



# Sandoval County Senior Program Administration

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## CENTER LOCATION

**Sandoval County Senior Program**  
1500 Idalia Rd., Bldg. D  
P O Box 40  
Bernalillo NM 87004

**Phone: 867-7535**  
**Fax: 867-7606**

**Hours of Operation:**  
**Monday—Friday 8-5pm**

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## ADMINISTRATION STAFF

**Senior Program Manager**  
Desi Aragon

**Administrative Assistant**  
Jennifer Stivers

**Food Service Manager**  
George Archibeque

**Accounting Specialist**  
Elaine Jaramillo

**Transportation Drivers**  
Shannon Cassidy **Scheduler-Driver)**  
Matthew Montoya **(Driver)**  
Greg Shea **(Driver)**

**SAMS Data Coordinator**  
Vacant

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## Health & Wellness

### September is Cancer Awareness month for Leukemia, Lymphoma and Thyroid

[www.nfcr.org](http://www.nfcr.org)

To bring attention to leukemia and lymphoma, Congress in 2010 designated September as Blood Cancer Awareness Month. These diseases are diagnosed in 14,000 people monthly within the United States. But with advances in treatment and technologies yielding earlier and earlier detection, the overall five-year relative survival rate for leukemia has more than quadrupled since 1960.

But these statistics are painted in broad strokes and can foster a false sense of security. There are numerous types of leukemia and lymphoma whose facts and figures are not nearly so rosy as, for instance, the promising 86% five-year-survival rate for Hodgkin lymphoma.

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma is a far more lethal form of blood cancer, and while the survival rate has grown considerably since the 1990s, approximately 20,140 deaths 11,450 men and 8,690 women from this disease will still occur this year. Acute myeloid leukemia (AML), which itself has several subtypes, all of which affect both blood and bone marrow, is expected to kill 10,000 in 2018. Patients over 60 tend not to respond well to AML treatment, and the overall five-year survival rate is just 26%.

Causal agents for both are not entirely understood. While family history can lead both patients and doctors to early and correct diagnoses, leukemia is also linked to exposure to high doses of ionizing radiation, the chemical benzene or a very particular gene mutation dubbed the “Philadelphia chromosome.” In a leukemia subtype called chronic myelogenous leukemia, or CML, part of the DNA from one chromosome moves to another chromosome. This change results in the bone marrow making an enzyme, tyrosine kinase, that causes too many stem cells to become white blood cells.

As to lymphoma, many risk factors are similar to those associated with leukemia, including benzene, radiation exposure and family history. But too, previous viral infections such as Epstein Barr and hepatitis C can elevate the likelihood of developing the condition.

Several National Foundation for Cancer Research-funded scientists, including Doctors Frederick Alt and Curt Civin, have dedicated their careers to fighting blood cancers.

Alt’s work on a DNA repair mechanism called “non-homologous end joining” highlights a process protecting against translocations, a type of genetic damage that leads to cancers including lymphoma and leukemia. Civin’s breakthrough discovery of CD34<sup>+</sup> lympho-hematopoietic stem-progenitor cells opened new directions in research and accelerated the first successful stem cell therapy that was developed from basic research.

## Health & Wellness continued

But as with any disease, early detection and treatment is key. Persistent fatigue, night sweats, and unexpected weight loss are all symptoms of lymphoma. But the hallmark of the disease, and the symptom that should send a person to his or her doctor, is a painless swelling of the lymph nodes in the neck, armpits, and groin. Likewise, fever, chills and weight loss associated with leukemia are so general as to suggest other, more likely, conditions, but those combined with bone pain, frequent nosebleeds and infections, and tiny red spots on the skin (called petechiae) are a warning of a far more dire situation.

The sooner patients and doctors can connect these dots, the better the chances are that the blood cancer, if indeed present, can be eradicated successfully.

Thyroid cancer is a devastating disease with interesting idiosyncrasies which are not yet fully understood. It is estimated that nearly 54,000 people will be diagnosed with thyroid cancer in the U.S. this year. It is likely that over 2,000 people will die from the disease. Women are three times more likely to develop thyroid cancer, but men are more likely to die from the disease upon developing it. Thyroid cancer is the most common cancer in women ages 20 to 34. More information is needed to better understand these statistics, but it is clear that young women need to be aware of their risk for this disease.

There are various risk factors for thyroid cancer which converge on two major themes. The first is iodine. Iodine is necessary for thyroid hormone production and it appears that a deficiency in this element does increase risk of developing cancer. Simultaneously, an excess has been shown to negatively impact thyroid function and lead to cancer. Finding the appropriate balance is important. The second major risk factor is radiation. Radiation from previous cancer treatment, as well as nuclear radiation, is strongly associated with thyroid cancer risk. Breast and colon cancer both too increase thyroid cancer risk. Family history of thyroid cancer is an additional risk factor.

Thyroid cancer produces many symptoms, such as swelling or lumps in the lower front of the neck, pain in the neck and sometimes moving up to the ears, difficulty breathing or swallowing, and a constant cough not due to a viral or bacterial infection. If any of these symptoms appear it is critical to go to a medical professional for a Neck Check or other screening. Regardless of symptoms, always ask your medical professional for a Neck Check during routine visits so they can detect a thyroid nodule if present.

Thyroid cancer currently has many promising immunotherapy-based treatments on the horizon. This is in response to new research which has exposed the genetic underpinnings of the disease. Many researchers are hopeful that major breakthroughs in thyroid cancer treatment will come in the near future. Increasing funding into this research will help the possibility for better treatment become a reality.

## Nutrition

### 13 Cholesterol-Lowering Foods to Add to Your Diet

[www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com)

Heart disease is the world's leading cause of death. Having high cholesterol levels especially “bad” LDL is linked to an increased risk of heart disease. Low “good” HDL cholesterol and high triglycerides are also linked to increased risk. Your diet has a powerful effect on your cholesterol and other risk factors.

**Here are 13 foods that can lower cholesterol and improve other risk factors for heart disease.**

#### 1. Legumes

Legumes, also known as pulses, are a group of plant foods that includes beans, peas and lentils. Legumes contain a lot of fiber, minerals and protein. Replacing some refined grains and processed meats in your diet with legumes can lower your risk of heart disease.

#### 2. Avocados

Avocados are an exceptionally nutrient-dense fruit.

They're a rich source of monounsaturated fats and fiber two nutrients that help lower “bad” LDL and raise “good” HDL cholesterol.

#### 3. Nuts — Especially Almonds and Walnuts

Nuts are another exceptionally nutrient-dense food. They're very high in monounsaturated fats.

Walnuts are also rich in the plant variety of omega-3 fatty acids, a type of polyunsaturated fat associated with heart health.

Almonds and other nuts are particularly rich in L-arginine, an amino acid that helps your body make nitric oxide. This, in turn, helps regulate blood pressure.

What's more, nuts provide phytosterols. These plant compounds are structurally similar to cholesterol and help lower cholesterol by blocking its absorption in your intestines.

Calcium, magnesium and potassium, also found in nuts, may reduce blood pressure and lower your risk of heart disease.

#### 4. Fatty Fish

Fatty fish, such as salmon and mackerel, are excellent sources of long-chain omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s bolster heart health by increasing “good” HDL cholesterol and lowering inflammation and stroke risk. Keep in mind that the healthiest ways to cook fish are steaming or stewing. In fact, fried fish may increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. Fish is a major part of the Mediterranean diet, which has been extensively studied for its benefits on heart health. Some of the heart-protective benefits of fish may also come from certain peptides found in fish protein.

## Nutrition

### 5. Whole Grains — Especially Oats and Barley

Extensive research ties whole grains to lower heart disease risk.

Whole grains keep all parts of the grain intact, which provides them with more vitamins, minerals, plant compounds and fiber than refined grains.

While all whole grains may promote heart health, two grains are particularly noteworthy:

Oats: Contain beta-glucan, a type of soluble fiber that helps lower cholesterol. Eating oats may lower total cholesterol by 5% and “bad” LDL cholesterol by 7%.

Barley: Also rich in beta-glucans and can help lower “bad” LDL cholesterol (19Trusted Source).

### 6. Fruits and Berries

Fruit is an excellent addition to a heart-healthy diet for several reasons.

Many types of fruit are rich in soluble fiber, which helps lower cholesterol levels.

It does this by encouraging your body to get rid of cholesterol and stopping your liver from producing this compound. One kind of soluble fiber called pectin lowers cholesterol by up to 10%. It's found in fruits including apples, grapes, citrus fruits and strawberries.

Fruit also contains bioactive compounds that help prevent heart disease and other chronic diseases due to their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects.

Eating berries and grapes, which are particularly rich sources of these plant compounds, can help increase “good” HDL and lower “bad” LDL cholesterol.

### 7. Dark Chocolate and Cocoa

Cocoa is the main ingredient in dark chocolate.

It may seem too good to be true, but research verifies the claims that dark chocolate and cocoa can lower “bad” LDL cholesterol.

Cocoa and dark chocolate also seem to protect the “bad” LDL cholesterol in your blood from oxidation, which is a key cause of heart disease.

However, chocolate is often high in added sugar which negatively affects heart health.

Therefore, you should use cocoa alone or choose dark chocolate with a cocoa content of 75–85% or higher.

### 8. Garlic

Garlic has been used for centuries as an ingredient in cooking and as a medicine.

It contains various powerful plant compounds, including allicin, its main active compound.

Studies suggest that garlic lowers blood pressure in people with elevated levels and may help lower total and “bad” LDL cholesterol although the latter effect is less strong.

Because relatively large amounts of garlic are needed to achieve this heart-protective effect, many studies utilize aged supplements which are considered more effective than other garlic preparations.

Nutrition continued

## 9. Soy Foods

Soybeans are a type of legume that may be beneficial for heart health.

While study results have been inconsistent, recent research is positive. An analysis of 35 studies linked soy foods to reduced “bad” LDL and total cholesterol, as well as increased “good” HDL cholesterol. The effect seems strongest in people with high cholesterol.

## 10. Vegetables

Vegetables are a vital part of a heart-healthy diet.

They're rich in fiber and antioxidants and low in calories, which is necessary for maintaining a healthy weight. Some vegetables are particularly high in pectin, the same cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber that occurs in apples and oranges. Pectin-rich vegetables also include okra, eggplants, carrots and potatoes.

Vegetables also deliver a range of plant compounds which offer many health benefits, including protection against heart disease.

## 11. Tea

Tea harbors many plant compounds that improve your heart health.

While green tea gets a lot of attention, black tea and white tea have similar properties and health effects. Two of the primary beneficial compounds in tea are:

**Catechins:** Help activate nitric oxide, which is important for healthy blood pressure. They also inhibit cholesterol synthesis and absorption and help prevent blood clots.

**Quercetin:** May improve blood vessel function and lower inflammation.

Though most studies associate tea with lower total and “bad” LDL cholesterol, research is mixed on its effects on “good” HDL cholesterol and blood pressure.

## 12. Dark Leafy Greens

While all vegetables are good for your heart, dark leafy greens are particularly beneficial.

Dark leafy greens, such as kale and spinach, contain lutein and other carotenoids, which are linked to a lower risk of heart disease. Carotenoids act as antioxidants to get rid of harmful free radicals that can lead to hardened arteries.

Dark leafy greens may also help lower cholesterol levels by binding to bile acids and making your body excrete more cholesterol.

One study suggested that lutein lowers levels of oxidized “bad” LDL cholesterol and could help prevent cholesterol from binding to artery walls.

Nutrition continued

### 13. Extra Virgin Olive Oil

One of the most important foods in the heart-healthy Mediterranean diet is extra virgin olive oil.

Olive oil is a rich source of monounsaturated fatty acids, the kind that may help raise “good” HDL and lower “bad” LDL cholesterol.

It is also a source of polyphenols, some of which reduce the inflammation that can drive heart disease.

## Frail & Elderly

### Kitchen Safety

[www.agingcare.com](http://www.agingcare.com)

While the kitchen is often referred to as the "heart of the house," it can be a dangerous place for elderly people. In fact, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) people over the age of 65 have a 2.5 times greater risk of dying in a kitchen fire than the general population. Cooking is one of the leading causes of fire in the home, FEMA says, accounting for thousands of injuries and deaths each year.

There are many reasons why our aging loved ones are at greater risk for fire death and injuries:

- They may be less able to take the quick action necessary in a fire emergency due to physical, visual, and hearing impairments
- The medications your loved one is taking may affect their ability to make quick decisions or responds in a timely fashion
- Diminished mental facilities due to depression, forms of dementia or Alzheimer's disease also make reaction times slower
- Seniors may not have others around to help during a cooking fire

Here are some tips for making cooking safer for seniors.

Most kitchen fires occur because food is left unattended on the stove or in the oven. Never leave food that is cooking on the stove unattended. Never leave the kitchen even for a short time when food is frying, grilling, or broiling. Don't leave the house if food is simmering, baking, or roasting

## Frail & Elderly Continued

For people with Alzheimer's or dementia who tend to turn on the stove, then walk away and forget they turned it on, this is easier said than done. However, a variety of products and devices are available to reduce the risk of accidentally leaving the stove turned on. For example, auto shut-off devices can be installed to automatically turn off the stove and oven after a set period of time (anywhere from 5 to 90 minutes.) Keep pot handles turned inward. When handles are turned outward, or even to the side, they can be easily bumped, causing the pot to spill or fall over.

For people with arthritis, Parkinson's disease or general muscle decline, heavy pots and pans are an accident waiting to happen – especially if the pan is full of grease, which can easily ignite if spilled. Products that can help: two handled pans allow the senior to lift and maneuver hot heavy pans with more stability.

Avoid wearing loose clothing with flowing sleeves while cooking. Robes, house dresses and other garments that may be comfortable for a senior often have extra loose sleeves that could potentially ignite if they get too close to a hot burner. Opt for comfortable clothing that has short or tight-fitting sleeves.

Keep cooking surfaces and surrounding areas free from clutter. Use pot holders and oven mitts, but keep them away from the stovetop when not using them. Many cooking aids can be combustible: never leave oven mitts, dishtowels, wooden utensils, paper, plastic bags, cardboard boxes, cans of cooking spray, or oils near open burners.

The accumulation of grease on kitchen appliance hoods and in exhaust systems can lead to disaster. Clean cooking surfaces regularly to prevent grease buildup, which can start fires.

Make sure there is a working smoke detector in the kitchen. Test and dust each alarm monthly, and change the batteries at least once a year. Have a small fire extinguisher in the kitchen. Teach your loved one how to use it. If necessary, write instructions for use and tape it to the extinguisher.

Seniors don't have to give up their love of cooking just because they've lost some mobility or mental capacity. The key is to provide a safe environment for them to cook in.



## Staying Active

### SEPSIS AWARENESS

[www.sepsis.org](http://www.sepsis.org)

Sepsis is the body's overwhelming and life-threatening response to infection that can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death. In other words, it's your body's overactive and toxic response to an infection.

Your immune system usually works to fight any germs (bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites) to prevent infection. If an infection does occur, your immune system will try to fight it, although you may need help with medication such as antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals, and antiparasitics. However, for reasons researchers don't understand, sometimes the immune system stops fighting the "invaders," and begins to turn on itself. This is the start of sepsis.

Some people are at higher risk of developing sepsis because they are at higher risk of contracting an infection. These include the very young, the very old, those with chronic illnesses, and those with a weakened or impaired immune system.

Patients are diagnosed with sepsis when they develop a set of signs and symptoms related to sepsis. Sepsis is not diagnosed based on an infection itself. If you have more than one of the symptoms of sepsis, especially if there are signs of an infection or you fall into one of the higher risk groups, your doctor will likely suspect sepsis.

Sepsis progresses to severe sepsis when in addition to signs of sepsis, there are signs of organ dysfunction, such as difficulty breathing (problems with the lungs), low or no urine output (kidneys), abnormal liver tests (liver), and changes in mental status (brain). Nearly all patients with severe sepsis require treatment in an intensive care unit (ICU).

Septic shock is the most severe level and is diagnosed when your blood pressure drops to dangerous levels.


Sepsis has been named as the most expensive in-patient cost in American hospitals. One report stated the costs were \$24 billion in 2014. But at an average of over \$18,000 per hospital stay and with over 1.5 million sepsis hospital stays per year, this actually works out to costs of \$27 billion each year.

Studies investigating survival have reported slightly different numbers, but it appears that on average, approximately 30% of patients diagnosed with severe sepsis do not survive. Up to 50% of survivors suffer from post-sepsis syndrome. Until a cure for sepsis is found, early detection and treatment is essential for survival and limiting disability for survivors.

When it comes to sepsis, remember **IT'S ABOUT TIME™**. Watch for:

T	I	M	E
<b>TEMPERATURE</b> higher or lower than normal	<b>INFECTION</b> may have signs and symptoms of an infection	<b>MENTAL DECLINE</b> confused, sleepy, difficult to rouse	<b>EXTREMELY ILL</b> "I feel like I might die," severe pain or discomfort

Watch for a combination of these symptoms. If you suspect sepsis, see a doctor urgently. CALL 911 or go to a hospital and say, "I AM CONCERNED ABOUT SEPSIS."

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## Volunteer

### **THE SANDOVAL COUNTY SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AND YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!**



**...to share your time, experience, and compassion.  
The Foster Grandparent Program and Senior Companion  
Program is looking for YOU**

**If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please call  
Marta at (505) 404-5818  
Jonathan at (505) 404-5822  
Or Lynn at (505) 404-5915**

### **September Volunteer Birthdays**

**Alois Bamberg**

**Judy Griffith**

**Peggy Barr**

**Kimberly A. King**

**Maxine Benson**

**Barb McKinney**

**Dee Yeager-Bovenzi**

**LeNein B Mueller**

**Raj Sudarsanam**

**Sandra Campanella**

**Georgia Clemens Dray**

**Betty Ziesmer**

**Aimee Guinotte Beneage**



Three decades ago, more than 20,000 Americans raised their right hands and pledged to get things done for America. These members helped more than 1,000 communities nationwide during their first year of service. Since then, more than 1.25 million Americans and hundreds of thousands more AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers of all backgrounds have followed in their footsteps, providing billions of hours of results-driven service across each of the 50 states and US territories.

In times of tragedy and triumph, when America calls, AmeriCorps answers. Whether its AmeriCorps members stepping forward to help after 9/11, aiding in recovery from disasters like Hurricane Katrina over the course of decades, or pivoting to address the urgent needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic, AmeriCorps knows how to get things done for America and has been turning moments of impact into a national service movement for three decades.

America was founded on a promise of opportunity. When we build stronger communities, you, the volunteers help make this promise a reality, for every individual to succeed. Especially in times of adversity, we find the courage to unite and overcome. Helping our communities prosper, head on and together. It's what AmeriCorps Seniors is built for: bringing all Americans together. Working alongside each other for the betterment of every community. Ensuring that everyone gets the help they need, and the opportunities they deserve. AmeriCorps is your chance to be a part of something bigger.

In honor of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of AmeriCorps, Sandoval County Senior Volunteer Program is participating in the September 11<sup>th</sup> National Day of Service. We are asking you to contribute to a special community “**Ready to Eat**” food drive. Our RSVP site at St. Felix Pantry has asked us to help them meet the special needs of clients and children who do not have a stove or microwave to cook or maybe don't know how to cook. St. Felix is looking for foods that are ready to eat and require no refrigeration such as:

- Bars with protein in them
- Pop-top can foods such as, soups, mac-n-cheese, pastas,
- Applesauce, fruit cups,
- Canned meats and tuna.
- Ramen Cups

Donations are being accepted at the following sites: Bernalillo Senior Center, Corrales Senior Center, Cuba Senior Center, Jemez Senior Center, Placitas Senior Center, Pena Blanca Community Center and the Health Commons Building at the Sandoval County Complex. Donations will be accepted from August 28<sup>th</sup> thru September 11<sup>th</sup>. If you have questions, please call the volunteer office at 505-404-5818.



**If you were a child and couldn't cook or you were homeless and didn't have access to a stove or microwave what could you eat?**

AmeriCorps Senior programs in partnership with the Sandoval County Senior Volunteer Program are participating in a national service project in remembrance of September 11. We are hosting a special community drive for food that is "ready to eat." On behalf of our RSVP volunteer site at St. Felix Pantry, we are asking for donations of:

- Bars with protein in them
- Pop-Top-ready to eat foods including: soups, mac-n-cheese, ravioli or pasta
- Applesauce or fruit cups
- Canned meats including Vienna sausages, spam or tuna and crackers
- Ramen cups

**All food needs to be ready to eat without cooking or refrigeration  
Donations will be accepted from August 28<sup>th</sup>-September 11, 2023**

Drop off your donations at the following locations: Corrales Senior Center, Bernalillo Senior Center, Placitas Senior Center, Jemez Senior Center, Cuba Senior Center and Pena Blanca Community Center

