

Macon County Health Department
Caregiver Advisory Newsletter

May/June
2026

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



CHAMPION YOUR HEALTH: MAY 2026

Celebrated every May, Older Americans Month acknowledges older American's contributions, highlighting aging trends and reaffirming the commitment to older adults.

This year's theme, **Champion Your Health**, focuses on prevention, wellness and personal responsibility as cornerstones of healthy aging. During the 2026 observance, communities and individuals alike are urged to take steps to champion health and advance healthy aging for all ages, including:

- Stay up to date on preventative care and screenings.
- Build and maintain social connections that support emotional well-being.
- Choose nutritious, minimally processed foods.
- Incorporate regular physical activity to maintain strength and mobility.
- Practice daily habits that support health and resilience.

The Importance of Socialization for Older Adults

How Regular Socialization Can Improve Quality of Life

1. Reduced Feelings of Loneliness

Loneliness can be detrimental to an older adult's health and well-being. Regular socialization helps combat these feelings. This will also ensure that seniors remain a vital part of their community!

2. Increased Cognitive Function

Staying socially engaged can help seniors maintain and even improve their cognitive function. For example, it's a good idea for seniors to participate in mentally stimulating activities. Playing games or having a lively conversation can help keep the brain sharp and alert.

3. Enhanced Emotional Support System

A strong social network provides older adults with an invaluable emotional support system. Friends and family can offer encouragement, empathy, and advice during difficult times. The resulting emotional security this can provide is invaluable.

4. Boosted Self-esteem

Social interactions can boost an older adult's self-esteem by providing opportunity for positive feedback and recognition. Feeling valued and appreciated by others is an important contributor to overall self esteem.

5. Greater Sense of Purpose

Regular socialization can help seniors maintain a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. In addition, engaging with others and contributing to the community can foster a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.





Every June, the Alzheimer's Association sponsors Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month to raise awareness for various types of dementia. It's a time to help recognize the 55 million people living with Alzheimer's or other dementias worldwide and those who provide them with support and care.

Wear Purple: Purple is the official color of Alzheimer's awareness. Show your support by wearing purple or changing your social media profile picture to include a purple frame.

Educate Yourself and Others: Learn about the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer's, risk factors, and ways to support brain health. Sharing information with friends, family, and your community can spark conversations and reduce stigma.

Join or Organize a Fundraiser: Participate in walks, host a bake sale, or start an online fundraiser. Every dollar raised contributes to research efforts and resources for families impacted by dementia.

Engage in Brain-Healthy Activities: Activities such as puzzles, reading, or learning a new skill can help maintain cognitive function. Incorporating a Mediterranean diet, regular exercise, and quality sleep are also known to support brain health.

Advocate for Policy Changes: Reach out to local and national policymakers to support funding for Alzheimer's research and improved caregiving resources.

Tips for Caregivers: Taking Care of Yourself

Being a caregiver can be extremely rewarding, but it can also be overwhelming. Caring for a person with Alzheimer's or a related dementia takes time and effort. It can feel lonely and frustrating. You might even feel angry, which could be a sign you are trying to take on too much. It is important to find time to take care of yourself. Here are some tips that may offer some relief:

- Ask for help when you need it. This could mean asking family members and friends to help or reaching out to **local services** for additional care needs.
- Eat nutritious foods, which can help keep you healthy and active for longer.
- Join a caregiver's support group online or in person. Meeting other caregivers will give you a chance to share stories and ideas and can help keep you from feeling isolated.
- Take breaks each day. Try making a cup of tea or calling a friend.
- Spend time with friends and keep up with hobbies.
- Get exercise as often as you can. Try doing yoga or going for a walk.
- Try practicing meditation. Research suggests that practicing meditation may reduce blood pressure, anxiety and depression, and insomnia.
- Consider **seeking help** from mental health professionals to help you cope with stress and anxiety. Talk with your doctor about finding treatment.



ANALOGIES TEST

Complete each analogy by writing the correct word

1. Car is to Road as Boat is to _____
2. Painter is to Canvas as Writer is to _____
3. Clock is to Time as Thermometer is to _____
4. Bird is to Nest as Bee is to _____
5. Teacher is to School as Doctor is to _____
6. Knife is to Cut as Pen is to _____
7. Fish is to Water as Bird is to _____
8. Pen is to Paper as Paintbrush is to _____
9. Key is to Lock as Password is to _____
10. Sun is to Day as Moon is to _____
11. Fork is to Eat as Shovel is to _____
12. Eye is to See as Ear is to _____
13. Foot is to Shoe as Hand is to _____
14. Cat is to Meow as Cow is to _____
15. Fire is to Heat as Ice is to _____



CAREGIVER STRESS-BUSTING DEMENTIA PROGRAM



Program for Family Caregivers of People with
Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia

Do you provide care for a loved one with
Alzheimer's disease or dementia?

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

- We know caregiving can be stressful.
- This program will teach:
 - stress management techniques.
 - relaxation and coping strategies.
- Program is available at no cost, but donations are accepted.

"The program was a turning
point in my being able to cope."
-Participant

Information

Who: Family caregivers of a loved one with dementia

What: Multi-component program meets

- 90 minutes/week for 9 weeks
- Groups of up to 8 people

Where: Macon County Health Department

1221 E. Condit St.

Decatur, IL 62521

When: June 2nd–July 28th

Tuesdays from 1–2:30 p.m.



For more information, call
217-423-6550 opt 4
RSVP required.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Macon County Health Department
Decatur, Illinois



StartingPoint

Your Aging and Disability Resource Center



Public Health
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Macon County Health Department
Decatur, Illinois

DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

DEVELOPED BY SMRC

Macon County Health Department

1:00-3:30 p.m.

Every Thursday

May 21st-June 25th

**Free
6 week
course**

**Donations
accepted**

You will learn to:

- Communicate with healthcare professionals
- Manage symptoms
- Fight fatigue
- Build confidence
- Eat healthier
- Monitor blood sugar

Please call 217-423-6550 ext. 1520 to learn more or to register for the class.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

May

- 25 **Health Department CLOSED Memorial Day No Memory Cafe**
- 26 Virtual Caregiver Support Group 10:00-11:00 a.m.
- 28 Caregiver Support Group at Randall Residence 10:00-11:00 a.m.

June

- 1 Dementia Friendly Zoo Day 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- 8 Memory Café at Eagle Ridge 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- 18 Seniorama @ Civic Center 10:00-1:00 p.m.
- 19 **Health Department CLOSED Juneteenth**
- 22 Memory Café at Eagle Ridge 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- 23 Virtual Caregiver Support Group 10:00-11:00 a.m.
- 25 Caregiver Support Group at Randall Residence 10:00-11:00 a.m.



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www.maconchd.org
Department (Decatur, IL)

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Caregiver Advisory Services
1221 E. Condit Street
Decatur, IL 62521-1405

