

April 2020

Aging Healthfully Newsletter

Illinois Department on Aging



April is National Volunteer Month

There is no better time than now to honor all the volunteers in our communities. In the face of a global pandemic, it is truly inspiring to see how all volunteer efforts, both large and small, are making an impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Volunteers continue to rise to the challenge(s) we face to help keep older adults safe by providing balanced meals, well-being checks, and most importantly support to help them remain in their homes and communities.

Mark your Calendar for April 19th through April 25th to celebrate National Volunteer Week!

National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to celebrate and show appreciation for their service and recognize the combined power that volunteers have in building stronger communities, confronting society's greatest challenges, and being a force that inspires others to serve.

During this week, make a point to recognize and thank the volunteers in your community who lend their time, voice, and talents to making a difference in your life and the community.

Ideas to Celebrate Your Local Volunteers:

- **Present a Certificate of Appreciation to show special recognition to your volunteers** (see Certificate of Appreciation example).
- **A picture is worth more than 1000 words** – sharing a photo of volunteers in action (with the volunteers' written permission) on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or even through staff email can inspire others to volunteer and honor those that already do.
- **The impact of a video** – make a quick 30-second to 1-minute 'thank you' video with your smartphone compiling volunteers in action that you can share on social media or make a quick slideshow of photos with text and music.
- **Send a letter to the editor of your local paper** about volunteers making a difference in your community or write a hand-written thank you note to a volunteer.

[Staying Active While Practicing Social Distancing](#)

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic can make it very difficult to maintain an active lifestyle. Fitness centers have closed temporarily to help keep communities safe during the pandemic. Those most at risk (older adults and immune compromised) must practice social distancing as recommended to protect themselves, but that does not mean you can no longer exercise.

Social Distancing: avoiding public gatherings (10 or more people) and keeping a social distance of 6 feet or more to protect yourself and others from spreading the virus.

Avoiding gyms and working out at home in your neighborhood or backyard can be done safely with a few modifications. Here are some examples:

- Put on some music and walk briskly around your home or down a hall for 10-15 minutes 2-3 times a day.
- Do an exercise video or two (see workout video resources below)!
- Walk or jog (if your doctor approves) around your neighborhood while maintaining at least a 6 feet distance from others.
- Perform yoga – deep breaths and mindfulness, which can help reduce anxiety.
- Do wall push-ups or sit-to-standing squats from a sturdy chair or while holding on to a countertop.

Workout Video Resources:

- National Institute on Aging at the National Institute of Health
<https://go4life.nia.nih.gov/workout-videos/>
- National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD)
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwMOBYmlSHaPIArTOC4JBZfeuU7LN7KVJ&fbclid=IwAR0ZlaoYy0xY5cz10f6kBralBvshMdU5GqzEPwSirD7SVVFBeiuK4kwSpZAA>
- Silver Sneakers 4 Simple At-Home Exercises With Videos
<https://www.silversneakers.com/blog/daily-exercises-older-adults/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/older_adults/index.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fphysicalactivity%2Feveryone%2Fguidelines%2Folderadults.html

Attachments:

- Certificate of Appreciation Example
- Staying Active During Coronavirus Pandemic
- **Recipes:** Quick Crab or Tuna Salad Melts; Italian Orzo Soup

References:

<https://www.few.org/national-volunteer-month/>
<https://www.pointsoflight.org/nvw/>
<https://www.ncoa.org/blog/encouraging-older-adults-to-stay-active-and-safe-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>



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<https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/CommunityServices/nutrition/Pages/nutrition.aspx>