

Happy  
New Year!

# HomeLife Connection

JANUARY 2023

As we step into the new year, our entire team would like to express our gratitude to our Home Care Aides for their hard work and dedication as well as our amazing clients who we serve

We look forward to a successful year ahead and wish you all a year of joy, health, and prosperity.

Team HomeLife



## Getting the most out of your Home Care Aide

There are times when it is challenging to accept care. A good Caregiver should make you feel at ease and make life easier for you and your families. Here are a few good reminders of what you can expect from those caring for you.

- Building Confidence
- Exercise Compassion
- Don't Hesitate to Act - Initiative
- Respect
- Words of Encouragement
- Patience
- Listening and Communicating
- Empathy Above All

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# *New Year... New You!*

***With all the stress and responsibility of family caregiving, it's easy to forget to give ourselves credit for the wonderful things we do for others.  
The new year brings an opportunity for health, growth, and happiness***

## **Learn to Love Yourself**

When we embark on caregiving it can be easy to lose ourselves. Between the endless to-do lists and increasing personal needs, caring for an older adult can take a toll on you. And when even the tiniest unimportant mistakes feel like we are failing someone, we may find ourselves in a dark place. Try to exercise your brain by learning something new—take a class, do crossword puzzles, or even play video games. These are all great ways to keep your mind busy, which helps maintain function and keeps the mind sharp and alert.



**Eat right.** When you eat healthier and get the right amounts of nutrients and vitamins, you'll be able to stay active and remain independent longer. A good diet in your later years reduces your risk of osteoporosis, high blood pressure, heart diseases and certain cancers.

**See your doctor.** Many of us have not been to the doctor for a checkup in a long while. If this is true for you, make a point to make an appointment for a checkup early in the year. A visit to the doctor is your chance and talk with your physician about all of the different factors affecting your health, make sure your medications are in order, and discuss any concerns you may have.



**Socialize and/or volunteer.** Isolation and depression—both of which lead to poor health—can be combatted by getting out and socializing with friends and family. Have you visited your local Senior Center yet? Volunteering is an even higher level of socialization with added benefits: Studies show that volunteering, helping others, and/or donating to charities leads to happiness and well-being. Don't know where to start? Look at your local community center or senior center.



**Be grateful.** It's important concentrate on things you're thankful for. Being grateful is good for you. According to a recent study, thankfulness is good for the brain, helps to relieve stress, depression and addictions, and it's good for your body. Grateful people experience fewer aches and pains and they report feeling healthier.



# *Staying Active During Winter... Vital for Seniors' Overall Health*

For many of us, winter can seem like never-ending gloom, with little sunshine and rainy, cold weather. And although it is nice to hunker down by a warm fire with a good book or a favorite television show, we still need to move our bodies. I know you may be thinking... it's far too cold to exercise, right? Or is it?

For seniors, staying active during the winter months can go a long way toward staying healthy. But “active” doesn't have to mean running a marathon -- or even heading into the cold for a walk or jog. Simple exercise several times a day is enough to keep muscles and joints in shape. Fear of getting hurt is actually what causes many seniors to stay in – and be more inactive – during the winter months, but, in reality, it is really a ‘move-it-or-lose-it’ scenario.

It is suggested that seniors try and squeeze in exercise at least once a day, though more often is optimal. A lot of people, when they get older, think they can't do something, and they stop moving forever. I say, if it feels good, go for it. If it hurts, pay attention to those signals your body is giving you. When you don't move, your body will stiffen up, so it is important to keep moving -- even if you do only tiny things every day. Start the day by stretching, whether standing or in a chair, to get the blood flowing to your heart and lungs and loosen those joints and muscles that have tightened up from lying in bed all night.

If weakness or balance is an issue, using a chair for support or try chair yoga or chair cardio classes that can be found at the local gym, or on YouTube. You can find any type of exercise videos on YouTube these days that can be pulled up on a smart TV – and many streaming services offer an exercise channel or programming, as well. Balance issues or fear of falling, that is still no excuse. Sit in a chair and move your arms, stomp your feet, bend your knees or do jumping jacks sitting down. The important thing is to keep your muscles moving.

Even arthritis pain can be stemmed by small movements. Almost all of us will experience arthritis pain at some point. Keeping our joints moving will help with that. It can be as simple as opening and closing our fingers to make a fist or making circles with our wrists to ease the pain in our hands, or flexing elbows, knees and ankles several times a day.

For those seniors who are not homebound, consider joining a walking club at the local mall or an indoor track or find a water aerobics class at a gym or community center. Water aerobics are a great way to stay active – whether in summer or winter – because seniors are in a warm pool where the resistance of the water helps joints and muscles move freely, but without the low impact of jumping around on a floor.

But keeping your body active is not enough. We need to keep our mind active as well to stay healthy. Socialization is an important piece of staying healthy and active. We all saw what isolation did to our mental health during COVID. Depression can set in when we stay to ourselves, but it can have an even bigger impact on a senior's memory if they don't keep their mind working, so if they can get out and join a club or exercise class at a senior center, it will do a lot for your overall health.

And while we have all heard the mantra to “check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program,” it is even more important to “listen to your body.” If you have heart or lung or a mobility issue, an individual should talk to their doctor to learn their limitations, but limitations don't mean you should stop moving. Exercise doesn't have to be crazy or strenuous to be beneficial. As long as you know your body and don't push yourself too hard, movement will always make you feel better.

If you think you're too old to do something, you are probably not. A lot is mental attitude: ‘I can do this, I am strong enough, age is just a number!’

# *On The Lighter Side*

Why not ask your Caregiver to help you prepare a nice batch of homemade soup... there is nothing better than some comfort food to help stay warm and cozy in this crazy weather.

## **Chicken and Wild Rice Soup**

### **Ingredients**

4 tablespoons unsalted butter  
3 celery ribs, cut into 1/2-inch pieces  
2 carrots, cut into 1/2-inch pieces  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 1/2 teaspoons finely chopped thyme  
Salt & Pepper  
1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
1 cup wild rice (5 ounces)  
2 quarts chicken stock or low-sodium broth  
2 cups water  
4 cups bite-size pieces of roasted chicken or turkey  
1 cup heavy cream



### **Directions**

In a large saucepan, melt the butter. Add the celery, carrots, onion, garlic, thyme and a generous pinch each of salt and pepper and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables just start to soften, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle the flour over the vegetables and cook, stirring, until evenly coated and lightly browned, about 3 minutes.

Add the wild rice to the saucepan and gradually stir in the stock and water. Bring to a boil, then simmer over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes. Add the chicken and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the wild rice is tender, 10 to 15 minutes longer. Stir in the cream and season with salt and pepper. Ladle the soup into bowls and serve.



## **Sending Birthday Wishes to Some Special People**

May you have all the joy your heart can hold,  
all the smiles a day can bring,  
and all the blessings a life can unfold!

### **Cheers to Another Year!**

Rosemary B. - Jan 1  
Rachel C - Jan 12  
Julianna W. - Jan 19



Jim H. - Jan 6  
Betty P. - Jan 13  
Jinx R. - Jan 23  
Wafer T. - Jan 24