

# Senior News



Visit Our Website at [www.gobroomecounty.com/senior](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/senior)

**PLEASE NOTE:** all Senior Center and Office for Aging programming is subject to change depending on the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please call the Office for Aging at (607) 778-2411 if you have questions.

## Office for Aging is Here to Help

In light of the ongoing pandemic and other situations going on in Broome County, we at the Office for Aging want to remind our readers that through it all, we are here for you.

The mission of the Broome County Office for Aging is to improve and enrich the quality of life for all older persons in Broome County.

The Office for Aging:

- Promotes the dignity and independence of the older person
- Ensures that comprehensive and coordinated services are brought to bear on the needs of older persons
- Fosters public awareness of the value and contribution of older persons of the community

The Broome County Office for Aging does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, national origin or sponsor, sexual orientation, or subject any persons to any discrimination in his civil rights.

If you are in need of services or information, please do not hesitate to reach out. We are here to help!

Call (607) 778-2411

or go online:

[www.gobroomecounty.com/senior](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/senior)

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## NY Connects

NY Connects—what is it? It’s exactly what it sounds like. NY Connects is a program which links people to local resources and services when they need help. NY Connects provides Information and Assistance and is a single point of entry for Home- and Community-Based Services and Supports. NY Connects is available to people of any age and income, for medical and non-medical needs and can help improve or maintain your health and independence. NY Connects is a focal point of accurate, up-to-date information on programs, services and benefits. Examples of Home- and Community-Based Services and Supports include:

- Personal Care Services
- Caregiver Supports
- Respite Care
- Housing
- Transportation
- In-home Services
- Health and Wellness
- Help with food or obtaining a mask
- Help completing a Medicaid, SNAP, HEAP or housing application
- Information on Meals on Wheels or take-out meals at a Senior Center
- Other information on services you may need to remain as independent as possible



**NY Connects**  
Your Link to Long Term Services and Supports

*Continued on Page 2*

## Understanding Telehealth

Hearing a lot about telehealth lately? It’s not a coincidence. Telehealth is a great way to get the health care you need while still practicing social distancing.

### What is telehealth?

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

*Continued on Page 2*

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## NY Connects *continued from page 1*

Someone might call NY Connects on behalf of an older adult, a child or an adult with a disability, a family member or friend in need of assistance. You may also call for yourself. NY Connects is also a resource for professionals, providing information and assistance as needed. While callers are frequently referred to the specific agency able to provide the needed services, we aim to be a one-stop shop for accurate, helpful information. Calling NY Connects is always a good first step. We welcome any and all questions. While much information is provided over the phone, we also have an extensive print material resource library, and many callers receive follow-up information with resources sent through the mail.

Sometimes the best way to get to know a service is through examples, so here are a few:

- If you need help with personal care or chores around the house, call NY Connects. We can provide information to help you remain independent in your home.
- If you are considering moving, we can discuss housing options with you and mail you a copy of the *Senior Apartment Housing Guide*.
- If you are struggling financially, we can discuss various benefit programs and mail you a copy of the *Financial Benefits Guide for Seniors*.
- If you need transportation, to a medical appointment for example, we can connect you to the Office for Aging Mini-Bus, or provide information on other transportation options.

NY Connects links people to community services and programs.

For more information, call (607) 778-2278, Monday – Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. You can also visit our website: [www.gobroomecounty.com/senior/nyconnects](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/senior/nyconnects).

## Understanding Telehealth *continued from page 1*

### Did you know?

Recent federal policy changes now allow you to receive care using tools that you may already be using. As a good faith provision of telehealth during the COVID-19 nationwide Public Health Emergency, providers may use popular video chat applications with patients — including Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video, Zoom, or Skype. Ask your doctor what they support.

### What types of care can I get using telehealth?

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 the COVID-19 emergency — 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.

Disclaimer: The reference to named video- and text-based communications software for telehealth is informational and not intended as an endorsement of those services.

Article from the U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/patients/understanding-telehealth/>



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## How Caregivers Can Control Their Coronavirus Stress Harness those concerns and turn them into positive action

by Barry J. Jacobs, AARP, May 5, 2020

"I worry about him constantly," the 70-year-old woman said during a recent therapy session while fretting about her husband, who is in a nursing home dementia unit. "How do I know he won't get coronavirus there?"

"I can well understand," I said empathetically, but then added, "As long as we're in this pandemic, I don't think you are going to be able to stop worrying about him." In my mind I was considering how I could help her not worry less but worry more productively.

Caregivers have plenty to be fearful about nowadays, including contracting the coronavirus, feeling isolated at home, getting food and medications, and coping with financial strain. Those worries are normal and expected; it would be surprising if a caregiver wasn't worrying during this time of crisis. Evolution has equipped human beings with built-in worry capacity for reasons of survival — to fix our attention on pressing problems and then spur us to try to remedy them.

But when the tendency to stew escalates so much during stressful times that worries dominate caregivers' thoughts, disturb their sleep and detract from their ability to enjoy life, we call it something else: anxiety. Unlike worry, anxiety isn't normal; it's a problem that clouds our thinking and diminishes our abilities to perform at our peak. In its more severe forms, anxiety is debilitating and requires treatments such as medication and psychotherapy.

How can family caregivers use worry productively to better face the pandemic but not cross the line into anxiety? Here are some ideas.

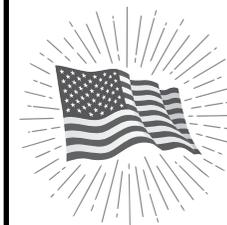
### Worry, but don't ruminate.

Thinking about worrisome challenges is not a problem; thinking about them constantly is. Ruminating cows chew their cud for hours; likewise, ruminating caregivers chew on the same worrying thoughts again and again, without getting any closer to a solution. The thoughts torment them, especially at bedtime when they can't turn worrying off enough to relax and fall asleep.

It's usually about as helpful to tell anxious caregivers to just quit worrying as it would be to tell them to cap a high-pressure fire hydrant. Instead, a tried-and-true, if somewhat paradoxical, psychological technique is to encourage caregivers to worry more — but only at certain times.

So rather than trying to distract themselves from their worries by forcing their mind to focus on other things, caregivers should schedule at least an hour each day to fret as much as they possibly can. During that time, they should keep a highly detailed journal in a notebook or Word document about whatever is troubling them. But, here's the key: at the end of the hour, they need to put the notebook away or close the file and turn their attention to more immediate concerns. This act of "brain-dumping" worries allows caregivers to circumscribe them to those "worry hours" and gain a greater sense of control over their thoughts in general.

*Continued on Page 3*



## Happy Independence Day!

Please note: The Office for Aging will be closed on Friday, July 3rd in observance of Independence Day. Take-out meal service from Broome County Senior Centers will also be unavailable on this day.

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## Scam of the Month

### Sweepstakes Scams

In 2018, there were 132,470 scams reported to the Federal Trade Commission that involved prizes, sweepstakes or lotteries. As a result of these scams, a total of about \$118 million was taken from innocent people.

Sweepstakes scams are often committed via phone, postcard, email, or social media. Scammers typically request bank account information, claiming that they need it in order to deposit money, but instead they use the information to withdraw funds. Sweepstakes scammers may also request that you purchase gift cards and give them the information off the card to pay the "taxes" on your "winnings." Another popular way that sweepstakes scammers steal funds is to inform victims that they have won a large amount of money and need to pay "fees" to unlock the supposed "prize." Often, seniors receive a (fake) check in the mail. Scammers know that while a victim can deposit this check into a bank account and it will show up in the account immediately, it may take a few days for the bank to realize the check is fake and reject it. In those few days, scammers may collect money for supposed "fees" or "taxes," which they pocket while the victim has their "prize money" removed from his or her account as soon as the check bounces. At that point, the victim is unable to get back any money he or she may have sent to the scammer.

Always remember to investigate to find out if something is true or legit before paying for something or providing personal information.

If you would like more information about scams, or would like to report a scam, please call the Office for Aging at 607-778-2411.

## How Caregivers Can Control Their Coronavirus Stress Harness those concerns and turn them into positive action

*continued from page 2*

### Worry, but don't "catastrophize."

It is realistic to worry about the coronavirus's impact on the country's public health and economy. It may not, however, be realistic for a caregiver to worry that her entire family is in imminent danger of being wiped out by COVID-19 because she forgot to wear a mask when she went to the pharmacy three weeks ago. Anxious caregivers tend to "catastrophize" — that is, fear the worst-case scenario in every situation even though the probability is low that anything catastrophic will happen. To tamp down this mindset, caregivers need to reflect on their worries and ask themselves two questions: How realistic is this worry, really? How helpful is it to dwell on worrying about this low-probability possibility? If a worrying thought is neither realistic nor helpful, then it should be given less attention.

### Harness worry's energy.

Worrying makes us more alert and ready for action. This increased energy can be used for effective problem-solving. During the "worry hour," caregivers can not only dump their worries and then assess them for realism and helpfulness but also ask themselves another important question: Which of my worries are and aren't within my power to solve? Those that aren't should be assigned for more venting. But those that are should prompt caregivers to begin generating ideas in their journal about how these worries can be addressed. What steps can a caregiver take to make a difference in reducing these concerns? What does she need in order to take those steps? In this case, the caregiver could contact the nursing home and ask what measures the staff are taking to combat the coronavirus. She could also ask what the plan is for the nursing home to communicate important information to both residents and families on a regular basis. This should catapult her into an action mode in which she uses all her will, talents and determination to help herself, her care recipient and her family members fight against this present scourge.

*Barry J. Jacobs, a clinical psychologist, family therapist and healthcare consultant, is the co-author of Love and Meaning After 50: The 10 Challenges to Great Relationships — and How to Overcome Them and AARP Meditations for Caregivers (Da Capo, 2016).*

*Article originally published on [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).*

## Did You Know?

### The Dangers of Joint Bank Accounts

Many people decide to add someone as a joint user on their bank accounts to allow that designated person to pay bills in the event that they cannot do so themselves. Here at Office for Aging, we always encourage people to come up with a plan for the future so that things can be taken care of if there comes a time one cannot manage things alone. However, it is important to realize that there are some risks associated with joint bank accounts. Once someone is a joint user on an account, that person is a legal owner of the account, which means that they are well within their legal rights to withdraw or transfer any assets they choose from that account.

Legal experts would advise someone to instead assign Power of Attorney (POA) to someone you trust. This document designates the person or persons who may gain access to your accounts. A POA ensures there are safeguards in place for you should the person assigned misuse their power. Joint bank accounts have no such protection. It is safer to consider a POA as an alternative.

Are you 60 or older and a resident of Broome County? You can get a free Power of Attorney filled out through the Legal Aid Society, sponsored by the Office for Aging. You can call Legal Aid at (607) 231-5900.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call the Office for Aging at (607) 778-2411.

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## Make a Tasty, Satisfying Summer Salad!

by Kathleen Cook, Nutrition Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County

As we head into the warmer summer months, coming up with satisfying nutritious foods that don't have to be cooked can be a challenge. Who feels like cooking when it's hot outside? One way to manage this is to prepare food ahead of time, perhaps in the evening or early morning when it's cooler. Then, you will have it ready to eat from the refrigerator later!

Brown rice is a gluten-free whole grain with a good deal of fiber, so you don't have to eat much of it to feel satisfied. Whole grains provide you with essential vitamins and minerals your body needs to stay healthy, and the fiber helps to remove excess artery-clogging fat from your system.

Combining several food groups into one dish is a good way to nourish your body without having to eat a lot of food. Just a half-cup of Fiesta Rice Salad (recipe below) provides you with 5 grams of protein and 4 grams of fiber!

Here is a tip: one cup of uncooked brown rice will yield 2 cups cooked. After it is cooked, you can freeze some of it by scooping half-cup portions (or smaller) onto a baking sheet. Place the sheet in the freezer until your rice portions are solid, then store them in an airtight plastic zipper bag for up to a month!

### Fiesta Rice Salad

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup brown rice (cooked)
- 1 carrot (shredded)
- 1 cup broccoli (chopped fine)
- 1 red onion (small, chopped)
- 1 cup tomato (chopped)
- 1 bell pepper (green, red, orange, or yellow)
- 1 can kidney beans (15oz, drained, rinsed)
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, dill, or other fresh herbs (chopped fine)
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar (or white or cider)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- salt and pepper (to taste)

#### Directions

1. Wash and chop vegetables and mix with cooked rice.
2. In a small bowl, combine vinegar, oil, herbs, salt and pepper. Pour over rice mixture.
3. Add beans and toss well. Serve cold.





## Pasta Dinner Fundraiser

Support the Broome County Senior Games with our annual Pasta Dinner Fundraiser on Thursday, August 6th, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. or until sold out at Broome West Senior Center, 2801 Wayne Street in Endwell. Each meal includes pasta, meatballs, tossed salad, dessert and a beverage. Cost is \$10 for adults; \$5 for children 12 and under; FREE for children 3 and under. All meals will be sold to-go with the convenience of drive-through pickup.

Advanced reservations are strongly encouraged, but some to-go meals will be available for purchase without a reservation. To reserve your to-go meal, please contact Sofia at the Broome County Office for Aging by Tuesday, August 4th at (607) 778-2115. Please leave a message with the number of meals you would like to reserve and your callback phone number.

This dinner is sponsored by: 

## Stay Cool This Summer with HEAP Summer Cooling Assistance

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Cooling Assistance opened on May 1, 2020 and is scheduled to close on August 31, 2020. The program is open to both homeowners and renters who obtain a physician's statement identifying the need for air conditioning due to a medical condition (dated within the last 12 months) and can be used once every 5 years.

If you are eligible, you may receive a new air conditioner which will be installed by a vendor at no cost. In future years, it is up to the recipient to maintain the air-conditioner and install/remove it. In circumstances where an air conditioner cannot safely be installed, a fan will be provided.

#### You may be eligible for a HEAP Cooling Assistance benefit if:

- Your household's gross monthly income is at or below the current guidelines for household size (call for information)
- You receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, or
- You receive Temporary Assistance (TA), or
- You receive Code A Supplemental Security Income (SSI Living Alone), and
- You and your household members are United States Citizens or qualified aliens, and
- Includes an individual with a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by heat, and
- You received a Regular benefit greater than \$21 in the current program year, and
- You currently do not have a working air conditioner or the air conditioner you have is five years old or older

If you received 2019-2020 HEAP Winter Heating Assistance or if you have ongoing Temporary Assistance (TA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), then you only need to complete a Cooling Assistance application.

If you did not receive HEAP Winter Heating Assistance, then you need to complete a HEAP application and a Cooling Assistance application as well as provide required documentation.

To apply, please call Department of Social Services at 607-778-1100.

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## How to Protect Yourself & Others

While closings and restrictions related to COVID-19 are being eased, it does not mean the danger of contracting the virus, or worse—succumbing to it, is gone. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

Here are some guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention you can and should continue to use to keep yourself and others safe and healthy:

### Know How It Spreads

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.**
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:
  - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
  - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
  - Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

### Everyone Should:

- 1) Wash your Hands Often
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- 2) Avoid Close Contact
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home. If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
  - Put distance between yourself and other people outside of your home.
  - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus.
  - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
  - Do not gather in groups.
  - Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.
  - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
- 3) Cover your Mouth and Nose with a Cloth Face Cover when around Others
  - You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
  - Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities.
  - Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
  - The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
  - Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker.
  - Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
- 4) Cover Coughs and Sneezes
  - If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
  - Throw used tissues in the trash.

- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- 5) Clean and Disinfect
    - Clean AND disinfect frequently-touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
    - If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
    - Then, use a household disinfectant. Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.
  - 6) Monitor Your Health
    - Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
    - Especially important if you are running essential errands, going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.
    - Take your temperature if symptoms develop.
    - Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
    - Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

*Adapted from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>*

## Advent at Midlife

I am no longer waiting for a special occasion; I burn the best candles on ordinary days.

I am no longer waiting for the house to be clean; I fill it with people who understand that even dust is Sacred.

I am no longer waiting for everyone to understand me; it's just not their task.

I am no longer waiting for the perfect children; my children have their own names that burn as brightly as any star.

I am no longer waiting for the other shoe to drop; It already did, and I survived.

I am no longer waiting for the time to be right; the time is always now.

I am no longer waiting for the mate who will complete me; I am grateful to be so warmly, tenderly held.

I am no longer waiting for a quiet moment; my heart can be stilled whenever it is called.

I am no longer waiting for the world to be at peace; I unclench my grasp and breathe peace in and out.

I am no longer waiting to do something great; being awake to carry my grain of sand is enough.

I am no longer waiting to be recognized; I know that I dance in a holy circle.

I am no longer waiting for Forgiveness.

I believe, I Believe.

Mary Anne Perrone

## Protect your Social Security Benefits from Identity Theft

Social Security allows recipients to conduct some of their business online. Various options include the ability to update your address, contact information or banking information. Going online can be more convenient than spending time on a trip to your local office. In a time where identity theft is a serious concern, it is recommended that if you have access to a computer, you should create an online account for Social Security now, before someone else tries to do so in your name.

When you open an online Social Security account, the Social Security Administration (SSA) asks questions involving your personal information to verify your identity. Unfortunately, if a scammer has already gotten access to your personal information via other means, it means the scammer will be able to use that information to open a new account (if you have never made one) or make changes to your existing account. Once the scammer has access to an online SSA account in your name, they have the ability to change your address, change your contact information, and more important, a scammer can redirect your monthly payment by changing your banking information to an account only the scammer can access.

When an online account is first created, or anytime any changes are made to an account on Social Security's website, a letter is sent to the recipient. In other words: if you create an account, the SSA will mail a letter to confirm the creation of the account. If someone has changed your address, the SSA sends a letter for that as well, to the previous address. If you are not the one who made these changes, these letters will alert you to potential identity theft and you should contact the SSA immediately. However, if the SSA sends these letters but no one notices or takes action, it may allow a scammer to then make changes to your banking information, cheating you out of your benefits. If a scammer has successfully changed your address associated with your online account, when the SSA sends a letter to notify you of a change to your banking information, you will not receive the letter because it will be sent to the address entered by the scammer.

Upon receipt of a letter informing you of changes to your online Social Security account, it is recommended that you call the Social Security Administration as soon as possible or visit your local office in person, especially if you have never created an online account, or if you know that these are changes that you have not made yourself. When you call or visit in person, make sure you are prepared to provide proof of your identity. Once the SSA can verify your identity, you have the option to tell the SSA to make it so no changes can be made to your account unless they are made in person. This is a safety measure which can provide additional protection against identity theft. Another recommendation is to be proactive: create your own online SSA account. This way you can ensure the account created is legitimate. When you create the account, you will set up security questions that have to be answered when you log in. Make sure these questions and their answers are things only you or someone you trust would know.

If you think that you have been the victim of Social Security fraud, you should contact the office of the Inspector General for SSA at 1-800-269-0271 (TTY 1-866-501-2101) or <http://oig.ssa.gov/report-fraud-waste-or-abuse>.

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## Farmers' Market Vouchers Available to Eligible Seniors

It's that time again!

Once a year, the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) gives eligible, low-income older adults 20 dollars in coupons to buy locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets in New York State. Booklets are available beginning in August and may be used through November.

Who is eligible? SFMNP coupons are provided to individuals 60 years or older, who are, or affirm that they are, low-income based on income standards. Proof of income is not required, but individuals must self-attest that they meet the specified income standards.

There is no cost for the coupon booklets. Participating farmers markets may accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits, and many markets accept the Electronic Benefits Card (EBT).

For specific information on a schedule for distribution of Farmers' Market Coupons, please call (607) 778-2411 or visit [www.gobroomecounty.com/senior](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/senior)

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## Stop the Spread of Rumors

### Know the Facts about Coronavirus Disease 2019

1. **Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.** Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.
2. **For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.** However, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.
3. **Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.** For up-to-date information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/summary.html>.
4. **There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.**
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Stay home when you are sick.
  - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
5. **You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:**
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you

- Develop symptoms

AND

- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or live in or have recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Call ahead before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/share-facts.html>

## Gratitude

In everyday life, we can find the good and the bad. Why is it that some people seem to always be happy no matter what happens in their day? There can be several explanations as to how someone can see the good in the bad. One of them is that they could be practicing gratitude. There is extensive research on gratitude and its positive effects on a person's physical and psychological health.

Some ways to practice gratitude:

- Thank people for what they do—the grocery clerks, mail carriers, neighbors who check on you, your friends and relatives.
- Thank yourself; don't criticize yourself for every little thing you do wrong.
- Record or recall the positive things that happen to you each day.
- Concentrate on being "in the moment" and truly experiencing things as they happen.
- Pay it forward: when someone does something nice for you, do something nice for someone else.
- Share your past experiences with loved ones who can benefit from hearing about them.

Give yourself a break; chances are good you are doing the best you can. Focusing on the good will brighten your day and allow you to really appreciate all of the good things that are happening around you.

Broome County  
**Office for Aging** 



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- Obtaining food
- Information about programs and services
- Safe ways to get to the doctor and other necessary appointments
- Help completing a Medicaid, SNAP, HEAP or housing application
- Obtaining a mask
- The latest community safety information for older adults
- Ways to stay socially connected and healthy while staying home

Call Us at 607-778-2411  
or visit our website:  
[www.gobroomecounty.com/senior](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/senior)

## Sudoku

Each Sudoku Puzzle has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, and every 3x3 square.

Answers on Page 10

					2		
	8			7		9	
6		2				5	
	7			6			
			9		1		
				2			4
		5				6	3
	9		4				7
		6					

## “And I Quote...”

Below are some quotes to inspire you to live life independently, on your own terms!

“The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud.”

*Coco Chanel*

“Associate with the noblest people you can find; read the best books; live with the mighty. But learn to be happy alone. Rely upon your own energies, and so not wait for, or depend on other people.”

*Thomas Davidson*

“Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice.”

*Steve Jobs*

“Is freedom anything else than the right to live as we wish? Nothing else.”

*Epictetus*

“The best place to find a helping hand is at the end of your own arm.”

*Unknown*

“If it is to be, it is up to me.”

*William H. Johnsen*

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who’ll decide where to go.”

*Dr. Seuss*

“No person is your friend (or kin) who demands your silence or denies your right to grow.”

*Alice Walker*

“If you think you can do it, or you think you can’t do it, you are right.”

*Henry Ford*

“Don’t compromise yourself. You’re all you’ve got.”

*Janis Joplin*

## Understanding Mental Health: Depression

Have you ever had long periods of sadness, loss of joy in daily activities, poor sleep, or feelings of worthlessness or guilt? Have you quickly lost or gained weight, or lost all energy to complete daily tasks? If so, you may be feeling symptoms of depression. It is important to know depression is not a “normal” part of getting older. It is a medical problem that touches many older adults and can often be treated. During uncertain times, these feelings of depression or stress can be overwhelming. If you have these feelings, please talk with your doctor, or use the New York State Emotional Support Helpline at: 1-844-863-9314.

*Adapted from <https://www.mhanational.org/depression-older-adults>*

## Looking to Apply?

Looking to apply for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to help stretch your grocery budget? Here are your options for assistance:

Broome County Office for Aging – 607-778-2411

Broome County NY Connects – 607-778-2278

Family Enrichment Network NOEP – 607-723-8313 x827

Broome County Department of Social Services – 607-778-1100

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Simply contact us by phone at **(607) 778-2411** or by email at **ofa@co.broome.ny.us** and let us know you would like to start receiving the Senior News by email instead of postal mail. You will need to provide your name, your email address, and if you are already a mail subscriber: your current mailing address, so we may remove your name from our postal delivery mailing list.

Don’t have email? Do you simply prefer a paper copy with your morning coffee? We understand that! Senior News will continue to be available on paper.

## How Cataracts Cloud Your Vision

As we age, our vision changes. Cataracts are one such common change. A cataract is a cloudy area in the lens of your eye. By age 80, most people either have cataracts or have had surgery to remove them.

Around age 40, the proteins in the lens of your eye start to break down and clump together. This clumping makes a cloudy area on your lens that gets worse over time.

At first, you may not have any symptoms. But eventually your vision becomes blurry and colors seem faded. You may also have trouble seeing at night.

Luckily, cataracts can be corrected with surgery. Cataract surgery is one of the most common operations in the U.S. Your doctor may recommend surgery if your cataracts start getting in the way of everyday activities like reading, driving, or watching TV.

During cataract surgery, the doctor removes the clouded lens and replaces it with a new, artificial lens. Surgery is very safe. Nine out of 10 people who get it can see better afterwards. But most people don’t need to rush into surgery. Talk with your health care provider if you’re having vision problems.

There are things you can do to delay cataracts. Wear sunglasses and a hat to block the sun. Quit smoking. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables—especially dark, leafy greens like spinach and kale. And if you’re age 60 or older, get a dilated eye exam at least once every two years.

*Source: NIH News in Health*

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## A Well-Aged Mind Maintaining Your Cognitive Health

Getting older can bring many changes, both physically and mentally. Even when you're healthy, your brain and body start slowing down. Maintaining your cognitive health—the ability to clearly think, learn, and remember—is important for your overall well-being.

Many things influence cognitive health. Your genes, lifestyle, and environment can all impact your thinking skills and ability to perform everyday tasks.

It's common to experience some decline in cognitive function as you get older. That may mean occasionally losing things, forgetting words, or briefly forgetting what day it is. Or you may notice that it takes longer to learn new things. Such symptoms don't necessarily mean that you're developing Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia.

"I like to think about the brain as a computer disk for memory and thinking," explains Dr. Marie Bernard, an aging expert at NIH. "As you get older it gets fuller and fuller. So, it can get more difficult to retrieve data and add data to it. But you're still able to learn and grow."

Aging is bound to bring changes. But there are many things you can do to protect your cognitive health as you age. That includes knowing what puts your well-being at risk.

### Staying Aware

It's not only occasional memory problems that older adults are more likely to experience. Aging can bring other changes to the way the brain works. These changes can impact your ability to deal with complex social situations. That can put you at higher risk of being scammed.

"Older adults are often targeted by scam artists," says Dr. Patricia Boyle, who studies the aging brain at Rush University.

Older adults are also more likely than younger ones to pick up the phone without knowing who's calling, she explains. "Simply by doing that, you're opening yourself up to a conversation with someone who may be an unscrupulous person trying to steal from you."

Common scams targeting older adults include identity theft, risky or fake investments, charity scams, and people posing as relatives in distress to ask for money.

Any adult can fall victim to these sorts of scams. But Boyle and her team recently found that low awareness of tactics used by scam artists may be an early indicator of worsening brain function.

In their study, people with low scam awareness were about twice as likely to later develop Alzheimer's disease as those with high scam awareness.

People should verify any investment proposal or request for money before acting, Boyle explains. Trusted family members or friends may be able to help with this. "Take the time to look into financial propositions and make sure they are legitimate," she says.

### Reversing Changes

Many things can cause memory or other thinking problems. Depression, anxiety, an infection, or even certain medications can cause cognitive changes. Sometimes these types of issues can be resolved with treatment.

If you experience a sudden change in thinking, memory, or mood, it may be caused by a new medication. Some drugs may not cause cognitive changes when taken on their own but can do so when combined with other medications. Even common supplements or over-the-counter remedies can cause these types of interactions.

Sometimes, if you have more than one doctor, one might not know what the others prescribed. "Older adults really benefit from having a list of all their over-the-counter, herbal, and prescribed medications with them whenever they see a health care professional," says Bernard.

Certain medications can also have dangerous, or even deadly, effects when combined with alcohol. And alcohol alone poses risks for the older brain. It can take less alcohol to alter judgment, coordination, balance, or sleep patterns in an older adult.

Dangerous drinking habits have been rising among older adults in the U.S. A recent NIH-funded study found that 1 in 10 Americans aged 65 or older binge drinks regularly. That means drinking four or more drinks on the same occasion for women and five or more for men.

Older adults may change their drinking habits to cope with the death of a partner or other loved one, or because they're lonely. But drinking can also be part of social activities for older adults, explains Dr. Edith Sullivan, an alcohol researcher at Stanford University.

"Older adults might feel that 'well, I'm old now, it's OK for me to drink,'" Sullivan says. But older brains and bodies are especially vulnerable to the effects of alcohol, she adds.

A recent study by Sullivan and her team used brain imaging to see how alcohol affects the brain. They found that older adults who misused alcohol had greater loss of brain tissue compared with their peers who didn't drink. This was true even if they started misusing alcohol later in life.

The good news, she explains, is that some problems with thinking or memory caused by medications or alcohol misuse can be reversed. "That's different from classical dementia, which is a one-way street of decline," says Sullivan.

### Building Brain Power

There are many things you can do to protect your brain as you age. "Cognitive activity, physical activity, and social engagement are associated with better cognitive functioning in older adulthood," Boyle explains.

Managing your health conditions is also important. Controlling your blood pressure, for example, reduces the risk of having a small stroke (bleeding from blood vessels in the brain). Small strokes can cause temporary or permanent cognitive problems.

Feeling a sense of purpose in one's life also seems to help protect older adults from cognitive decline. A study from Boyle and her colleagues found that people who felt more purpose in life had fewer symptoms from brain changes linked to Alzheimer's disease.

"The aging brain can accumulate Alzheimer's changes, but if you're stimulating your brain and strengthening it like a muscle, you may be better able to tolerate those changes," she says.

Bernard stresses that getting older can also bring cognitive advantages you might not know about.

"Older adults have greater verbal ability than younger adults. They're better problem solvers. And accumulated experiences are very helpful," she says.

"Think about the positive things that come with aging," Bernard says. "It's a great time to become engaged in meaningful activities, maintain connections to friends and family, develop new connections, and be physically active. And in turn, all of these things can enhance one's quality of life and one's aging."

*Source: NIH News in Health*

## Senior Center Contact Information

- BROOME WEST**..... **785-1777**  
2801 Wayne St., Endwell, NY 13760
- DEPOSIT**..... **467-3953**  
14 Monument Street, Deposit, NY 13754 (Located in Christ Episcopal Church)
- EASTERN BROOME**..... **693-2069**  
27 Golden Lane, Harpursville, NY 13787
- FIRST WARD**..... **729-6214**  
226 Clinton St., Binghamton, NY 13905
- JOHNSON CITY**..... **797-3145**  
30 Brocton St., Johnson City, NY 13790
- NORTHERN BROOME**..... **692-3405**  
12 Strongs Place, Whitney Point, NY 13862
- NORTH SHORE**..... **772-6214**  
24 Isbell St., Binghamton, NY 13901
- VESTAL**..... **754-9596**  
Old Vestal Junior High School Cafeteria / 201 Main St., Box #4, Vestal, NY

## Stay Hydrated This Summer

Did you know that as we age we begin to lose our sense of thirst? This means that by the time we realize we are thirsty we are already dehydrated. In the summer months, this puts us especially at risk for severe dehydration and heat-related issues. The average adult should drink around 64 ounces of fluid each day, but this amount can increase depending on outside temperatures, body weight, medications, and other health conditions.

Older adults have trouble responding to changes in temperature. Certain medications, such as diuretics, antihistamines, laxatives, and corticosteroids can cause frequent urination. Medical conditions such as uncontrolled or even undiagnosed diabetes put older adults at greater risk of dehydration.

Initial signs of dehydration include headaches, muscle cramping, constipation, dry mouth, sleepiness, and a bright yellow urine color. Signs that dehydration has already become severe includes little to no urination at all, dark or amber-colored urine, irritability, confusion, low blood pressure, falls, fast heart beat but weak pulse, dry skin that stays folded when pinched, and cold hands and feet. Untreated dehydration can have severe consequences on your kidneys, bladder, risk of falling, seizures, and even coma or death.

To stay hydrated this summer season, make sure to follow these tips:

- Aim to drink a minimum of 64 fluid ounces each day. This can include fluid from water, low-fat milk, or 100% fruit juice. You can get creative with your beverages by adding fruit or herbs to infuse your water or making a smoothie.
- Consume foods that have a high-water content, such as cucumbers, tomatoes, watermelon, bell peppers, grapes, oranges, blueberries, and cantaloupe.
- Enjoy broth soups, vegetables, and 100% fruit popsicles.
- Keep water accessible so you're more likely to remember to drink throughout the day.
- When feeling initial stages of dehydration, make sure to begin consuming fluids right away.

Sources:  
www.health.gov "Caregivers: Help Older Adults Stay Hydrated During Summer"  
www.agingcare.com "Hydration Tips for Seniors"

## Sudoku Answers

9	5	7	6	1	3	2	8	4
4	8	3	2	5	7	1	9	6
6	1	2	8	4	9	5	3	7
1	7	8	3	6	4	9	5	2
5	2	4	9	7	1	3	6	8
3	6	9	5	2	8	7	4	1
8	4	5	7	9	2	6	1	3
2	9	1	4	3	6	8	7	5
7	3	6	1	8	5	4	2	9

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Senior Centers are offering to-go meals for curbside pickup on weekdays. To-go meals are served around 12 noon and include an entrée, sides, dessert and a beverage. The Senior Centers will be closed for activities and dining until further notice.

**To reserve a meal**, please call your local senior center one day prior by 12 noon. To learn more about a center near you, contact the Office for Aging at (607) 778-2411.

Meals are available at a suggested contribution of \$3.50 for those ages 60+ and spouse of any age. All others are charged \$4.50. No one age 60+ will be denied a meal due to an inability or unwillingness to contribute.

Broome County  
**Office for Aging** 

## The Power of Pets Health Benefits of Human-Animal Interactions

Nothing compares to the joy of coming home to a loyal companion. The unconditional love of a pet can do more than keep you company. Pets may also decrease stress, improve heart health, and even help children with their emotional and social skills.

An estimated 68% of U.S. households have a pet. But who benefits from an animal? And which type of pet brings health benefits?

Over the past 10 years, the National Institute of Health (NIH) has partnered with the Mars Corporation's WALTHAM Centre for Pet Nutrition to answer questions like these by funding research studies.

Scientists are looking at what the potential physical and mental health benefits are for different animals—from fish to guinea pigs to dogs and cats.

### Possible Health Effects

Research on human-animal interactions is still relatively new. Some studies have shown positive health effects, but the results have been mixed.

Interacting with animals has been shown to decrease levels of cortisol (a stress-related hormone) and lower blood pressure. Other studies have found that animals can reduce loneliness, increase feelings of social support, and boost your mood.

The NIH/Mars Partnership is funding a range of studies focused on the relationships we have with animals. For example, researchers are looking into how animals might influence child development. They're studying animal interactions with kids who have autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and other conditions.

"There's not one answer about how a pet can help somebody with a specific condition," explains Dr. Layla Esposito, who oversees NIH's Human-Animal Interaction Research Program. "Is your goal to increase physical activity? Then you might benefit from owning a dog. You have to walk a dog several times a day and you're going to increase physical activity. If your goal is reducing stress, sometimes watching fish swim can result in a feeling of calmness. So there's no one type fits all."

NIH is funding large-scale surveys to find out the range of pets people live with and how their relationships with their pets relate to health.

"We're trying to tap into the subjective quality of the relationship with the animal—that part of the bond that people feel with animals—and how that translates into some of the health benefits," explains Dr. James Griffin, a child development expert at NIH.

### Animals Helping People

Animals can serve as a source of comfort and support. Therapy dogs are especially good at this. They're sometimes brought into hospitals or nursing homes to help reduce patients' stress and anxiety.

"Dogs are very present. If someone is struggling with something, they know how to sit there and be loving," says Dr. Ann Berger, a physician and researcher at the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. "Their attention is focused on the person all the time."

Berger works with people who have cancer and terminal illnesses. She teaches them about mindfulness to help decrease stress and manage pain.

"The foundations of mindfulness include attention, intention, compassion, and awareness," Berger says. "All of those things are things that animals bring to the table. People kind of have to learn it. Animals do this innately."

Researchers are studying the safety of bringing animals into hospital settings because animals may expose people to more germs. A current study is looking at the safety of bringing dogs to visit children with cancer, Esposito says. Scientists will be testing the children's hands to see if there are dangerous levels of germs transferred from the dog after the visit.

Dogs may also aid in the classroom. One study found that dogs can help children with ADHD focus their attention. Researchers enrolled two groups of children diagnosed with ADHD into 12-week group therapy sessions. The first group of kids read to a therapy dog once a week for 30 minutes. The second group read to puppets that looked like dogs.

Kids who read to the real animals showed better social skills and more sharing, cooperation, and volunteering. They also had fewer behavioral problems.

Another study found that children with autism spectrum disorder were calmer while playing with guinea pigs in the classroom. When the children spent 10 minutes in a supervised group playtime with guinea pigs, their anxiety levels dropped. The children also had better social interactions and were more engaged with their peers. The researchers suggest that the animals offered unconditional acceptance, making them a calm comfort to the children.

"Animals can become a way of building a bridge for those social interactions," Griffin says. He adds that researchers are trying to better understand these effects and who they might help.

Animals may help you in other unexpected ways. A recent study showed that caring for fish helped teens with diabetes better manage their disease. Researchers had a group of teens with type 1 diabetes care for a pet fish twice a day by feeding and checking water levels. The caretaking routine also included changing the tank water each week. This was paired with the children reviewing their blood glucose (blood sugar) logs with parents.

Researchers tracked how consistently these teens checked their blood glucose. Compared with teens who weren't given a fish to care for, fish-keeping teens were more disciplined about checking their own blood glucose levels, which is essential for maintaining their health.

While pets may bring a wide range of health benefits, an animal may not work for everyone. Recent studies suggest that early exposure to pets may help protect young children from developing allergies and asthma. But for people who are allergic to certain animals, having pets in the home can do more harm than good.

### Helping Each Other

Pets also bring new responsibilities. Knowing how to care for and feed an animal is part of owning a pet. NIH/Mars funds studies looking into the effects of human-animal interactions for both the pet and the person.

Remember that animals can feel stressed and fatigued, too. It's important for kids to be able to recognize signs of stress in their pet and know when not to approach. Animal bites can cause serious harm.

"Dog bite prevention is certainly an issue parents need to consider, especially for young children who don't always know the boundaries of what's appropriate to do with a dog," Esposito explains.

Researchers will continue to explore the many health effects of having a pet. "We're trying to find out what's working, what's not working, and what's safe—for both the humans and the animals," Esposito says.

*Source: NIH News in Health*

# MEET, GREET & EAT

## July Menu - Bon Appétit!

At all Broome County Senior Centers. **Reservations are needed by noon the day before.** Menu subject to change.  
 A contribution of \$3.50 is requested for people age 60+ and spouse of any age. Those under age 60 are charged **\$4.50 per meal.**  
*No one age 60+ shall be denied a meal due to an inability or unwillingness to contribute.*

**Senior Centers will be closed for activities and dining until further notice. Centers are offering meals to-go.**  
**Please contact your local senior center to learn more about to-go meals with curbside pickup during the month of July.**

		<b>Sweet &amp; Sour Pork 1</b> <b>OR Citrus Rubbed Pollack</b> Brown Rice Pilaf Broccoli Florets Applesauce Bar	<b>Sausage Link OR 2</b> <b>Chicken Thigh w/BBQ Sc</b> Baked Potato Pickled Beet Salad Peach Cobbler	<b>3</b>  <i>Centers Closed in Observance of Independence Day</i>
<b>Chicken a la King 6</b> <b>Over a Biscuit</b> Green Beans Diced Peaches	<b>Classic Meat Lasagna 7</b> Spinach Frosted Devil's Food Cake	<b>Halupki OR 8</b> <b>Kielbasa w/Onions</b> Mashed Potatoes Peas & Carrots Banana	<b>Rotisserie Chicken 9</b> Baby Red Potatoes Corn Orange Cranberry Bar	<b>Beef Stroganoff OR 10</b> <b>Citrus Rubbed Pollack</b> Brown Rice Hot Beets Diced Cantaloupe
<b>Ziti Parmesan 13</b> Italian Blend Vegetables Mandarin Oranges Chocolate Cookie	<b>Cilantro Lime Chicken 14</b> <b>OR Salmon Patty w/Dill Sc.</b> Brown Rice Pilaf Green Beans Fruit Cocktail	<b>Chicken Salad Croissant 15</b> Baked Beans Ambrosia Carrot Raisin Bar	<b>Liver w/Onions 16</b> <b>OR Chicken Marengo</b> Mashed Potatoes Spinach Diced Honeydew	<b>Herb Rubbed Pollack 17</b> <b>OR Salisbury Steak</b> Quinoa Carrots Ice Cream Cup
<b>Cheesy Pasta Bake 20</b> Broccoli Florets Fruit Cocktail Sugar Cookie	<b>Halupki OR 21</b> <b>Breaded Chicken Parm</b> Mashed Potatoes Italian Green Beans Frosted Vanilla Cake	<b>Beef Burgundy 22</b> Buttered Noodles Cucumber & Tomato Salad Sherbet Cup	<b>Macaroni &amp; Cheese 23</b> Stewed Tomatoes Italian Vegetables Pineapple & Mandarin Oranges	<b>Roast Turkey 24</b> <b>OR Broiled Fish w/Lemon</b> Mashed Potatoes Peas Honey Bran Muffin
<b>Chicken Alfredo 27</b> Green Beans w/Mushrooms Oatmeal Cookie	<b>Liver w/Onions OR 28</b> <b>Meatloaf w/Gravy</b> Mashed Potatoes Carrots Fruit Cocktail	<b>Roast Pork OR 29</b> <b>Broiled Fish w/Lemon</b> Scalloped Potatoes Zucchini Peanut Butter Brownie	<b>Chicken Salad 30</b> <b>Croissant</b> Potato Salad Watermelon Lemon Poppyseed Muffin	<b>Spinach Parm Pollack 31</b> <b>OR Beef Burgundy</b> Buttered Noodles Peas Strawberry Mousse

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