

BRAIN HEALTH / GOOD NUTRITION MATTERS / EXERCISE TO STAY STRONG / DRIVING

boomers

SUMMER 2021



© ADOBE STOCK

FREE

A SUPPLEMENT OF THE BARRE-MONTPELIER TIMES ARGUS | JUNE 2021

www.timesargus.com/boomers

Summer 2021

List of things TO-DO w/ MSAC



Montpelier
Senior
Activity Center

Call MSAC at
Home to help
install my A/C
and new
lightbulbs

Check out
membership
benefits like tech
device library (new
year starts
in July!)

Subscribe to
MSAC's
weekly e-letter
to stay
informed

Sign up for a
class (Yoga? Tai
Chi? Art? Singing
Rounds Outside?
Bone Builders?
Zumba?)

Reserve a
FEAST
Curbside
Picnic



Tues / Fri
12 - 12:30 pm
802-262-6288



58 Barre St. | Montpelier | 05602
802-223-2518 | msac@montpelier-vt.org
www.montpelier-vt.org/msac

HEALTH CONCERNS

Brain Health

Your brain can also become weak as you age if you do not maintain its health.



© ADOBE STOCK

Although there is not physical way to work out your brain, there are some mental workouts you can perform to keep your brain strong and healthy.

Mental health is important

Although you may have good mental health, you can never be too careful as you continue to age. Mental health disorders such as dementia and depression can develop in anyone if you do not take care of your brain.

Luckily there are some preventative measures you can take to ensure that your brain stays healthy as you age.

The best way to work out your brain is to keep your mind active. Challenging yourself with learning a new

skill or taking in music, theater or another creative activity will get your mind moving and working.

Unhealthy habits

Your brain is effected by everything you do. So keep that in mind if you are a smoker, if you do not get much sleep at night or if you don't eat the right things.

A healthy brain requires a healthy life away from harmful substances such as cigarettes, alcohol and junk food.

Being active is a great way to keep your mind and body healthy whether it's walking through your local park, taking a tai chi or yoga class or even just stretching every day for 10 minutes. Get your body moving and kick away those unhealthy habits and you'll lead a

long, bright healthy life.

Leading a healthy life is the best way to protect your body against aging and disease. Creating a healthy life style will lead to more benefits in your life and well being.

Activities

Some other activities you can do to keep your brain active are puzzles, brain games on your phone or using your memory. Drawing a map of your town from memory is a good challenge for your brain. Include major streets, landmarks and major sights in town.

Draw your daily routine in town during the day. These and other activities will help your brain fight against diseases such as Alzheimers.

Good Nutrition Matters

The National Council on aging shares advice and tips on a healthy life and healthy nutrition.

Importance of Nutrition

The National Council on Aging says poor nutrition increases your risk for serious health problems. When you are sick, your body needs extra nutrition to heal. If you don't eat right, your body will have to get the nutrition from somewhere breaking down nutrients in your muscles to use as fuel.

The NCOA says malnutrition effects your body by:

- Making it harder to recover from surgery and illness.
- Make it more difficult to heal wounds.
- Increase risk for infection and risks for falls.
- Decrease strength needed to take care of yourself.

Read the Warning Signs

You won't feel the effects of poor nutrition overnight.

Sometimes, it will take a while to see that you are getting the proper nutrients your body needs. As you get older, the signs may become more troubling for you than in a younger adult or child. Talk to your health care provider if you show any of the warning signs provided by NCOA.

- Eating poorly.
- If chewing and swallowing becomes difficult.
- Taking multiple medicines to feel normal.
- Unplanned weight loss

Steps to Good Nutrition

The first step to a healthy diet is to know what nutrients to look for. NCOA says your plate should look like a rainbow. Bright, colored foods are the best choice. Your plates should include all of the following:

- Lean protein (lean meats, seafood, eggs and beans).
- Fruits and Vegetables (orange, red, green and purple).
- Whole grains (brown rice, whole wheat pasta).
- Low-fat dairy (milk and its alternatives).

Choose foods that are high in fiber and low in sodium or salt. Vitamins such as vitamin D are important as you age. Making sure you eat the right items will help you lead a safe and healthy lifestyle and can prolong the effects of aging.

MSAC At Home

Supporting aging in place with the national 'village' model

By Andrew Gribbin

*Aging in Place Coordinator / VHCB
AmeriCorps member serving at
Montpelier Senior Activity Center*

While many of us would prefer to stay in our homes as we age – whether that home is a house, apartment, or condo – certain elements often become more difficult to do for ourselves with the passage of time. To that end, the Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC) has been busy expanding its offerings beyond the physical walls of the building in order to provide support and services that can help address these challenges. These new offerings, called MSAC at Home, strive to empower older adults to age safely and successfully in their homes while remaining connected to the community around them.

The vision behind MSAC at Home can be attributed to a dedicated group of Montpelier residents who began thinking of their loved ones' – and eventually their own – need for an increase in support as they got older. Their review of possible solutions led them to the Village Model, a nationwide movement of several hundred independently operating grassroots, member-driven organizations located throughout the country, including Vermont. Villages aim to provide a wide-range of practical services that help with activities such as non-medical household tasks, transportation, and simple technology assistance, as well as to promote social connection and opportunities to reduce isolation



PROVIDED PHOTO

among older adults. Services are provided by a network of volunteers located in the community where a particular Village operates, serving to strengthen the bonds between neighbors.

MSAC at Home has begun a gradual but steady roll out of services, beginning in the fall of 2020. During this initial phase, efforts have focused on three distinct areas: check-in phone calls to MSAC members in order to provide for friendly conversation and the sharing of local resources, basic technology help, including personalized Zoom trainings, and outdoor, home-based chore assistance, such as yard cleanup and wood stacking help. As the pandemic restrictions have eased, home-based assistance has expanded to include indoor offerings such as air conditioner installation, the lifting or moving of heavy objects, and home evaluations by a licensed occupational therapist for falls risk prevention. Further services, such as in-person social opportunities and a technology device lending and training program, are planned as future

offerings. In order to keep these services accessible to as many people as possible, all are being offered for free (or by optional donation) at this time.

Along with key partners, including the Central Vermont Council on Aging, the City of Montpelier, and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) AmeriCorps program, MSAC at Home strives to be a part of the solution that makes it less challenging, more rewarding, and safer for individuals to remain in their homes for as long as they choose to do so.

To learn more about MSAC at Home, including ways to get involved, visit www.montpelier-vt.org/MSAC-at-Home or contact VHCB AmeriCorps member Andrew Gribbin at 802-262-6287 or msac-ameriCorps@montpelier-vt.org.

To learn more about MSAC, membership and summer classes, see the full-page ad on the inside cover!

To learn more about the Village Model, please visit www.vtvnet-work.org.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Exercise to Stay Strong

As you age and get older it is important to make sure you keep your body healthy and strong to prevent injuries.

Exercising may seem a little intimidating but if you know what you are doing then it can be fun and super beneficial to your health.

Keep Your Legs Strong

To help prevent falls, trips or injuries as you age it is important to make sure you are working out your body keeping it strong and healthy. Although it may be unsafe for you to go to a gym during a pandemic that should not limit your ability to workout. There are simple leg workouts that you can perform at home in your living room and backyard safely.

- Chair squats. Position your body in front of a chair with your hands straight out in front of you. While keeping your legs should length apart perform squats on the

chair. For a harder workout hover and hold your legs over the chair and count to 5 during each squat.

- Side leg raise. Stand behind a chair with your feet shoulder width apart. Slowly lift one leg to the side while keeping your back straight and eyes staring forward. Hold your leg in the air for 15 to 30 seconds and slowly set it down. Repeat for the opposite leg.

- Toe lifts. While using a chair or counter for this exercise, stand with your feet together and stand up on your toes as high as you can. Slowly lower yourself and repeat this about 10 times.

Stretching is Important

There are other ways to get your daily fitness in and one of those is stretching. Stretching helps give you greater movement in joints and improving your posture.



© ADOBE STOCK

Stretching also helps to release muscle tension and soreness. Over time, stretching will help your body just as much as working out would.

Seniors should try and stretch a major muscle group for at least 10 minutes, twice a week, if not more. These exercises paired with other healthy lifestyles will help your body stay strong and prevent possible falls in the future.



HOMESHARE

Bringing Vermonters together to share homes

HomeShare
VERMONT

802-863-5625

HomeShareVermont.org

United
Way



New England VP Ed Coats
Publisher/Executive Editor Steven Pappas
General Sales Manager Tim Duguay
Customer Service Manager Melody Hudson
Creative Services Manager Keri Franzoni
Advertising Krystal Marshall, Peter Morande, Kristine Wolfrom
Design Tiahna Gillam, Fran Grabowski

THE BARRE MONTPELIER
TIMES ARGUS
Established 1897

47 North Main Street, Suite 200, Barre, VT | www.timesargus.com | 800-498-4296

boomers

Cover photo: © adobe stock

BOOMERS is a publication of Brunswick Publishing LLC with content provided by GreenShoot Media. Reproduction in whole or in part without prior written permission is strictly prohibited. Opinions expressed in the publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the management of the publication.

Save the Date

Central Vermont Council on Aging benefit "Together Again" Fundraiser



October 9, 2021

12:00—2:00pm

**Stoweflake Inn and Resort
Stowe, VT**

For more information, please call 802-476-0116
or email events@cvcoa.org



Change is Great!

After a long season of social distancing, we are thrilled to see our residents enjoying their lives together, laughing, and visiting with friends, family and neighbors. This change is so good!

Our residents can live rich, fulfilling, and social lives with:

- Daily planned activities
- Chef-prepared meals with friends
- Games, entertainment, music
- Fitness programs designed for seniors
- Impromptu socialization in a safe environment
- Zero property maintenance responsibilities



**MARGARET PRATT
COMMUNITY**

Be at home with us!

Assisted Living

Contact us for more information:

802-222-5554 • info@margaretpratt.org • Bradford, VT



ON THE GO



© ADOBE STOCK

Plan Before you Drive

If you or a loved one have aching pains and stiffness but are still able to drive it doesn't hurt to take extra steps to make sure you keep yourself and others on the road safe.

Before you drive take some extra initiative to know where and when you are going somewhere. Being a safe driver will help you remain a driver for a longer period of time without having to rely on your loved ones or a service to get you where you need to go.

Be a Safe Driver

Being a safe driver is knowing when it's best for you to drive and knowing when you shouldn't drive. If you have trouble seeing then maybe driving at night or during a storm isn't the right choice for you.

If you have concerns about your ability to drive you can get it checked by a trained [professional or even an occupational therapist.

Taking a defensive driving course to freshen up your memory or even to update yourself on the new rules of the road is a good way to be a safe driver and to keep yourself on the road/.

Is it Time to Quit Driving?

As you get older you will eventually reach an age where you are unfit to drive a vehicle. This may occur sooner in some adults than others. Medications can also affect your driving skills. There are some medications that can make you sluggish and react slower than you usually do. This is very dangerous if you drive constantly because it can affect the way you drive and may put you at risk of an accident.

When do you know it's time for you or your loved ones to put the keys down?

- Multiple car crashes or near miss incidents.
- Multiple or more traffic tickets during a short period of time.
- Comments from other such as neighbors or family members.
- Experiencing anxiety when it's time to get behind the wheel.

If you or a loved one is experiencing any of these difficulties then it may be time to put down the keys.

Senior Drivers

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says one in six drivers in the United States are 65 years or older and that older drivers are more than twice as likely to report having a medical problem making it difficult for them to travel.

There are some steps you can take to ensure you or your family member can travel safely.

See your Doctor

Talk to your doctor about medications or your body if you have any doubts of you or your loved one's ability to drive themselves. Talk to them about any pains you may be experiencing while driving. If you are experiencing lower stiffness, pain or arthritis, then look into getting vehicles with the hand controls for both the gas and brake pedals.

Sight Problems

Note that your vision can worsen with age and if you are slowly noticing your vision becoming worse than before then see your doctor about glasses and procedures.

The CDC says trouble seeing can make it more difficult for you to read street or traffic signs clearly. Glare from oncoming headlights at night can also affect your vision ahead of you on the road. If you are 65 or older, the CDC recommends you see your eye doctor every year.

Hearing Problems

Hearing can also be affected as you get older. Trouble hearing can make it more difficult for you to hear horns, sirens from emergency vehicles and even noises that may be coming from your own vehicle.

Have your ears checked by your local doctor every three years if you are 50 years or older.

Other Travel Methods

If you or your loved has trouble traveling and are not able to drive or travel on their own then there are other ways they can get where they need to go.

Some cities provide a travel service specifically for seniors for a monthly fee. Religious groups in some communities also offer volunteers who will drive you wherever you need to go.

MY HEALTHY VERMONT

Online workshops.
Personalized support.
Real results.

Offering free, online workshops for type 2 diabetes and prediabetes, chronic disease, quit smoking, and more! **Also coming soon, a new high blood pressure workshop.**



Find a workshop at
MyHealthyVT.org