

# Connections

A Newsletter for the Members of Community Care



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for Our Infection  
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WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE  
OF INFECTION AND  
PREVENTION CONTROL FOR  
SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS  
WITH DISABILITIES?

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# 5 Questions For...

**Peggy Eckart,** *Community Care's Infection Prevention-Control Coordinator*

**1 Will you describe what you do as Community Care's infection prevention-control coordinator?**

I teach Community Care team members about infection prevention issues and priorities. I track infectious diseases in our population with the help of state and local public health agencies. We use this information to keep our members and employees safe from infectious disease. For example, every year I work to make sure everyone gets a flu vaccine.

**2 Can you explain the importance of infection and prevention control for seniors and individuals with disabilities?**

As we get older, our immune systems do not fight infections like when we were young. Seniors and people with disabilities may have other health conditions that weaken their immune systems. This makes it easier to get infections. This is why seniors and people with disabilities should be up to date with their vaccinations. They also need to wash their hands and cover their coughs properly, especially if they live

in a group setting.

**3 What do you want members to know about infection and prevention control, especially in light of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?**

Infection control is important when responding to pandemics like COVID-19. I have been part of Wisconsin Emergency Preparedness planning since September 11, 2001. This planning brings together health care workers; first responders like police and fire; local and state public health agencies; and business leaders.

Together we plan how to handle a pandemic like COVID-19. We learn how to work together to respond to the spread of illness. We also share equipment and supplies between organizations. At Community Care, I coordinate the information we get from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local public health agencies and share it with employees so we can take care of our members. During a pandemic, this information changes rapidly as we learn new things about this particular virus.

**4 What other ways do members benefit from your work?**

Whenever we get new health recommendations, I share that information with team members so they can promote it to our members. An example is the new Shingles vaccine available for seniors.

**5 What are Community Care's goals for infection and prevention control?**

We want to make sure our members are safe and healthy and we want to support our team members so they can provide excellent care.

## *A Message From Kenneth Munson,* **Community Care CEO**

Dear members,

As I write this, we are in the middle of the "safer at home" order our governor issued toward the end of March.

This is unlike anything we have ever experienced. We have all had to adjust to a new way of life after the coronavirus outbreak.

We hope you find the information in this issue of the Connections newsletter helpful as you adjust to the current situation.

The coronavirus pandemic has forced our Community Care staff to do things differently. I know how hard this must be for everyone.

The connections made between our staff and the members they serve are so very important. We do not take this for granted. I want to thank you all for your patience and understanding during this time.

As we all know, in time this will pass and we will regain some level of normalcy. While we all look forward to that time, please take care of yourselves.

Kenneth Munson,  
Chief Executive Officer



# Fraud Surrounding COVID-19

Here's what you  
can do to help  
protect yourself

*is On the Rise*

As the COVID-19 pandemic grows, so do the scams associated with it. Scammers use public health emergencies as opportunities for new fraud schemes. Because older adults are at greater risk for serious illness from this virus, they are at increased risk of being targets.

During this medical crisis facing our nation, it is important to have the facts surrounding COVID-19, to be aware of the potential for scams, and to know what you can do to protect yourself.

Currently there is no FDA-approved vaccine for COVID-19 and although there may be treatments for symptoms, there is no "cure". However, scammers often use fear-based tactics to convince people that a vaccine or cure is now being offered.

## Key Points

- Beware of anyone contacting you in person, on the computer or by phone, claiming to have a cure or vaccine.
- Do not give your Medicare number, Social Security number, or any personal information in response to unsolicited calls, text, email, or home visits.
- Be suspicious of anyone offering anything related to COVID-19 such as testing kits, any supplies, or treatments.
- Don't succumb to fear-based tactics of scammers. Cut off those who make you afraid and contact familiar sources instead.
- Remember that although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health officials may contact you, they will not ask for your insurance number or financial information.

## Additional Information What Does Medicare Cover in Relation to COVID-19?

- Medicare Part B covers COVID-19 tests when ordered by your doctor or health care provider on or after February 4, 2020.
- Medicare covers all medically necessary hospitalizations, including extra days in the hospital for patients who had to stay longer under COVID-19 quarantine.
- There is no vaccine for COVID-19 at this time; however, if one becomes available, Medicare Part D will cover it.
- Medicare also recently expanded coverage of telehealth services to enable beneficiaries to access a wider range of services from their provider without having to travel to a facility.
- This includes access to doctors, nurse practitioners, clinical psychologists,

and licensed clinical social workers.

- During this emergency, there are also more options for the ways your provider can talk with you under this provision.

## What You Can Do

- Contact your own doctor if you are experiencing potential symptoms of COVID-19.
- Carefully review your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) looking for errors or claims for products or services that weren't received.
- Follow the instructions currently outlined by the CDC, the governor, and your living complex.
- Be prepared to take further action if instructed in response to COVID-19.

Source: Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.



# Tai Chi

## A smooth, quieter exercise

Paulette Butler looks forward to the days she spends at Community Care's Vliet Street adult day center. The people are nice. The food is good. While her favorite activity is art, she really looks forward to the time she spends exercising.

This is not your typical exercise class. The pace is slower. There's no sweating. As physical activities go, tai chi is low impact. This all helps to make this form of exercise appealing to members like Paulette, who has been visiting the PACE day center for about 15 years.

*"It's just a smooth, quieter exercise than what most exercise classes are and I like that."*

"I like it because I can do it either sitting or standing, because I can't stand yet because of my balance," Paulette said. "It's just a smooth, quieter exercise than what most exercise classes are and I like that."

Tai chi is an ancient form of exercise that originated in China. While it has been popular in China for generations, it has taken awhile to catch on in the U.S. But now, researchers are studying the effects of tai chi on individuals with chronic health conditions.

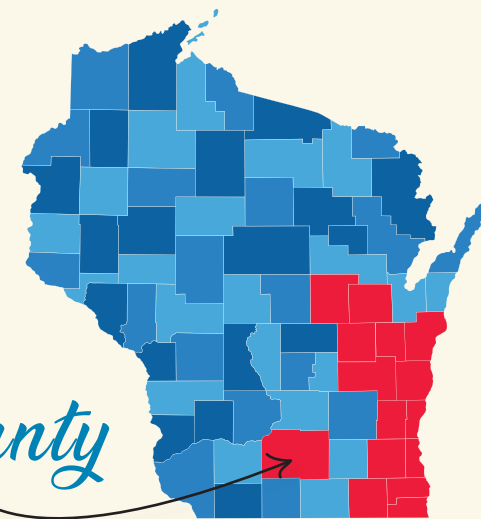
Tai chi has shown benefits in improving health-related fitness, muscle strength, fall prevention,

and flexibility. All styles of tai chi consist of slow, gentle and flowing movements that involve strengthening, balance, posture, concentration, relaxation, and breath control.

Kevin Konieczka, a PACE rehab therapy supervisor, inherited the program when he joined Community Care. With a background as a personal trainer, Kevin quickly discovered the benefits this form of exercise provided to participants at the day center.

"You don't have to be super fit to do this. This is really geared toward the senior population," Kevin said. "It helps keep the mind sharp or make new connections."

## Community Care to offer Family Care in Dane County



Community Care will begin providing Family Care services in Dane County as early as May.

Community Care currently contracts with the state to deliver the Family Care program to more than 10,000 Wisconsin residents in 14 counties

including Calumet, Fond du Lac, Kenosha, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca, and Winnebago.

"Community Care's expansion into Dane County allows us to further our mission to provide high-quality care to help individuals remain in the community," said Kenneth Munson, chief executive

officer. "We are grateful to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for the opportunity to deliver Family Care services helping older adults and adults

*"...allows us to further our mission..."*

with disabilities to live as independently as possible."

For more than 40 years, Community Care has been helping adults with long-term care needs connect with the services they need to remain in their own homes and foster independence.

Community Care is the only Wisconsin managed care organization to offer all three programs of Family Care, Family Care Partnership and Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).

## Nothing Beats a Little Fresh Air

It is spring. The coronavirus might keep you from doing some things, but it doesn't have to keep you from going outdoors. Take a step outside or at the very least crack a window and enjoy some of the physical, emotional and spiritual benefits of fresh air.

**1 Fresh air cleans out your lungs.** Breathe in. Breathe out. Breath in. Breathe out. Take time each day and pay attention to your breathing. This can help relieve stress, prepare you for the day, and help you get a good night's sleep.

**2 Fresh air makes you happy.** Whether you have had a bad day, week, or month, fresh air has the power to turn things around. Go outside and take some deep breaths, it can help settle you down and increase your peace.

# HEALTHY EATING *Begins with You*

Giving your body the right nutrients and maintaining a healthy weight can help you stay active and independent. You will also spend less time and money at the doctor. This is especially true if you have a chronic condition, such as diabetes or heart disease.

The definition of healthy eating does change a little as you age. For example, as you grow older, your metabolism slows down, so you need fewer calories than before. Your body also needs more of certain nutrients. That means it is more important than ever to choose foods that give you the best nutritional value.

Here are some tips on how to find the best foods for your body and your budget.

## **1** Know what a healthy plate looks like.

You might remember the food pyramid, but the USDA recently unveiled a simpler way to help people see what they should eat each day. It's called MyPlate. The simple graphic shows exactly how the five food groups should stack up on your plate. These are the building blocks for a healthy diet.

## **2** Eat important nutrients.

Make sure you eat a variety of foods to get all the

nutrients you need. Your plate should look like a rainbow—bright, colored foods are always the best choice! A healthy meal should include:

- Lean protein (lean meats, seafood, eggs, beans)
- Fruits and vegetables (think orange, red, green, and purple)
- Whole grains (brown rice, whole wheat pasta)
- Low-fat dairy (milk and its alternatives)

Remember to choose foods that are high in fiber and low in sodium or salt. Also, look for Vitamin D, an important mineral as we age.

## **3** Read the Nutrition Facts label.

The healthiest foods are whole foods. These are often found on the perimeter of the grocery store in the produce, meat, and dairy sections. When you do eat packaged foods, be a smart shopper! Read the labels to find items that are lower in fat, added sugars, and sodium.

## **4** Use recommended servings.

To maintain your weight, you must eat the right amount of food for your age and body. The American Heart Association provides recommended daily servings for adults aged 60+.

## **5** Stay hydrated.

Water is an important nutrient too! Don't let yourself get dehydrated—drink small amounts of fluids consistently throughout the day. Tea, coffee, and water are your best choices. Keep fluids with sugar and salt at a minimum, unless your doctor has suggested otherwise.

## **6** Stretch your food budget.

Want to get the biggest nutritional bang for your buck? The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) can help you afford healthy food when you need it. Over 4 million older Americans use SNAP to buy food, and the average senior receives \$113 each month. Visit [BenefitsCheckUp.org/getSNAP](https://www.benefitscheckup.org/getSNAP) to see if the program can help you.

Source: National Council on Aging

*Continued  
from Page 7:  
Nothing Beats a  
Little Fresh Air*

**3** Fresh air helps you focus. A little fresh air can help you focus on the task at hand and ignore any distractions.

**4** Fresh air is free. Some people need a cup of coffee or some sugar to get going in the morning. Save your money. Fresh air doesn't cost a thing.

**5** Fresh air gives you energy. Fresh air and sunlight are two of the most important forms of a positive energy. It can help you get through the day, but also helps relax you so you can wind down at the end of the day.

If you are trying to improve your health and well-being, now that the weather is getting nicer, try to get outside every day and get your daily dose of fresh air.



# Staying Home

## During the Coronavirus

The government has told us to stay at home because of coronavirus. Coronavirus is also called COVID-19. Coronavirus is making a lot of people sick. It is very important to keep yourself and others safe. Coronavirus can spread easily between people

- when someone coughs or sneezes
- by touching something with the virus on it

Some people get very sick and can die if they get coronavirus. Some people do not get sick but can give coronavirus to other people. It is everyone's job to stop the virus.

### Being Healthy at Home

There are lots of ways to stay healthy while you are at home.

- Be active

- Dance
- Stretch
- Do exercise
- Walk around your garden

### Stay Connected

It is important to keep in touch with family and friends. Use your mobile phone or computer to stay in touch.

### Do Things You Enjoy

- Do something you love or try something new.
- A hobby like drawing or gardening
- Cooking your favorite food
- Playing games with your family or housemates

### Think About Good Things

Take time to think about

things that make you happy. If you feel sad or scared let someone know.

### Sleep Well

Good sleep helps your body and mind. Some things you can do to help you sleep are

- Take a shower or bath before bed
- Listen to calm music
- Try not to use your mobile phone late at night

### If You Feel Sick

If you are sick with a cough, fever or sore throat

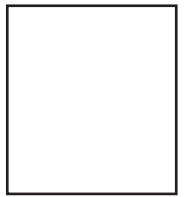
- Call your doctor and they will tell you what to do
- Do not leave your home
- Try to stay away from the people you live with

Source: Council for Intellectual Disability





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