

Healthy LIVING while aging!



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Easy Gardening for Autumn

By Angela O'Callaghan, PhD

Lower temperatures make autumn a terrific time for gardening and spending time outside, while our plants continue to grow merrily. Growing plants should be a leisure activity and with a little help, it can be, despite having issues related to our aging.

Before starting any physical activity, gardening in particular, loosen up your joints and do some mild stretches.

“Ergonomic” tools and tips are designed to make gardening less difficult, limit repetitive stress on our joints and help minimize some of the aches and pains we might feel. Wear gloves, especially since hands often get blisters when gripping or sliding on the handles of tools such as hand gardening tools, shovels, and rakes. Applying a coat of liquid rubber to handles can keep hands from slipping. Attach extension handles to gardening tools since longer handles minimize stressful arm, shoulder, or back movements. Try to keep your wrist straight, fingers slightly curled and relaxed, not bent or twisted to minimize wrist pain when holding tools.

Gardening can also entail bending and lifting. Always be sure to lift, bend and move correctly.

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Instead of a big garden, consider using a couple of large pots, perfect size for a patio garden. Filled with a good potting soil, they can produce spring through fall. If you can protect them from the colder temperatures as the weather changes, they will often continue producing during the winter!

Should you have enough room, try using raised beds, no more than four feet wide and ten feet long. The soil can be as deep as you want, but rarely needs to be more than two feet. Filled with well-amended soil or mix, raised beds can be as productive as a small farm. Be sure to use your ergonomic tools to help you do the lifting, moving, and cultivating work.

If you have an even larger garden area, use it. The options of what you can grow is only limited by your imagination.

Gardening offers so many possibilities to seniors. Whether you use small pots, large pots, raised beds, or large garden areas, growing the right plant in the right space, using the right tools, we can all enjoy our fall gardens! Happy gardening in the months ahead.

For more information about Healthy Aging education or resources, please visit our website: extension.unr.edu and search “Healthy Aging” or contact Dakota at 702-948-5916 .

Seasonal Fall Vegetables

Beets	Carrots	Green Beans	Parsnips	Spinach
Bell Peppers	Cauliflower	Kale	Potatoes	Sweet Potatoes/ Yams
Broccoli	Celery	Lettuce	Pumpkin	Swiss Chard
Brussel Sprouts	Collard Greens	Mushroom	Radishes	Turnips
Cabbage	Garlic	Onions	Rutabaga	Winter Squash

Exercise and Physical Activity Tips from the National Institute on Aging at NIH

Exercise and physical activity can help you improve and maintain your strength so you can stay independent and maintain mobility as you age. Balance exercises can help lower your risk of falls and fall-related injuries.

Research has shown that exercise is not only good for your physical health, it also supports emotional and mental health. You can exercise with a friend and get the added benefit of emotional support.

In addition, exercise and physical activity may possibly improve or maintain some aspects of cognitive function, such as your ability to shift quickly between tasks, plan an activity, and ignore irrelevant information.

Fall Butternut Squash Stew

Recipe courtesy of Cassie Montana, UNR Garden Nutrition Team

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp	Oil
1	Carrot, medium, diced
1/2	Onion, large, diced
1 cup	Butternut squash, cubed
4 cups	Vegetable stock (low sodium)
2	Bay leaves
1 Tbsp	Thyme
1 Tbsp	Rosemary
1 15 oz	White kidney beans, drained & rinse
1 cup	Kale, chopped
1/8 tsp	Salt
1/2 tsp	Pepper

Directions:

1. Heat oil in a large soup pot. Once the oil is heated, add in the carrots, onion, and butternut squash. Sauté the vegetables for 5-7 minutes or until softened.
2. Add in the vegetable stock, bay leaves, thyme, rosemary, and kidney beans and bring mixture to a boil. Once boiling, reduce to medium heat and cover for 15-20 minutes.
3. Add in the kale and recover to continue simmering for 5-10 minutes or until kale is softened.
4. Finish with salt and pepper to season and serve immediately. Leftovers can be frozen.



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