

# The HomeLife Connection

[www.homelifeseniorcare.com](http://www.homelifeseniorcare.com) (925) 240-5770

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NEWSLETTER

## Autumn: The Cooling Off Season

Sandwiched between blazing summer and chilly winter, Autumn is known as the “cooling off season”. Night-time arrives earlier, temperatures begin to drop, and most noticeably our surrounding landscapes turn to beautiful hues of orange, yellow and red.

The best part of welcoming Autumn is the variety of sights, smells, flavors, and activities. As we age, one of the most important things we can do for our health is to remain active with both our mind and bodies. Take this time to try new things.

Have you heard the buzz about Hygge (pronounced HOO-gah)? It’s the Danish word for “cozy” and it is a popular lifestyle trend that involves friends coming together by firelight or candlelight to delight in the warmth of camaraderie and activeness such as games, reading, knitting, or simply enjoying a cup of tea with friends. Hygge pastimes are a creative way to keep you social and active.

Another great way to take in the fall season is to take a walk and enjoy the crisp air and beautiful colors. If it’s too strenuous on your own, ask your caregiver to accompany you, invite a friend, neighbor or grandchild.

We hope the ideas and tips we have gathered for you in this newsletter help you enjoy a happy, healthy and fun fall season.



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*We appreciate our community,  
our clients, and our caregivers!*

*We are so grateful to everyone  
for choosing HomeLife Senior  
Care as the “Best of Oakley”  
for In-Home Assisted Care  
and Senior Services.*

*Thank You*



- ❖ A study in the Journal of Aging research found children born in the fall months are statistically better students and live longer.
- ❖ Since 1997, Autumn has been one of the top 100 names for girls in the United States.
- ❖ Historically Fall was called “Harvest” because of the moon that occurs close to the autumn equinox.
- ❖ Fall colors are caused by the amount of sugar in the leaves.
- ❖ Pumpkin Spice has nothing to do with Pumpkins.

# Fall Prevention

Falls and accidents seldom “just happen”. The more you take care of your overall health and well-being, the more likely you’ll be to lower your chances of falling. Here are a few hints:

- Talk with your doctor and plan an exercise program that is right for you. Regular exercise helps keep you strong and improves muscle tone. It also helps keep your joints, tendons, and ligaments flexible.
- Have your vision and hearing tested often. Even small changes in sight and hearing can make you less stable.
- Find out about the possible side effects of medicines you take. Some medicines may affect your coordination and/or balance.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. Even a small amount can affect your balance and reflexes.
- Always stand up slowly after eating, lying down, or resting. Getting up too quickly can cause your blood pressure to drop, which can make you feel faint.
- Don’t let your home get too cold or too hot... it can cause you to become lightheaded or dizzy.
- Using a cane, walking stick, or walker can help you feel steadier when you walk. This is very important when you’re walking in areas you don’t know well or in places where the walkways are uneven.
- Wear rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes that fully support your feet. Wearing only socks or shoes with smooth soles on stairs or waxed floors can be unsafe.
- Hold handrails when using the stairs. If you must carry something while going up or down, hold it in one hand and use the handrail with the other.

Source: National Institute on Aging

*“Each year more than one in four adults aged 65 and older will fall. This represents 29 million falls, 3 million emergency room visits and 800,000 hospitalizations”*



## MAKE YOUR HOME SAFE

You can help prevent falls by making changes to unsafe areas in your home with these home safety tips.

### In stairways, hallways, and pathways:

- Make sure there is good lighting with light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Keep areas where you walk tidy.
- Check that all carpets are pressed firmly to the floor, so they won’t slip. Put no-slip strips on tile and wooden floors. You can buy these strips at the hardware store.
- Have handrails on both sides of all stairs from top to bottom, and be sure they’re tightly fastened.

### In bathrooms and powder rooms:

- Mount grab bars near toilets and on both the inside and outside of your tub and shower.
- Place non-skid mats, strips, or carpet on all surfaces that may get wet.
- Keep night lights on.
- In your bedroom: Put night lights and light switches close to your bed.
- Keep your telephone near your bed.

### In other living areas:

- Keep electric cords and telephone wires near walls and away from walking paths.
- Tack down all carpets and area rugs firmly to the floor.
- Arrange your furniture (i.e. low coffee tables) and other objects so they are not in your way when you walk.
- Make sure your sofas and chairs are a good height for you, so that you can get into and out of them easily.



On October 26<sup>th</sup> our HomeLife team is proud to be participating and walking in the world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support, and research.

# 8 Autumn Health and Home Safety Tips for Seniors

**Regions around the country are starting to experience their first tastes of the cooler temperatures and shorter days fall has in store for them. Don't miss this quick essential checklist for seniors looking to safeguard their health and safety this season.**

## **Get a Flu Vaccine**

Last year's flu was a brutal one killing upwards of 80,000 people in the U.S. according to the Centers for Disease Control and hospitalizing close to 900,000. While older adults and children are more susceptible to flu complications, researchers found that even young adults were severely affected during last year's flu season. It is critical that everyone get the flu shot sooner rather than later. Seniors may also want to check with their doctor about the pneumonia vaccines available to them and whether they should get them or not.

## **Organize Your Medicine Cabinet**

Autumn is a great time to get your medicine cabinet organized and stock up on flu prevention essentials like hand sanitizer, antiseptic wipes, Kleenex, and over-the-counter supplements you may use to boost your immune system like vitamin C or zinc. Discard old prescriptions you are not using, especially antibiotics. You may be inclined to take an antibiotic if you are feeling ill, but you could possibly be helping your body build up a bacterial resistance when really you have a virus at work. Always talk to your doctor first.

## **Cold proof Your Home**

As the temperatures outside drop, you may be noticing more drafts in your home. Windows and doors that don't properly shut or seal could be letting cold drafts in through your home that can make you cold as well as increase your vulnerability for getting sick. Address any visible drafts you can find, rearrange furniture to block cooler air coming in from windows. Get out your favorite throw-blanket to have handy.

## **Check Batteries**

Everyone, especially seniors who utilize wood stoves, fireplaces, and space heaters, should check their carbon monoxide and smoke detector batteries this fall. Plan on testing the alarms on these detectors every month to make sure they are working properly as well. If you are a senior who has trouble affording high heating bills during the winter, don't risk your health safety. Talk to your local Council on Aging or utility company to find out if there are heating assistance resources available for older adults in your area.

## **Protect Against Falls**

It's not just inclement icy weather that can put seniors at a higher risk for falling during cold weather months. Factors like increased joint pain or difficulty exercising because of cooler weather can also make seniors with chronic conditions like arthritis, diabetes, and heart disease more likely to experience a fall inside their home.

## **Make Sure You Can See**

Ensuring your visibility this fall is a three-fold operation. One, make sure you have gotten your annual vision checkup done so that you know you are seeing correctly or have the prescription aids to do so. This will lower your risk of falling or having a driving accident. Two, test the lighting throughout your home and replace bulbs that are dimming or simply aren't bright enough. Three, don't forget that clocks fall back an hour in early November which means that your evenings get quite a bit darker. You may want to plan outings and travel accordingly.

## **Plan for Solitude**

Even with holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas, the fall and winter months can still leave many seniors on their own, especially when freezing temperatures or bad weather make it difficult to get out and about. For seniors, fall may be the perfect time to learn how to use technology to maintain contact with the outside world and stay connected with friends and family. This may include learning to live video chat with Skype or Facetime, or simply joining social media platforms like Facebook.

## **Prep for Bad Weather**

Are you ready for bad weather? In addition to coats, scarves, hats, gloves, and boots, you'll want to make sure that you have backup supplies of water, food, prescription medicines, and first aid items both in your home and in your car. Don't forget battery-operated flashlights and candles that will come in handy in a pinch if your power is knocked out in a snowstorm. It may also be a good idea to have an action plan in place with your family or care network so people know how to get a hold of you or check on you should you live alone when nasty winter weather strikes.

*Source seniordirectoy*



**The Autumn equinox is upon us, officially bringing summer to an end and ushering in the season of falling leaves and cooler weather. The long days of daylight are gradually ending and the best part... and extra hour of sleep!**

**Don't forget to turn your clocks back 1-hour on Sunday, November 3rd**



6440 Brentwood Blvd, Ste A  
Brentwood, CA 94513

## Thanksgiving Day Tips for Seniors and Their Families

Thanksgiving is a great occasion to get together with family members, young and old. It's one of the most enjoyable holidays of the year, but it can also bring its share of challenges. With some advance planning, it can be a very special time for you and your loved ones.

Holidays and other events that change the daily routine may be tiring for your Senior loved one, so make sure he or she has a little extra help, arranging for a Caregiver to help your loved one get dressed and ready to go to the event help put them at ease.

### Preparation

There are many ways you can prepare to make the home safe and comfortable for a senior friendly gathering. Hazards that could lead to trips or falls should be removed. Arrange for a special seat at the end of the table with extra room as walkers and canes can make getting up and down from the dinner table difficult.

### Helping Out

Seniors should never feel left out of the equation, especially when it comes to holidays. There are ways they can help in the kitchen without getting in the way or hurt, and they will be thrilled to be able to contribute. Something as simple as picking the menu, a no bake side dish, setting the table or helping with dessert are great ways to get involved.

### Connecting

Connecting with family is key. During the meal, try to bridge generation gaps by asking each other to share something, such as their proudest moment, the first president they remember, or a fun story from the past that left a lasting impression. Give thanks! This is the best time of year to consider the people and things you appreciate in life. Studies have shown that gratitude can have a positive impact on your health! It can relieve depression, lower blood pressure, improve immune function, and even facilitate more efficient sleep.

### Fall Word Search

L	N	G	C	Z	O	G	W	C	N
U	H	I	A	O	C	C	O	Y	E
F	Q	W	K	I	V	F	P	I	E
K	F	U	D	P	F	Q	K	N	W
N	R	E	M	E	M	I	M	A	O
A	R	Y	E	K	R	U	T	P	L
H	K	N	A	D	T	L	P	L	L
T	A	S	Y	U	P	F	U	P	A
R	Z	W	A	V	Y	H	C	P	H
A	P	P	L	E	B	V	J	E	C
PUMPKIN			APPLE			AUTUMN			
COFFEE			TURKEY			THANKFUL			
CIDER			HALLOWEEN						



## Easy Vegetable Soup

When it comes to fall cuisine, hearty soups and stews are the best. This soup is packed with all the Ingredients you crave on a chilly autumn day.

The best thing about this soup is you can add any veggies that you like! My go-to ingredients are spinach, celery, potatoes, zucchini, and corn.

4 C. chicken broth	1 (28oz) can diced tomato
1 small onion	1 Tbsp olive oil
1 clove garlic	1 C. carrots
1 C. green beans	1 C frozen corn
1 C. frozen peas	1 can white kidney beans
½ lemon	1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
½ tsp salt and pepper	Handful basil and parsley

Measure the broth into a large microwave-safe bowl. Add the diced tomatoes. Microwave on high for 6 minutes.

Meanwhile, put a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the oil. Roughly chop the carrot matchsticks. Add to the oil. Stir and cover. Chop the green beans into 1-inch pieces and add to the carrots. Stir and cover. Peel and chop the onion. Add it to the pot. Peel and mince the garlic. Add it to the pot along with the salt and pepper. Drain the beans and add to the pot. Add the peas and corn to the pot. Cover.

When the microwave finishes, add the hot broth mixture to the pot. Cover pot and increase heat to high. When it boils, reduce heat to a moderate simmer, stirring occasionally until carrots and green beans are tender (about 2-3 minutes).

Meanwhile, roughly chop the basil, parsley or cilantro. Juice the half of a lemon. Remove the soup from the heat. Stir in the lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce. Ladle into bowls and garnish with chopped herbs.