Healthy LIVING while aging!

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Gratitude and Healthy Habits for the Holiday Season

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As the holiday season approaches, November offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect on what we're grateful for while continuing to care for our health and well-being. Practicing gratitude can do more than lift our spirits—it can help reduce stress, improve mood, and strengthen connections with family and friends.

The holidays are often filled with celebrations, special meals, and busy schedules. While it's important to enjoy these moments, maintaining healthy habits can help you feel your best throughout the season. Small, consistent choices can make a big difference.

Stay Hydrated. Cooler weather may make us less likely to feel thirsty, but our bodies still need fluids to function properly. Keep a water bottle nearby, enjoy warm herbal teas, and choose water-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, and soups.

Keep Moving. Physical activity doesn't have to be complicated. A daily walk, stretching routine, or chair exercise session can help improve balance, maintain strength, and boost energy levels.

Choose Nourishing Foods. Holiday meals can be enjoyed alongside healthy choices. Fill your plate with colorful vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and seasonal fruits. Remember, healthy eating is about balance, not perfection.

Connect with Others. Social connections are an important part of healthy aging. Reach out to friends, participate in community events, or share a meal with loved ones. Even a simple phone call can brighten someone's day, including your own.

Practice Gratitude Daily. Consider writing down three things you're grateful for each day. They can be as simple as a sunny morning, a favorite meal, or time spent with family. Focusing on positive moments can help create a greater sense of joy and well-being.

This November, let gratitude inspire healthy choices that support your mind, body and spirit. By staying hydrated, remaining active, eating well and nurturing meaningful relationships, you can enjoy a healthier and happier holiday season.

November Gratitude Challenge

Each evening, write down three things you are thankful for. By the end of the month, you'll have a collection of 90 positive moments to reflect on and celebrate!

Research suggests that regularly practicing gratitude may help improve mood, reduce stress and support overall well-being. Taking time to appreciate life's small blessings can be a simple but powerful part of healthy aging.

Healthy Aging Tip: *Gratitude and healthy habits go hand in hand—when we care for ourselves, we're better able to enjoy the people and moments that matter most.*



Please visit extension.unr.edu/Healthy-Aging to enjoy our accessible, online newsletter and discover additional Healthy Aging education and resources. Or, email HealthyAging@unr.edu.

Hydrating Harvest Salad

A perfect November recipe packed with water-rich produce like cucumber, pears, mixed greens, and pomegranate seeds, this refreshing salad helps support hydration while providing fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants.

Ingredients

- 4 cups mixed greens
- 1 cup diced pear
- ½ cup pomegranate seeds
- ½ cucumber, sliced
- ¼ cup walnuts
- Light vinaigrette



Directions

1. Combine ingredients.
2. Toss with dressing just before serving.

Why it helps: Pears, cucumber, greens and pomegranate all contribute fluids while providing fiber and nutrients.

Healthy Aging Hydration Reminder

Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink water. As we age, our sense of thirst may decrease, making it important to sip fluids regularly throughout the day and enjoy water-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, soups, and smoothies.

Treasured Traditions



Traditions help connect us to family, friends and cherished memories. Whether it's sharing a favorite holiday recipe, gathering for a special meal, decorating the home or volunteering in the community, traditions create a sense of belonging and joy. As we age, these meaningful routines can strengthen relationships, provide comfort and remind us of the moments that matter most. This season, consider sharing a favorite tradition with a loved one, or starting a new one that can be enjoyed for years to come.

Reflection Question: *What holiday tradition brings you the most happiness, and why?*

Fall Fun Ideas for Older Adults

Fall is a wonderful time to stay active, connect with others, and enjoy the beauty of the season. Here are some enjoyable and age-friendly activities:

- **Decorate a Pumpkin** – Paint or decorate pumpkins instead of carving for a safer and creative activity.
- **Take a Scenic Fall Walk** – Enjoy cooler temperatures and colorful autumn leaves at a local park.
- **Visit a Farmers Market** – Explore seasonal fruits, vegetables, and homemade goods.
- **Share Favorite Family Recipes** – Exchange holiday recipes and the memories behind them.
- **Create a Fall Photo Album** – Gather photos from past holidays and special family moments.
- **Make a Seasonal Centerpiece** – Use gourds, pinecones, leaves, and flowers to create festive decorations.
- **Host a Coffee and Conversation Hour** – Invite friends to share stories, traditions, and gratitude.
- **Volunteer in the Community** – Help at a food bank, community event, or local organization.
- **Keep a Gratitude Journal** – Write down three things you're thankful for each day during November.
- **Try a New Fall Recipe** – Make a healthy soup, stew or harvest salad featuring seasonal produce.

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