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SUMMER 2020

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Ageless

SUMMER 2020

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Calvin Casey shared this photo with Ageless. Here's the backstory:



Photo credit: Cover photo by Calvin Casey, ©2020 by Calvin Casey

“The guy’s name is Rob. He rode by me and my buddy on his bike in Brookings. I told my buddy that would make a cool picture. I approached him in Bi-Mart and asked him if I could take his picture when he was done shopping. He said ‘I normally don’t, but for you I will because I see a fire in your eye.’

“So, I waited for him out in the parking lot. And once he started riding, I just started snapping pictures. It is really one of my favorite pictures.”



See more of the photographer’s work on Facebook:
Calvin Casey Art Werx

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Chetco Medical & Aesthetics will open medspa 'Bellezza' in Brookings this fall

Chetco Medical & Aesthetics will expand its services with a brand-new aesthetics wing opening this fall—Bellezza. The name was selected from more than 200 suggestions from the community, and means 'beauty' in Italian.

Bellezza will offer a comprehensive selection of aesthetics services including Botox, fillers, CoolSculpting/CoolTone, and skin rejuvenation services such as laser resurfacing, sun and age spot removal, microneedling, and medical grade facials.

Other services include hair restoration treatments, women's intimate health, laser hair removal and many more. Also offered will be several medical-grade skincare lines including ZO Skin Health by Obagi, Epionce, and PCA Skin

Chetco Medical & Aesthetics began with the medical practice of Dr. Jay Patel. He is board certified in Internal Medicine, Geriatric Medicine, and Obesity Medicine and has been a practicing physician in the Brookings

community since 1987. His practice includes treatment of a broad spectrum of medical diseases such as managing both common and complex illnesses of adolescents, adults and the elderly.

His son, Dr. Palak Patel, joined the practice in 2016.

Dr. Palak is board certified in Internal Medicine and Geriatrics. He grew up in Brookings, along with his twin brother and his sister, Roochita Patel. He attended the University of California San Diego for his undergraduate studies. He completed his medical education at Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU) in Portland. He then went on to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire to complete his internal medicine training prior to graduating from his geriatric medicine fellowship program at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pennsylvania, one of the top geriatric programs in the country.

In 2016, the fat-freezing CoolSculpting device was added to their practice, and the doctors were pleasantly surprised by the feedback from their patients. They noticed there was a gap in options for medical-grade aesthetics services in the area, so Dr. Palak became trained and certified in aesthetics procedures including Botox, fillers, and laser treatments and started offering them in the clinic and Chetco Medical and Aesthetics was born.

Over the past year, the doctors have seen increased interest in these types of services, so they decided to invest in having a dedicated space and to expand the range of services available to match the community's interest.

Roochita Patel, sister to Dr. Palak, has taken a sabbatical from her corporate roles in San Francisco to lead the buildout of this new aesthetics wing, along with Dr. Palak and Dr. Jay. She

grew up in Brookings and attended the University of California, Berkeley for her undergraduate studies, where she earned a double-major in Economics and Legal Studies, and a minor in Business Administration. She has spent the majority of her career working in Silicon Valley where she held executive positions in operations, analytics, and finance at several companies including Walmart.com and Minted. She resides in San Francisco, and is very excited to be able to help bring services that typically are only available in larger cities to the town where she grew up.

"We've worked with a local builder and with a designer who specializes in medical spa design to craft a premium space and experience at Bellezza for the local community," Roochita Patel said. "We are continuing to also provide comprehensive medical care at Chetco Medical & Aesthetics, and are accepting new patients at this time."



A brand-new aesthetics wing is under construction at Chetco Medical & Aesthetics. The Bellezza medspa will open in the fall.

Preventing heart attacks and strokes

DR. REGINALD WILLIAMS

North Bend Medical Center, Gold Beach

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, and high blood lipids or hyperlipidemia are two of the greatest causes of heart attacks and stroke. Although genetics and age play a role in your risk of hypertension and hyperlipidemia, there are ways you can reduce your risk of a heart attack and stroke.

Cardiovascular disease is the major cause of death in America, accounting for 34 percent of deaths. If you have diabetes, your risk increases dramatically. The best prevention against heart disease and stroke is to understand the risks and treatment options.

The most influential risk factor for cardiovascular disease is age — the older you are, the greater your risk. The second is your genetic make-up. You don't have to have genetic testing to evaluate your risk. If you know your parents, grandparents, or other relatives were afflicted with or died of heart disease, diabetes or stroke, your risk is much greater.

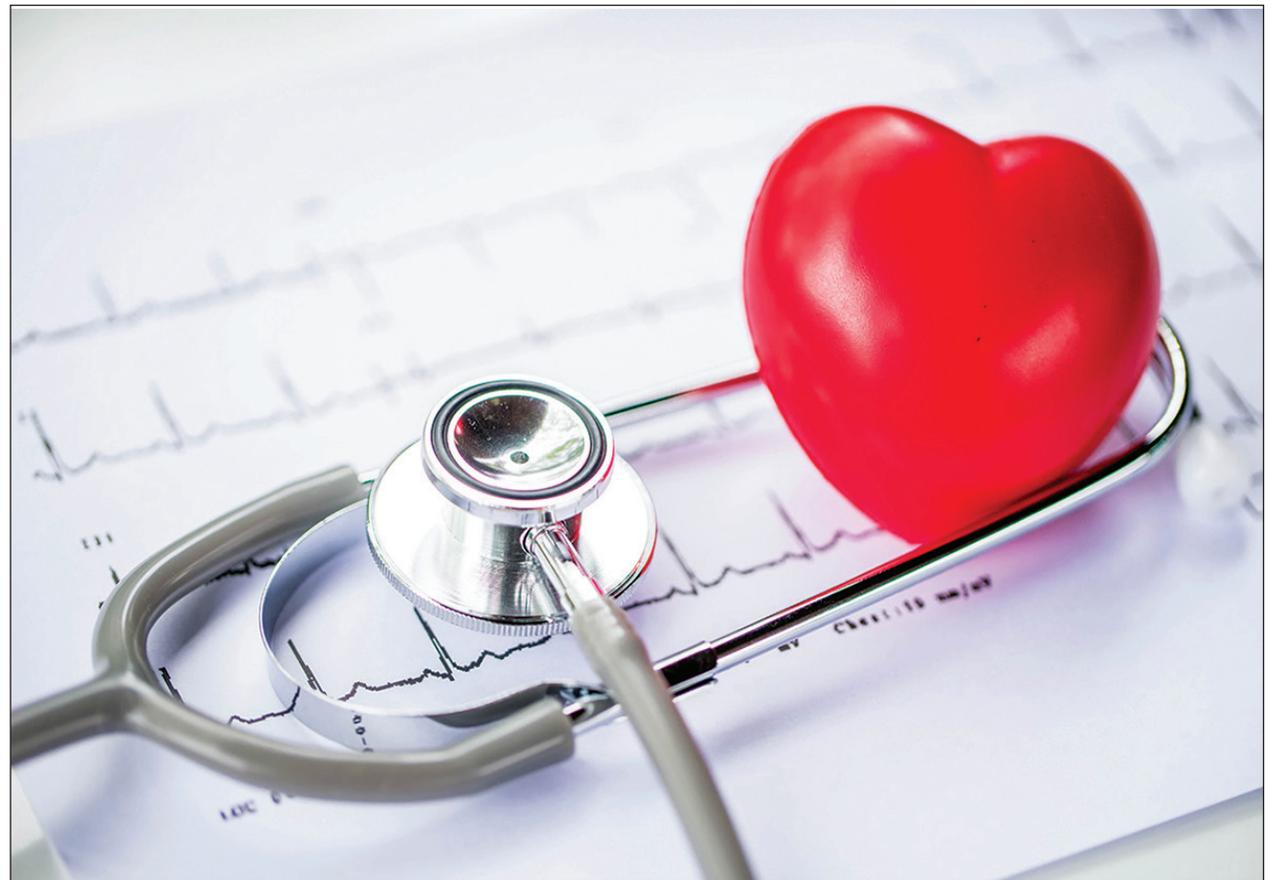
Smoking and or exposure to second-hand smoke is known to increase the risk of heart disease, lung disease and peripheral vascular disease and stroke. If you smoke, there are many over the counter nicotine products and prescriptions that can help reduce the urge to smoke.

Maintaining a healthy blood pressure is imperative. Hypertension, “the silent killer,” often goes without symptoms and causes damage to the inner lining of your blood vessels. The higher the blood pressure, the greater your risk.

According to the American Heart Association, a normal blood pressure should be maintained at or below 120/80. Measuring blood pressures at home reflects more accurately your risk than having the blood pressure taken at a physician's office. It is worth the investment to get a blood pressure cuff, keeping a record of your daily blood pressure. Bring your log with you to your doctor appointment to help your physician have an accurate picture of your blood pressure.

While diet and exercise are the best ways to reduce your blood pressure, your doctor may prescribe a variety of medications that can help lower it. It is imperative that you take blood pressure medications exactly as prescribed by your doctor.

Monitoring your cholesterol is also very important. Abnormal or high blood lipids



Metro Creative Connection

Annual physicals are key to preventing heart attacks and strokes, especially as you age.

(fats) are a major contributor to cardiovascular disease. Your blood lipids include the LDL (bad cholesterol; remember as “lousy cholesterol”), HDL (good cholesterol; remember as “healthy cholesterol”) and triglycerides. The lower your LDL and the higher your HDL, the better your prognosis.

The amount of cholesterol in your blood is determined mainly by three factors: the amount produced by the liver (this is largely genetic), the amount absorbed from the intestinal tract (some from what you eat, but a lot more from cholesterol produced by the liver and excreted into the digestive tract) and, finally, age - your cholesterol increases with age.

If you are at risk, medication is almost always necessary to lower the LDL or to raise your HDL. The ideal ratio of total cholesterol divided by HDL cholesterol is 3.0. If higher, you might need diet as therapy.

The problem with diet is that, in general, it can only decrease total blood cholesterol by about 10 percent. If you have a strong family history or a higher cholesterol ration, drug therapy is usually needed.

Diet and exercise are two important aspects in preventing heart attacks and stroke. The obesity rate in Americans is alarming, contributing to a near epidemic of diabetes, which is a cardiovascular disease. If you have diabetes, your risk is the same as someone who already had a heart attack. Obesity is caused by consuming more calories than your body burns. Abdominal obesity is the major risk. The lack of exercise is also contributing to the obesity epidemic in Americans. Controlling your weight cannot be done by exercise alone, you must also modify your diet.

Reducing stress is also beneficial in reducing your chance of a heart attack or stroke. There are things you can do to help reduce stress, such as regular exercise and getting adequate sleep are helpful. Also, try to avoid situations and people who make you anxious or angry.

Lastly, annual physicals with your physician are very important for early diagnosis and treatment. To make an appointment with one of North Bend Medical Center's providers, call 541-247-7047.

How to handle traveling as economies reopen

Metro Creative Connection

Travel is an important part of life for many active seniors. But COVID-19 complicates travel.

While most people are no doubt happy to get out of the house, after months of stay-at-home orders, people are probably somewhat hesitant to stray too far away. You may wonder if it's safe to travel.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state that travel increases a person's chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. But not all travel is the same, and the CDC notes there are different levels of risk associated with different types of travel.

- **Air travel:** Time spent in security lines and airport terminals brings travelers in close contact with other people and frequently touched surfaces. While airplane cabins are filtered, which makes it difficult for viruses and other germs to spread through the air, social distancing is difficult on crowded flights. That difficulty can increase the chances of airline passengers spreading COVID-19 to each other.

- **Bus/train travel:** Social distancing on

buses and trains also is difficult, increasing the likelihood that COVID-19 will spread among passengers.

- **Car travel:** Short car trips can be safe, but long car trips involve pulling over for gas, food and restroom breaks. That puts drivers and their traveling companions at risk of exposure to COVID-19 from other travelers or contaminated surfaces.

- **RV travel:** Recreational vehicles, or RVs, are typically equipped with restrooms and kitchenettes, which can cut down on the need to make potentially risky pitstops. But RVs also tend to be parked in overnight RV parks so travelers can sleep. Such places may make travelers vulnerable to COVID-19.

Much is still unknown about COVID-19. In fact, many people do not even know if they have had the virus or not. Scientists suspect that millions of people have been exposed to the virus but produced no symptoms. Because of that uncertainty, many people are willing to travel as economies reopen. The CDC recommends that such people adhere to local travel restrictions and take steps to anticipate travel needs before

departing so they can minimize the chances that they are exposed to the virus.

- **Bring enough medicine** to last you for the entire trip. If need be, call your physician and request refills to serve as a safety net in case medication is lost during your travels.

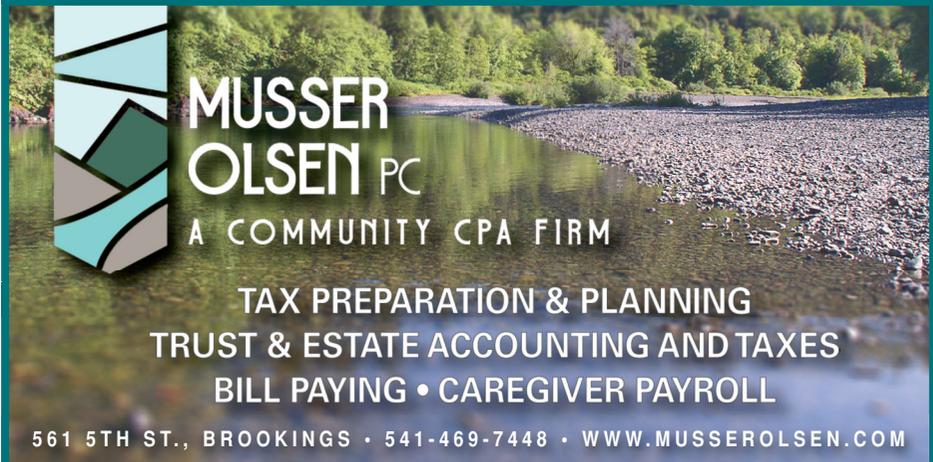
- **Pack enough alcohol-based hand sanitizer** (at least 60 percent alcohol) and keep it within reach at all times during your trip.

- **Bring cloth face coverings** to wear in

public places. The CDC advises such coverings be routinely washed, so bring enough clean coverings to last the trip if you will not have access to a washer and dryer.

- **Prepare food and water** for your trip. Pack non-perishable food in case restaurants and stores are closed.

People who intend to travel can take certain precautions to make their trips as safe as possible.



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Telehealth allows patients to consult with physicians without leaving their home, a feature that is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Del Norte Community Health Center offers remote check-ups

The Del Norte Community Health Center and other clinics that are part of Open Door Community Health Centers are among health providers all over the world who now offer telehealth — a way to see a medical professional remotely via computer.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Open Door provided telehealth with specialists not available in the area. And with concern about the virus, tele-health provides a safe way for people to see their doctors with a video visit.

Health Center is located at 550 E. Washington Blvd., Crescent City. To schedule a consultation, including remotely, call the clinic at 707-465-6925. More information about telehealth is available online at opendoorhealth.com.

Del Norte Community



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What you need to know about telehealth

U.S. Health & Human Services

Telehealth is the use of electronic information and telecommunication technologies to extend care when you and the doctor aren't in the same place at the same time. If you have a phone or a device with the internet, you already have everything you need to do telehealth — you may be able to:

- Talk to your doctor live over the phone or video chat
 - Send and receive messages from your doctor using chat messaging, email, secure messaging, and secure file exchange
 - Use remote patient monitoring so your doctor can check on you at home.
- For example, you might use a device to gather ECG or other vitals to help your

doctor stay informed on your progress. You might be surprised by the variety of care you can get through telehealth. Your doctor will decide whether telehealth is appropriate for your health needs.

If you need care — especially during COVID-19 — it's worth checking to see what your telehealth options are. For example, you may be able to get:

- General health care, like wellness visits
- Prescriptions for medicine
- Dermatology (skin care)
- Eye exams
- Nutrition counseling
- Mental health counseling
- Urgent care conditions, such as sinusitis, back pain, urinary tract infections, common rashes, etc.





Chetco
MEDICAL & AESTHETICS
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Welcome
Shannon Dhungel, PA-C

Shannon Dhungel, PA-C, is a certified physician assistant specializing in internal medicine and women's health. She completed her training and master's degree from Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. She has a special interest in preventive care for all ages, as well as acute and chronic illness management of hypertension, diabetes, and a variety of dermatological conditions.

In her free time, she enjoys traveling, painting, being outdoors, trying new restaurants and recipes, and spending time with family and friends.

"I believe optimal patient care occurs when there is an open, active, and trusting partnership between the patient and healthcare professional. I am there to listen, and to provide options and guidance, but ultimately, the patient is in charge of their own health and wellness." Shannon Dhungel, PA-C

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Amazing benefits to seniors having pets

Metro Creative Connection

Pets bring much joy to the lives they touch. So it should come as no surprise that the 2019-2020 National Pet Owners Survey, which was conducted by the American Pet Products Association, found that about 85 million families in the United States own a pet. In Canada, 7.5 million households are home to companion animals, states the PetBacker blog.

Pets offer companionship and unconditional love. While they are fitting for any family, seniors may find that having a pet is especially beneficial. The organization A Place for Mom, which helps match families with senior living residences, says pets provide a comfort system that produces measurable health results. Caring for pets and being around them can produce a chemical chain reaction in the brain that may help to lower stress hormones while also increasing production of the feel-good hormone serotonin.

This is not the only health benefit pets may provide. A recent study from the Mayo Clinic, which looked at 1,800 people

between the ages of 25 and 64 who had healthy hearts, found that almost half owned a dog. Having a dog was likely to spur heart-healthy behaviors, like exercising with the pet, eating well and having ideal blood sugar levels.

Pets also provide emotional support and companionship that can help seniors — including those who may be divorced or widowed — feel more secure and happy. The National Poll on Healthy Aging found that, among respondents who had pets, 88 percent said their pets helped them enjoy life, and 86 percent said their pets made them feel loved.

Seniors considering getting a pet can explore the many benefits to doing so.

- **Reduce pain:** A 2012 study published in Pain Magazine found therapy dogs provided “significant reduction in pain and emotional distress for chronic pain patients.”

- **Feeling of purpose:** Caring for an animal not only stimulates physical activity, but it also can give seniors a reason to get up and go, which equates to a feeling of purpose.

- **Altered focus:** Having a pet can help seniors focus on

something other than physical or mental health issues and preoccupations about loss or aging, according to New York-based psychologist Penny B. Donnenfeld.

- **Increased physical activity:** Pets require care, and that interaction can get seniors moving more than if they didn't have a pet.

- **Improved health:** Ongoing research from Harvard Medical School has found dog owners have lower blood pressure, healthier cholesterol levels and lower risk of heart disease than those who don't own a dog.

- **Stick to routine:** Caring for pets helps seniors maintain a routine. Having structure after retirement can be important to ward off risk of depression. Staying on top of feeding, grooming and other pet needs also can help prevent cognitive decline.

Pets bring many benefits to their owners' lives, and they may be the perfect remedy for seniors looking for a friend and purpose.

And animal shelters often need volunteers. Seniors who aren't able to take on the full-time care of a pet may find companionship

by volunteering at a shelter.

Area pet adoption services can help seniors find the perfect furry companion. Be sure to call ahead, as appointments may be required because of COVID-19:

DEL NORTE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Humane Society of Del Norte
821 Elk Valley Rd., Crescent City
707-464-1686

humanesocietyofdelnorte.org

[Facebook.com/HumaneSocietyofDelNorte/](https://www.facebook.com/HumaneSocietyofDelNorte/)

Del Norte County Animal Control

2650 W. Washington Blvd.,
Crescent City
707-464-7235

[Facebook: Dogs of Del Norte County](https://www.facebook.com/DogsOfDelNorteCounty)

CURRY COUNTY, OREGON

South Coast Humane Society

828 Railroad St., Brookings
541-412-0325

mysouthcoasthumane.org

[Facebook: South Coast Humane Society](https://www.facebook.com/SouthCoastHumaneSociety)

Wild Rivers Animal Rescue

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29921 Airport Way, Gold Beach
541-247-2514

wildriversanimalrescue.org

[Facebook.com/wildriversanimalrescue](https://www.facebook.com/wildriversanimalrescue)

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South Coast Humane Society

Editor Claudia Elliott and her husband, Chuck, with their recently adopted dog Maggie.

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Beware of COVID-19 scams and fraud

Metro Creative Connection

Restrictions implemented to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 have saved untold numbers of lives. The world has adjusted to such restrictions, and many parts of the world have relaxed measures as case numbers have declined.

As communities begin returning to some semblance of normalcy, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned people against letting their guard

down. While many of those warnings pertain to the importance of continuing to practice social distancing as economies reopen, advisories also include notices about fraud schemes related to COVID-19.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General has advised the general public about scams involving Medicare fraud. Such schemes are targeting Medicare beneficiaries in an assortment of ways,

including through text messages, social media, telemarketing calls, and even door-to-door visits. When perpetrating such frauds, scammers seek beneficiaries' personal information, which they then use to fraudulently bill federal health care programs, potentially leaving their victims on the hook for costly unapproved tests related to COVID-19.

The CDC notes the importance of being aware of such schemes. Awareness can help consumers avoid being victimized by scammers, and the following are some additional measures people can take to protect themselves from COVID-19-related fraud.

- Do not share personal account information. Scammers need their victims' personal information to perpetrate their fraudulent schemes. The CDC cautions beneficiaries to be suspicious of unsolicited requests for their Medicare or Medicaid numbers.
- Do not take callers or visitors at face value. Unsolicited callers or visitors requesting Medicare or Medicaid informa-

tion should be met with extreme caution. Be suspicious of any unexpected calls or visitors offering COVID-19 tests or supplies. Compromised personal information may be used in other fraud schemes.

- Never click on links in emails or text messages. Do not respond to, or open hyperlinks in, text messages or emails about COVID-19 from unknown individuals.

- Ignore offers or advertisements for COVID-19 testing or treatments on social media sites. Offers or ads for testing are one of the ways scammers are accessing personal information. Only a physician or other trusted healthcare provider should assess your condition and approve any requests for COVID-19 testing.

The COVID-19 outbreak has made it easy for criminals to exploit consumers concerned about their health. Consumers who suspect COVID-19 fraud can contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at (866) 720-5721 or visit [Justice.gov/DisasterComplaintForm](https://www.justice.gov/DisasterComplaintForm) to file a complaint.

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AARP

This program is supported by a generous grant from Toyota to AARP Foundation.

Driver Safety

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The why and how of AARP driver safety

AARP

One of the most significant demographic factors changing in our nation's future is the aging of the population. The number of people age 50-plus has grown significantly in the past decade and this segment will continue to increase more rapidly than other age groups in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by the year 2030, one in four drivers will be 65 or older, which translates into more than 30 million drivers.

Traffic statistics indicate that older adults overall are safe drivers with good driving records. However, medical conditions, certain medications, and age-related physical changes can increase the risk of injury and crashes among older drivers. It is critically important that older drivers make driving safely a personal priority. AARP Driver Safety is committed to helping Americans 50 and older sustain mobility and safety as they age.

The AARP Smart Driver course, offered by AARP Driver Safety, is designed for drivers age 50 and

older. However, the course has a lot to offer drivers of any age. The course is intended to help drivers live more independently as they age and remain safe on today's roads. Since the program's inception in 1979, more than 15 million participants have completed the course. More than 4,000 AARP-trained volunteers conduct our classroom course each year.

The AARP Smart Driver Course covers defensive driving techniques and the normal changes in vision, hearing, and reaction time associated with aging. The course also provides practical techniques for adjusting to these changes to ensure the driver's own safety and that of others on the road. During the course, participants learn about current rules of the road and how to operate their vehicles more safely in today's increasingly challenging driving environment.

Topics include:

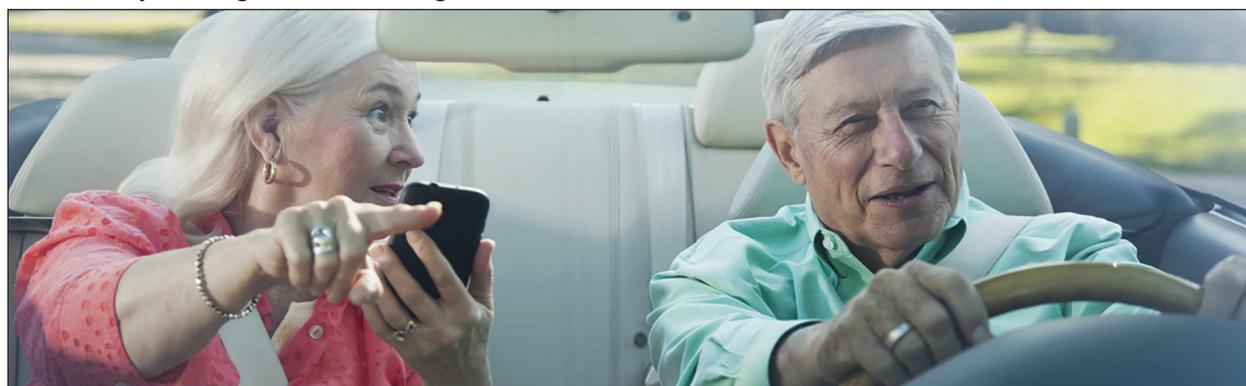
- Maintaining proper following distance.
- Minimizing the effect of dangerous blind spots.
- Limiting driver distractions such as eating, smoking, and cell phone use.

- Properly using safety belts, air bags, and all car features.
- Effects of medications on driving.
- Maintaining physical flexibility.
- Monitoring the driving skills and capabilities of yourself and others.

As an added bonus, you may be eligible to receive a multi-year auto insurance discount upon completing the course (consult your insurance agent for details). AARP membership is not required to take the course and there are no tests to pass.

Courses are available either in the classroom or online. If you enjoy interaction with others, taking the classroom course is for you. Cost is \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members for the classroom courses.

Find courses near you at www.aarp.org/DriveOR or call 1-877-946-3299.



Metro Creative Connection

An AARP driver safety course can help seniors continue to drive safely as they age. Courses are available online as well as in person.

Volunteer opportunities

If you are looking for a rewarding volunteer opportunity keeping drivers safe, AARP Driver Safety would love your help. If you have access to a computer, some basic computer skills, and a knack for speaking in front of groups, you are already a fit. All necessary training is provided, and there are plenty of opportunities for advancement to leadership. For more information, please visit www.aarp.org/volunteer.

Go online for safe entertainment during pandemic

Green Shoot Media

Recreational opportunities are more limited currently due to COVID-19. But if you have access to a computer or tablet, you may enjoy what is being called "virtual tourism" or other online programs.

Technology is primed to take you around the world virtually. It's never been easier to expand your horizons by seeing the world without leaving home. Here are some ways to dabble in virtual tourism:

Google Earth

Google Earth is a website and app that you can access from a personal computer, tablet or smartphone. Using satellite and local 360-degree photography, you can "fly" to

destinations worldwide. Immersive images of historical and cultural sites even include extra content to help you discover the history and context of the area. If you're nervous about tackling this technology, look for online courses that teach users the basics of Google Earth and facilitate virtual "trips" for beginners.

Other Virtual Options

There are various other online options for virtual tourism, but you'll need to do some legwork to find the resources you need. Think of it as vacation planning. Thrillist offers a list of VR and 360-degree photography resources at www.bit.ly/2DplyTZ. They include a tour of Japanese bamboo forests and sushi restaurants, a trip to Northern Ireland's coasts, the Great Wall of China,

the Northern Lights, dozens of World Heritage Sites, national parks and more.

Skip the Lines

One benefit of visiting destinations virtually is the ability to skip the lines, and in some cases, the hike required to access the attraction. Take it easy with a virtual visit to destinations such as Disney World, Niagara Falls, Mount Rushmore, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Pyramids of Giza, the Eiffel Tower, the Colosseum and more.

The Guardian offers a list of links to popular attractions you can visit virtually. Some include interactive educational components so you can learn something new on your virtual travels. Others include 360-degree aerial images, providing you a view you'd be hard-pressed to have access to when visiting

in person.

Online Programs

It's important to stay active and keep your brain engaged while sheltering at home. If you're feeling out of touch with peers or your community, look into virtual programs offered by your local library, senior center or senior living community.

You might find book clubs, hobbyist groups, writers' workshops, meditation classes, cooking classes, cultural discussions and more.

Your library is probably offering curbside pickup, to prevent you needing to go into the library to pick up your reserved materials.

Call your library or senior center or check their website to ask about services they're offering.

Get outdoors for socially-distanced recreation



Photo by Claudia Elliott

Hiking trails abound in our region, allowing for socially-distanced recreation.

Go Wild Rivers Coast

Recreation is important, but with requirements for social distancing, some options are not the best right now.

Fortunately, living on the Wild Rivers Coast makes it easy to find something you can do outdoors. Consider these options:

Hiking

From an easy walk along the beach to coastal trails or inland forested trails, there are dozens of opportunities to hike in the

region and social distancing is easy. Check tide tables to find out the best times for viewing starfish and other tide pool critters.

Picnics

It's an old-fashioned tradition and something to do when the walls are closing in. Make a lunch at home or pick up take-out from a local restaurant and head to one of many local parks for an enjoyable outing.

Exercise & Activities

Group activities such as Tai Chi and yoga have

moved outside during the pandemic (some were already enjoyed out-of-doors).

Fishing

It might seem obvious, with the ocean in our view and rivers everywhere, but fishing is a great way to occupy yourself during the pandemic (or any other time) and opportunities abound on the Wild Rivers Coast.

And you don't have to have a boat — you can fish off the beach, from a river bar, or on one of

many available public docks.

You do have to be sure to have a fishing license and any appropriate tags or punch cards.

Inquire at a local sporting goods store or online if you're unsure about seasons or needed equipment.

Pick up a copy of Go Wild Rivers Coast magazine — published by the Curry Coastal Pilot and Del Norte Triplicate — for lots more ideas.



Photo by Peggy Judkins

John Judkins enjoys fishing at Chetco Point. There are many places to fish along the Wild Rivers Coast.



Photo by Katherine Monreal

Tai chi is among organized activities that can be performed outdoors and socially-distanced.

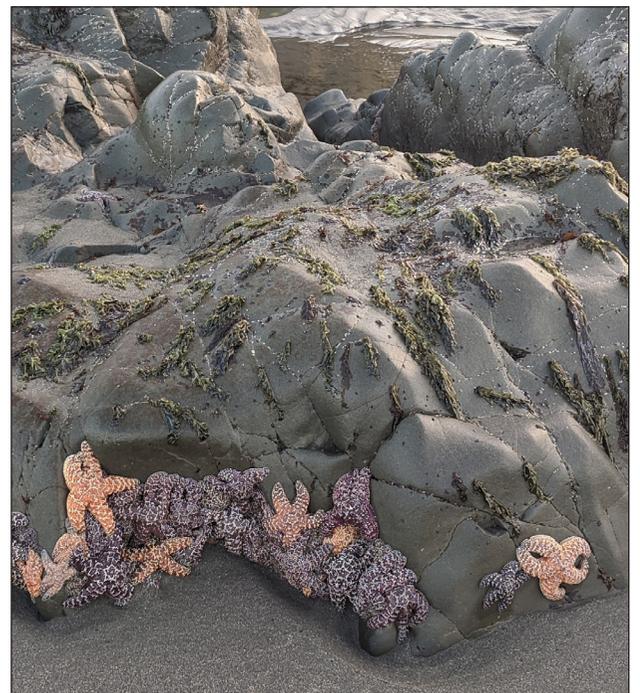


Photo by Claudia Elliott

Plan a beach outing for low tide to see starfish and other tide pool creatures.

Eat healthy: More important than ever at 50

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A balanced diet is an integral element of a healthy lifestyle for men, women and children alike. But while kids and young adults might be able to get away with an extra cheeseburger here or there, men and women approaching 50 have less leeway.

According to the National Institute on Aging, simply counting calories without regard for the foods being consumed is not enough for men and women 50 and older to maintain their long-term health. Rather, the NIA emphasizes the importance of choosing low-calorie foods that have a lot of the nutrients the body needs.

But counting calories can be an effective and simple way to maintain a

healthy weight, provided those calories are coming from nutrient-rich foods. The NIA advises men and women over 50 adhere to the following daily calorie intake recommendations as they attempt to stay healthy into their golden years.

Women

- Not physically active: 1,600 calories
- Somewhat active: 1,800 calories
- Active lifestyle: between 2,000 and 2,200 calories

Men

- Not physically active: 2,000 calories
- Somewhat active: between 2,200 and 2,400 calories
- Active lifestyle: between 2,400 and 2,800 calories

When choosing

foods to eat, the NIA recommends eating many different colors and types of vegetables and fruits. Phytochemicals are substances that occur naturally in plants, and there are thousands of these substances offering various benefits. The Produce for Better Health Foundation notes that a varied, colorful diet incorporates lots of different types of phytochemicals, which the PBH says have disease-preventing properties.

The NIA also advises that men and women over 50 make sure at least half the grains in their diets are whole grains. Numerous studies have discovered the various benefits of whole grains, which are loaded with protein, fiber, antioxidants and other

nutrients. Whole grains have been shown to reduce the risk for diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some types of cancer.

Another potential hurdle men and women over 50 may encounter is a change in their sense of smell and taste. A person's sense of smell may fade with age, and because smell and taste are so closely related, foods enjoyed for years may no longer tantalize the taste buds.

That can be problematic, as many people instinctually add more salt to foods they find bland. According to the U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, older adults should consume no more than 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day. That equates to roughly 3/4-



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teaspoon of salt.

Older men and women should resist the temptation to use salt to add flavor to foods, instead opting for healthy foods that they can still smell and taste. In addition, men and women should mention any loss of their sense of smell to their

physicians, as such a loss may indicate the presence of Parkinson's disease or Alzheimer's disease.

Maintaining a healthy diet after 50 may require some hard work and discipline. But the long-term benefits of a healthy diet make the extra effort well worth it.

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What you need to know before drafting a living will

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During the prime of their lives, people typically don't give much thought to scenarios in which they become ill or are facing the end of life. Sickness and mortality are not easy conversations to have, but it is important for everyone to approach these heavy topics with close family members so that individuals can rest easy knowing their needs will be met if or when their health falters.

An advanced healthcare directive

— also known as a living will — is a legal document in which a person lists the specifics of medical care and comfort actions they desire should the individual no longer be able to make decisions for themselves due to illness or incapacity. The legal advice resource Legal Zoom says the living will may list certain things, such as whether life support is desired or if pain medication should be administered. A living will should not be confused with a traditional will, which is a legal document that explains wishes

for financial and personal assets after a person dies. Living wills also differ from living trusts, which address how assets will be managed if a person becomes incapacitated.

A living will is not always a necessity if a person does not have strong feelings about decisions made on his or her behalf while not cognizant. However, for those who do want to have a say in care, a living will is the best method for ensuring choices will be carried out. The following are some other questions

people should ask themselves concerning living wills.

- Do I want to remove the burden of tough choices from my loved ones? A living will relieves grieving loved ones of the responsibility of making challenging decisions of invoking life-saving procedures or not — particularly if they're not sure what you desire.

- Do I have firm feelings about life-saving methods? A living will allows you to spell out preferences on insertion of feeding tubes, if you want specialized

hydration, if you want to be hooked up to life support if brain function is minimal, and a host of other scenarios.

- Is cost preventing me from drafting a living will? Cost need not be a factor in setting up a living will. You can download a free template from any number of online legal sources. Local hospitals often have forms as well, which can be notarized for only a few dollars. These forms are generally comprehensive and can help you answer all the questions and write in specifics.

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