

THE COMMUNICATOR

A Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging Publication

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BEAT THE HEAT - Staying Safe In The Summertime

nih.gov

After a long winter cooped up, the arrival of sunny days can make you eager to be outside. Getting outdoors can be good for you in many ways. It provides opportunities for exercise and boosts your mental health.

But as the heat rises, health risks can increase. Intense heat will put a strain on both your body and brain. Too much heat can also cause a heat-related illness called hyperthermia. Heat hyperthermia can cause discomfort, like muscle cramps or swelling in the ankles and feet.

Heat exhaustion is more serious. It occurs when your body can no longer keep itself cool. You may start to feel dizzy or nauseated. Other symptoms include feeling thirsty, weak or uncoordinated.



TIPS TO PROTECT YOU FROM THE SUN:

- Do outdoor activities during the coolest part of the day, in the early morning or evening
- Exercise in an air-conditioned space if possible. Or, do water workouts.
- Try to stay in the shade when outdoors during peak sunlight.
- Drink plenty of liquids, especially water. Avoid drinks that contain alcohol or caffeine.
- Choose to wear light colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Use sunglasses that blocks both UVA and UVB.
- Use sunscreen that has a sun protection factor of at least 15 SPF, preferably 30 or more and apply frequently.

The most extreme form of hyperthermia is heat stroke. Heat stroke is life-threatening, so seek medical help right away. Symptoms include fainting or having trouble walking. You may start feeling confused or agitated. You can also feel very hot but not sweat or have dry, flushed skin.

Some people are more at risk for heat-related illness than others. Older adults are the most heat sensitive. That's because the body's ability to cool itself changes as we get older.

There are two main ways your body regulates its temperature. One is increasing how much blood flows to the skin. The other is how much we sweat. Neither of these works as well in older adults. That makes it more difficult for them to cool off.

Too much heat is not safe for anyone. If you're outside in the heat, drink lots of water. Don't try to exercise or do a lot of activities outdoors when it's hot.

If you start to feel sick in the heat, rest in a cool place and drink plenty of fluids. If you think someone has heat stroke, get them to a cool place and call 911. If possible, get into an air-conditioned room for a while. Heat isn't the only hazard during the summer. It's also important to protect your skin and your eyes from the sun.

PREVENTING A FALL

cdc.gov

More than 1 in 4 older adults report falling each year. This results in about 36 million falls. Falls can cause serious injuries such as broken bones or a head or brain injury. But falls are not a normal part of aging, they can be prevented.

You can take action to prevent falling and stay independent longer.

Speak up.

- ⇒ Tell your doctor if you have fallen, if you feel unsteady when standing or walking, or if you are afraid you might fall.
- ⇒ Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review the medicines you take. Some medicines might make you dizzy or sleepy which can increase your risk of falling.
- ⇒ Have an eye doctor check your eyes at least once a year and update your eye-glasses as needed.
- ⇒ Have your doctor check your feet at least once a year and discuss proper footwear to reduce your risk of falling.
- ⇒ Ask your doctor about health conditions like depression, osteoporosis, or hypotension that can increase your risk for falling.



Stay active.

- ⇒ Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance, like Tai Chi.

Make your home safer.

- ⇒ Get rid of trip hazards like throw rugs, and keep floors clutter free.
- ⇒ Brighten your home with extra lighting or brighter light bulbs.
- ⇒ Install grab bars in the bathroom(s) next to the toilet and inside and outside of your bathtub or shower.
- ⇒ Install handrails on both sides of staircases.



Did you know you can hire family and friends to provide your care?



With self-direction, you can stay in your home and choose who supports you, including family or friends that you love and trust.

GT takes care of the paperwork and payroll, so you can live your life hassle-free.

Want to learn more?

Jason McKenney | KS Director of State Services
jmckenney@gtindependence.com
Phone: 913.277.1571 | gtindependence.com

DRIVING - WHEN ITS TIME TO GIVE UP THE KEYS

Getting older doesn't automatically mean that you shouldn't be behind the wheel. However, regularly monitoring your driving abilities is an important part of maintaining senior health. There comes a point for nearly everyone when reflexes slow and vision deteriorates, making driving no longer safe for you and others on the road. This is especially true for people who have age-related health conditions.

Here are some clear indicators that it's no longer safe to drive.

- ⇒ Stopping at green lights or when there is no stop sign.
- ⇒ Getting confused by traffic signals.
- ⇒ Running stop signs or red lights.
- ⇒ Having accidents or side-swiping other cars when parking.
- ⇒ Getting lost and calling a family member for directions.
- ⇒ Hearing from friends and acquaintances who are concerned about your driving.

There is no set age when everyone should stop driving. Each person is different. But keep in mind that most people drive 7 to 10 years longer than they should.

Making the transition from being an independent driver to being a passenger can be difficult. However, creating a network of alternative transportation arrangements to get you where you need to be can go a long way toward helping you adjust.

Dear Newsletter Recipient:

For years "The Communicator" has served as a vital means for providing seniors in Wyandotte County important information regarding aging news, events, programs, services and much more! The newsletter's continuity depends on your donations for its existence.

Please help us continue to provide this important publication by becoming a sponsor!

Respectfully,
The Newsletter Committee

_____ \$100	Advocate
_____ \$50	Benefactor
_____ \$25	Patron
_____ \$10	<i>patron</i> Contributor
_____	<i>contribuidor</i> Other
_____	<i>otro</i>

Appreciation is extended to the following who have contributed toward the cost of this newsletter.

Wanda Collins - Contributor
Pauline Estell - Benefactor
Freddye Davis - Benefactor
Wilma Scroggins - Patron

Names are listed in alphabetical order.

If you would like to contribute to the cost of the newsletter, please make checks payable to:

Wyandotte/Leavenworth AAA
Attn: The Communicator
849 North 47th, Suite C
Kansas City, Kansas 66102



Join our
mailing list

By joining our email club, get
information before everyone else!

Send an email to:
60Plus@wycokck.org
with your request.

FARMERS MARKET VOUCHERS

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging & Disability Resource Center is currently distributing Farmers Market vouchers (by mail).

Recipients must be at least 60 years of age or older, living in Wyandotte County and meet income guidelines. The amount of the booklets is \$35.

Contact the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531 to request your application.

**SENIOR
FARMER'S MARKET
NUTRITION
Program**



Don't be a victim of
Medicare fraud...read
your Medicare Summary
every quarter!



PROTECT...yourself from Medicare error, fraud and abuse.

DETECT...learn to detect potential errors, fraud and abuse.

REPORT...if you suspect that you have been a target of errors.

**SMP
HOTLINE
1-800-432-3535**

COVID UPDATES AND OPENINGS

The Unified Government Health Department UGPHD continues to encourage the use of masks for individuals who are unvaccinated, especially indoors. The UGPHD also continues to focus on vaccines.

Visitors are required to wear a mask upon entry to any Unified Government facility, including the UG Public Health Department's vaccination sites.



The CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccination for people age 12 and older. The UGPHD continues to provide free COVID-19 vaccinations for any one 12 and older.

Homebound seniors/shut-ins are able to access vaccinations in their home by contacting the 311 line at 913-573-5311.

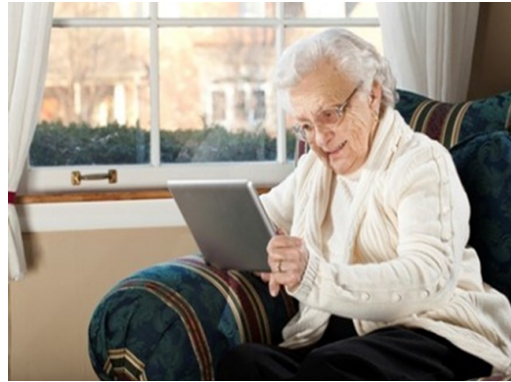
DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ Did you know a giraffe can go longer without water than a camel?
- ◆ Did you know scorpions glow under ultra violet light?
- ◆ Did you know white cats with blue eyes are usually deaf?
- ◆ Did you know a group of whales is called a pod?
- ◆ Did you know an elephants ears are used to regulate body temperature?
- ◆ Did you know a hummingbird's heart beats at over 1,000 times a minute?
- ◆ Did you know a giraffe can clean its ears with its 21 inch tongue?
- ◆ Did you know elephants are the only mammal that can't jump?
- ◆ Did you know a bear has 42 teeth?
- ◆ Did you know rabbits like licorice?
- ◆ Did you know birds need gravity to swallow?
- ◆ Did you know a flea can jump 350 times its body length?
- ◆ Did you know a snail can sleep for 3 years?
- ◆ Did you know bulls can run faster uphill than down?
- ◆ Did you know shark's teeth are literally as hard as steel?

Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging

BATTLING ISOLATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Reconnecting Our Seniors



Qualifications:

- Those 60 and older, or those needing to connect to older residents, who are in nursing homes or in residential locations where they are isolated, and
- Those who had lost internet or phone connection due to COVID-19 and inability to pay for the services.

To apply for assistance:

- Be prepared to submit a copy of the outstanding bill identifying the amount past due and includes the current amount due.
- Be prepared to provide the name of the carrier to whom the payment is owed, along with the account # and other pertinent information required for payment.



AARP
Real Possibilities

If you're in need of assistance staying connected, contact the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging at **913-573-8531** to complete an intake for consideration.

NATIONAL SENIOR CITIZENS DAY

Annually on August 21st, National Senior Citizens Day recognizes the achievements of the more mature representatives of our nation. The day provides an opportunity to show our appreciation for their dedication, accomplishments, and services they give throughout their lives.

Spend time with the senior citizen you know. Let them know they are appreciated and loved.

Share your smile with those who may not otherwise get a visitor.

Dehydration and Dementia: Causes and Effects

Source: A Place for Mom

Older adults are naturally at high risk for dehydration. As we age, feelings of thirst become less noticeable and the body can't store as much water. But chronic or unresolved dehydration can be dangerous, because without sufficient fluids, our bodies may not be able to carry out its normal functions.

While dehydration can affect all people as they age, dehydration and dementia often go hand-in-hand. In fact, dehydration in elderly people with dementia occurs at significantly higher rates than those without cognitive decline. Older adults with dementia may not remember to drink regularly and often need help or reminders to stay hydrated throughout the day. As Alzheimer's disease and other dementias progress, seniors may lose the ability to recognize thirst, drink without assistance or to verbally communicate their needs to a caregiver.

Dehydration in elderly adults with dementia is particularly common, since the part of the brain that recognizes liquid imbalance and lets people know they're thirsty may not work properly as dementia progresses. Here are eight reasons seniors with dementia may become dehydrated:



- ◇ **Inability to recognize thirst.** In the early stages of dementia, a person may be less sensitive to thirst and less likely to remember when they last took a drink.
- ◇ **Memory concerns.** As dementia progresses, someone may no longer remember where the glasses are kept, how to turn on the faucet or how to open a carton of juice.
- ◇ **Decline in verbal communication.** Dehydration in dementia's later stages can be the result of compromised communication. Someone may be unable to express thirst to a caregiver, or suffer a complete loss of thirst and not understand why they need to hydrate.
- ◇ **Medication.** Certain medications prescribed to people with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia may increase perspiration or urination, necessitating greater water intake.
- ◇ **Fear of incontinence.** Seniors may limit their water intake to avoid frequent urination, leading to dehydration.
- ◇ **Existing medical conditions.** Unmanaged diabetes causes frequent urination, while people with cystic fibrosis tend to have saltier sweat that can quickly unbalance mineral levels and lead to dehydration.
- ◇ **Fluid regulation.** The body's water balance is regulated by feedback mechanisms that connect different parts of the nervous system with kidneys. That feedback loop is compromised by cognitive decline.
- ◇ **Illness.** Diarrhea and vomiting can also lead to dehydration—that's why it's important to push fluids during any common illness.

Once you determine which of these may be concerns for your loved one, you can go about figuring out how to overcome them. Preventing dehydration in elderly with dementia is possible using the following tips:

1. **Keep water close.** Having water nearby can help limit dehydration in elderly people with dementia, especially those who have difficulty getting their own.
2. **Set hydration reminders.** A post-it note on the fridge, a sign taped to their bottle of water or a phone alarm are all great ways to provide reminders for your loved ones.
3. **Stay hydrated with healthy snacks.** Offer water-rich snacks, like melon, cucumbers, high protein broths, yogurts and smoothies throughout the day.

The sooner you realize your loved one may be dehydrated, the sooner you can take action. Early signs of dehydration include chapped lips, constipation, decreased urine output and dry skin. For most, drinking water is the best way to stay hydrated and rehydrate. Don't hesitate to speak with a healthcare provider if you're concerned about your or someone else's hydration status.

SHOULD YOU MOVE YOUR ELDERLY PARENTS INTO YOUR HOME?

At some point, many adult children will face the reality of caring for elderly parents. Nearly 17% of adults living in the US care for someone who is 50 or older.

If a loved one can no longer live on their own, one option is moving your elderly parents into your home. But how do you know if this arrangement is right for you and your family? Take some time to reflect on several important questions below.

What kind of care will your aging parent need at home?

Before you decide to care for your elderly parents at home, consider their mental and physical health. Are they relatively healthy and independent, requiring minimal care? If so, moving them in may allow a chance to bond more with other family members.

However, sometimes health issues or a crisis are a catalyst for the transition. One of the main duties of a caregiver is assessing medical needs. This could mean keeping track of medical appointments, managing medications and chronic condition, or assessing pain levels.

Before caring for your elderly parents at home, talk with their doctor and other health professionals. Ask yourself if you'll be able to manage your parents' chronic illnesses or physical limitations. If they are experiencing memory loss or cognitive decline, read up about common dementia behaviors to be sure you and your family are prepared.

When determining whether this transition is a good idea for you and your family, it's important to consider the following:

- ⇒ **Consider your needs and schedule.** If your parent needs help using the bathroom during the night, are you willing and able to do so?
- ⇒ **Be proactive and realistic.** Does your parent have a progressive health condition? Will you be able to provide care now and in the future?
- ⇒ **Know your personal limits.** If your parent needs help with activities of daily living (ADLs), such as bathing and dressing, are you comfortable performing these personal tasks? Would home care help be an option to supplement care you and other family members can provide?

Consider these three questions.

- ⇒ **Do you have someone at home who can help you?** You may not always be available to assist your parent when they need help moving from a chair to a bed or using the bathroom.
- ⇒ **Do you have children?** If you're a member of the sandwich generation, consider how moving your aging parents will affect your children. Are they old enough to help with daily chores or assist your parents with care if needed?
- ⇒ **Do you work?** If so, are you able to set aside free time? Having flexibility throughout your day or evening can be helpful if an emergency happens or if you need to assist with errands, medicine, or transportation.

For some, caring for an aging parent is fulfilling. More than half of caregivers say being a caregiver gives them a sense of purpose and meaning. Would caring for your elderly parents in your home be a positive way to give back some of the care, love and nurturing they gave you?

Consider the history of your relationship to determine whether you can live together peacefully in the same home, especially since your roles will be reversed.

Even if you feel obligated to care for them, it's important to be realistic about your relationship and whether you're able to live in harmony.

If becoming an in-home caregiver is not the best option for your family, or if you get to a point when you can no longer care for an elderly parent. Do not hesitate to explore other senior living options.



Should You Move
Your Elderly
Parent into Your
Home?

CHICKEN BROCCOLI CHEDDER CALZONES

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 bag (12oz) frozen chopped broccoli
- 1 can refrigerated classic pizza crust
- 1 cup shredded deli rotisserie chicken
- 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese (8oz)
- 2 teaspoons olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray 2 large cookie sheets with cooking spray. Make broccoli as directed on bag. Drain on paper towels and let cool slightly. Meanwhile, unroll pizza crust and cut in half crosswise. Place half on each cookie sheet. Press each half into 9-inch square.

2. Divide chicken between crusts and place diagonally on half of crust leaving 1/2-inch rim, covering corners as well. Top chicken with cheese, pressing cheese down firmly. Top with broccoli.

3. Working from opposite point, gently fold and stretch dough over filling; press edges with fork to seal. Poke several holes in top of each calzone with fork. Brush top of calzone with oil and sprinkle with salt to taste. Bake 23-27 minutes or until golden brown. Cut each calzone into fourths.



SUMMER FUN

Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

- AIR CONDITIONER
- BARBEQUE
- BIKING
- BOATING
- CONCERTS
- CORN ON THE COB
- FIREWORKS
- FISHING
- FOURTH OF JULY
- GARDENING
- GRILLING
- HEATWAVE
- HOTDOGS
- HUMIDITY
- HYDRATE
- INDEPENDENCE
- KITES
- LAWN
- MANICURE
- MOWING
- PICNIC
- POLISH
- PRIMARIES
- RED, WHITE, BLUE
- RIBS
- SEEDS
- SENIOR CITIZENS DAY
- SHELTER HOUSE
- SLIP N SLIDE
- SPARKLERS
- SUNBURN
- SWIMMING
- THUNDERSTORMS
- VACATIONING
- WATER BALLOON
- WATERGUN

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Wyandotte/Leavenworth

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PRESORTED STANDARD

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JULY >>>

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Sunday, July 4, 2021

INDEPENDENCE DAY RECOGNIZED

Monday, July 5, 2021

Unified Government Offices Closed



The Communicator is published bi-monthly by the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging. It is funded by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services through the Older Americans' Act. We assume no responsibility for the care and return of unsolicited material. Donations are suggested.

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age national origin, sex, or handicap.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint with the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services at 1-800-432-3535.

Linda Ramirez, Editor

AUGUST >>>

NATIONAL SENIOR CITIZENS DAY

Saturday, August 21, 2021