

# WELCOME TO YOUR AVENIDA LIFE

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## **Pursuing A Healthier Mind Through Diet, Exercise, and Activities**

June is Seniors' Month: a time to recognize and thank the older members of our communities who have shaped the past and continue to influence the future. It is also a time to reflect on the challenges and opportunities we face in our senior years, including maintaining brain health. Based on numerous scientific studies, we have learned that there is a clear connection between a healthy mind and being active.

Lifestyle changes can have a dramatic and positive effect on brain health and overall health. The loss of concentration, clear thinking, and recall of facts is an all too common problem for older Americans. This is called mild cognitive impairment (MCI), which is a slight but noticeable decline in cognitive abilities.

While a significant percentage of older Americans will experience some level of MCI, exercise and activity can help to lessen its effects. A study published in the journal *Neurology* shows that a group of older adults with MCI saw substantial improvements in recall and thinking skills after six months of aerobic exercise and modified diet.

Let's look at some ways to pursue a healthy mind through diet, exercise, and activities.

### **Exercise and Proper Diet for a Healthier Older Mind**

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, less than 40% of adults 65 and older engage in the federal guideline of at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week; further, 20% do not even engage in any type of formal exercise.

Walking is a wonderful start, so aim to move about for thirty minutes on most days. You can also engage in safe activities designed to improve balance and reduce falls. It's also a good idea to diversify by engaging in aerobic exercises designed for older Americans with clearance from your physician. Besides supporting improved cognitive and brain function, exercise improves strength, energy, balance, mood, motor function (your level of control over your movements), and sensory function (your level of response to touch sensation). A healthy diet goes hand-in-hand with a healthy mind and body by reducing the risk of many chronic diseases, such as heart disease or diabetes, while also supporting brain health.

While proper exercise and diet set the stage for a healthier older mind, incorporating them into activities can be the best way to get the most benefit while you increase your enjoyment of life.

### **Engaging in Activities That Strengthen the Mind**

Many people have expressed the same fears about growing older: loneliness, boredom, and mental decline. But aging can be a positive and fulfilling stage of life filled with fun activities that keep you mentally sharp and in a great mood.

People who engage in meaningful activities, like volunteering or hobbies, say they feel happier and healthier. Learning new skills, engaging in activities like book club participation, and taking classes in something that interests you all involve physical activity and can keep your mind active.

It is the desire of everyone to have a sound and healthy mind as they age. Applying the practices discussed here can set you on the right track to a healthier older mind and happier outlook in what can be a great stage of life.





The following programs will be held outside, in the Courtyard area, weather permitting:

**Mondays - 3:00 PM - Ladder Toss**

**Tuesdays - 10:30 AM - Balance & Stability**

*\*if there is rain, we will meet in the hallway*

**Wednesdays - 9:30 AM - Chair Yoga**

**3:30 PM - Corn Hole**

**Thursdays - 10:30 AM - Stretch & Walk**

*\*if there is rain, we will meet in the hallway and then walk the building*

**Fridays - 3:30 PM - Happy Hour**

**(please bring a chair with you)**

**Please dress for the weather, bring a water bottle, and wear a mask. Check your email for updates.**



### 3 Practices to Shake Up Your Routine

When we get stuck on autopilot, we lose touch with actual experience — which can always be interesting if we bring our curiosity to it. For a moment, stop thinking and drop into your senses instead. By helping us shift our state of mind from thinking to sensing, these practices invite us to rediscover interest, beyond our expectations.

#### 3 Practices to Shift out of Autopilot

Linger on each step for at least three minutes. Once you've got the hang of dropping into each sense in turn, try opening to all of the senses together at moments of so-called boredom in life.

##### 1. See with new eyes

Take a familiar object from your home (such as a mug you've owned for years, an old photograph, a piece of clothing, or furniture) and examine it as if you've never seen it before. Let your thoughts about the object drop into the background as you offer it your full attention.

##### 2. Notice how objects feel

Now, take a different object and this time offer attention to its texture, touching it as if for the first time. Or you could choose to work with an inner feeling, directing awareness to a part of your body, noticing what sensations (if any) are present.

##### 3. Try hearing, smelling, and tasting anew

Now, take your attention in turn to three everyday objects in your environment that you can hear, smell, or taste (for example, the ticking of a clock, a flower, a piece of fruit).

#### Effort

Linger on each step for at least three minutes daily.

*Ed Halliwell - Mindful.org*

### Easy Summer Sangria

#### Ingredients:

16 oz frozen mixed fruit (ex: peaches, strawberries, pineapples), plus extra for "ice"

2/3 cup sugar

3/4 cup warm water

1 cup satsuma rum

12 oz. chilled sprite

1 bottle chardonnay or pinot noir, chilled

#### Instructions:

Fill pitcher or container with frozen fruit. In a small bowl, stir sugar and warm water. Add to pitcher. Add in rum, sprite, and chardonnay. Stir to combine well. Refrigerate until ready to serve.