



THE UNIVERSITY *of* NORTH TEXAS
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER *at* FORT WORTH

CENTER FOR GERIATRICS

COVID-19 Special Edition: *Weekly Updates & Resources | May 7, 2020*

Please note: We will be transitioning to a monthly COVID-19 newsletter, but we will continue to share important information as it becomes available.



THE HISTORY OF OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthday. Many were living in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. There were few places where a senior with age-related health issues could live with independence, dignity and purpose. Interest in older Americans and their concerns were growing and in April 1963 a meeting between President John F. Kennedy and members of the National Council of Senior Citizens led to designating May as “Senior Citizens Month,” the prelude to “Older Americans Month.”

Historically, Older Americans Month has been a time to acknowledge the contributions of older adults to our country. Every President since Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation designating May as Older Americans Month and asking the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older adults in their community. The 2020 theme, *Make Your Mark* was chosen to encourage and celebrate the many contributions that older adults make to our communities, utilizing their time, experience, and talents every day.

SAFE WAYS TO CELEBRATE

Looking for creative ways to celebrate upcoming special events, such as Mother's Day, Graduation, Memorial Day, and Father's Day? Here are some fun (and safe!) ideas to recognize our loved ones and keep the party going!

- **Support each other's hobbies or cultivate new ones with family and friends.**
- **Host a virtual party where everyone makes the same meal.**
- **Record a video tribute and post to social media.**
- **Postpone the celebration and start planning together instead.**
- **Have a meal delivered to someone you love - make it a surprise!**

Visit https://dailycaring.com/coronavirus-mothers-day-celebrate-safely-with-thoughtful-activity-and-gift-ideas/?utm_source=DailyCaring&utm_campaign=e8e3da8f77-DC_Email_2020-05-05&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_57c250b62e-e8e3da8f77-123497770 for more activity and gift ideas you can use during the coronavirus season.

CO-EXISTING WITH COVID-19

Guidelines to follow as we return to 'normal'.

Under state government direction, plans are being coordinated to loosen COVID-19 restrictions and slowly reopen communities and businesses. The pandemic situation continues to evolve, and it is still critical to stay updated and get accurate information in this changing environment. For older adults and people with chronic conditions it is important to continue to minimize exposure.

The CDC continues to recommend the following guidelines for older adults:

- **Stay home as much as possible.**
- **In public settings, wear a face covering and maintain local distancing measures.**
- **When wearing a face mask, make sure it covers your nose and mouth completely.**
- **Wash hands frequently.**

For the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 precautions, check the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov.

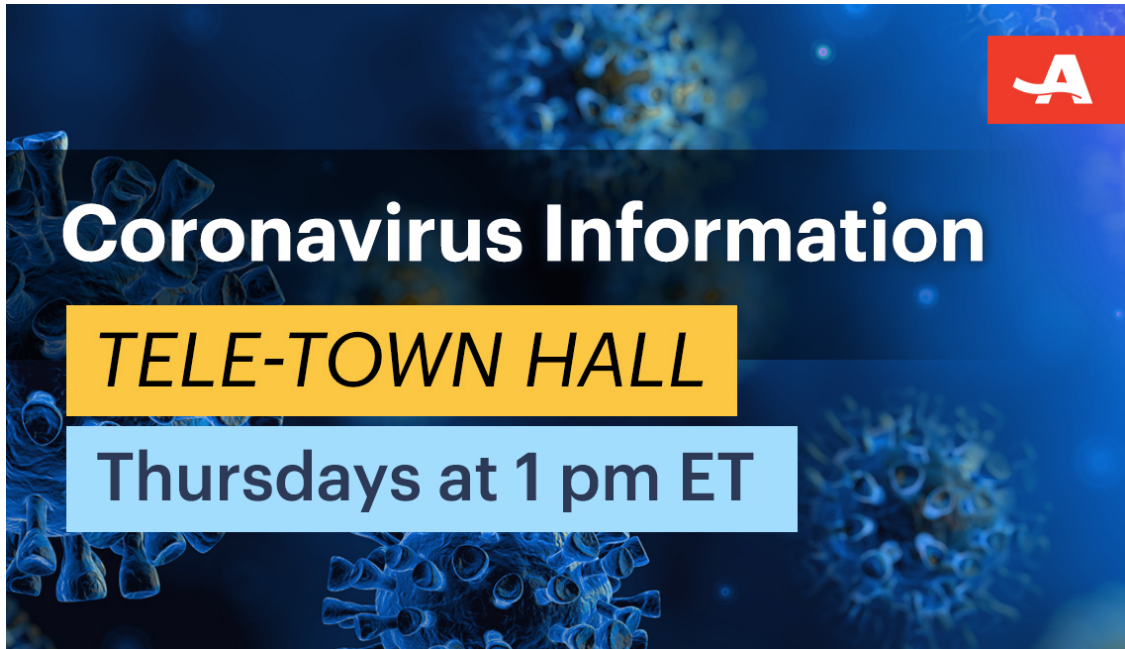
HEALTH MAINTENANCE DURING A PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 impact on communities and individuals across our nation can cause significant stress and grief. Routines are disrupted during a crisis, especially with postponed appointments and closures of healthcare services. While it can be a challenge to manage chronic conditions under these circumstances, it is important to monitor and manage your symptoms to maintain quality of life, and avoid injury, illness, hospitalization, or disability.

To continue monitoring the safety and health of older adults with chronic conditions, [HSC Center for Geriatrics](#) encourages other health care practices for older adults:

- **Maintain routine preventative care visits with your primary provider** through telehealth options or home visits, if available. Discuss changes to your lifestyle that require different ways of carrying out a treatment plan.
- **Keep vaccinations on schedule** to reduce the risk of getting diseases, like the flu, pneumonia, or shingles, that vaccines can prevent. Visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines for the recommended vaccination schedule for adults age 65+. Talk with your healthcare provider about what is recommended for you.
- **Monitor, record and report changes or safety concerns to your provider.** Pay attention to any changes to your mood or emotions and changes to other lifestyle patterns, such as sleeping or eating (either less or more than usual). If you've fallen or almost fell, share this with your provider. While these changes may seem minor to you, they may have clinical implications that a healthcare provider can help address.
- **Discuss plans for end-of-life care** with your healthcare provider to make sure your preferences are clearly outlined and documented. Having an end-of-life plan helps healthcare providers during a life-threatening emergency so that they can carry out treatment based on what matter most to a patient. Your health care provider can help you understand and complete advance directive documents, healthcare proxies, and end-of-life treatment options.

TELE-TOWN HALLS & WEBINARS



Join us for 2 Tele-Town Halls on Thursday, May 7th

1 p.m. (ET) – **Coronavirus: Protecting Your Health & Bank Account**

Experts will answer your questions and address the federal government's actions related to the physical and economic health of older Americans, and how we can continue to protect ourselves and loved ones from the virus as we go about our daily lives. Find out what you should know about accessing emergency services during the outbreak, and how to spot and avoid scams that have been feeding off the pandemic.

7 p.m. (ET) – *Coronavirus: Managing Your Career, Business & Income*

Experts will answer your questions and address how the federal government's actions are affecting older adults' wallets, including economic stimulus payments, unemployment benefits, and resources for small businesses. Find out how to navigate the current job market or prepare for your next career move during this uncertain economic time. Learn how to tap into resources that are available through the CARES Act and manage their personal finances and income during the pandemic.

Call toll-free 855-274-9507 to ask a question and listen to the live event each Thursday. For the latest coronavirus news and advice, [go to AARP.org/coronavirus](https://www.aarp.org/coronavirus).



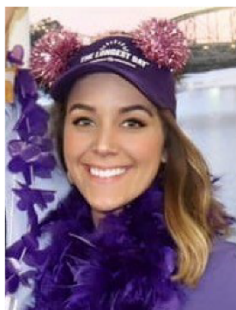
North Central Texas Chapter **VIRTUAL PROGRAMS**

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES May 2020

Dementia Misconstrued as Mental Illness **Presented by Sandra Davis, MD**

May 12, 10 am, [Register Here](#)

Join Dr. Sandra Davis to learn how dementia and mental illness can be intertwined. Dr. Davis has practiced psychiatry in Fort Worth for 20 years. She has particular interest in depression and its association with mild cognitive impairment and will be doing further research in this area at the UNT Health Science Center.



#ENDALZ Through Advocacy **Presented by Sydney Thomas, MPA**

May 19, 10 am, [Register Here](#)

Alzheimer's disease is one of the most critical public health issues in America. Join Public Policy Coordinator Sydney Thomas to learn about legislative priorities for 2020, especially those addressing the pandemic and how it affects our community.

Sleep Health **Presented by Michael Scullin, PhD**

May 26, 10 am, [Register Here](#)

Join Dr. Michael Scullin to learn why everyone needs sleep, how sleep is especially critical for brain health, and how to improve sleep health. Dr. Scullin is an Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Baylor University. He has been awarded grants from the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and private foundations.



View all available programs on our [Community Resource Finder](#)



For more information or to register by phone, please call our

24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900

If registering for a session starting in less than 24 hours, please call to register by phone.