

# Ageless Living

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# Free

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## Feeling stress & anxiety? Feed the birds

In today's constant contact, cell-phone celebrated, digital world, most people can go days or even weeks without spending any time in natural sunlight. Instead, we eat breakfast inside, or on the go, only to race to an office, filled with artificial light and plastic plants, for 8 to 10 hours a day. It's no wonder why Americans' mental health is suffering.

Compare that hectic routine to those memorable moments when you're able to sit quietly, let the sunshine warm your face, hear the birds, and allow nature to envelope you. While everyone longs for less stress, actually relaxing can be dauntingly stressful!

However, a new study out of the United Kingdom sheds light on one way people can de-stress: bird watching. The study finds that people who watch birds from their home have lower depression, anxiety, and stress compared to those that live in less leafy areas that have fewer birds. People "felt relaxed and connected to nature when they watched birds in their garden" researchers say. These feelings increased with the level of bird feeding in the yard, they add.

Specifically, the number of birds people might see was directly associated with better mental health. "This study starts to unpick the role that some key components of nature play for our mental well-being. Birds around the home and nature in general, show great promise in preventive health care, making cities healthier, happier places to live," says lead researcher Dr.



Daniel Cox from the University of Exeter.

Dr. Tina Phillips, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, agrees. "Overwhelmingly, studies show that people feed birds because it makes them feel more relaxed, that it's something they're interested in and ultimately something that makes them feel good."

If you want to disconnect from the digital world and relieve some daily stress and anxiety, getting outside, bird watching could be the key to increasing your mindful, mental health.

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## Move over meat - Veggies are taking center stage on your plate

(NewsUSA) - Historically, American dinner plates have featured meat as its mainstay/star, with vegetables as tepid, secondary supporting players. Now, the balance of power on the plate is shifting as fresh, homegrown vegetables take center stage.

Recent "food trend" studies show that more people are making vegetables the main course of their meals. Although the interest in healthy eating extends to all age groups, millennials seem to be driving this healthful food trend. Data from the NPD Group suggests that people younger than 40 are eating 52 percent more fresh vegetables compared with young adults 10 years ago, and that preference is likely to continue as they age. In support of this trend, professional chefs, bloggers, restaurants and home cooks are embracing the flavors of a vast variety of vegetables, from common to exotic. Episodes of the popular "Iron Chef" television show feature vegetable-centric meals and a recent article in New York magazine noted, "Simply put, the once-meat-obsessed populace is realizing that vegetables actually taste good. Especially when fresh, in



season, and carefully prepared."

You'll see that many restaurants now offer vegetable-based entrees that have inspired home cooks to explore the healthy and delicious potential of making

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# Five tips to safely manage medications

Medication management often feels like a high-stakes balancing act. With multiple visits to doctors and specialists, a variety of dosage instructions, and refill schedules that vary from prescription to prescription, it's a challenge to keep medications organized. It's no surprise that many older adults struggle to keep track of their medications.

According to a 2019 survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the majority of adults 65 and older (54 percent) report taking four or more prescription drugs. While many older adults want to remain independent and manage their own medications without a plan, they are putting themselves at risk. Medication mismanagement is among the most serious health threats facing seniors.

Mistakes can often lead to severe drug interactions or forced placement into a long-term care facility. Having the right plan in place to safely manage prescription and over-the-counter drugs can help alleviate the potential hazards of medication management. To help avoid the pitfalls of medication misuse, consider the following tips from Home Instead Senior Care:

**Create a master list.** It can be easy to lose



track of all your prescriptions and supplements, when they should be taken and how often. Keep a list of all current prescription medications, over-the-counter medications and any vitamins or herbal supplements you are taking. Share the list with all health professionals involved in your care.

**Enlist a loved one.** A second set of ears and eyes can help you remember everything you intended to discuss during a doctor's appointment, including the prescriptions you are taking and why. At home, consider asking a friend or loved one to help you stick to a daily routine.

**Stay organized.** A variety of prescriptions and dosages can make it difficult to stay

on track. Establish a safe system or regimen to manage your medications. Use organizers, such as pill boxes or printed trackers. Consider signing up for a pharmacy service such as Simple Meds, which automatically organizes and sorts your medications, packaging each dose into clearly labeled packets that are mailed to you each month.

**Designate a physician gatekeeper.** It's typical to see multiple doctors for various health needs. While many assume doctors talk to one another, that isn't always the case. To minimize the potential for error or miscommunication, identify a single provider to manage medications and monitor your overall health.

**Watch for red flags.** Changes in mood or side effects such as weight gain, insomnia and constipation are examples of things that may indicate medications are adversely interacting with one another. A full pill bottle may indicate missed dosages. If you have any concerns or questions regarding a prescription or your ability to successfully manage your medications, reach out to your pharmacist or health provider. To learn more on the resources available with medication management, visit [www.LetsTalkAboutRx.com](http://www.LetsTalkAboutRx.com) (NewsUSA)

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► **VEGGIES - continued from page 1**

fresh vegetables a main course. Some reasons driving the shift in popularity of vegetables over meat include:

- Vine-Ripened, great taste. Homegrown vegetables have a home field advantage when it comes to flavor because they stay on the vine to fully ripen and are harvested just before eating. Store bought veggies are often harvested before they're fully ripe, so they don't spoil on the journey to the store. Once picked from the vine, sugars begin to turn to starch-and that homegrown sweetness dissipates.

- Good health. Everyone knows that vegetables are good for you, but research backs it up. In a study of over 130,000, in the Journal of American Medical Association Internal Medicine, consumption of plant protein is associated with longer life compared with animal protein consumption.

- Good stewardship. Eating more vegetables and less meat can have a positive effect on the environment. Data from the University of Oxford, England, suggests that eating more vegetables could have a greater impact on reducing one's carbon footprint than giving up a car!

As vegetables grow in popularity and push meat from the center of the plate, more people are interested not only in eating more vegetables, but eating locally grown vegetables - hey, what's more local than growing your own veggies at home? Growing vegetables at home is convenient, satisfying, a money-saver in the produce aisle, and they'll taste better, too!

Fortunately for the home gardener, professional growers make it easy to grow nutritious and delicious vegetables at home. Bonnie Plants, for example, is a greenhouse grower offering more than 250 varieties of vegetable, herb, and fruit plants, ranging from traditional favorites to new and different choices. Some easy-to-grow options for your veggie main course

► **FEED THE BIRDS - continued from page 1**

Since studies reveal the more birds you see, the less likely you are to be stressed and anxious, it's important to attract as many birds as possible.

The first step to attracting birds is to use an all-purpose tube feeder, which is the number one feeder choice, allowing birds to feed from multiple ports. Cole's Wild Bird Products, Co. offers the Terrific Tube feeder, it's made to last with state-of-the-art materials that prevent warping and discoloration and it features a "Quick Clean"; removable base, so cleaning is super simple. Natural grip perch covers mimic the feel of a real branch, which encourages longer feeding times.

Once you have the right feeder, you'll need reliable seed that will bring birds to your backyard to deliver that dose of stress relief we all desire. According to Elaine Cole, President and owner of Cole's, the quality of birdseed will determine how many feathered friends will flock to your backyard.

Unlike other birdseed mixes, which typically contain cheap filler seed like milo and wheat, Cole's selects only the top 1 to 2 percent of the highest quality seeds birds like to eat. Plus, Cole's doesn't add pesticides or chemicals, preferring instead to keep the seed as close to its natural state as possible. "If you use inferior seed, you're not going to like the results. Our seed is specifically formulated to attract the greatest number, variety, and species of birds. Birds are picky and birdseed matters. If you use cheap feed, they won't hesitate look for something else they prefer. Birds are like people, give them what they like to eat and they'll come back and bring their friends," Cole said. Since we've learned that the more birds we attract, the more stress-free we'll be, it makes good sense to use the best bird feed you can buy. Cole's Special Feeder, attracts the greatest number of wild birds than any other mix out there. Add Cole's Blue Ribbon blend, which attracts the greatest variety of wild birds to the mix, and you've got the perfect prescription to help calm your anxiety and stress.

At the heart of it, everyone wants less stress and anxiety. Once you start watching birds in action, they'll engage your attention in a way that keeps you in the moment, a state that provides mental relief. Admiring their beauty, listening to their sweet song and enjoying their antics will calm your overactive mind and bring joy and renewal. For more information on top quality feed and feeders, please visit: Cole's website. (NewsUSA)

include hearty tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and zucchini.

Bonnie Plants operates more than 70 greenhouse facilities in 48 states and trucks fresh plants from greenhouses to retailers near you, so they're ready for planting upon purchase, and you'll harvest six weeks sooner than if you grow from seed. Plus, the plants are grown a truck-ride away from the retailers that sell them. Don't worry if you have little outdoor space, patio-ready caged varieties and combo pots are available as great options for small spaces. Curious home gardeners interested in healthy eating can enjoy experimenting with vegetables to replace meat. For a new take on burgers, try substituting squash. Veggie burgers, like their meat-based counterparts, can be made in advance, frozen in patties, and pulled out for easy reheating as a healthy burger choice on a busy night. Try putting a new spin on salad, substituting Swiss chard for a fresh, peppery taste in lieu of such standbys as lettuce, spinach, and arugula. (NewsUSA)

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# Caring for a long-distance older loved one

Long-distance caregiving for a parent or senior loved one is a difficult reality for many adults. A study by Home Instead, Inc., franchisor of the Home Instead Senior Care network, finds that 23 percent of American adults currently care for an older relative who lives more than an hour away. Providing care from a distance can be stressful. But if relocating closer to a loved one is not an option, Home Instead recommends the following tips to make providing long-distance care a little easier:

**1. Establish open communication** - When visiting your loved one, make time to meet the individuals who are part of his or her everyday life. Whether that's a physician or caregiver, it's important to get to know those involved in the daily care of a loved one.

**2. Be observant** - Do your loved ones avoid answering specific questions about their health? Have they stopped participating in their usual activities? Are they unaware of current events or forgotten important dates?



These may be warning signs that they need additional care or help around the house.

**3. Be prepared** - Create a list of your older adult's medical issues/medications, doctor's names, and legal documents in case you need to access them from afar during an emergency.

**4. Spend quality time during visits** - It's easy to get wrapped up in caregiving responsibilities. When you visit, set aside time with your

loved one to participate in activities unrelated to caregiving. Go see a movie together, plan a visit to see other family members, go for a walk or simply relax at home.

**5. Get to know neighbors and friends** - Get to know your loved one's neighbors and identify one or two trustworthy individuals who can check in and give you occasional updates.

**6. Learn more about caregiving** - Find support to help you become a better caregiver. For example, Home Instead Senior Care offers resources that can help family members provide better care and learn skills, such as how to safely move someone from a

bed to a chair, how to help someone bathe, and how to prevent and treat bed sores, as well as basic first aid. Family members looking for additional resources and support relating to long-distance caregiving can visit [caregiverstress.com](http://caregiverstress.com) or find a local Home Instead Senior Care office by going to [www.homeinstead.com/state](http://www.homeinstead.com/state). (NewsUSA)



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# Easing senior loneliness - It's more important than we think

Social isolation is a little-thought-of, but growing, factor in the health and well-being of people 65 and older - and it may play a greater role than obesity as a public health hazard, according to research at Brigham Young University.

But what does "social isolation" really mean? It's how often we interact with others, and how much we enjoy those connections. In fact, social interaction is so important that it's actually a key factor in maintaining good health. As we age, a support system is more important than ever - because often, basic life circumstances may have changed. For example, seniors may be on a fixed income, with less money to spend on eating out. Or may not see well enough to drive. Bottom line, it can become difficult to fulfill the basic human need to connect with others.

"Relationships really do matter when it comes to healthy aging, because there's a strong correlation between a satisfying social life and a senior's overall well-being," says Larry Weinstein M.D., Chief Medical Officer of Humana Behavioral Health. "If you're feeling isolated, the first step is to talk your doctor, and it's important to reach out to family and friends for encouragement and support. There also are lifestyle changes we can make to better nurture our emotional health, and by extension, our physical health."

Humana's Dr. Weinstein recommends five ways in which to become more active and engaged:

**1. Socialize on Schedule**

Nurture existing relationships by scheduling a weekly phone call, coffee date, or game night with friends or family.



**2. Volunteer**

If you love animals, consider volunteering at a local shelter. Or comforting babies at a hospital.

**3. Stay Active**

Local senior and community centers offer health and wellness activities, exercise classes, walking clubs, and social programs, often at little to no cost.

**4. Learn Something New**

Join a book club or take a class to learn a new skill. Local libraries are a wonderful community resource, often offering seminars free of charge.

**5. Get a Pet**

Pets are wonderful companions. Choose a pet that suits your needs. For example, an older, trained dog is easier to care for than a puppy. Or a cat or fish might be a good fit.

When it comes to maintaining good health, social interaction matters. If you - or a loved one - are struggling with social isolation, please contact your physician.

And for more information on health and wellness, please visit [humana.com](http://humana.com). (NewsUSA)

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# Chapin Senior Center Programs

37 Pleasant Street, New London, NH 03257 603-526-6368 www.coachapincenter.org. COA's mission is to promote, develop, and reinforce programs that support and enhance the health, well-being, dignity, and independence of older people in the nine towns of the greater Kearsarge area.

## APRIL 2020

**Tom & Tom's Men's Discussion Group** - Mondays at 8:45am. We want to hear your stories and we'll share a few of our own. Come visit over an endless cup of coffee! This is a walk-in program.

**French Discussion Group** - First and Third Mondays at 4:15pm. Join this casual, friendly group to practice your language skills and have fun. Participants at all skill levels are welcome! This is a walk-in program.

**Chair Exercises** - Mondays and Fridays at 10:15am. This low impact exercise program is perfect for those looking for an easy, effective exercise routine. This is a walk-in program.

**Walking at Proctor Academy Gym** - Monday through Friday at 8:30-10:00am. New participants please call COA at 526-6368 for registration instructions.

**Outdoor Recreation for Seniors** - Tuesdays at 10:00am

Join this active group to bike, hike, kayak and more! Please call COA at 526-6368 to register prior to your first activity.

**Memoir Writing Group** - Tuesdays at 10:00am. This is a walk-in program.

**Walk-In Painting Group** - Tuesdays at 1:00pm. Bring your current painting project to work on. This is an informal group and we'd love to have you join us. This is a walk-in program.

**Gentle Yoga** - Second, Third and Fourth Tuesdays from 3:00-4:00pm. This wellness class will help you feel better and create a sense of inner calm as we focus on gaining flexibility, strength and balance. We will use yoga mats or chairs while we do yoga poses. At

the end of each class there will be a time of relaxation. Gentle yoga is appropriate for all levels from beginner to experienced. Bring a yoga mat and wear comfortable clothing. Carol Filbin, Certified Yoga Teacher Friends Program.

**Bone Builders Exercise Classes** - Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:00-11:00am. This senior exercise program helps strengthen bone, build muscle and improve balance. You can exercise while seated or standing using small hand weights. Classes are held in the Newbury Heights Community Room, 52 Newbury Heights Road, Newbury. This is a walk-in program.

**Needlework Craft Group** - Wednesdays at 1:00-3:00pm

Love to cross stitch, do needlework, quilt, knit or crochet? We'd love to chat, laugh, and get to know the folks who enjoy the same hobbies we enjoy. Please join us! This is a walk-in program.

**Women's Discussion Group** - Fridays at 9:00am Get to know your neighbors over a casual cup of coffee. Join friends, new and old, to visit, chat and share! This is a walk-in program.

### Bridge

Duplicate Bridge - Mondays at 12:45pm and Wednesdays at 9:15am

Contract Bridge - Thursdays at 9:30am

### Games

Poker - Tuesdays at 2:00pm

Hand and Foot Card Game - Wednesdays at 1:00pm

Mahjong - Thursdays at 12:30pm

Bingo! - Fridays at 2:00pm

Ten games for \$5. Ten bingo sheets with 6 cards on each sheet. Participants must be 55 years old and older.

### VNA Foot Care Clinic at COA

Friday, April 3rd & April 10th at 9:30am-1:00pm \$25 Please call COA at 526-6368 to schedule an appointment.

### Blood Pressure Clinic

Monday, April 6th at 9:30am

This is a walk-in program.

**Parkinson's Support Group** - Tuesday, April 7th at 1:00pm. You are invited to join this lively, welcoming and supportive group! This is a walk-in program.

**Morning Book Group** - Tuesday, April 14th at 9:30am

The Library Book by Susan Orlean. The author reopens the unsolved mystery of the most catastrophic library fire in American history and delivers a dazzling love

letter to a beloved institution: our libraries. ~ NovelList. This is a walk-in program. Please call COA at 526-6368 to obtain the book.

**Humanist, Agnostic, Atheist Discussion Group** - Thursday, April 16th at 1:30pm Welcome to those who are interested in delving into a variety of humanist and non-theist topics. We share our knowledge and experiences related to the challenging questions of religion, spirituality, and how they influence our lives. Using reason, critical thinking, and honest examination, we do our best to approach personal truths. Bring your thoughts, your questions, and an open mind, and join our lively, respectful monthly discussions. This is a walk-in program.

**Caregiver Support and Discussion Group** - Thursday, April 23rd at 1:00pm. There is no instruction manual for being a caregiver! Join this peer-led group to learn tips, strategies and advice from those experiencing the same challenges and rewards. This is a walk-in program.

**Shamballa Reiki Sessions** - Tuesday, April 28th Linda Luck of "Lady Luck healing therapies" will be accepting appointments for Shamballa Reiki at the Chapin Senior Center on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 10:00am - 3:00pm. During the Reiki sessions, Linda will be checking the Chakras (energy centers) of clients to look for blockages in their energy system. Upon the completion of the session, she will review what was found concerning the Chakras and give the client paperwork explaining what any blockages mean for the client's health and what can be done about it. Shamballa Reiki works on energy concerned with mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health. Sessions are 15 minutes in length and the cost is \$15 per session. Please call COA at 526-6368 to schedule an appointment.

**Movie & Pizza Matinee** - Tuesday, April 28th at 12noon "The Art of Racing in the Rain" Based on the best-selling novel by Garth Stein, THE ART OF RACING IN THE RAIN is a heartfelt tale narrated by a witty and philosophical dog named Enzo (voiced by Kevin Costner). Through his bond with his owner, Denny Swift (Milo Ventimiglia), an aspiring Formula One race car driver, Enzo has gained tremendous insight into the human condition and understands that the techniques needed on the racetrack can also be used to successfully navigate the journey of life. Please call COA at 526-6368 to sign up.

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