

FREE



JUNE 2026

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Summer Driving Tips for Seniors: Stay Safe and Enjoy the Journey

Reprinted from <https://www.retirenet.com/>

Essential warm-weather driving tips for adults 55+ to ensure a smooth, safe, and stress-free summer.



Summer is a great time for road trips, visiting family, and exploring new places, but it also brings unique challenges for drivers. High temperatures, increased traffic, and summer storms can make driving more stressful, especially for older adults. Whether you're planning a long trip or just running errands, here are essential driving tips to help seniors stay safe and comfortable on the road.

Prepare Your Car for the Summer Heat

Hot weather can put extra strain on your vehicle, so ensure your car is in top shape before hitting the road.

- ✓ **Check the battery:** Heat can weaken your battery, leading to unexpected breakdowns. Have it tested before long trips.
- ✓ **Inspect your tires:** Hot pavement can increase the risk of blowouts. Check tire pressure regularly and look for signs of wear.
- ✓ **Top off fluids:** Ensure your coolant, oil, and windshield washer fluid levels are adequate to prevent overheating and maintain visibility.
- ✓ **Test the air conditioning:** A working AC is essential for staying comfortable during summer drives.

Beat the Heat and Stay Comfortable

- ✓ **Drive during cooler hours:** Early morning or late evening trips help avoid extreme heat and heavy traffic.
- ✓ **Wear lightweight clothing:** Light, breathable fabrics can keep you cool while driving.
- ✓ **Stay hydrated:** Bring a bottle of water to prevent dehydration, which can lead to fatigue.
- ✓ **Use sun protection:** Sunglasses and a sunshade for your windshield can help reduce glare and keep your car cooler.

Prevent Driver Fatigue

Long drives and heat can lead to exhaustion, making it harder to react quickly.

- ✓ **Take regular breaks:** Stop every 1-2 hours to stretch and rest.
- ✓ **Avoid drowsy driving:** If you feel tired, switch drivers if possible or take a short nap.
- ✓ **Eat light meals:** Heavy foods can make you sluggish; opt for snacks like fruit, nuts, or granola bars.

Stay Prepared for Emergencies

Even with the best planning, unexpected situations can arise.

- ✓ **Carry an emergency kit:** Include water, non-perishable snacks, a flashlight, jumper cables, and basic tools.
- ✓ **Have roadside assistance ready:** Keep the number for AAA or your insurance company's roadside service handy.
- ✓ **Charge your phone:** A fully charged phone ensures you can call for help if needed.

Watch for Summer Storms

Sudden downpours, thunderstorms, and extreme heat waves are common in summer.

- ✓ **Slow down in rain:** Wet roads increase stopping distances, so reduce speed and increase following distance.
- ✓ **Avoid flooded roads:** Never drive through standing water; even a few inches can cause hydroplaning.
- ✓ **Use headlights properly:** Turn them on in rain or low visibility, but avoid high beams in fog.

Enjoy a Safe and Stress-Free Summer Drive

By preparing your car, staying hydrated, and driving smart, you can enjoy a smooth and safe trip wherever the summer takes you. Whether you're heading on a scenic road trip or just visiting loved ones, these simple tips will help make your journey stress-free. Stay safe, and happy travels!

Staff Spotlight: Bronson

My name is Bronson Stelzer, and I am excited to join the ADRC team as the Dementia Care Specialist. I look forward to continuing to serve individuals and families by providing support, guidance, and resources to enhance quality of life. Previously, I was a Wellness Specialist for a Health System in WI for over 10 years. I've had the opportunity to help individuals build sustainable, healthy lifestyles through personalized coaching, behavior change strategies, and program development.



In addition to my work in the wellness field, I serve as an adjunct instructor at Chippewa Valley Technical College in the Law Enforcement Department, where I enjoy mentoring and guiding the next generation. I am also a co-owner of Fit Lab Nutrition in Eau Claire, a space dedicated to helping people move, grow, and improve their overall well-being.

Outside of work, I am a husband and proud dad to two boys. When I'm not working, you can usually find me spending time with my family and enjoying outdoors camping, fishing, hunting, and making the most of every season.

Pawaboo Hands-Free Dog Leash

With the advent of warmer days, our fuzzy friends are just as excited as we are to get outside and enjoy the weather. For those of us with joint pain, weak grip strength, or limited dexterity, however, taking the dog for a walk can become a more painful task than it needs to be. One solution is the Pawaboo Hands-Free Dog Leash. This leash is a thickly-woven "bungee" style leash that attaches to the included waist belt via a 360 degree swivel, which prevents it from tangling no matter where your companion goes. This leash supports dogs from 25-150 lbs, and its elastic design absorbs shock and reduces back strain or other injuries for you and your dog.



You can find the Pawaboo Hands-Free Dog Leash at retailers like Walmart or Amazon for \$19.98.

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.

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.

Eating Disorders in Older Adults *By the GWAAR Legal Services Team*

The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) has noted an increase in eating disorders and body dissatisfaction among older adults. While stereotypes exist depicting eating disorders as affecting younger people, particularly those who identify as female, disordered eating can affect any gender and can occur at any point in someone's life.



Eating disorders can be more severe among older adults because the body may not be able to bounce back from the negative health effects of an eating disorder (cardiac, bone, dental, gastrointestinal). Muscle wasting, frailty, depression, and increased vulnerability to diseases and disorders can occur. Restrictive dieting can lead to rapid cognitive decline. An eating disorder is a serious mental condition, not a phase or lifestyle choice. Higher mortality rates are a consequence of eating disorders among older adults.

Body image issues and eating disorders can be triggered by a variety of life changes, from pregnancy and childbirth to menopause and divorce. Societal pressure around aging can also cause someone to develop insecurities around their physical appearance. Our bodies do not remain the same throughout our lives; there are natural changes that occur. Menopause can impact the development of disordered eating for these reasons, as can hormonal changes in men.

While eating disorders have commonalities across the age spectrum, there are some differences for people experiencing them as an older adult. For example, there may be a lack of awareness of eating disorders in this population by medical professionals, causing them to overlook signs that someone may need support in this area. Symptoms may be dismissed, such as attributing weight changes to aging itself, or as a side effect of medications. Additionally, an older adult may also feel shame at experiencing an issue that they associate with younger girls or teenagers, causing them to avoid seeking help.

Control is a factor in eating disorders. Choosing how much to eat, or when to eat, is something a person can feel in control of, particularly if there are things happening in their life that they don't feel they have control over – losing a spouse or other loved one, chronic illness, no longer being able to work, etc. Major life changes may be an indicator of someone developing disordered eating patterns to try to cope and feel in control.

The article "Disordered eating in older people: Some causes and treatments" notes that there are four basic causes of weight loss in older people: anorexia (an eating disorder leading to severe food restriction and weight loss), socioeconomic factors (such as having to choose between eating enough and paying for medications or other expenses), dysphagia (difficulty swallowing), and weight loss despite normal food intake.

It is important to note that while anorexia may be the most prevalent eating disorder among older adults, bingeing (eating to excess in one sitting) may also occur, or bulimia (bingeing accompanied by purging or excessive fasting). While some people may have experienced eating disorders in their past and something has caused a reoccurrence, there are people who may develop an eating disorder for the first time in later life.

Some signs of a potential eating disorder include rapid weight loss or gain, use of laxatives or diet pills, a fixation on healthy eating, a change in habits (such as disappearing during meals), avoiding meals, a desire to eat alone, excessive hair loss, and anxiety or depression.

If you are worried you may have an eating disorder, visit Eating Disorder Screening Tool - NEDA. Treatment options are available; discuss your habits and concerns with a trusted individual and seek professional guidance from a doctor or therapist.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Chippewa County Presents

Medicare & You Classes

Free Unbiased Medicare Information!

New to Medicare or want to know more about those Medicare commercials you keep seeing? Wondering where you can go for objective Medicare information?

We will cover multiple topics including enrolling in Medicare, the parts of Medicare, the difference between Advantage Plans, Supplements & drug coverage options.

This is open to anyone new to Medicare, currently on Medicare, caregivers, families and community partners.

Registration Required (3 ways)

- www.chippewacountywi.gov/adrc/events
- Or use your phone's camera to scan this code & register online.
- Or call us to register: 715-726-7777

In person and Virtual attendance are offered. See our website for the full schedule.

Upcoming Second Wednesdays at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM | Chippewa Courthouse

SHIP State Health Insurance Assistance Program Navigating Medicare

2026 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.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center Presents

FREE: Power of Attorney Clinic

Why everyone 18 and older should have a POA

Did you know that **Wisconsin doesn't recognize relatives** as automatic decision makers when someone is incapacitated?

Completing a POA is a gift to your family and friends because they won't be left wondering what you would like.

You can save money by avoiding the need for court-appointed guardianship.

Attend a **FREE** event where knowledgeable staff from Chippewa County DHS will provide unbiased information on the POA for Health Care and POA for Finance.

Please plan to attend the entire presentation. No registration required.

Save the 2026 dates!

- Tuesday, June 2
 - 10:00 – 11:30 am
- Wednesday, August 12
 - 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm
- Tuesday, October 6
 - 10:00 – 11:30 am
- Wednesday, December 9
 - 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

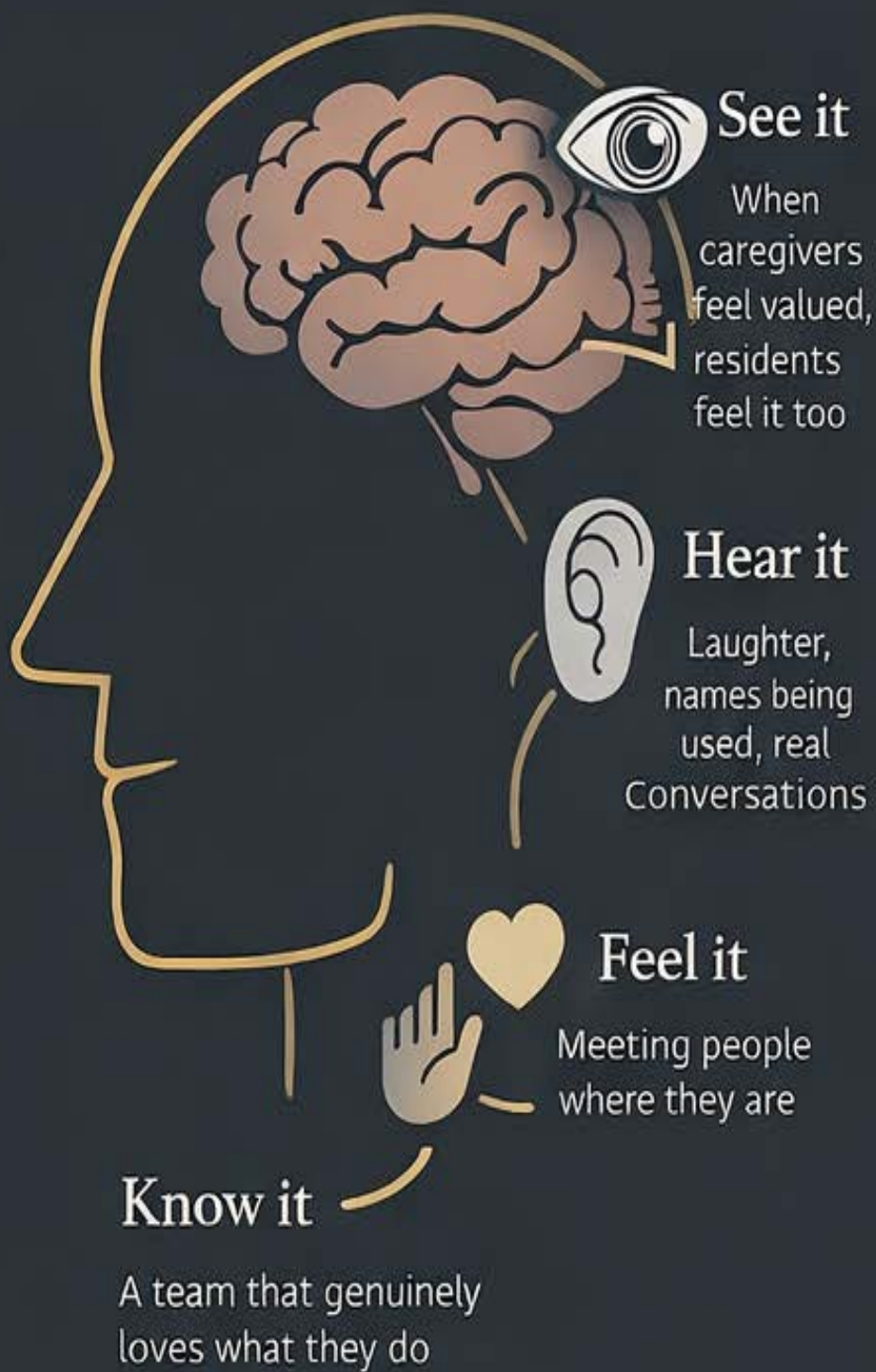
Chippewa County Courthouse
Third Floor Conference Room – 302

For questions, contact the ADRC.
715- 726-7777 or find more info online:
www.chippewacountywi.gov/ADRC/events

ADRC Aging and Disability Resource Center of Chippewa County

CHIPPewa COUNTY Human Services

You don't just read it—
you feel it.



This is the heart
of our culture.

What makes it possible:

At Comforts of Home, we believe exceptional senior living starts with a **happy, supported team**. When caregivers feel valued, residents feel it too and that's the heart of our culture. We offer one of the **most cost-effective senior living models in our area** without sacrificing personalized attention. Our communities specialize in serving individuals with higher-acuity needs, behavioral support, or those looking for a place that will meet them where they are. Comforts of Home delivers compassionate, specialized care that **families can trust**, at a **price they can actually afford**, powered by a **team that genuinely loves what they do**.



715-800-0688

The Nifty Fifties Decade By Ken Anderson, themayberryguru@gmail.com

Anyone who knows me quite well knows that I have a soft spot in my heart for that wonderful decade of the 50s. The ten years of the 50s were a unique and wonderful time to grow up. World War 2 was over, and our country was about to enter a new decade of prosperity and excitement. It has often been referred to as “the golden age of prosperity”. I began the 50s as a 4-year-old and ended it as a teenager.



Wop is my favorite 50s music. It is characterized by multi-part vocal harmonies, nonsensical backing syllables, e.g., “Who put the bomp in the bomp-bah-bomp-bah-bomp? Who put the ram in the rama-lama-ding-dong?” I never discovered the answer to that question.

Without a doubt, my favorite part of the 50s has to be the great cars. Although I own two classic cars from the 60s, whenever I attend a car show, I am immediately drawn to the cars from the 50s. Gone were the drab, unexciting cars from the 40s. Bright colors, large tail fins, wrap-around windows, and classy convertibles were the new norm. Powerful engines and lots of chrome became the popular features on American cars. Gas was cheap, so large, powerful V8 engines became the choice for most motorists.

The 50s are often described as a time of innocence for young people. Most children lived in two-parent homes where the mother stayed home. Children spent time outdoors playing, and toys were much simpler than those of today. Teenagers enjoyed school dances, malt shops, and cruising down Main Street. Television was a new form of entertainment, but programming was very different, with this era dominated by live programming, dramas, variety shows, and sitcoms. Programming had very strict standards. No foul language was allowed, married couples were always shown with twin beds, and the very first toilet ever shown on television was on *Leave It to Beaver* when Wally and the Beaver kept a baby alligator in the toilet tank. Listening to the family radio was also a popular pastime in the 50s.

My second favorite part of the 50s is the music. New music groups formed, and the birth of rock and roll, and that wonderful Doo Wop sound. Elvis Presley became a household name, and young people across the country were forming rock-and-roll bands. Doo

The 50s were not perfect by any means. But I choose to think about the positive aspects of that wonderful decade. I hope you can, too.

CHIPPEWA VALLEY EYE CLINIC





**CHIPPEWA VALLEY
EYE CLINIC
&
OPTICAL**

Aging Eye Care

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

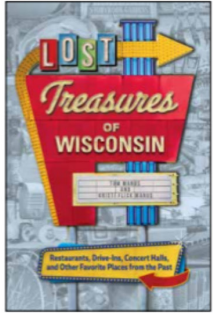



715-834-8471

cveclinic.com

Lost Treasures of Wisconsin


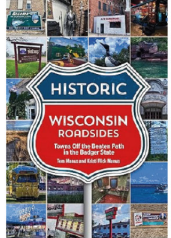

AUTHOR TRAVELPROGRAM





Eau Claire authors and travel writers Tom and Kristi Manus talk about their latest book, *Lost Treasures of Wisconsin*.

The couple has been featured on TV and radio stations across the Midwest, including WGN Chicago and NPR.

GE Bleskacek Family Memorial
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For more information visit us at 1519 17th Ave.,
online at bloomerpubliclibrary.org or call 715-568-2384.

★ CAREGIVER RESOURCES ★

Chippewa Valley Dementia Coalition
Presents the 2nd Annual:



**Chippewa Valley
Dementia
Conference**

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.



D.R. MOON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

COMFORT CORNER

**A MEMORY CAFE
PROGRAM FOR THOSE
LIVING WITH
DEMENTIA AND THEIR
CAREGIVERS**

JUNE 24

10AM-11:30AM

STANLEY FIRE
STATION

- **ACTIVITIES**
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- **GAMES**
- **SOCIALIZATION**

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- ▶ Choose from 1 and 2-bedroom apartments
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- ▶ 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

VIRTUAL DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUPS



All support groups listed are provided by Dementia Care Specialist at the Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) throughout Wisconsin. Join us for support, encouragement and resources.

The groups listed are for those living in or caring for someone living in Wisconsin. For more information on local dementia resources near you, contact your local ADRC.

MONDAY COFFEE CONNECT

EVERY MONDAY 10:00- 11:00 AM

This support group is for caregivers of loved ones living at home, it offers a safe, welcoming space to connect with other caregivers weekly. Ask questions, gain support, and brainstorm solutions—participate by video or phone via Microsoft Teams. For more information contact Kelsey at kflock@lacossecounty.org

MONDAY D.I.S.H.

1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH 7:00 - 8:00 PM

This group was created to support adult working children, friends and spouses of someone living with dementia. Join us as we support each other working through challenges and sharing strategies. To join, contact Carla at cberscheit@dunncountywi.gov

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH 2:00-3:00 PM

Is a support group for people caring for someone living with brain changes. Join to share encouragement, resources and struggles with each other. Contact Teresa at teresa.gander@vernoncountywi.gov

EVENING CONVERSATIONS

2ND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH 7:00 - 8:00 PM

This support group is for people caring for someone with brain changes. Join us as we share education, strategies, challenges, encouragement and resources. Contact Teresa at teresa.gander@vernoncountywi.gov

MINDS & VOICES

2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH 10:30 - 11:30 AM

A virtual advocacy group for people living with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or living with any form of dementia. We meet every 2nd Wednesday from 10:30-11:30am. Building a better tomorrow starts with the making changes today. Your voice, opinions, and feedback matter. Contact Tonya at 920-675-4035 or tonyar@jeffersoncountywi.gov

to find an ADRC near you www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Health Awareness Month

According to the Alzheimer's Association there are over 7 million people in the U.S. that have Alzheimer's. This number goes up yearly, which prompted the Alzheimer's Association to organize a national campaign to educate the public about Alzheimer's and other brain-related disorders. Understanding what Alzheimer's is and the risk factors that contribute to its development can help individuals make better choices about their brain health. While there isn't enough research available to know how to eliminate the risk of developing Alzheimer's, there is good research on how to support a healthy brain and slow the progression of Alzheimer's.



Your mental health can help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's. There are studies that support the link between strong social connections and lowering your risk of cognitive decline. Social connections and interactions improve cognitive abilities. Cognitive decline can also be reduced by exercising your brain. Engaging in activities like reading, doing puzzles, or engaging in a hobby will stretch your cognitive skills and help reduce your risk of Alzheimer's. Stay connected and stretch those mental muscles to reduce your risks.

Of course, protecting your brain from trauma will help reduce damage to your brain. Trauma to your brain has been linked to increased risk of Alzheimer's. Always wear your seatbelt and helmets to reduce trauma to your brain.

What is Alzheimer's?

Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that affects memory loss, cognitive abilities, and behavior. The effects interfere with daily life and progressively worsen over time. It's important to remember that Alzheimer's isn't a part of getting older, but some individuals are more likely to be affected than others.

While we can't predict if someone will develop Alzheimer's, we do know that some factors give us a clue about those that may be more likely to develop it. Age is the biggest factor that points to the likelihood of an individual developing it. This is because most individuals with Alzheimer's are 65 and older and the risk factor doubles every 5 years. Another risk factor is heredity and family history. If you have a family member with Alzheimer's, you are at a higher risk of developing it yourself, and this risk increases the more family members who have this disease. The next risk factor is a link to an increased risk of dementia from head injuries. Lastly, certain medical conditions, especially those linked to heart health, increase the risk of developing dementia. This link has to do with blood vessel health. Talk to your doctor about your risks of developing Alzheimer's to make a plan to reduce those risks.

Can I prevent Alzheimer's?

Unfortunately, there isn't a way to eliminate the risk of developing Alzheimer's, but we can help keep our brain as healthy as possible to reduce our risks. While some risk factors like genetics and family history can't be prevented, we can do several things to help reduce our risk of developing Alzheimer's. We can control our overall physical health with diet and exercise. We can improve our mental health with social connections and keeping mentally active. We can also protect our head by wearing helmets on bikes and wearing seat belts while in a car.

There is a connection between heart health and brain health. Keeping conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol under control helps your cardiovascular system and improves overall heart health. Taking steps to improve your heart health, like regular exercise and a healthy diet, help reduce high blood pressure and cholesterol. This also helps to keep blood sugar under control. Making healthy choices now can reduce the damage that can result from uncontrolled diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol, leading to better heart health which reduces your risk of Alzheimer's.

While we don't know everything about Alzheimer's, we do know overall brain health is a significant determinant of the likelihood of developing it. Understanding your risks of Alzheimer's can help you reduce those risks by taking preventative measures early. Take steps today to help keep your brain as healthy as possible, for as long as possible. Find more information about Alzheimer's by visiting the Alzheimer's Association website at <https://www.alz.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).

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

Strong Bodies 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 to sign up for the classes starting in July 2026.

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

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 and 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) and Tuesdays & Thursdays, July 21 - September 10, 2026 at 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.

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

Med Wise Rx

Medication errors can result in unwanted effects from medicines, and worse, falls, hospitalizations and even death. The pharmacist is important to help people manage their medications and address their medication-related questions and concerns. Yet, patients and caregivers often are unsure what questions to ask or how to ask them. In this workshop, you will gain confidence in talking with your pharmacist and learn what to ask about your medicines. Meets for two 2-hour classes, separated by one week for home practice.

Tuesdays, 1:00 - 3:00 pm/ August 4 & 18, 2026

Lake Street Methodist Church, 337 Lake Street, Eau Claire

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

That's A Good Question ?

I will be turning 65 soon. How do I sign up for Medicare? If you are already receiving Social Security Disability or Retirement benefits, Social Security will mail you your Medicare card 2-3 months before the month you turn 65. If you are not receiving disability or retirement benefits from Social Security, you will need to contact Social Security to apply either by calling 1-866-815-2924 (Eau Claire Field Office) or by making an SSA.gov online account and applying for Medicare online.

Note: If you decide to call SSA to sign up for Medicare, do so 2-3 months before the month you turn 65 if you would like Medicare to start the month you turn 65. There are so many other things to consider regarding Medicare so we strongly urge you to sign up for one of the ADRC's Medicare & You workshops. You can do this by going online www.chippewacountywi.gov/adrc-events or call the ADRC at 715-726-7777.

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.

Hydration and Healthy Aging

by Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)

Small Sips, Big Impact

Staying hydrated is one of the simplest ways to support health. As we grow older, it becomes even more important—and a great opportunity to care for our bodies in new, mindful ways.

Why Hydration Matters

Water helps the body do many important jobs. It supports digestion, keeps joints moving, and helps the heart, brain, and kidneys work well. It also helps control body temperature and carry nutrients where they are needed.

When the body does not get enough fluids, dehydration can happen. This can lead to tiredness, confusion, falls, bladder leakage, constipation, and other health concerns.

The good news: drinking enough fluids is a simple habit that supports strength, focus, and overall well-being.

How Hydration Changes with Age

Aging brings natural changes, and our hydration needs change too.

- **Less thirst:** Older adults may not feel thirsty as often, even when the body needs fluids.
- **Lower body water:** The body holds less water over time due to changes in muscle mass.
- **Kidney changes:** The body may not hold onto water as well as it once did.
- **Daily factors:** Medications, health conditions, and even busy routines can affect how much we drink.



These changes mean hydration takes a bit more attention—but also offers a chance to build healthy routines that support aging well.

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National Dairy Month

Why Dairy Matters as We Age

June is National Dairy Month, a perfect time to celebrate the role dairy foods play in supporting health, especially for older adults. As we age, maintaining strong bones, muscle strength, and overall nutrition becomes increasingly important.

Bone Health

Dairy products like milk, yogurt, and cheese are rich in calcium and vitamin D (two nutrients essential for maintaining bone density and reducing the risk of fractures and osteoporosis).



Muscle Strength

Protein needs increase with age. Dairy provides high-quality protein that helps preserve muscle mass and supports mobility.

Heart Health

Low-fat and fat-free dairy options can be part of a heart-healthy diet. They also provide potassium, which helps manage blood pressure.

Brain Function

Emerging research suggests nutrients in dairy, including vitamin B12 and iodine, may support cognitive function.

Easy Ways to Enjoy Dairy Every Day

Incorporating dairy into your meals doesn't have to be complicated. Here are some simple, enjoyable ideas:

Daily Dairy Tips

- Add milk to your morning oatmeal or cereal
- Enjoy yogurt with fresh fruit as a snack
- Sprinkle cheese on vegetables or soups
- Blend a smoothie with milk or kefir

Smart Choices

- Choose low-fat or fat-free options if managing cholesterol
- Look for lactose-free milk if you're sensitive to lactose
- Try fortified plant-based alternatives if dairy isn't suitable

Social Tip

Sharing meals with others can improve appetite and mood. Consider hosting a small dairy-themed brunch or attending a community meal.

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Featured Recipe – Creamy Berry Yogurt Parfait

This no-cook recipe is nutritious, easy to prepare, and perfect for breakfast or dessert.

Ingredients (Serves 2)

- 1 cup plain or vanilla yogurt
- 1/2 cup fresh strawberries (sliced)
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1/4 cup granola
- 1 tablespoon honey (optional)



Instructions

1. In a glass or bowl, add a layer of yogurt.
2. Add a layer of strawberries and blueberries.
3. Sprinkle granola on top.
4. Repeat layers until ingredients are used.
5. Drizzle with honey if desired.

Benefits

- High in protein and calcium
- Rich in antioxidants from berries
- Easy to chew and digest

Final Thoughts

National Dairy Month is a wonderful reminder that small dietary choices can make a big difference. Whether it's a glass of milk, a slice of cheese, or a delicious yogurt parfait, dairy can be a simple way to nourish your body and enjoy your meals.

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How to Maximize Your FoodShare Benefits

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025 (OBBB) made several changes to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, including updates to work requirements, utility allowances, non-citizen eligibility, and the Thrifty Food Plan. With these changes, it is more important than ever for FoodShare recipients to make the most of their benefits.

These tips can help stretch your food dollars through planning, budgeting, and smart shopping.

Before Shopping

- Plan meals and snacks ahead of time and use leftovers wisely.
- Check store ads, coupons, and sales before shopping.
- Sign up for store discount or rewards cards for extra savings.

During Shopping

- Avoid shopping while hungry to help stick to your list.
- Try store brands, which often cost less but offer similar quality.
- Compare unit prices and nutrition labels for the best value.
- Check expiration dates and choose the freshest items.

After Shopping

- Refrigerate or freeze food right away to keep it fresh.
- Divide bulk meat, poultry, or fish into meal-size portions and freeze.
- Use foods with the earliest expiration dates first

Smart Food Choices:

Breads & Grains

- Choose whole grains and buy day-old bread when discounted.
- Buy regular oats, rice, and grits instead of instant versions to save money and reduce added sugar and sodium.



Vegetables

- Frozen vegetables are affordable and last longer.
- Choose canned vegetables labeled “low sodium” or “no added salt.”

Fruits

- Buy fresh fruit in season for the best price.
- Frozen and canned fruits can also be nutritious and budget friendly.


Dairy

- Buy larger containers of low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese when possible.
- Ultra-pasteurized milk lasts longer and reduces waste.

Meat & Beans

- Dried beans and peas are inexpensive, healthy protein sources with a long shelf life.
- Canned light tuna packed in water is another affordable protein option.

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Using Leftovers Safely

Good nutrition is important at any age



Leftovers help avoid food waste, save money, and make quick future meals. **Store and reuse leftovers properly to prevent foodborne illness.**

STORE LEFTOVERS

Put large batches of food in the fridge to eat over the next few days, and freeze the rest. **Store leftovers within 2 hours of cooling.**

Food safety tips to use when storing leftovers:

- 1 To cool your leftovers:**

 - Divide the food into single servings for later use
 - Wait for the food to stop steaming before putting it away
- 2 To store in the fridge (4°C | 40°F or lower):**

 - Put leftovers in covered containers (e.g., lids, aluminum foil)
 - Label the type of food and the date you made it
- 3 To store in the freezer (-18°C | 0°F or lower):**

 - Put leftovers in containers that are made for the freezer, or wrap food in aluminum foil and place in re-sealable bags
 - Label the type of food and the date you made it

What is Grief and Why Do We Grieve? By Ron Potter-Efron, MSW

What is Grief?

A good definition of grief is “an intense emotional response to significant loss or change, characterized by deep sorrow, heartache, anguish, and distress, particularly after the death of a loved one.”

Grief may affect every part of us. We often react to great loss emotionally (such as tearfulness, anxiety, apathy); cognitively (confusion, indecisiveness); behaviorally (loss of appetite, inability to act); socially (isolation, loneliness); and spiritually (seeking comfort from God, rejection of God).

Why Do We Grieve?

Human beings are social creatures. Over countless generations our species has learned an important lesson: survival depends on making strong bonds with others, bonds that ensure we will protect each other from danger throughout our lives. One kind of bond is stronger than any other: scientists call it “attachment.” Most people call it “love.”

Parents, of course, form attachment bonds with their children. Spouses fall in love “forever.” Sometimes friends become so important to us they feel like sisters and brothers. Anyone who ever has had to say goodbye to a deeply loved pet knows we can form attachment bonds with them as well.

The hallmark of love is that we create a new relationship that’s called “US.” Us is more than you and me. It’s more than a bridge connecting separate people. Us is a living force, so strong it becomes a main reason for living.

So, what happens when death intervenes? Consciously, we know that the loved one has departed. But at a deeper layer, deeper than mere rational awareness, we protest. “NO, NO. They’re not dead. They’ve just gone missing. I must find them.” And even deeper: “I am nothing without you” and “I can’t live without you.”

Does Grief Ever End?

Grief is this strong response to the (apparent) loss of “us.” We despair, feeling an almost unendurable emptiness. Eventually, we are told, we will reach “acceptance,” meaning we are no longer consumed with the search for our missing “us.” Better, we reach acceptance when we have figured out a way to keep our loved one in our heart while developing a new, meaningful single way of living.



One lesson I’ve learned about grief in the almost 4 years since my wife Pat died: Grief is forever, although the pain isn’t nearly as intense now as it was at first. Grief is everlasting and that’s ok: it means I will always have a loving relationship with Pat. There will always be an “us” because I still carry her in my heart. I still see Pat in my dreams. I report to her my day’s activities nightly before bed. I feel her presence whenever I talk about grief. I treasure these moments of togetherness, even though they usually arrive with a tinge of sadness.

To summarize: Grief occurs when death threatens the “us” bond we have created with our loved one. We protest that loss with every cell in our bodies. Grief usually lessens over time but never goes completely away, and the key to survival is to find ways to create a new, single life while keeping the loved one with you in your heart.

Ron Potter-Efron, MSW, is a facilitator for the Chippewa Valley Grief Support Group. The support group meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, from 3-4:30 p.m., at Central Lutheran Church, 28E. Columbia Street. For more information, contact Ron at 715-797-3817 or rpottere@gmail.com




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- **Special Home Adaptation (SHA)**
 - o Designed for veterans with qualifying disabilities that do not meet SAH criteria
 - o Funds are used to modify an existing home to improve accessibility
 - o Common uses include adapting bathrooms, entrances, or essential living spaces
- **Temporary Residence Adaptation (TRA)**
 - o Available to veterans who qualify for SAH or SHA but are temporarily living in a family member's home
 - o Helps cover the cost of making accessibility modifications in that temporary residence
- **Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA)**
 - o Available for both service-connected and non-service-connected disabilities
 - o Covers medically necessary home improvements such as ramps, bathroom modifications, and entry/exit access
 - o Unlike SAH/SHA, HISA is typically smaller in amount and focused on specific medical needs rather than full home adaptation

How to Apply

- Apply through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs by submitting VA Form 26-4555 (Application in Acquiring Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation Grant)
- Veterans can apply online, by mail, or with assistance from a local VA office
- It's recommended to work with a Veterans Service Officer (VSO), who can help ensure the application is completed correctly and supported with proper medical evidence
- The VA will review the claim, verify eligibility based on service-connected disabilities, and may request additional documentation or evaluations
- Once approved, the veteran can coordinate with the VA and contractors to begin approved home modifications
- For HISA, submit VA Form 10-0103 (Veteran's Application for Assistance in Acquiring Home Improvements and Structural Alterations)



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Why Memory Worsens as You Age, and 5 Things You Can Do About It

Resourced from *EverydayHealth*

Ever been at a party and unable to remember the name of the person you're talking to? Or found yourself tearing apart the house looking for your keys? While these experiences can feel unnerving, some degree of forgetfulness is a natural part of aging. The good news is there are ways to help support memory and cognitive functioning. Here's what research says about why memory changes with age and what lifestyle habits may help.

3 CAUSES OF AGE-RELATED MEMORY LOSS

1. The Volume of Your Brain Shrinks. Your memory naturally changes with each decade of life, though normal age-related decline may not be as dramatic as once believed, according to the Stanford School of Medicine.

A reduction in neurons caused by slight shrinking of the brain, along with loss of protective myelin, may slow processing speed.

"It's due to the shrinking of your hippocampus, the part of your brain that stores memories," explains neurologist Majid Fotuhi, MD, adjunct professor at the Mind/Brain Institute at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

2. You Have Chronic Health Conditions. Certain chronic conditions can increase your risk of dementia as you age. High blood sugar, such as with diabetes, can damage blood vessels in the brain over time, potentially leading to problems with memory and cognition, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

High blood pressure, especially during middle age, is also linked to a higher risk of dementia later in life, according to the American Heart Association. Elevated cholesterol may contribute as well, with the National Institute on Aging linking high cholesterol to an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, early symptoms of dementia may include:

- Forgetting recent events or information
- Misplacing commonly used items
- Changes in mood, behavior, or interests

Other conditions, including untreated sleep apnea, can also affect memory, Fotuhi says. Stress, pain, poor sleep, depression, anxiety, and attention difficulties may also interfere with cognitive processing.

3. Your Hormones Fluctuate. The hormonal changes that accompany menopause may also play a role in cognitive decline, according to a 2021 research paper. Researchers believe estrogen, which decreases during menopause, may act as a neuroprotective agent that supports brain health.

5 WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR MEMORY AS YOU AGE

While some age-related memory changes are outside of your control, certain lifestyle habits may help support a healthy memory.

1. Break a Sweat. Exercise-related physical activity has been linked to increased brain volume and reduced cognitive decline, according to a 2024 study.

"A third of your brain is made up of blood vessels, so it should come as no surprise that there's a link between physical fitness and brain volume," Fotuhi says.

A 2021 study also found a correlation between regular exercise and stronger working memory — the ability to temporarily hold and use



information, such as remembering a phone number or following a recipe. In other words: "It's never too late to start [exercising]," Fotuhi says.

2. Limit Sitting. Even if you exercise regularly, spending too much time sitting may negatively affect your brain. Research involving adults ages 45 to 75 found that those who sat for three to seven hours a day experienced substantial thinning of the medial temporal lobe, the area where the brain forms new memories. Thinning in this area often precedes dementia, says Gary Small, MD, chair of psychiatry at Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey and author of *The Memory Bible*.

3. Practice Mindfulness. Stress can be harmful to brain cells.

"It kills them off and shrinks both the prefrontal cortex and the hippocampus, both areas of the brain responsible for memory and learning," Fotuhi says.

One research review that followed nearly 30,000 people for at least 10 years found that people with clinically significant anxiety were more likely to develop dementia later in life. Mindfulness practices such as meditation or yoga may help counteract those effects. According to a 2023 article, meditation may stimulate neuroplasticity — the brain's ability to form new connections — and contribute to growth in the hippocampus, a region vital for memory. Meditation may also reduce the harmful effects of stress hormones on the brain.

4. Dine Mediterranean-Style. The Mediterranean diet — rich in fruits, vegetables, healthy fats, legumes, and whole grains — is known for heart-health benefits, but it may support brain health as well. A 2023 study found the Mediterranean diet may slow cognitive decline and reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

"It makes sense that any diet that helps lower blood pressure and cholesterol would help your brain, too," Small says. "The healthy fats in the diet also reduce brain inflammation, while antioxidants help protect brain cells from wear and tear."

On the other hand, a study of nearly 500,000 people in the United Kingdom found that eating just 25 grams of processed meat daily — roughly one slice of bacon — was associated with a 44 percent increased risk of dementia.

5. Get Enough Sleep. While you sleep, your brain strengthens connections between cells and transfers information from short-term to long-term memory storage, according to the Yale School of Medicine.

"This process essentially shifts memories and skills to a more efficient brain region so they become more stable and you can easily recall them, a process called memory consolidation," Small says.

Sleep also gives the brain time to clear out waste products like beta-amyloid, which is associated with Alzheimer's risk. If you struggle with sleep, it may be tempting to rely on prescription sleep or anti-anxiety medications. However, Small says it's best to avoid this when possible. Some research has linked regular benzodiazepine use — including medications such as diazepam (Valium), lorazepam (Ativan), and alprazolam (Xanax) — with a higher risk of Alzheimer's disease, though evidence is not yet conclusive.

Instead, focus on healthy sleep habits, including maintaining a consistent sleep schedule and avoiding screens for a couple of hours before bed.

No Laughing Matter: Protecting Independence as We Age

By Carl A. Trapani, MA, MS, LPC, Chippewa Manor Campus Chaplain

“Help! I’ve fallen and can’t get up!”

Hearing that phrase instantly brings back memories of that famous television commercial. People laughed when they first heard it. Comedians repeated it. Families joked about it around the dinner table. But for many seniors, that sentence stopped being funny the moment it became real. Over time, the commercials themselves changed in tone and became deadly serious. The lighthearted humor faded and was replaced with something much more sobering. Instead of a dramatic cry, there was only a frightened whimper: “Help. Help me please!” That quiet plea carried a different kind of weight. It revealed the loneliness, fear, and helplessness a person can feel after a serious fall.

A fall can happen in seconds — stepping out of the shower, carrying groceries, reaching for a top shelf, or getting up too quickly from a recliner. One moment you’re fine; the next moment you’re on the floor staring at the ceiling wondering, “Now how do I get up?” Sadly, sometimes no one is there to hear a call for help. A fall is not amusing if you are the one on the floor unable to rise, hurting, frightened, and wondering how long it will be before someone finds you. Minutes can feel like hours. Even a confident, independent person can suddenly feel fragile and terribly alone.

People of every age group have falls. But among older adults, falls are one of the leading causes of serious injury and death. Each year, according to the Center for Disease Control, millions of older people—those 65 and older—fall. Each year, there are about 3 million emergency department visits due to older people falls. In fact, more than one out of four older people, will experience a falling incident each year, but less than half tell their doctor.

Important fact: Falling once doubles your chances of falling again.

A broken hip, head injury, or even a long period lying on the floor alone can change a person’s life permanently. Many seniors never fully recover their strength or confidence after a major fall. For some, the greatest injury after a fall is not the bruise or broken bone — it’s the unseen loss of confidence. After a bad fall, even ordinary activities become frightening. Fear quietly moves in and begins shrinking a person’s world. After a fall, many people begin living cautiously, nervously, or even isolated. “What if I fall again?” “What if nobody finds me?” “What if this time I can’t get up?” Those are frightening thoughts. And they deserve to be taken seriously. One woman said, “The bruise healed faster than my confidence.” That’s the heartbreaking side of falls. They don’t just affect bones — they affect the spirit.

That is why fall prevention matters. This is not merely about avoiding embarrassment. It is about preserving independence, dignity, mobility, and even life itself. And yet, even in such serious matters, humor still has a place. One senior said: “I’ve reached the age where I don’t trust anything that moves — including myself.” Another joked: “I used to run from my problems. Now I walk carefully around them holding the railing.” And still another quipped: “At my age, getting down on the floor is easy. It’s the committee meeting required to get back up that’s the problem.”

Humor helps us cope. But underneath the laughter is a truth we shouldn’t ignore; falls can steal independence quickly. Using a cane, walker, nightlight, handrail, or medical alert button is not admitting defeat. It is choosing safety over pride. Pride can be dangerous. Many seniors resist using canes, walkers, handrails, or medical alert systems because they don’t want to “feel old.” But wisdom says: “It is far better to use a walker than a wheelchair.” A cane doesn’t announce weakness.

It announces intelligence. One gentleman finally accepted using a walker when his daughter told him: “Dad, it’s not surrender. It’s preventive maintenance.” A cane is not surrender. It’s strategy. One gentleman joked, “I finally accepted my walker when I realized it can also carry my coffee.”

Many falls happen at home — the very place we think is safest. A healthy amount of what I call, “preventive paranoia” will help you see that your house may be plotting against you. Common threats include throw rugs, dim lighting, electrical cords, slippery bathrooms, cluttered walkways and pets who suddenly stop directly in front of you. One man admitted: “I’m not saying my cat tried to kill me... but he’s got nine lives, and I only have one!” And walking around in those innocent-looking socks on hardwood floors? Those are basically ice skates on your indoor rink.

That famous phrase “Help! I’ve fallen and I can’t get up!” became memorable because it touched a real fear. Medical alert systems, phones nearby, and regular check-ins from family or neighbors can literally save lives. Providing regular and reliable contacts for aging loved ones ensures their well-being and is proof of our love for them. To help another in their time of need, is to love them.

Falling reminds us of something we don’t always like to admit: we are fragile. But it also reminds us how deeply people care for one another. After a fall, families gather. Friends call. Neighbors help. Love shows up with casseroles, encouragement, and advice about sensible shoes. And perhaps that’s part of God’s design — that we learn to lean on one another as the years go by. When families rally to help the injured fall victim with visits, groceries and rides. When neighbors check in. Love appears. And perhaps that’s one of life’s quiet lessons in aging — learning both how to give help and how to receive it gracefully.

Carl Trapani, MA, MS, LPC serves as campus Chaplain at Chippewa Manor. For more information please call (715) 723-4437 or email him at carl.trapani@chippewamanor.com.



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