

FREE



MAY 2026

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Older Americans Month

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy and the National Council of Senior Citizens declared May as Senior Citizens Month to draw awareness to

relevant issues of the time. The country lacked effective resources for healthy aging, with only 17 million Americans living past the age of 65, compared to the 55 million today. Plus, one in three older Americans lives in poverty, a staggering number. Two years later, President Kennedy renamed it Older Americans Month, and it has remained a national month of recognition to this day, with every president since honoring it in a formal proclamation.

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month, a time to recognize older Americans' contributions, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm our commitment to serving older adults.

The 2026 theme, Champion Your Health, focuses on prevention, wellness, and personal responsibility as cornerstones of healthy aging. It encourages taking an active role in managing your own health, advocating for yourself, accessing preventive care, and making informed decisions that support independence.

Join us in highlighting the importance of evidence-based approaches, self-management, and community partnerships that empower individuals to lead their healthiest lives.



Older adults bring a lifetime of experience, wisdom, and perspective. They serve as volunteers, mentors, caregivers, and advocates – sharing their time and talents in ways that strengthen our communities and enrich the lives of others.

Older Americans Month is also a reminder of the importance of connection and engagement at every stage of life. Staying involved and connected supports well-being and helps build strong, vibrant communities for all generations.

This May, we invite you to take a moment to celebrate the older adults in your life – thank a volunteer, listen to a story, or simply reach out. Aging is not about slowing down; it's about continuing to make a difference.



Staff Spotlight: Carmen

Hello, my name is Carmen and I'm the Caregiver Coordinator for the ADRC of Chippewa County. I get to connect caregivers with support programs to help them get a little respite from their caregiving duties. It's rewarding to see them get the support they deserve. As a former caregiver myself, I have the utmost respect and compassion for caregivers.



I moved to the Chippewa Valley 15 and half years ago, after my caregiving duties were over. I always enjoyed visiting this area as a kid and young adult, as many relatives live in this area. Now that I'm much older I enjoy the many trees, rivers, lakes, nature and beauty of Chippewa Valley. I'm also a big fan of the arts here, with my oldest son often performing with the local theaters.

Supporting You and Your Loved Ones At Every Stage of Life

Adapted from blog.ssa.gov



*Submitted by: Stephanie Rasmussen,
Disability Benefit Specialist*

Social Security is with you throughout life's journey. Our programs and services are there when you and your family need them most. We understand that some individuals may have difficulty accessing or understanding our systems and may need additional help. If you're helping a family member or friend, here are some tools and resources that can help make the process easier:



- 1. Create a personal *my* Social Security account:**
Planning for retirement or interested in estimating future benefits? Your loved one can create a free and secure my Social Security account to view their Social Security Statement and manage their benefits.
- 2. Apply for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI):**
If someone you know is unable to work due to a serious medical condition, Social Security disability benefits can provide essential support. Learn more and apply on our Disability page.
- 3. Our Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program:**
SSI provides monthly payments to people with disabilities and older adults who have little or no income or resources. If you or someone you know thinks they may be eligible, you can check eligibility and apply for SSI.
- 4. Check the status of a pending application:**
Tracking the progress of a benefits application is simple with a personal my Social Security account. If you don't have an account, you can easily create one on our website.
- 5. Appeal a decision for benefits:**
If someone you know was denied Social Security or SSI benefits, they can request an appeal online. Our webpage provides guidance for appealing both medical and non-medical decisions.

For more ways to assist others, visit our Information for Groups and Organizations. Please share this information with your friends and family and help us spread the word on social media!

The ADRC is Online!

Subscribe for FREE to get this eNewsletter emailed to you each month at www.chippewacountywi.gov/adrc or scan the QR code below. You can always pick up this free newspaper at most local grocery stores, or pay \$16/year for a mailed subscription. **Call the ADRC at 715-726-7777.**

Website



Resource Guide



Facebook



Events



Leave Us a Review



eNewsletter



Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Staff ... *Your Bridge to Support!*

- ADRC Manager – Sarah Zielke
- Administrative Assistants – Renee Price, Carmen Olson, Karen Herbison
- Benefit Specialist Assistant – Breanna Schemenauer
- Dementia Care Specialist – Bronson Stelzer
- Disability Benefit Specialist – Stephanie Rasmussen
- Elder Benefit Specialist – Cory Miller
- Nutrition & Transportation Programs Supervisor – Kayla Colbenson
- Nutrition Program Assistants – Jason Kolano, Jen Buckley
- Nutrition Site Aides – Sue Barnum, Linda Felmlee, Cindy Sarazen, Ann Mueller, Cindy Irish, Vicky Steinmetz
- Options Counselors – Sarah Hedlund, Erika Stevens, Jessica Gibson, Libby Leinenkugel, Brittany Lofquist

Aging and Disability Resource Centers are the first place to go with your aging and disability questions. We are an "information station" where you can get accurate, unbiased information related to aging or living with a disability. Our job is to help you remain as independent as possible! Give us a call at 715-726-7777 or stop in at 711 N. Bridge Street (Courthouse), Room 118, Chippewa Falls.

Know us BEFORE you need us!

There are no income requirements to utilize the services of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). ADRC assists adults age 60 and over as well as adults age 18-59 with disabilities. ADRC services are also available to family members, friends, caregivers and professionals working with these populations.



WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

- Information, Assistance and Long-Term Care Options Counseling
- Elder and Disability Benefits Counseling
- Health Promotion and Prevention
- Family Caregiver Support
- Dementia Care Services
- Nutrition Services (Meals on Wheels—Senior Dining)
- More Resources Available



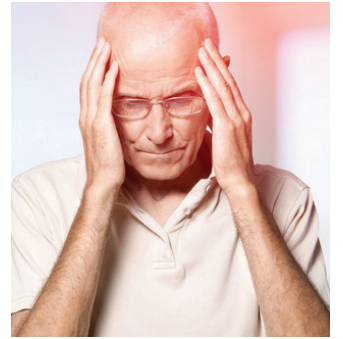
Chippewa County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

711 N. Bridge Street, Room 118 | Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
 Fax: 715.738.2589 | Toll Free: 1.800.947.3529 | TTY: Use Relay (711)
715.726.7777 | adrc@chippewacountywi.gov
chippewacountywi.gov/adrc
 Office Hours: 7:30-4:30 M-Th, 7:30-11:30 F

May is American Stroke Month

By the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resource Legal Services Team

May is American Stroke Month. According to the American Stroke Association, strokes can happen to anyone, at any age, and having a stroke puts you at higher risk for a second one.



A stroke occurs when blood flow to part of the brain is blocked by a clot or when a blood vessel bursts or ruptures. Blood vessels carry oxygen and nutrients to the brain, and when part of the brain can't get the blood and oxygen it needs, brain cells begin to die within minutes.

The most common risk factors for strokes include high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, smoking, and obesity. There are also factors that can't be controlled, such as increasing age, race, ethnicity, family history, and previous stroke, TIA, or heart attack.

Learning F.A.S.T. can save lives. When you spot a stroke warning sign, act fast. Recognizing the stroke warning signs and calling 911 immediately may make the difference between a strong recovery or long-term disability; survival or death.

For more stroke resources, visit: <https://www.stroke.org/en/about-the-american-stroke-association/stroke-awareness-month>

Chippewa Valley Dementia Coalition
 Presents the 2nd Annual:



Thursday
JUNE 11, 2026
 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Chippewa Valley Technical College
 771 Scheidler Road, Chippewa Falls

FOR PROFESSIONALS AND FAMILY CAREGIVERS



Dr. Barbara Bendlin
 School of Medicine and
 Public Health
 UW-Madison



Sharon Lukert, Author
 Living Well with Mild
 Cognitive Impairment

Join us for the 2nd Annual Chippewa Valley Dementia Conference! A day designed to offer practical tools, shared learning, and a supportive space with others who understand the realities of dementia care.

All attendees will enjoy:

- Take-home materials from keynotes and breakout sessions
- Direct access to speakers and exhibitors for Q&A
- Meaningful connection with other caregivers
- Insight into valuable Chippewa Valley resources
- Continental breakfast, lunch, and afternoon refreshments
- Certificates of attendance if needed
- Cost to attend: \$25
- Scholarships available, contact your local ADRC

If you need respite care to attend the event, consider using supportive home care or adult day programs. Contact your local ADRC for more information.

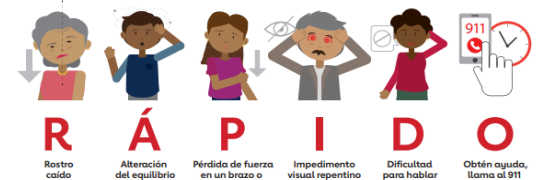
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

<https://bit.ly/dementiaconf26>
 by Friday, June 5, 2026.



R.Á.P.I.D.O. es como juntos acabaremos con los ataques o derrames cerebrales

Aprenda sobre los signos de advertencia de los ataques o derrames cerebrales



Cada 40 segundos, alguien en los Estados Unidos sufre un ataque o derrame cerebral. Podría suceder en la calle, tu lugar de trabajo, en la tienda o en cualquier otro lugar. Si estás listo para detectar los signos de advertencia y llamar al 911, puedes salvar una vida y marcar la diferencia entre una recuperación completa o una discapacidad a largo plazo. Por eso es tan importante que conozcas los signos de advertencia de los ataques o derrames cerebrales y animes a todos a hacer lo mismo.

Entre más rápido se trate el ataque o derrame cerebral, más posibilidad tiene el paciente de recuperarse. De hecho, los pacientes con ataque o derrame cerebral que reciben tratamiento anticoagulante intravenoso r-TPA con alteplase dentro de los primeros 90 minutos siguientes a la aparición de los síntomas tienen el triple de probabilidades de recuperarse sin discapacidad o con poca discapacidad. En algunos casos también se recomienda utilizar un procedimiento para eliminar el coágulo que causó el ataque o derrame cerebral. El 91% de los pacientes que tuvieron un ataque o derrame cerebral y recibieron tratamiento con un recuperador de stent dentro de los 150 minutos siguientes a la aparición de los síntomas se recuperaron sin discapacidad o con poca discapacidad. Lo que hay que recordar es que el ataque o derrame cerebral suele poder tratarse en la mayoría de los casos. Solo es cuestión de recibir el tratamiento adecuado de inmediato.

derramecerebral.org

PROTECT DETECT REPORT

BBB Wisconsin: Top 10 Scams

By Lisa Schiller, Senior Director of Investigations and Media Relations, Wisconsin BBB

Online shopping scams were the most frequently reported scam to BBB Scam Tracker in 2025 by Wisconsinites. This trend provides valuable insight into the findings reported and illustrates the broader patterns reflected in the top scams throughout the year.




Top 10 Scams

- 1 Online/Counterfeit Purchases
- 2 Phishing
- 3 Employment
- 4 Debt Collection
- 5 Advance Fee Loan
- 6 Government Agency Impostor
- 7 Credit Cards
- 8 Tax Collection
- 9 Healthcare/Medicaid/Medicare
- 10 Sweepstakes/Lottery/Prizes

BBB saw an increase of 74% from 2024 to 2025 of all published scam tracker reports.

Of the scams reported, BBB noted a significant rise in Tax Collection-related scams and U.S. Passport and Visa scams in 2025. BBB received reports from consumers in all 72 counties within Wisconsin, with the most reporting from Price, Burnett, and Wood counties. The county with the highest percentage of money loss was Dodge, followed by St. Croix and Rock counties.

Online shopping scams occur as a result of fake websites and social media ads offering discounted and popular items that either never arrive or are counterfeit. We combined online shopping with counterfeit items because many of the online purchase reports included counterfeit products.

Red flags of online shopping websites include extraordinarily low prices, missing or incorrect contact information, spelling or grammar issues, missing punctuation, and demands for payment through untraceable methods such as pre-paid/debit gift cards or wire transfers.

Tips to avoid online shopping scams:

1. Shop local whenever possible
2. Research before you purchase (improve your research skills including better prompting when using AI searches). Remember that professional imagery or videos can be fake.
3. Look for spelling errors, poor grammar, missing punctuation, and lack of contact information.
4. Be suspicious of deeply discounted products or services

Top 10 Most Impersonated Orgs

- 1 DMV/Motor Vehicle Services
- 2 PayPal
- 3 Amazon
- 4 Apple
- 5 Warner Bros. Discovery (WBD)
- 6 Target
- 7 Helsinn Healthcare
- 8 Joann Fabrics
- 9 Wayfair
- 10 Publishers Clearing House

Talking About Money

By Jeanne Walsh

A study from March 2026 looked at how couples feel about talking about money. Many people worry that these talks will feel awkward or cause problems, but the study found that most money conversations go better than people expect.



After talking about their finances, many couples felt better than they thought they would. Some felt relieved and closer to their partner. People often thought their partner would feel upset or stressed, but most partners were glad to be included and willing to talk openly.

As couples get older and deal with changes like retirement or health costs, talking honestly about money becomes even more important.


3 Simple Tips for Talking About Money as a Couple

- **Pick a regular time to talk.** Having a regular check in (like once a month) makes money feel less scary and more normal to talk about.
- **Don't avoid the topic.** Talking openly—even when money feels stressful—helps couples feel more supported and connected.
- **Work as a team.** Couples feel closer when both partners are included and listen to each other.

To talk about other important family and financial topics, contact Chippewa County's Extension educator Jeanne Walsh at (715)726-7950. Visit <https://chippewa.extension.wisc.edu/> for more information.



Are you experiencing TECH-nical Difficulties?



(715) 834-5043

United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley offers a **Digital Navigator Program** to assist community members in using the internet, smart phones, computers and more.


This service is open to all residents of Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties. Digital Navigators will meet with residents who wish to further their digital skills and become more confident with using the internet.

Digital Navigators work one-on-one to meet YOUR unique learning goals and needs, including:

- Components of a Computer
- Mouse and Keyboard Use
- Using an Internet Browser
- Privacy and Security
- Creating and Using Email
- Basics of Word Processing (Create, Edit, Print Documents)
- Telehealth Services
- Social Media
- Video Calls (Zoom, Skype)
- Online Banking
- Streaming Services

AND MORE!

Reach out and get matched with a Digital Navigator!
 Phone: (715) 834-5043
 Email: DigitalNavigator@uwgcv.org
bit.ly/digital-navigator-program



United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley

CHIPPEWA VALLEY EYE CLINIC



CHIPPEWA VALLEY EYE CLINIC & OPTICAL

Aging Eye Care

- Glaucoma
- Macular Degeneration
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Cataract
- Low Vision



715-834-8471

cveclinic.com

Memorial Day's Importance By Ken Anderson, themayberryguru@gmail.com

My favorite activity for the summer occurs in May. It is when my wife and I participate in the annual Memorial Day Parade in downtown Eau Claire. My squad car and I are always placed in front of the Eau Claire Police Department's Honor Guard. For over 20 years, my wife has had the honor of driving our convertible for the Gold Star Mothers. This alone reminds us of the importance of remembering all those men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice to their country.



One thing that is easy to forget is that throughout all the terrible wars we have experienced as a nation, our adversaries also suffered staggering losses, and their families suffered the same loss and pain as Americans have. We also forget that there are other nations who have a Memorial Day that is like ours.

On May 9th Russia has Victory Day. This special day commemorates the surrender of Nazi Germany to the Allies in World War II. On this day, Russians remember the millions who lost their lives in that war.

According to data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense, well over 1.3 million Americans have died while serving in the armed forces since the Revolutionary War began in 1775.

These staggering numbers represent husbands, wives, fathers, sons, brothers, daughters, sisters and grandchildren who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country through nothing of their own making. Many had no choice about serving their country as they were ordered to serve. Others willingly volunteered to serve.

Australia and New Zealand celebrate Anzac Day, the day of the first military action by Australian and Kiwi forces in World War I. As part of the celebration, people play "two up", a version of heads-or-tails that Australian soldiers used to play to pass the time. Germany, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, and Israel also have commemorative days like our Memorial Day.

As you relax and have fun on this Memorial Day with family and friends, please take a few minutes to reflect on the real reason for this important day.

SERVICE with PASSION

DISCOVER THE DIFFERENCE

Providing assisted living and memory care services in a thoughtfully designed community setting.

Experience the difference of a non-corporate, unconventional care provider like Comforts of Home.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Chippewa County Presents

Medicare and You

Free • Unbiased • Objective

Perfect for:

- People new to Medicare
- Current Medicare beneficiaries
- Caregivers, family, and friends
- Community partners

Learn about Medicare and how your coverage options work. We'll explain:

- How to enroll and avoid penalties
- The parts of Medicare
- Advantage Plans vs. Supplement
- Drug coverage options

Registration Required

Register online or call 715-726-7777
www.chippewacountywi.gov/adrc/events

Visit our website for the full schedule, locations, and virtual options

Upcoming Session

Wednesday, 05-13-2026
 1:00 – 3:00 PM
 Bloomer Public Library

This project is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,061,673 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.



GREAT LOCATIONS

Menomonie Chippewa Falls
 Hudson River Falls
 Baldwin St. Croix Falls

www.COHSeniorLiving.com

Lewy Body Dementia

Although there are more than 100 different types of dementia, this one is one of the more common types. Lewy Body Dementia accounts for 5-10% of all dementia cases in the United States. In this type of dementia, experts have identified a build-up of proteins which block the communication of nerves cells to one another. Lewy Body dementia is more common in men than women, a family history of Lewy body dementia or Parkinson's disease are at greater risk. Common symptoms of Lewy Body Dementia include:



- Visual Hallucinations
- Tremors
- Rigid muscles
- Fluctuations in alertness
- Shuffling when they walk
- Cognitive challenges
- Decreased deep REM sleep
- Decreased ability to regulate body functions such as: Blood pressure, Heart rate, Sweating, Digestion

Helpful Resources:

- Lewy Body Dementia Association www.lbda.org or 1-800-677-1116
- Your county's Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)



COMFORT & CONNECTION ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY GRANT

Compass IL received a grant from the Chippewa Valley Dementia Coalition to acquire assistive technology for individuals with dementia. The program offers demonstrations and donations—if the technology benefits you or a loved one, you can keep it. Contact Compass IL to participate.

Equipment Available

Digital Clocks
Assist individuals with dementia by providing clear, consistent orientation to time to reduce anxiety and support daily routines.

Fidgets
Activity and fidget aprons provide sensory stimulation, reduce anxiety, and support fine motor skill development in individuals with dementia. They often soothe, lowering agitation and boredom.

Digital Picture Frame
Support individuals with dementia through visual stimulation that improves memory, reduces anxiety, and promotes engagement, while fostering emotional bonds with familiar faces and scenes to combat isolation.

Baby Dolls
Realistic baby dolls comfort and soothe individuals with dementia by satisfying their innate need to nurture, reducing anxiety and loneliness, and promoting calmness and purpose.

TO REFER YOURSELF OR A LOVED ONE: CALL US AT 715-233-1070

EQUIPMENT PREVIEW

Digital Clock



Fidget Devices



Digital Picture Frames



Baby Dolls



CHIPPEWA MANOR RESIDENTIAL LIVING APARTMENTS



Flexible, Worry-Free Assisted Living!

- ▶ Choose from 1 and 2-bedroom apartments
- ▶ Private bathrooms, refrigerators, stove/ovens
- ▶ Restaurant-style dining with chef-prepared meals
- ▶ Assisted Living Services available in your apartment
- ▶ Flex on/off program from month-to-month



www.chippewamanor.com

Call (715) 723-4437 for a tour or more information

DEMENTIA P.A.C.T. Positive & Assertive Caregiver Training



JOIN USE FOR FREE QUARTERLY TRAININGS TO INCREASE YOUR SKILLS AS A CAREGIVER. ALL TRAININGS WILL BE HELD AT **ASPIRUS STANLEY HOSPITAL FROM 10AM - 11:30AM**

COPING SKILLS FOR CAREGIVERS FEBRUARY 10

Caregiving can take a toll. Learn practical strategies to care for yourself while caring for others

DICE APPROACH TO DEMENTIA AUGUST 11

Sometimes people with dementia can have behaviors related to their brain changes. Learn practical strategies to manage them.

DEMENTIA LIVE MAY 12

Have you ever wondered what it might feel like to have dementia? Come and check out our dementia simulation!

DEMENTIA & HOME SAFETY NOVEMBER 10

Learn low tech and high tech devices that can help keep your loved one safe at home.

Join Hannah Quicker, Dementia Care Specialist to gain knowledge, understanding and resources.



Attend some or all of the trainings

Registration is required



715-644-6153

Diane.Finn@aspirus.org

Comfort and Connection Project

Compass IL recently received a generous grant from the Chippewa Valley Dementia Coalition titled "Comfort and Connection," to support a project that provides assistive technology and home care stipends for individuals with dementia and their caregivers.

This project consists of two main components:

1. **Assistive Technology:** Compass IL has acquired several dementia-specific assistive devices, which we will distribute to individuals with dementia who may benefit from them. This program will serve as both a demonstration and donation initiative. We will meet with potential recipients, assess their needs and barriers, and bring appropriate devices accordingly. Staff members will demonstrate the devices provided; if the individual, their caregivers, or family members determine that a device is suitable, it will be donated to the individual at no charge.

Our goal is to promote safety, comfort, education, and engagement. We aim to reduce anxiety, support memory retention, and enhance the overall quality of life for individuals living with dementia.

2. **Home Care and Respite Stipends:** Caring for a person with dementia at home can be overwhelming—physically, emotionally, and financially. To ease this burden, Compass IL will provide stipends for home care and respite services. The amount of each stipend will be dependent on individual needs. This assistance can be used to provide short-term in-home relief or help with household tasks, giving caregivers time to rest, work, or attend to personal responsibilities while ensuring their loved one remains in a safe, familiar environment.



If you or someone you know may benefit from caregiver stipends or assistive technology for individuals with dementia, please contact Compass IL at 715-233-1070.



Lake Hallie Memory Care
A happier life for everyone...

Helping you serve those in need
for **13 years and counting**

To learn more
CALL 715-738-0011

FIND US : [memorycarepartners.com/lake-hallie/](https://www.memorycarepartners.com/lake-hallie/)

  @memorycarepartners

**NOW
HIRING!**



Check out our website at seniorreviewnewspapers.com

Healthy Living Programs Available to YOU

The ADRC of Chippewa County has made arrangements with the ADRC of Eau Claire County to allow Chippewa County residents the ability to enroll in any of their healthy living programs. If you would like more information about any of these programs or would like to register, please call the ADRC of Eau Claire County at 715-839-4735 or go to www.adrcevents.org

Healthy Aging Presentation

Many misconceptions about aging keep us from doing the things we want. We will explore how perceptions of aging affect health, how aging and disease are not synonymous, and look at lessons from the world's oldest and healthiest people. Information on local health promotion programs and services will also be shared.

Wednesday, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m./ May 20, 2026

Lake Street Methodist Church, 337 Lake Street, Eau Claire

StrongBodies Information Session for new participants

Strength training is especially important as we age. Being physically active and socially connected are both essential for health and well-being. The StrongBodies program provides a safe environment for older adults to improve strength and balance with a fun group of peers. Learn more in this free orientation and sign up for classes starting in July 2026.

Tuesday, 10:00 - 11:15 a.m./ June 4, 2026

Walk With Ease

This six-week walking program is developed by the Arthritis Foundation. While walking is the central activity, it also includes education to ease arthritis symptoms, stretching and strengthening exercises, and motivational strategies. In person classes meet outdoors three times weekly for one hour. Proven benefits include:

- Reduce pain and discomfort of arthritis
- Increase your balance, strength and walking pace
- Build confidence in your ability to be physically active
- Improve your overall health

\$10 suggested contribution. Participants receive the Arthritis Foundation Walk with Ease guidebook.

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, 9:30 - 10:30 am/ June 22 – July 30, 2026
Carson Park, Eau Claire

StrongBodies 10-week workshops, classes meet twice weekly for one hour each.

Virtual:

- Mondays & Wednesdays, July 6 - September 9, 2026 at 8:30 am, 11:15 am OR
- Tuesdays & Thursdays, July 7 - September 10, 2026 at 8:30 am

In-person:

- Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 8:00 am (Augusta Senior & Community Center), Mondays & Wednesdays, 5:00 pm (Dove Healthcare-West Eau Claire)
- Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00 pm (Dove Healthcare-West Eau Claire)



Repeat participants must complete a Re-enrollment Consent Form to sign up by June 22. \$20 Suggested contribution for repeat participants. Download form at www.adrcevents.org, email adrc@eauclairecounty.gov or call the ADRC at 715-839-4735 to request a form by mail.

REGISTER at least one week prior: Call the ADRC at 715-839-4735 or go to www.adrcevents.org.

NO NEW MEDICARE CARD



Have you been told you need a new Medicare card?

**STOP!
It's a scam**

Here's the truth

- Medicare is NOT issuing plastic cards
- You do NOT need to 'update' your Medicare Card
- Medicare will NEVER call or text you asking for your Medicare number

Protect Yourself

- Never give out your Medicare number to unexpected callers
- Hang up on anyone asking for personal information
- Report suspicious calls to SMP



Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

888-818-2611

www.smpwi.org

Preventing Medicare Fraud

SMPs are grant-funded projects of the federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL).

Get Healthy with Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less Online

ADRC of CHIPPEWA COUNTY IS OFFERING A NEW WELLNESS INITIATIVE

NEW SERIES BEGINS SOON.

Check it out—a 15-week weight management program that works because it is not a diet—it's a lifestyle! All weekly classes are conducted online by a live instructor, fostering interaction between the instructor and all participants. Participants can conveniently attend classes from home or office using a computer or mobile device.

For registration code, please contact Sarah Zielke at (715) 726-7777 or adrc@chippewacountywi.gov

Go to www.esmmweighless.com to view class times for the upcoming series beginning soon.

Discover the Power of Artichokes

What is an Artichoke?

The Artichoke is a fascinating vegetable that is actually the bud of a thistle plant. Originally grown in Mediterranean regions, it has become popular around the world for its mild, slightly nutty flavor and impressive health benefits.



While the outer leaves may seem tough, the inner leaves, stem, and especially the “heart” are tender and delicious.

Why Artichokes Are Great for Older Adults

As we age, choosing nutrient-rich foods becomes even more important. Artichokes are a wonderful addition to a healthy diet for several reasons:

Heart Health Support

Artichokes contain antioxidants and plant compounds that may help reduce “bad” LDL cholesterol while increasing “good” HDL cholesterol. This supports better circulation and overall heart health.

Digestive Wellness

One medium artichoke contains a significant amount of dietary fiber. Fiber helps:

- Maintain regular bowel movements
- Support gut health
- Reduce bloating and discomfort

Liver Protection

Artichokes naturally contain compounds like cynarin and silymarin, which may help protect and support liver function. A healthy liver plays a key role in digestion and detoxification.

Blood Sugar Balance

Because they are high in fiber and low in fat, artichokes can help prevent spikes in blood sugar levels which is important for managing or preventing Type 2 Diabetes.

Bone and Immune Support

Artichokes provide essential nutrients such as:

- Vitamin K for bone strength
- Vitamin C for immune defense
- Magnesium and potassium for muscle and nerve health

Simple Ways to Add Artichokes to Your Meals

If you’re new to artichokes, start simple:

- Add canned or frozen artichoke hearts to salads
- Mix into pasta dishes or soups
- Serve as a warm side dish with olive oil and herbs
- Blend into dips or spreads

Shopping & Storage Tips

- Look for artichokes that feel heavy and firm
- Leaves should be tightly closed (a sign of freshness)
- Store in the refrigerator for up to 4–5 days
- For convenience, keep canned or jarred artichoke hearts on hand

Easy Lemon Garlic Artichoke Hearts

This recipe is flavorful, easy to chew, and gentle on digestion—perfect for a quick lunch or side dish.

Ingredients

- 1 can (14 oz) artichoke hearts (packed in water), drained and rinsed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Optional:
 - 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
 - 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Warm the oil

Heat olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat.

2. Cook the garlic

Add minced garlic and cook for about 1 minute, stirring frequently to avoid burning.

3. Add artichokes

Place artichoke hearts in the pan. Cook for 5–7 minutes, stirring gently until warmed through and slightly golden.

4. Add flavor

Stir in lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Cook for another 2–3 minutes.

5. Finish and serve

Sprinkle with parsley or Parmesan cheese if desired. Serve warm.

Serving Suggestions

This dish is versatile and can be enjoyed in many ways:

- Alongside baked chicken or grilled fish
- Tossed with whole-grain pasta
- Added to a quinoa or rice bowl
- Served on toast for a light, satisfying meal

Cooking Tips for Comfort & Ease

- Use pre-cut or canned artichoke hearts to save time
- Cook until very tender for easier chewing
- Adjust seasoning to your taste or dietary needs (low sodium, etc.)
- Pair with soft foods like rice, pasta, or eggs for balanced meals.

Final Thoughts

Eating well doesn’t have to be complicated. Adding nutritious foods like artichokes to your routine can support your health while bringing new flavors to your table.

Small changes, like trying a new vegetable, can make a big difference over time.

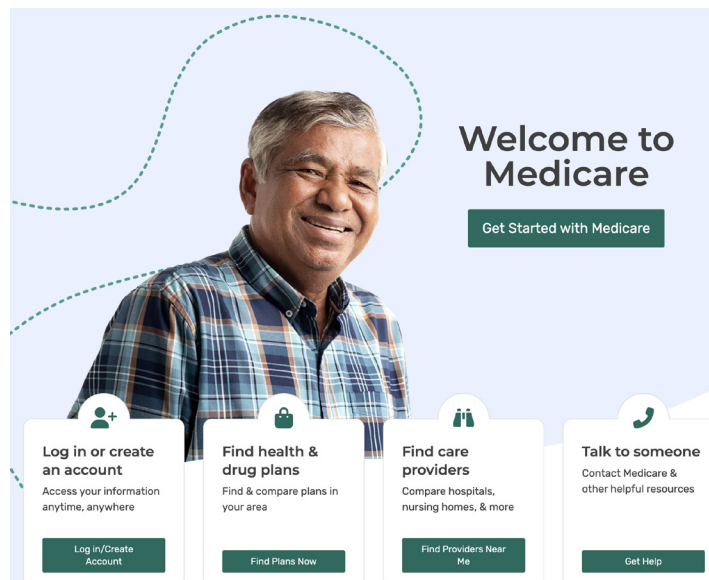
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Enhanced Medicare.gov Log-in

By the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources Legal Services Team

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently released enhanced login options for Medicare.gov accounts. You can now use one of the following identity verification options: ID.me, CLEAR, or Login.gov. These login options are already used by other federal agencies, like the Social Security Administration (SSA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). According to CMS, these services will better protect beneficiaries from fraud and identity theft.

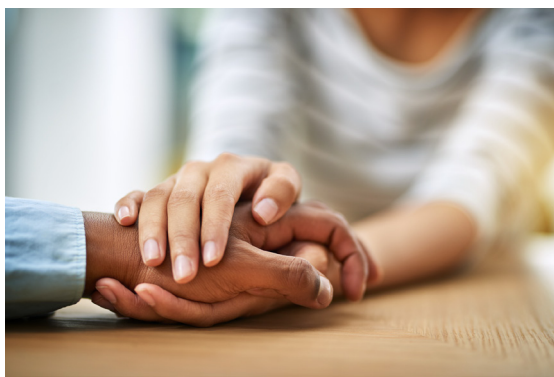
In addition to increased security, these options offer improved user support. According to CMS, each login service offers a live chat. In addition, CLEAR and Login.gov offer assistance over the phone, while ID.me offers assistance via video call. ID.me and Login.gov offer in-person verification options. If you need immediate assistance, lose access to your account, or experience a service outage, you should call 1-800-Medicare.



You do not need a driver's license or REAL ID to create an account. You can use a state-issued photo ID, a U.S. passport, or other accepted documents. Each login service will explain which documents you can use to prove your identity.

Please note that your medical information will be stored securely by Medicare. Your identity verification information will be stored separately by the login service you choose. These companies are not allowed to sell your data.

There is no cost to create a login or to use the new login options. You do not need a smartphone to use these options. You can use public computers to create an account, and you can verify your identity in person at certain locations, like participating Post Offices. You can also get help over the phone. People with Medicare who already have Medicare.gov accounts can still choose to log in using their existing credentials for now.



CHIPPEWA VALLEY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For individuals dealing with the death of a loved one: spouse, partner, child, parent, friend, colleague. Share feelings, thoughts and concerns.

If someone you love or care deeply about has died, you may feel a need to discuss your feelings, thoughts and concerns with others in the same situation. You may do so with the **Chippewa Valley Grief Support Group**. Our group meets on the Second and Fourth Monday of every month. This group is led by well-trained volunteers who have themselves gone through the grieving process. The group is open-ended, meaning you may come for as long as you feel the need, from one time to over a year. There is no fee.

This is a volunteer support group and not intended for therapy purposes

**Chippewa Valley
Grief Support
Group**

**Second and
Fourth Monday
every month**

3:00 – 4:30 PM

No Fee



LOCATION:

Central Lutheran Church
28 E. Columbia Street
Chippewa Falls, WI

Contacts:

Ron: 715-797-3817
rpottre@gmail.com

Wendy: 715-208-0003





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What to Know About Aging in Place

By the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources Legal Services Team

“Aging in place” refers to remaining in your own home rather than going to an assisted living or retirement community. Most people would prefer to remain in their home for as long as possible, but there are different things to consider when deciding what is right for you. Everyone’s situation isn’t the same, so even if your friends or family feel strongly about what’s right for them, or give advice about what you should do, you should make the best decision for you.



Home offers comfort, familiarity, and independence. Think about the following:

Home safety modifications: Is your home equipped to safely accommodate you should current or future health issues develop or get worse? Will your current setup meet your needs in 10 years? More? Small upgrades like installing grab bars in bathrooms, improving lighting, adding handrails, and removing loose rugs can reduce the risk of falls if mobility declines. Walk-in showers, stair lifts, or first-floor bedroom conversions are more expensive projects that may enable you to stay in your home longer. Check out the National Institute on Aging’s Worksheet: Home Safety Checklist for more safety considerations.

Habitat for Humanity Wisconsin is creating an aging in place program to focus on helping seniors stay in their homes with zero-interest loans for modifications based on income. Visit Aging in Place — HFH Wisconsin for more information and updates.

Long-term financial planning: Think about the increasing costs of healthcare, as well as the price of maintaining a home. Property taxes and insurance premiums, routine maintenance, and potential major

repairs like roofing require planning and consideration.

Healthcare access: Visiting nurses, physical therapists, personal care aides, and traveling meal programs may assist you in staying in your home longer if your healthcare and personal needs are moderate. However, think about the cost of these services and where you live. Sometimes finding in-home assistance is hard in rural areas.

Community support and transportation:

Will you be able to get to and from doctor’s appointments, the grocery store, your senior center, family members’ homes, activities with friends, etc. if you stay in your home? If you have a vehicle and can drive, this doesn’t present a problem but think about whether that will be the case 10 years from now. It’s important to maintain social connections and reduce isolation, and if you don’t live in an area with safe, reliable public transportation, you may need an alternative plan for staying in your home.

Have a candid conversation with your loved ones as you start to think about the benefits and challenges of aging in place. If you assume your children or other relatives will provide support or transportation as needed, it’s best to confirm their availability and willingness to take on that commitment ahead of time. If you live with a spouse, partner, roommate, or relative, talk to them about their expectations for taking care of each other as you age. It can be scary to think about leaving your home, or making needed changes to keep you in it, but planning ahead and involving others in the conversation can help prepare you for decision-making around the issue.

Veteran Benefit Information and News

Burial Benefits for Veterans - Burial Allowance

“Am I eligible for allowances to help pay for a Veteran’s burial and funeral costs?”

The Veteran must not have received a dishonorable discharge, and 1 of these circumstances must be true:

- The Veteran died as a result of a service-connected disability (a disability related to service), or
- The Veteran died while getting VA care, either at a VA facility or at a facility contracted by VA, or
- The Veteran died while traveling with proper authorization, and at VA’s expense, either to or from a facility for an examination, or to receive treatment or care, or
- The Veteran died with an original or reopened claim for VA compensation or pension pending at the time of death, and they would’ve been entitled to benefits before the time of death, or
- The Veteran died while receiving a VA pension or compensation, or
- The Veteran died while eligible for compensation or a VA pension at their time of death, but instead received full military retirement or disability pay

Or:

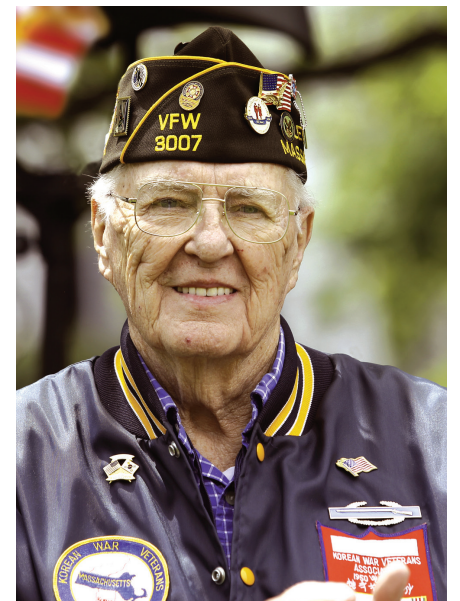
- The Veteran had been getting a VA pension or compensation when they died, or
- The Veteran had chosen to get military retirement pay instead of compensation

Note: The VA will also pay you back for the cost of transporting a Veteran’s remains for burial in a national cemetery.

You can’t get burial allowances for certain individuals. We don’t provide burial allowances if the individual died in any of these ways:

- On active duty, or
- While serving as a member of Congress, or
- While serving a federal prison sentence

For questions or additional information, contact the Chippewa County Veterans Service Office at (715) 726-7990.



Housing Insecurity is Harming Older Adults

By the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources Legal Services Team

Today's housing market doesn't meet the needs of many people. Older adults are being hit particularly hard by issues of affordability, availability, and accessibility. According to American Community Survey data, the number of senior households spending more than half their income on housing has risen to nearly 11.7 million. Housing costs aren't just inclusive of rent or a mortgage payment, but include property taxes, insurance, and maintenance. Older adults, especially those with fixed incomes, have less flexibility to change their spending if needed. Renters, people of color, and people with very low income are the hardest hit by the increasing wealth gap and housing inequity.



In addition to the issue of affordability, many older adults may be living in homes that no longer meet their needs. Some older adults counted on their home being a source of stability and safety in their later years and instead find that they are struggling to stay in it. The upkeep of a three-bedroom house may be more than someone living alone can manage. Older homes require increased maintenance for safety and to keep the home in good condition as an asset for future generations or future sale of the property.

Without the funds to make needed home modifications, some older adults may consider moving rather than staying in a home that raises safety concerns. Existing housing stock, however, can make moving challenging. The U.S. Census Bureau noted that only 10% of housing units in the U.S. are move-in ready for older adults, meaning 90% have stairs, bathrooms and/or bedrooms on just the upper floors, and other accessibility issues.

Between 2019-2022, the number of older adults experiencing homelessness increased by 37%, according to the Annual Homelessness Assessment Report. People who are unhoused experience negative health outcomes, safety issues, and disruption to their social networks.

If you are facing a housing crisis, there are some emergency options available. Federal programs and local shelters can help, as well as informal networks such as family and friends or faith-based organizations. Preventing a housing crisis such as eviction or foreclosure may be possible if you look for warning signs, such as increased debt to pay for medications, service utilities being cut off, having to skip meals to pay for things besides food, or making other choices between housing and meeting your basic needs. If you are experiencing any of these, you may need to consider getting advice and support on how to make your housing situation more sustainable. Call 211 to get connected to local resources in your area, or reach out to another credible source of information.

Make sure you have documents available to easily allow you to apply for support, including identification, income verification and bank statements, medical documentation if you have any medical needs to take into consideration, and service records if you are a veteran. It can be stressful to think about preparing for a housing crisis, but it is best to be proactive and try to prevent a crisis from happening if you can. Take steps now to examine your housing situation and finances so you can stay safe and healthy later.

Chippewa County Residents: Do you need financial assistance to help make your vehicle accessible?

The Vehicle Modification Grant may be an option for you to help modify a vehicle for accessibility needs.

This grant supports individuals with disabilities and caregivers who need vehicle modifications to safely drive or ride and do not have the financial means to do so.

Examples of covered modifications may include:

- Hand controls
- Adapted seating
- Wheelchair ramps

Who may qualify:

- Individuals with a disability that impacts vehicle access
- Caregivers supporting someone with accessibility needs

Contact us to learn more or apply:

Aging and Disability Resource Center of Chippewa County

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Wisconsin State SSI Payment Increase – Effective May 1, 2026

Source: Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)



Submitted by: Stephanie Rasmussen,
Disability Benefit Specialist

Good news for Wisconsin residents who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Beginning May 1, 2026, the state will increase its SSI supplementary payments by 10%.

SSI is a federal program administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), which determines eligibility and benefit amounts. In Wisconsin, individuals who receive federal SSI automatically receive an additional state-funded supplement and are enrolled in SSI Medicaid.

Some individuals may also qualify for an added state benefit, called the Supplemental Security Income Exceptional Expense (SSI-E). This is available to those who:

- Live in certain care settings with higher monthly costs, or
- Live at home but require at least 40 hours per month of long-term support services.

A smaller group of individuals receive a “state-only” SSI payment. These are individuals who were eligible for SSI benefits prior to 1996 and continue to receive a portion of the state supplement.



This increase is especially notable because Wisconsin’s state SSI payments have not changed since 1994 and are not adjusted annually like federal SSI benefits.

Starting in May 2026:

- Individuals receiving federal SSI will automatically receive the updated, higher state supplement
- Individuals receiving state-only SSI will see a 10% increase in their current benefit amount
- SSI-E payments will also increase by 10%

Depending on living arrangements, monthly state supplement amounts will increase modestly (for example, from \$83.78 to \$92.16 for an individual living independently).

Important: SSI is counted as income for some other programs, such as FoodShare and Wisconsin Shares. Because of this, the increase may impact benefits received through those programs.

If you have questions about your SSI benefits, you can contact ForwardHealth Member Services at 800-362-300.

PhysioNatural Therapy Mittens

Spring in the Midwest comes with weather that can range from "summer sunshine" to "dead of winter," and those rapid changes in temperature can really do a number on our joints. For those with arthritis, Reynaud's Disease, inflammation, or generalized pain in the hands and fingers, PhysioNatural's Therapy Mittens could be an excellent solution. Just pop them in the microwave until toasty warm, slip your hands in, and let those aches and pains melt away. These mittens are unscented and made from flaxseed, so you don't need to worry about any irritating chemicals. They're great for pain relief, loosening up your joints, or even just warming up on a cold morning.



Find these mittens on Amazon.com for \$24.99.

Compass IL offers the opportunity for individuals to borrow or try out items mentioned in our articles before making a purchase.

To learn more about this assistive device or other devices that can improve your independence, please contact Compass IL at 715-233-1070 or 800-228-3287. Our services are provided free of charge. However, we do not directly fund the purchase of assistive technology. Through the WisTech Assistive Technology Program, Compass IL provides a variety of services, including information on alternative financing options like WisLoan, Telework, and TEPP, upon request.

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Caring For Our Military Heros: An Honor And A Profound Responsibility

By Shelley Krupa, Business Operations Coordinator at Lake Hallie Memory Care

Across the United States, millions of family members and friends provide unpaid care to former service members coping with mental health challenges. Diagnoses of post-traumatic stress, depression, traumatic brain injury, substance use disorders, and other service-connected conditions are common for veterans. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans are at elevated risk for mental health concerns compared to the general population, particularly those who served in combat zones. For caregivers, the honor of caregiving carries with it cumulative stressors and may lead to burnout, compassion fatigue, financial strain, and declining physical health.



Understanding the Mental Health Landscape

Veterans may experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), major depressive disorder, anxiety disorders, or moral injury related to their service. PTSD manifests as hypervigilance, irritability, intrusive memories, sleep disturbances, or emotional withdrawal. Depression manifests with low moods, hopelessness, or losses of interest in previously meaningful activities. These symptoms affect the veteran and the household dynamic.

Caregivers function as informal case managers—coordinating appointments, managing medications, de-escalating crises, and providing emotional support. Without adequate respite and structural support, their role may become unsustainable.

Steps to Support the Veteran's Mental Health

Engage Professional Care Early. Connecting with licensed mental health providers experienced in military culture is critical. The Veterans Health Administration offers evidence-based treatments for PTSD and depression, including cognitive processing therapy (CPT) and prolonged exposure therapy (PE). Telehealth options have expanded access, especially in rural communities.

Develop a Crisis Plan. Caregivers and veterans should collaboratively create a written safety plan outlining warning signs, coping strategies, and emergency contacts. The Veterans Crisis Line (dial 988, then press 1) provides 24/7 confidential support.

Promote Routine and Protective Factors. Structured daily routines, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, and social connection may mitigate symptom severity. Peer support groups—either in-person or virtual—help normalize experiences and reduce isolation.

Address Co-Occurring Conditions. Substance use, chronic pain, and sleep disorders commonly co-exist with PTSD and depression. Integrated treatment plans improve outcomes and reduce relapse risk.

Steps to Provide Caregiver Relief

Utilize Formal Support Programs. The VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers provides stipends, training, mental health counseling, and respite care for eligible caregivers. Even those not enrolled in the comprehensive program may access caregiver support coordinators through local VA medical centers.

Schedule Respite Proactively. Short-term respite—whether through adult day programs, in-home aides, or trusted family members—should be planned routinely, not only during crisis periods. Predictable breaks reduce cumulative stress.

Seek Caregiver-Focused Counseling. Caregivers benefit from therapy that addresses secondary trauma, boundary setting, and stress management. Cognitive behavioral strategies and mindfulness-based interventions have demonstrated efficacy in reducing caregiver burden. Strengthen Financial and Legal Planning. Navigating benefits, disability compensation, and long-term care planning may reduce uncertainty. Accredited representatives or veteran service organizations are available to assist with claims and resource coordination.

Build a Distributed Support Network. Care should not rest on one individual. Establishing a team—including extended family, faith communities, neighbors, and veteran peer networks—creates redundancy and resilience.

Discuss Alternative Living Situations. Have tenderly shared tough conversations before needs of assisted living happen as an emergency. Peace of mind comes from having talked about “what if’s” and each person involved has made their wishes known. Schedule a free tour at assisted living facilities like Lake Hallie Memory Care to help you in your planning efforts.

A Sustainable Model of Care

Supporting veterans and sustaining their caregivers are inseparable missions. Through a combination of clinical care, financial stability, and proactive planning, we ensure a higher quality of life for the veteran and prevent burnout for the caregiver. True success in veteran care requires a system that protects the health of both the hero and the helper.



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Listening with Honor: Talking to Your Veteran about End-of-Life Wishes

By Stokes, Prock & Mundt Funeral Chapel

Talking to a loved one about their final wishes is never easy—but when that loved one is a veteran, the conversation carries an added layer of meaning, respect, and honor. Veterans have lived lives of service, sacrifice, and commitment, and their end-of-life wishes often reflect those values. While it may feel uncomfortable to bring up funeral planning, approaching the conversation with care can be one of the most meaningful things you do for them—and for your family.

The key is to start from a place of respect, not urgency. This isn't about planning for a loss—it's about honoring a life. A simple way to begin might be, "I want to make sure we honor everything you've done and everything that matters to you. Have you ever thought about how you'd like to be remembered?" Framing the conversation this way shifts it from something heavy and morbid to something personal and meaningful.

Timing matters, too. Try to choose a moment when things are calm and unhurried—maybe during a quiet afternoon, a car ride, or even while looking through old photos together. Conversations like this don't need to happen all at once. In fact it's often better if they unfold naturally over time.

For veterans, there may be specific preferences tied to their service. Some may want military honors, burial in a national or state veterans cemetery, or specific symbols included in their service. Others may feel differently—they may prefer a simple, private gathering. The only way to know is to ask.

You might say, "Would it be important to you to have military honors at your service?" or "Have you ever thought about being buried in a veterans cemetery?" These kinds of questions show that you recognize their service and want to respect it.

It's also helpful to listen more than you talk. Give them space to share stories, memories, and values. Often, these conversations reveal more than just logistics—they uncover what mattered most to them in life. That insight can be incredibly comforting when the time comes to make decisions.

Keep in mind that some veterans may be hesitant to talk about this. They might brush it off or change the subject. If that happens, don't push too hard. Instead, let them know the door is always open: "Whenever you feel ready to talk about it, I'm here." Sometimes just planting the seed is enough.

Another important part of the conversation is discussing practical details. This can include things like whether they've preplanned or prepaid for services, where important documents are kept, and any specific requests they have. For veterans, this may also include



discharge papers (DD214), which are required to access military funeral benefits.

You can gently bring this up by saying, "It would really help us to know what you want ahead of time, so we can make sure everything is exactly how you'd like it." Most people find comfort in knowing their wishes will be carried out.

Above all, approach the conversation with empathy and gratitude. Let them know how much their service—and their life—means to you. Something as simple as, "I'm really proud of you and everything you've done," can set the tone for a meaningful discussion.

At the end of the day, this isn't just about planning a funeral. It's about giving your veteran the opportunity to have their voice heard, their service honored, and their legacy preserved. And while the conversation may feel difficult at first, it often becomes a moment of connection—one that both of you will be grateful for.

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