



One foot in front of the other

Most people view running as the best way to engage in cardiovascular activity, but did you know that walking has the same benefits with hardly any of the risk for injury? More and more health care professionals and physical therapists recommend walking versus running as a healthy way to stay active throughout one's life.

At Touchmark, there are many opportunities for walking. All communities have Touchmark Trekkers, a walking club with varying routes and outings appropriate for different seasons and abilities. Indoor walking paths get you moving without having to brave the elements, and you're likely to run into familiar faces as you do so. Outdoor courses provide the opportunity to engage with nature and enjoy the fresh air. Some of the key benefits of regular walking include:

Improved circulation

Walking gets the blood pumping, which lowers blood pressure over time and strengthens the heart muscles, reducing the risk of heart disease.

Increased bone density

One of the lesser known benefits of walking is its effect on stopping and reversing bone density

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loss. A Brigham and Women's Hospital (Boston) study of postmenopausal women found that 30 minutes of walking each day reduced their risk of hip fractures by 40 percent.

More socialization



Unlike running, it's easy to hold a conversation while walking. Taking a walk with a friend or group of

people is a great way to tend to both your physical and mental health.

Release of endorphins

If you're in a lousy mood, research shows going for a walk outdoors is sure to turn it around. Walking releases endorphins: the body's natural painkillers and mood elevators.

Resident Joanne McCann is an avid fan of walking. "I like to be out and active. All my life, I've done it. It's easy to do, and I feel good when I do it. I go different places and I get to see different things. I walk on the Centennial Trail with the Touchmark Trekkers. I actually like to walk outdoors best, but in the winter, I walk indoors," she says.

For those seeking adventure, check with your Health & Fitness or Life Enrichment/Wellness team members about upcoming Trekkers outings.



"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks."

– John Muir



**NANETTE
WHITMAN-HOLMES**
Life Enrichment/
Wellness Director

April is a special month for considering the natural world and our connection to it. Earth Day happens in April, and it may be the first month of the new year that brings enough sunshine and thawing to begin spending more time outdoors again.

In keeping with this year's theme of contemplating life's greater meanings, I've been thinking about the many gifts nature presents, and several come to mind. Forget for a moment the idea of going out to exercise, and instead take a step outside to experience what it feels like to simply stand in a lush green area. Do you hear the sounds of birds and insects? Can you feel the warmth of the sun on your face as you turn it up to the sky with your eyes closed? Even spending a few moments outdoors brings peace.

There is joy in taking our cues from nature. Seasons do not change overnight; they transition over time. If you feel your body needs time to catch up with the mind, listen to it. Start increasing your time outdoors and in the benefits of nature by taking a 10-minute walk with a friend or reading a chapter of your book outside. Focus on how nice it is to pause and inhale fresh air rather than rushing to your next destination.

Do not be surprised if you feel compelled to spend more and more time outdoors, and don't underestimate how doing so strengthens your mind-body connection. Mother Nature is the friend who is always happy to hear your thoughts.

Health & Fitness Studio

Kevin Tibbetts is our new Fitness Instructor and he will be updating assessments and meeting people at Touchmark over the next few months! Be sure to stop by the office on the third floor and say hello while giving him your ideas and feedback. Kevin is from Havre, Montana, and enjoys exercising and outdoor sports.



What others are saying ...

"My favorite thing about Touchmark is the great staff. Everything falls into place because of the staff."

- Lee Anderson, resident

Celebrating the solstice with purpose



Millions of people worldwide are living with Alzheimer's or other age-related dementia. Touchmark is committed to supporting them, their families, and caregivers. Each year, every Touchmark community participates in the Alzheimer's Association's The Longest Day fundraising efforts. The Longest Day falls on the summer solstice, the day of the year with the most light to symbolize overcoming the darkness of the disease.

This is a fun and meaningful day due to its creative nature. Teams engage in a variety of activities to bring awareness and raise money for care and research. For example last year, Touchmark teams hosted a

wide range of events, including a 5K fun run culminating in an explosion of color, a pickleball tournament, karaoke, NuStep Challenges, and more.

Check the {FULL} Life calendar on the back page for 2019 Longest Day events and learn how your participation can make a difference at Touchmark and beyond.

**TOGETHER, THE STRENGTH OF OUR LIGHT
WILL OUTSHINE THE DARKNESS OF ALZHEIMER'S.**



TEAM MEMBER

Spotlight

Name: Nancy Yager

Position: Retirement Counselor

How would you describe yourself? A quiet soul who loves family time, sunshine, working out, my faith, and helping people. Currently my world is being a grandma: I love my granddaughters to the moon and back. They make me laugh, cry, and feel young.

Share a bit about your family and growing up. I grew up in eastern Montana in a small farming community. I have one brother and two sisters. Three of us live in Helena and all are quite close. I married my high school sweetheart and we have now been married for 38 years. We have one daughter. My husband Dennis and I enjoy our home, the outdoors, camping, and family time.

What are some of the most significant events in your life? Being healthy, happily married, being a mom and grandma, and seeing my family happy and content.

How long have you worked at Touchmark?
Going on nine years.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The residents make my day in so many ways. I love hearing their stories and being a part of their world.

What Touchmark value do you most closely relate to and why? I am an Ally, because being a compassionate listener is a strength of mine. I have always lived with compassion and integrity, as it was part of my upbringing. I also relate to being enthusiastic about my team members' success. Being part of a small town basketball team, I learned about teamwork, winning and losing, and celebrating the whole team's successes.

Outside of work what are your favorite ...

Activities: I enjoy working out, camping, and family time.

Food: I love all food but my favorites are chocolate and my mother's homemade bread! Another reason I love to work out.

Movie: I am not much of a moviegoer or music-lover so really don't have a favorite, but my new pastime is trying to master sudoku puzzles!



Communitywide events included a Mediterranean Winetasting and Dinner, a cocktail social, birthday month celebration, a visit from Intermountain Pet Therapy, Men's Lunch, and a fun spring craft.

SAVE THE DATE!

CELEBRATING RETIRED TEACHERS AND NURSES

Tuesday, May 7 at 2 pm • Forum

Enjoy angel food cake, strawberries with whipped cream, and gourmet coffee while we honor former nurses and teachers for their wonderful contributions. RSVP to the front desk.

MOTHER'S DAY AFTERNOON SOIREE

Friday, May 10 at 2 pm • Four Seasons Dining Room

The theme this year is *big* hats! Enjoy sweets and treats, tea sandwiches, and photo-ops. Cost: \$5/person. RSVP to the front desk.

MEN'S LUNCH LEAGUE

Wednesday, May 22 at 11:30 am • Forum

Join us for a talk by Mayor Wilmot Collins, a Liberian-born American and the current mayor of Helena. Learn how his journey has shaped him and why he ran for office. No cost. RSVP to the front desk.

UNSTYLED STYLE SHOW

Friday, May 31 at 2 pm • Four Seasons Dining Room

Join us for pie, coffee, and a good time. Accessories and clothing from local thrift stores will be modeled on the runway during this event. Cost: \$5/person. RSVP to the front desk.

FATHER/DAUGHTER DINNER & DANCE

Thursday, June 13 at 5 pm • Forum

This event honors dads and the girls they've raised. Enjoy the great food and music on this special evening. No cost. RSVP to the front desk.

CECIL THE MAGICIAN

Friday, June 14 at 2 pm • Forum

Cecil has been delighting audiences across the Northwest for the past 25 years. As a magician and illusionist, he will leave you spellbound. Invite your kids and grandkids to come and enjoy the show!

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION'S THE LONGEST DAY

Friday, June 21 • All day

Join us for events scheduled from sunup to sundown, including a sunrise nature walk, blueberry pancake brunch, crafts, games, outings, and an evening ice cream social in the garden with live music.

View our {FULL} Life calendar online for a complete list of events: TouchmarkHelena.com

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