors who have had changes in their contact information (i.e. address, phone numbers, email address, etc.) or who have questions about mileage reimbursement should contact the RSVP office at 505-404-5915.

More sunshine and warmer days bring out the gardener in many of us. After a long winter when we are often less active, jumping back in to bending, lifting, and otherwise exerting ourselves can lead to injury. Gardening experts shared a number of tips for staying safe in the garden:

- Keep hydrated and work outdoors during the cooler part of the day.
- Carry a reasonable load; divide loads into multiple trips or ask for help.
- Be mindful of tools and hoses on the ground; arrange them that so they do not create a fall hazard.
- Be cautious on sloped ground; use a walking stick for support and balance.
- Wear good, supportive footwear to avoid slipping.
- Notify a family member or a neighbor when you head out alone.
- Bring the garden to you. Rather than having to bend to the ground, consider raised beds, container gardens, vertical gardening, or garden benches.
- Add cushion and width to the circumference of tools to reduce fatigue when gripping tools. You can use pipe insulation attached with duct tape to do it yourself.
- There are also tools specifically adapted to provide additional support and leverage.
- Consider using a garden kneeler with handles to assist in getting up.

With a little creativity and attention to caution, your love of gardening can be enjoyed for a lifetime.



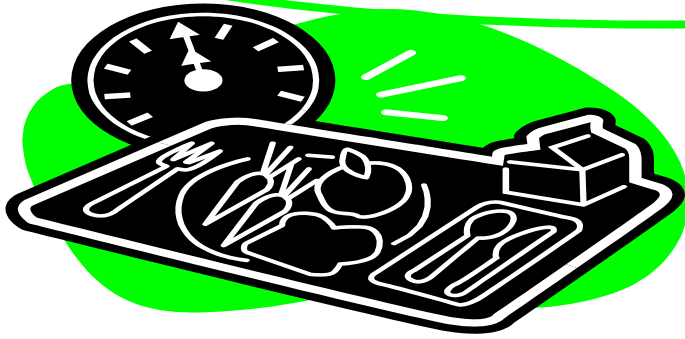
## Happy Birthday to our May Birthday Volunteers



Susan Bonsal  
Angela Ellison  
Richard Foley  
Carl Geiger Jr.  
Barbara Lucero  
Linda Morales  
Patricia Oshel  
Shirley Stanford  
Charlene Suranie  
Jarmila (Mila) Van Vossen  
Patricia Vasques  
Barbara Vidal



## Why should I make a contribution for my meals or transportation?



Meals and Transportation for seniors are paid for by funds from the Federal, State and County government. These funds are not enough to cover the full cost. Contributions made by participants in the program help make up the shortfall.

When the price of food and gasoline increases, the program needs more money to serve the same number of meals this year as were served last year. Additional income for the program helps to provide more meals, more transportation and expand services.

Q: If I make a donation, will my money be sent to another part of the State?

A: No, the contributions collected at your site will be deposited in an account in a local bank. The money goes to the program you participate in, providing meals to you, and other seniors in your program!

Q: Ok, I'll make a donation toward the cost of the meal or transportation... How much do you suggest?

A: Each person asked to contribute whatever he or she can afford to give. The suggested donation is \$2.00 for a lunch and \$2.00 to \$5.00 for transportation however No eligible person will be turned away if they are unable to make a donation.