

Senior Health & Wellness Newsletter

*Kentucky Department for Aging and
Independent Living*



CABINET FOR HEALTH
AND FAMILY SERVICES

502-564-6930

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Coping with Social Isolation

Social isolation in older adults has been a concern for many years. It has especially been a top concern for the past year and a half as we have navigated our way through the Coronavirus pandemic. Social isolation is defined as a lack of social connections with other people and events. Social isolation can lead into loneliness for many, especially older adults. It is a natural instinct to want to socialize and be around others. When you are not able to socialize, many mental and physical health conditions can arise.

Social isolation can lead to loneliness if the isolation lasts a long period of time or is unexpected. Many older adults experienced loneliness due to the coronavirus pandemic because they were not used to being socially isolated. Routines are important to older adults so when the schedule changes, it is hard to adapt. Older adults are used to going out with friends and family, visiting places of worship, going on day trips with various organizations and activities at the local senior center.

Many concerns with loneliness and social isolation are an increased risk of dementia, depression, anxiety and suicide. There are many health conditions that are a concern with social isolation/loneliness. There has been an increase in smoking, obesity

and physical inactivity which can lead to an increased risk of premature death.

Though it is difficult to socialize during the pandemic, there are ways to navigate socialization and make it work. Try to continue healthy routines and lifestyles throughout periods of loneliness and social isolation. Keeping a daily schedule can help each day. Getting up, eating meals and participating in physical activity are all important to incorporate in a daily routine. Eating a healthy meal with a variety of colors can help make meals more appealing. Make foods that you enjoy but try to make them as healthy as possible. Eating a variety of foods can be more inviting rather than eating the same thing over and over again.

Including physical activity throughout your day can help make you feel better but also help manage chronic diseases. A 30-minute daily physical activity routine is important. You do not have to complete all 30 minutes at one time. You can break it up into three 10-minute routines or two 15-minute routines. Complete an activity that you enjoy. If you enjoy walking, go for a walk. Exercise videos are great as well as simple chair exercises. Talk with your doctor to make sure you are cleared to do physical activity exercises.

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Coping with Social Isolation, Continued

Also to help with coping with isolation, try to incorporate things to pass the time. Get puzzles, magazines and/or books, activity books, like cross word puzzles, Sudoku, word finds, etc... This could also be the opportunity to learn a new hobby. Try something you have always wanted to try. Learn how to play a new game.

If you feel like you are experiencing social isolation or loneliness, please reach out to your doctor and local senior center for assistance.

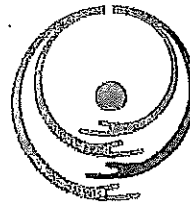
Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/publications/features/lonely-older-adults.html>

<https://sprc.org/sites/default/files/Reducing%20Loneliness%20and%20Social%20Isolation%20Among%20Older%20Adults%20Final.pdf>

International Day of Persons with Disabilities—Dec 3

From the United Nations and the World Health Organization, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities was established by the UN in 1992 to promote “the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities at every level of society and development, and to raise awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of political, social, economic and cultural life.”



International
Day of
**Persons with
Disabilities**

3 DECEMBER

National Handwashing Awareness Week—Dec 5-11

The first National Handwashing Awareness Week began in 1999 when Dr. Will Sawyer “helped spearhead a coalition in SW Ohio and Northern Kentucky because of flu vaccine shortage.” Since then the coalition has continued to observe this week to bring awareness to the importance of handwashing as a means to decrease the risk of illness including respiratory illness such as flu, adeno virus, RSV, the common cold, pneumonia, and Covid-19. Handwashing also re-



moves germs that can cause infections such as the norovirus and C. diff. According to the CDC, “handwashing can prevent about 30% of diarrhea-related sicknesses and about 20% of respiratory infections.” We are urged not to touch our eyes, nose, or mouth because this is a main path germs and bacteria can

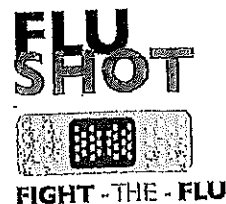
enter our respiratory system. You can use hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available. However, if your hands are visibly dirty or greasy, do not use hand sanitizer as it will not be as effective as soap and water. Make sure to scrub all surfaces of your hands (palms, fingers, back of hands, between fingers and under fingernails) for at least 20 seconds to remove germs. Sing “Happy Birthday” twice for a timer!

National Influenza Vaccination Week—Dec 5-11

According to the CDC, the National Influenza Vaccination Week is held annually in December to remind everyone that there is still time to protect yourself against the flu by getting your flu vaccine. The CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older to get a flu vaccine every year for two main reasons: 1. Because flu viruses constantly change, the flu vaccines get updated each year in order to

protect people against the viruses that research suggest will be the most common during the flu season; and, 2. Our body's immunity from a flu vaccine will decline over time and an annual vaccine provides the best protection. The CDC notes that "in recent years it has been estimated that between 70-85% of seasonal flu-related deaths and 50-70% of seasonal flu-related hospitalizations have

occurred in people aged 65 and older. Those in this age group are at higher risk for developing serious complications from the flu. If you haven't received your flu vaccine and would like to or would like more information, contact your local health department or your physician.



Hamburger Casserole For One

- 2/3 cups uncooked penne pasta
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 ounces ground beef
- 1/4 cups chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp Italian Seasoning
- 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- 1/8 tsp coarsely ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup + 2 TBSP shredded sharp cheddar cheese, for topping

Directions:

1. Cook the pasta according to package directions, drain and set aside
2. Heat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. In a skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil

30 seconds. Add ground beef, onions, garlic, Italian Seasoning, salt, and pepper. Cook, breaking the ground beef up with a spoon or spatula until the meat is cooked through and no longer pink, about 4-5 minutes.

4. Drain and transfer ground beef and vegetables to a medium-sized bowl.
5. Stir in the tomato sauce, sour cream, cooked pasta, and 1/2 cups of the shredded cheese.
6. Pour into a baking dish lightly greased with butter or oil. Top with the remaining 2 tablespoons of shredded cheese and bake for 20-25 minutes, until cheese is melted.
7. Remove from oven and serve immediately.

Resource:

<https://onedishkitchen.com/hamburger-casserole-recipe/>



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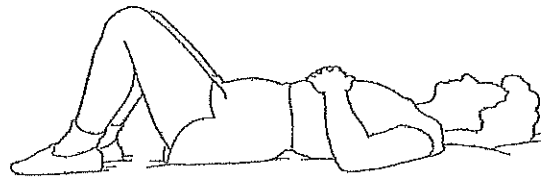
Email:

DAILAging@ky.gov

Exercise Series!

The holidays can be a busy time for us! This month our exercise series will give you permission to lay in bed! **Only perform exercises you feel comfortable doing. Do not do anything that causes pain. Always consult your doctor before beginning any exercise regimen.**

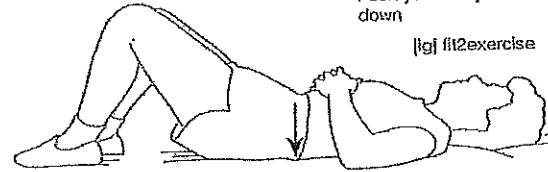
Pelvic Tilt



(1)
Lay flat with your knees bent upwards

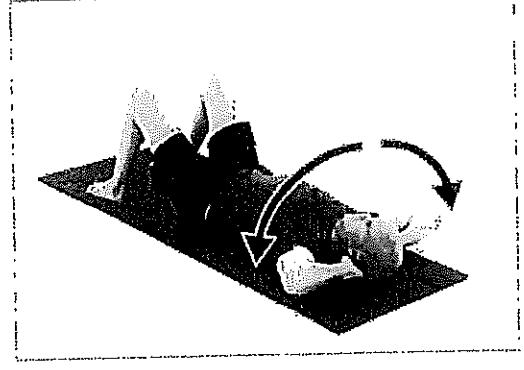
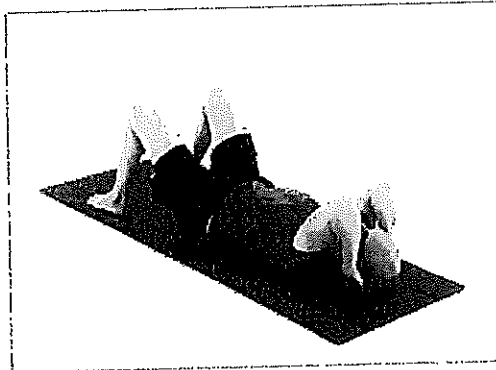
(2)
Bring in your pelvis closer to to your belly button

(3)
Push your belly button down



[ig] fit2exercise

Repeat 10 times, holding 5 seconds each time.



Lying on a firm surface with knees bent, place your hands behind your head. Slowly bring your elbows up as in picture 1. Slowly lower arms back down as in picture 2. Repeat 10 times.

Website:
[chfs.ky.gov/
agencies/dail](http://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dail)

Winter Begins

Creative Forecasting Editors

December 21, 2020

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hether you live in a cold, snowy climate or warm, tropical part of the country, certain activities can stimulate winter memories. Use winter themes, crafts, games, and props to bring a sense of winter into your community. By providing activities that encourage the use of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, we increase the chance that individuals will be able to participate to the best of their abilities. Use the following ideas for a Winter Fun theme. Many of these activities can be done during one-to-one visits, too.

Winter Theme Box Collect items that pertain to winter (i.e., ski sweaters, hats, gloves, mittens, ice skates, pictures of snow scenes, snowmen, skiers) and keep in a large plastic container to use each winter season. Use these to encourage reminiscing and for sensory stimulation. Ask residents to sit around a table. Place items on the table or have participants pass them around to each other. Questions to ask can include "Do you like cold weather? Did you live in a snowy state? If so, where? Did you ever ice skate?"

Weather Charts This activity is a nice change from current events. Sit in a circle. Make copies of the daily weather section of the newspaper and give to participants. Ask the group what the current weather is like and what is predicted. Ask them to look at the list of different cities to see which ones had the coldest temperature and the highest. The group can look for total snowfall amounts in the area.

Winter Word Games Using a dry erase board or blackboard with each letter of the alphabet written on it, ask people to name as many items or objects relating to winter as they can for each letter. Another topic could be "Name the Soup" or "Soup Ingredients."

Soup Tasting Ask dining services to plan a Soup Luncheon one day this month. Delicious hot soup accompanied by crusty bread or crackers is a great way to celebrate winter. Hold a Chili Cook-off with team members and families participating. Several residents can be the judges. After the winner is chosen, people can enjoy samples of the chili, as well.

Mitten Making Make large mitten patterns and have residents cut out mittens from different material scraps or construction paper. Decorate the bottoms of the mittens with shredded cotton balls. This activity works well with people of various functioning levels. While some trace and cut out the mittens, others can pull the cotton balls apart or glue the cotton on. Use the mittens as decorations for a bulletin board and/or to hang around the community.

Winter Headbands Cut out 2½" by 25" pieces of fleece and glue self-adhesive Velcro® to each end.

Poetry and Hot Chocolate Invite residents to a reading of winter poems. Ask various team members to read the poems. Ask the residents what they liked or disliked about the poems. Write a group poem using their memories about winter. Serve hot chocolate for a tasty treat.

Snowflake Craft Fold each piece of paper in half three times and cut out small triangles, circles, or other designs along the folded sides. Unfold for a unique snowflake. Paper lace doilies can also be used.

Snow Scenes Use white chalk, colored pencils, or paint to create snowy scenes on pieces of dark blue or black construction paper.

Winter Videos Watch winter videos on YouTube®. Topics can include ice-skating, Alaskan wilderness, polar bears, and blizzards. Serve hot drinks and popcorn.

Tactile Activities If snow falls in your area, bring some indoors in a plastic tub for people to play with. Another way to provide sensory input is to cover an entire table or area with shaving cream and ask residents to shape snowmen out of it. This is a messy activity, but everyone's hands will smell great! (Use a dustpan to push the shaving cream into a trash can.)

Indoor S'mores This tasty treat is easy to make. You will need an oven or toaster oven, baking sheet, graham cracker squares, large marshmallows, and pieces of chocolate. Place the oven rack on the highest position and turn on the broiler. Place graham cracker squares on a cookie sheet then place a piece of chocolate on top of each one then a marshmallow. Slide the cookie sheet under the broiler. Leave the oven door open and watch the marshmallows melt. Once the marshmallows are golden brown on top, remove the cookie sheet from the oven. Cool for about a minute and then place graham cracker squares on top. ☞

