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*Inspiring*  
GENERATIONS



Arwen Rasmussen, 715.831.0325  
editor@secondopinionmagazine.com

Graphic Design: Brigit Olson | Editor: Becky Streeter

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## Fun Facts Pumpkins!





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## Fun Facts Apples!

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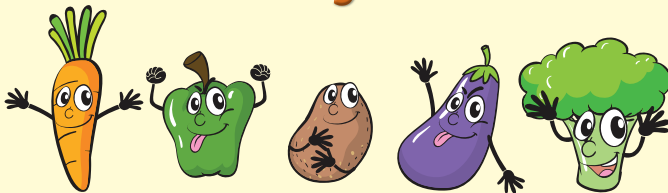


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All of these great companies share the same philosophy that we do at *Second Opinion* by being organic, or mostly organic. Visit their websites to see all the other products they offer!

# Back to School Goodies



## CHUM

### Fruit Bites

Their 100% fruit bites are perfect for moms and kids and back-to-school! They pick fresh fruits in season, bake them slowly down to retain all the goodness of nature, and then shape them into your favourite fruit bites. They give back 15% of profits to WILDAID.org to help protect the Chums – the beautiful endangered species featured as the brand heroes on their packs. [chumbites.com](http://chumbites.com)



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## UNIQUE SNACKS

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## TRUVANI

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## HARKEN SWEETS

### Candy Bars

Put these sweet treats in their lunchbox! These reimagined chocolate candy bars are made from a beloved ingredient: dates! They're better for you with no added sugar, but still carry that nostalgic candy bar taste and feel. They use fair trade chocolate and are women founded. You can find them locally at Walmart at the checkout and in HyVee stores. [harkensweets.com](http://harkensweets.com)



## FRUIT FOR THOUGHT

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# Backpack Safety

By Dr. Abby Bachmeier, Smith & Prissel Chiropractic and Massage

**B**ackpack safety is critical to maintaining healthy posture and preventing injuries, particularly among students who carry heavy loads daily. With the increasing use of laptops, textbooks, and other educational materials, a backpack's weight can easily surpass recommended limits, leading to a range of musculoskeletal problems. To ensure backpack safety, it's essential to focus on the backpack's weight, proper fitting, and how it is worn.

First and foremost, the weight of the backpack is a primary concern. It is recommended that a backpack should be less than 10-15% of the carrier's body weight. For instance, students weighing 100 pounds should carry at most 10-15 pounds in their backpacks. Overloading a backpack can cause strain on the shoulders, neck, and back, potentially leading to chronic pain and posture issues over time. Parents and students should routinely check the contents of the backpack and remove any unnecessary items to keep the weight within the recommended range. Using a bathroom scale is easy to ensure the backpack remains within safe limits.

Proper fitting is another crucial element of backpack safety. A well-fitted backpack should have wide, padded shoulder straps that distribute the weight evenly across the shoulders.

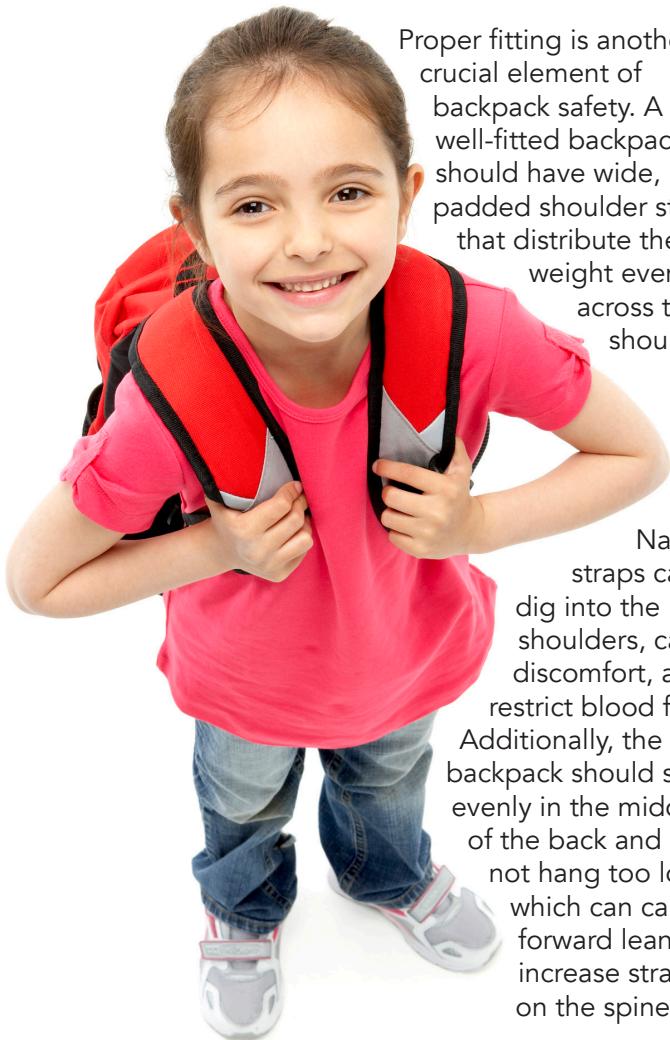
Narrow straps can dig into the shoulders, cause discomfort, and restrict blood flow. Additionally, the backpack should sit evenly in the middle of the back and not hang too low, which can cause a forward lean and increase strain on the spine.

Adjustable straps are beneficial as they allow the user to customize the fit to their body size. It is also helpful to look for backpacks with a padded back and waist or chest straps, which can further distribute the weight and minimize the risk of injury.

Wearing the backpack correctly is equally important. Both shoulder straps should be used to avoid uneven weight distribution, which can lead to muscle strain and imbalance. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder might seem convenient, but it places all the weight on one side of the body, leading to potential spine misalignment and other musculoskeletal issues. A backpack should be lifted with the knees bent, similar to lifting any heavy object, to avoid back strain. Encouraging students to use the locker or desk storage space to offload heavy items throughout the day can also reduce the burden on their backs. Parents should ask their children if they are experiencing any pain or discomfort. If the child is in discomfort, assist in repositioning items in their bag, adjusting straps, or considering a different backpack.

Rolling backpacks can be an alternative for those who need to carry heavier loads. Unfortunately, they can pose tripping hazards and may not be suitable for all school environments, particularly those with stairs. Other backpack considerations include using reflective tape for children walking or riding a bike to school and purchasing backpacks made of quality materials to protect against water and zipper damage.

Proper backpack usage can help decrease unnecessary loads on children's growing musculoskeletal systems and encourage healthier and more enthusiastic students.





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# Back to School Happy Dance

By Sandra Anderson RM., KT., LUT, Life & Soul Coach Intentions ~ Life and Soul Coach Integrative Energetic Healer Spiritual Guide, Speaker

Our happiness and well-being are learned. Raising happy kids is certainly not easy in this fast-paced, tech-filled world we now live in. Most parents or grandparents, when asked what they want for their children or grandchildren's lives, respond "Happiness, abundance, etc." We want this for our kids so they can have adulthoods of meaning, purpose, satisfaction and happiness.

It's back to school time, and finding that right and perfect path is the challenge. The idea of happiness, how to get it or make it, has filled decades of studies and research. Tips are plentiful, just ask Google. Fortunately, there is a road map parents can use to guide children towards emotional well-being. From all the research, "the science of happiness" has identified several habits that help make happiness a likely outcome for kids and adults.

Create healthiness and happiness. "The way to do is to be." Lao Tzu

**1. Start the day on a high note.** Gratitude feeds our soul, making us happier and healthier. Encourage everyone to share what they are grateful for, even the kid who is in the "crabby pants" stage. Challenge them to make it a game: after school, encourage them to create their own gratitude journal or wall with Post-it notes. Pick a place where you spend a lot of time like the kitchen to display them. The visual is a reminder that there are good things in life. Soon the gratitude attitude will grow.

**2. "Screens are dessert."** To have healthy and happy kids, research has shown that excessive screen time leads to an unsettledness, poor brain focus, not being grounded in the now. Think of the connection of diet and health. Is it OK to feed children cookies, soda or ice cream all the time?



Ahh...No! Let's think about screen time as dessert. Inspire them to have a healthy balance of good food, reading, and exercise, especially outside in nature.

**3. Practice kindness.** Kindness is like a muscle—it needs play time. With kindness, our happiness and quality of social connections improves. Have your kids pick a family member or friend to bake cookies for. Kids (especially the younger ones) love to be kitchen staff and will return again and again, especially if they can be the quality control sampler.

**4. Encourage creativity.** Those who spend time creating tend to be happier and less stressed. Encourage them to create their own storybook of words and pictures. Try new ideas for dinner: Silly skits with a friend, video the family's Happy Dance or song, and don't forget building forts, in bad weather (dining room tables and couches can become a work of art).

**5. Be curious.** Find something new to learn. We're happier when we are learning something new and learning to grow as people. As we learn more, we become more creative. Pick a county or favorite state to learn about and discuss. Have your kids plan a trip that includes topics of culture such as food, music or sports, and places to hike and explore.

**6. Be patient, and be persistent with the practice.** It's not about perfection. It's about progress. It's finding what makes you happy along the way. Now you can take these few tips and add your own to help create those happy and well kids and adults...get involved, have fun, enjoy the process.

Resources: Mike Ferry - [happinessandinnovation.com](http://happinessandinnovation.com). *The Australian Parenting Website*. <https://raisingchildren.net.au/> LAO TZU, *The Way of Life*, Translated by Witter Bynner, Number 47.



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# Live Great Food Truck and WILD Restaurant: Culinary Gems

Eau Claire, a vibrant city in Wisconsin, is known for its rich culture, scenic farmscapes, and a burgeoning food scene that caters to a diverse palate. Among the culinary highlights of this charming city are the well-known Live Great Food truck and their new feral kitchen in Banbury Place Building 2D in downtown Eau Claire, called WILD. Each offers unique dining experiences that have captivated all who have experienced either one!

If you haven't lived under a rock for the past few years, I am sure you've seen the undeniable bright yellow food truck, shouting from the farmers markets and beyond: WE HAVE GREAT LOCAL EATS! This mobile eatery, run by Tony and Jamie Chavez, has carved a superior niche for itself by serving high-quality, locally-sourced, and health-conscious meals. This food truck is not just about convenience, it's a testament to how street food can be delicious and nutritious.

From catering weddings, food truck days, markets, and musical events, the duo is out to serve great, local food to as many as possible.

If you know him, you know Tony is in constant go-mode, and has a new team: Tyler Thelen plus Chavez's kids, all playing their roles!

The menu, like their truck, at WILD is seasonally inspired, ensuring that only the freshest ingredients are used. This commitment to quality is evident in dishes from the hand-held pork sandwich to the sourdough pancakes—everything divine and perfectly crafted!

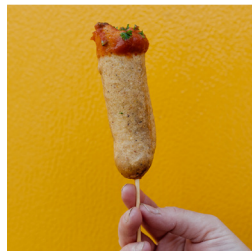


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By Second Opinion staff



# Why Buy Local?

**L**ocal grass-fed beef offers a variety of benefits, encompassing health, environmental, economic, and ethical aspects. Here are some of the key advantages:

## Health Benefits

- **Nutrient Profile:** Grass-fed beef is typically higher in certain nutrients compared to grain-fed beef. It contains more omega-3 fatty acids, which are beneficial for heart health, and higher levels of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which may help reduce body fat and improve overall health.
- **Vitamins and Minerals:** Grass-fed beef generally has higher levels of vitamins A and E, as well as antioxidants such as glutathione and superoxide dismutase, which can help protect cells from damage.
- **Lower Fat Content:** Grass-fed beef often has a lower total fat content, which can contribute to a healthier diet.

## Environmental Benefits

- **Sustainable Farming Practices:** Grass-fed cattle are usually raised on pasture, which can promote more sustainable farming practices. This includes improved soil health, better water retention, and reduced erosion.
- **Lower Carbon Footprint:** Grass-fed cattle may produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions over their lifetime compared to grain-fed cattle, especially when considering the carbon sequestration potential of well-managed pastures.
- **Biodiversity:** Grazing cattle can help maintain and promote biodiversity in pasture ecosystems, supporting various plant and animal species.

## Economic Benefits

- **Support for Local Farmers:** Purchasing local grass-fed beef supports small-scale and local farmers, contributing to the local economy and helping to preserve rural communities.
- **Job Creation:** The local farming industry can create jobs in agriculture and processing.
- **Shorter Supply Chains:** Local production means shorter supply chains, which can reduce transportation costs and the environmental impact associated with long-distance shipping.

## Ethical Benefits

- **Animal Welfare:** Grass-fed cattle are often raised in more humane conditions, with access to pasture and more natural living environments compared to those raised in confined feedlots.
- **Transparency:** Local farms often have more transparent and traceable production practices, allowing consumers to know more about how their food is produced and to make more informed choices.

## Taste and Quality

- **Flavor:** Many people find that grass-fed beef has a richer, more complex flavor compared to grain-fed beef.
- **Freshness:** Local beef is typically fresher, as it doesn't have to travel long distances to reach consumers, which can improve taste and texture.

## Community and Food Security

- **Local Food Systems:** Supporting local food systems can enhance community resilience and food security, ensuring that communities have access to a stable and reliable food supply.
- **Education and Awareness:** Engaging with local farmers and food systems can increase awareness about sustainable agriculture and the importance of supporting local food sources.

In summary, local grass-fed beef provides a range of benefits from improved health and taste to environmental sustainability and economic support for local communities.





# Maiv Flower Farm: A Blossoming Dream in Wheaton

By Pa Thao and Tommy Enright

Nestled in the Town of Wheaton, Maiv Flower Farm stands out as a hidden gem in the greater Chippewa Valley. As the only U-pick flower and vegetable farm in the area, it offers a unique and enchanting experience for visitors. With its vibrant fields and welcoming atmosphere, Maiv Flower Farm is not just a place to pick fresh blooms and produce—it's a celebration of tradition and community.

The farm is run by a mother-daughter duo, Maiv (pronounced "my") and Pa, spending time with each other through their love of gardening and being outdoors. Maiv dreamed of owning land and a farm since she started farming for market in 1997. Pa, inspired by her mother, also developed a deep love for gardening and for flowers.

"It was inspiring to see my mom continue a practice deeply rooted in Hmong agriculture in the old county of Laos, to see her utilize practices that are unconventional in mainstream agriculture, and see how to adjust and shift what she's always known in order to fit the climate of the Midwest," Pa said.

In 2022, their shared dream finally came true with the purchase of a 20-acre plot of land in the Town of Wheaton. Pa said that the gentle rolling hills were reminiscent of the landscape of Laos and ignited in her the Hmong emotional expression of "kho siab," meaning to miss something or someone, to have your heart yearn and ache for something that is distant or gone—a sense of nostalgia. "As 'kho siab' as Maiv Flower Farm is, it is also simply therapeutic," Pa added.

"My aspiration in owning land to farm on was to be able to share with the community, teach our young people and community where our food comes from, and to share and showcase Hmong traditional farming practices. As I was looking for land and stood on the hills of what is now Maiv Flower Farm, I knew instantly that this was the place."

Pa joined the Wisconsin Farmers Union when she was interested in attending the National Farmers Union Women's Conference last year after opening their first season of U-pick and "realizing there was so much to learn in farming and agriculture."

"Becoming a member and attending the conference allowed me to meet and network with women farmers across the nation. It plugged me into a network of support from fellow woman

farmers and technical assistance providers," she said. "Today, I am a proud coach for the Wisconsin Women in Conservation, a program with the aim of supporting women farmers and landowner in conservation practices."

Whether you are looking to create a stunning bouquet, enjoy a peaceful outing with loved ones, or simply immerse yourself in the natural beauty of the rolling landscape, Maiv Flower Farm provides an unforgettable experience. They also sell at the Eau Claire Downtown Farmers Market on Wednesdays and Saturdays.



Pa Thao (right) picks flowers with friend Xong Xiong

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# Fun Guy Farm: Mushroom Tinctures and How to Use Them

By Becky Streecher

**M**ushrooms have been used for medicinal purposes for thousands of years. When ingested, many types of mushrooms can help ease the symptoms of maladies in the body and brain. Some mushrooms, however, are too tough and woody to be considered edible, so in order to get the best medicinal results, they are often made into tinctures. Fun Guy Farm grows their own mushrooms and produces high quality tinctures right here in the Chippewa Valley.

Fun Guy Farm's tinctures are created using whole fruiting bodies, a dual extraction process, and ultrasonic-assisted extraction (UAE) for optimal nutrition. The traditional process for creating tinctures is lengthy, involving soaking the mushrooms in a water bath for several hours and an alcohol bath for several weeks in order to get the right alcohol ratio to make the tincture shelf stable. According to Steve Scholtz, owner and farmer of Fun Guy Farm, "Doing the same process while subjecting the mixtures to ultrasonic vibrations reduces the process from several weeks to a few hours, and yields better results." Fun Guy Farm has had an independent lab test their tinctures and found a greater than 10 times potency increase in the UAE tincture versus the traditional extraction technique. UAE is a safe, non-chemical and non-toxic process that increases efficiency and shelf life of the products.

Fun Guy Farm offers five varieties of tinctures, all of which have been shown to reduce inflammation, boost the immune system, and promote gut health. Additionally, each tincture also has its own unique compounds and benefits:

- Lion's Mane promotes focus and cognition.
- Reishi reduces anxiety and helps combat insomnia if taken 30-60 minutes prior to sleep.
- Turkey Tail contains powerful immune boosting abilities.
- Chaga is an incredibly powerful antioxidant, great for reducing oxidative stress in the body.
- Maitake helps control cholesterol and blood sugar levels, and reduces blood pressure.



For the best results, Scholtz says it's important to add the tincture to your daily routine. "I put tinctures in my morning coffee," he says. "They can be added to juices, smoothies or even water. The only caution is to not add them to a boiling liquid as some of the medicinal compounds break down at temperatures over 190 degrees." Some effects are fast acting, such as the focus and clarity of lion's mane and the calming of reishi. Other benefits take time to build in the body, such as better gut health and immune system modulation.

Scholtz says it's important to note: "Before starting any health supplement routine, individuals should consult their physician as some tinctures such as reishi have a slight blood thinning effect, and chaga contains oxalates which can promote the development of kidney stones in certain individuals."

You can visit the Fun Guy Farm storefront on Western Ave in Eau Claire, at local farmers markets this summer, or purchase tinctures online at

<https://funguy-farm.com>.

**Joyce Sobotta**  
Published Author: *Breast Health Is in Your Hands*  
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# WHY WAGYU?

## MARBLING

Wagyu beef is famous for its high degree of marbling, which refers to the intramuscular fat interspersed within the muscle tissue. This marbling enhances the beef's tenderness, juiciness, and flavor.

## FLAVOR

The high-fat content and marbling contribute to a rich, buttery flavor that is distinct from other types of beef. This flavor profile is often described as umami--a highly appealing savory taste.

## TEXTURE

The marbling in wagyu beef results in a tender texture that almost melts in your mouth. This is a key characteristic that distinguishes wagyu from other beef varieties.

## BREEDING AND GENETIC

Wagyu cattle are bred for their unique genetic makeup, which promotes the development of intense marbling. The breeding process is meticulous, ensuring that only the best qualities are passed down.

## RAISING PRACTICES

Wagyu cattle are often raised with great care and attention to their diet and environment. They are typically fed a special diet that includes grains, which helps develop their marbling. Some farms even use methods to reduce stress on the cattle, further enhancing the quality of the meat.

## HEALTH BENEFITS

Despite its high-fat content, wagyu beef contains a higher proportion of monounsaturated fats compared to other types of beef. Monounsaturated fats are considered to be healthier for the heart and can help reduce bad cholesterol levels.


## CULINARY VERSATILITY

Wagyu beef is versatile and can be used in a variety of dishes, from steaks and burgers to sushi and hot pots. Its unique characteristics make it a favorite among chefs and food enthusiasts.

## EXCLUSIVITY AND PRESTIGE

Wagyu beef is often considered a luxury item due to its limited availability and high cost. This exclusivity adds to its prestige and desirability.

Overall, wagyu beef is a highly prized and sought-after product in the culinary world and if you can experience it, you SHOULD!




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# Mindfulness During the Seasonal Transition

By Ann Brand

**T**he last weekend of June, I spent three days at the Blue Ox Music Festival in Eau Claire, WI. The weekend was filled with wonderful music, connecting with old and new friends, little time on my phone, and summer Wisconsin weather. My intention was to be outside for three days, rain or shine. We had both, and by the end of the weekend I realized I spent more consecutive hours outside than I have in a long time. Sun, rain, wind, birds, bugs, flowers, mud, grass—all were fully experienced. The natural world plus music truly helps us connect to the moment just as it is. I can't wait to do it again next June!

Summertime offers us the opportunity to spend a lot of time outdoors. It is easy to be outside with more unstructured time, sunny warm days, seasonably cool nights, and many outdoor events and activities. As fall and a new school year approaches, our schedule tightens up again and the weather becomes cooler and more unpredictable. We quickly lose the ease of being outside and fall automatically back into our indoor routines. Being indoors is not necessarily a problem, but we can lose the nourishment we get from being outside. We tend to forget as we return to the busy routine of the school year. With intention and practice, we can find nourishment from the natural world in all seasons, even our busy seasons.

Mindfulness practice can support us in sustaining our connections to the natural world as we move into the routine of fall, whether we are indoors or outdoors.

**1. Connecting with the five senses:** Being outdoors enlivens our senses without us even trying. Connecting with our senses brings us into our present-moment experience. We can bring this practice indoors

through momentary pauses in our day to connect to our senses through regular activities such as sipping coffee and daily chores, like folding laundry or checking email.

**2. Checking in with our intentions:** In the summer, we set an intention to enjoy all the season offers, which usually pulls us outside without much effort. Holding this intention in all seasons helps us remember what matters so we can find ways to connect with the natural world no matter where we are. It could be setting our phone down in the carpool line to gaze at the clouds floating by, or savoring the first sip of apple cider at the orchard. This intention works like a GPS system, helping us reroute when we get off track and lost in our busy schedule.

**3. Practicing mindfulness daily:** Returning to a regular mindfulness practice as we settle into our fall routine can help us remember to connect to the natural world. As you move from an unstructured summer to a scheduled fall, add a brief mindfulness practice to your routine. Consistent practice is where we build the skill to remember and come back to what matters. It is like a daily workout to build our capacity for focus, clarity, calm, and connection to ourselves, each other, and the world around us.

Consider bringing the practice of mindfulness with you indoors as you move into your fall routine. Looking for support? Check out my course offerings for Fall 2024 on my website [www.annbrandmindfulness.com](http://www.annbrandmindfulness.com) May the intention to stay connected to your experience support you in being present this fall, indoors and outdoors.



# Techniques for Monitoring Breast Health

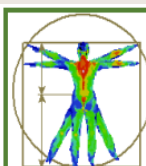
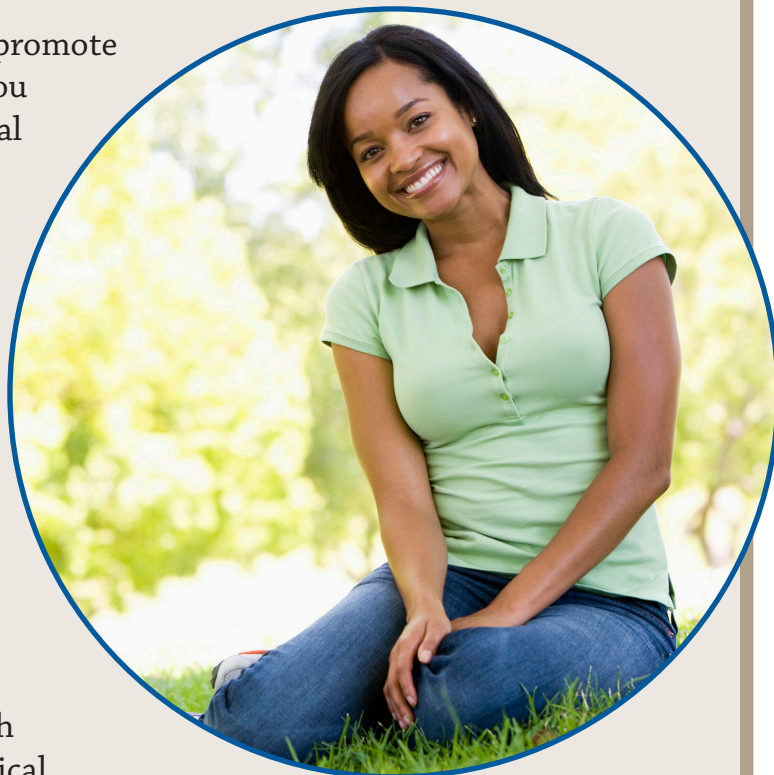
*By Shawn R. Seuferer, Certified Clinical Thermographer, Thermography of Wisconsin*

The National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. reports that one in eight women and one in 833 men will develop breast cancer in their lifetime. Curiously, the incidence of breast cancer in western culture is higher than in other cultures. Therefore, it is very important that women and men are mindful and aware of their breast health. Breast health is not only about breast cancer, but also includes lymph congestion, fibrocystic breast tissue, breast cysts, mastitis, and hormone imbalance as well.

Many simple techniques can be practiced to promote and monitor your breast health. Primarily, you need to know your breasts and what is normal for you. Monthly breast self-examination is vital, even if you have lumpy fibrous tissue. Take note of pain, unusual lumps, skin thickening or dimpling, and nipple secretions. Lymph massage and Pluffing the Girls® helps to keep lymph fluid moving and clear out toxins in your tissues. A healthy diet, regular exercise, positive emotional health, and avoidance of constricting clothing are all part of your breast care.

Additionally, thermography is an excellent annual monitoring tool for your breast health because it visualizes inflammatory, neurological, vascular or lymphatic indications of 'dysfunction' even at the early stages. Structural screening, such as with mammograms, MRI's and ultrasound imaging helps to complete your puzzle. The American College of Clinical Thermology (ACCT) recommends ultrasound for the structural comparison to thermography. Putting the two pieces of the puzzle together provides you with a better understanding of the current state of your breast health.

Be encouraged and be proactive in caring for your breasts! Together we can improve the statistics of breast cancer occurrence in our culture.



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# Learn the Options for Breast Screening

By Joyce Sobotta

**B**reast cancer risk is largely modifiable. Only 10-15% of breast cancer cases have any genetic component, which means that 85-90% of risk has to do with other factors: diet, stress, environmental factors, and emotions being among the most important. Many women do not know there are options for breast screening. Most accept the common path of mammography scans, but this isn't necessarily the right choice for everyone.

A mammogram delivers X-ray radiation to very sensitive tissue to detect the internal anatomical structure of the breast. According to the *Journal of Surgical Oncology*, a breast cancer growth needs 4-10 billion cells before a mammogram can detect it. Cancer cells may double approximately every 90 days. Often a cancer has already been growing for seven to ten years before it can be detected by a mammogram, and by then it may have spread to other parts of the body.

As early as 1928 physicians warned about the dangers of spreading cancer cells through the compression of the mammogram. It is only logical that if there are any small, undetected tumors already developing in the breast, that painful compression could easily spread malignant cells through the circulatory and lymphatic system.

## Overdiagnosis

Often screening for early forms of breast cancer leads to overdiagnosis of pseudo- or noncancers that would not cause harm if they were left alone. These cancers tend to get treated aggressively with repeated mammography scans, undue biopsies, and unnecessary double mastectomies. According to an article from Mount Sinai Health System in the *Huffington Post*, "It is a misconception and not true when a woman is told that the other breast is high risk for developing cancer.

There is an incredibly low, a half percent, that the other healthy breast is likely to develop cancer."

## Breast Ultrasound

An ultrasound may be a more accurate way to show all areas of the breast, including the area closest to the chest wall, which is hard to study with a mammogram. A breast ultrasound is used to see whether a breast lump is filled with fluid (a cyst) or if it is a solid lump. A lump that has no fluid or that has fluid with floating particles may need more tests.

For a breast ultrasound, a small handheld transducer is gently passed back and forth over the breast. A computer turns the sound waves into a picture called a sonogram or ultrasound scan. Breast ultrasound can add important information to the results of other tests such as "seeing" what is going on with breast tissue, especially if you have dense connective tissue or implants.

## Thermography

The benefit of Digital Infrared Thermal Imaging (DITI) is that it offers earlier detection of breast abnormalities than is possible with a self-exam, doctor exam, or mammography. Thermography works by imaging thermal patterns. A thermogram does not "see" tumors, it is a physiology test measuring subtle differences in skin temperature that can be associated with an underlying tumor or another pathology.

Thermography provides the ability to detect physiological changes in a cancer while it is still in the cellular phase, sometimes years before it is detectable with a mammogram. It offers younger women with dense breast tissue a valuable imaging tool that they can add to their regular breast health checkups, beginning with baseline imaging at age 20.

Thermography allows time to adjust diet, beliefs, and lifestyle to transform abnormal cells before they become cancerous. It can detect lymphatic congestion and hormonal imbalances as well as monitor dietary changes. In short, thermography is a tool to monitor breast health, not just a way to find disease! And there is no radiation or breast compression involved, so it is also safe for pregnant and nursing women.

Many women do not feel well informed about their breast health options before they are forced to decide. It's best to learn the options before deciding on a conclusive direction or focus. While diagnostic mammograms are helpful to evaluate known breast problems, other preventative measures can be extremely beneficial.

Joyce Sobotta is a published author of *"Breast Health Is in Your Hands, Tips for Breast Vitality and Sensuality"* and founder of an international business, HealthyGirlsBreastOil, a unique effective essential oil blend for breast health. She offers consultations for natural breast health. [www.aromatherapynatureway.com](http://www.aromatherapynatureway.com)







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## INSIDE:

- 7 Ways Assisted Living Can Enhance Quality of Life
- Assisted Living Facilities
- The Places We've Been, The Places We'll Go
- Online Resource Spotlight





# 7 Ways Assisted Living Can Enhance Quality of Life

by Shelley Krupa, Business Operations Coordinator at Lake Hallie Memory Care

As people age, their needs evolve, and sometimes living independently can become challenging. Assisted living facilities offer a blend of independence and support, ensuring that seniors can enjoy a higher quality of life. Here are seven ways in which assisted living can significantly enhance the lives of residents.



**1. Safety and Security** - One of the primary benefits of assisted living is the enhanced safety and security it provides. These facilities are designed with seniors in mind, featuring emergency call systems, handrails, non-slip flooring, and 24/7 staffing. For seniors prone to falls or medical emergencies, having immediate access to help can be life-saving. The constant presence of staff ensures that any health issues are promptly addressed, providing peace of mind for both residents and their families.

**2. Professional Care and Support** - Assisted living facilities offer professional care and support tailored to individual needs. This includes assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, medication management, and meal preparation. For many seniors, managing these tasks independently can become increasingly difficult and stressful. Trained caregivers provide the necessary help, allowing residents to maintain their dignity and independence. Personalized care plans ensure that each resident receives the appropriate level of support, enhancing their overall well-being.

**3. Social Interaction and Community** - Loneliness and social isolation are common issues among seniors, which can lead to depression and a decline in physical health. Assisted living communities foster a vibrant social environment with numerous opportunities for interaction. Residents can participate in organized activities, outings, and events that cater to a variety of interests. Communal dining areas encourage socialization during meals, helping residents form friendships and stay engaged. The sense of community and belonging that develops in assisted living can significantly improve mental and emotional health.

**4. Nutritious Meals and Dining Experience** - Maintaining a healthy diet is crucial for seniors, but it can be challenging to prepare nutritious meals consistently. Assisted living facilities provide balanced, dietitian-approved meals that cater to the dietary needs and preferences of residents. The communal dining experience not only ensures that residents receive proper nutrition but also promotes social interaction. Special dietary needs, such as low-sodium or diabetic-friendly options, are also accommodated, ensuring that each resident's health is prioritized.

**5. Opportunities for Physical and Mental Stimulation** - Assisted living communities offer a range of activities designed to promote physical and mental stimulation. Exercise classes, gardening, arts and crafts, and educational programs keep residents active and engaged. Physical activity is essential for maintaining mobility and overall health, while mental stimulation helps prevent cognitive decline. By participating in these activities, residents can enjoy a fulfilling and enriched lifestyle.

**6. Maintenance-Free Living** - One of the significant advantages of assisted living is the maintenance-free lifestyle it offers. Residents no longer need to worry about household chores, home maintenance, or yard work. This freedom from daily responsibilities allows them to focus on enjoying their hobbies and interests. Housekeeping, laundry, and transportation services are typically included, further enhancing convenience and quality of life.

**7. Peace of Mind for Families** - Knowing that a loved one is safe, well-cared-for, and enjoying life can provide immense peace of mind for families. Assisted living facilities keep families informed about their loved one's well-being and involve them in care plans and activities. This open communication ensures that families feel connected and reassured about their loved one's happiness and health.

Assisted living facilities offer a comprehensive approach to enhancing the quality of life for seniors. By providing a safe environment, professional care, social opportunities, nutritious meals, and a maintenance-free lifestyle, these communities help seniors live their golden years with dignity, joy, and fulfillment. For many families, choosing assisted living is a positive step toward ensuring their loved one's health, happiness, and well-being.





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## ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

### Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF)

CBRF's are staffed group living arrangements that provide room, board, supervision and other supportive services to 5 or more unrelated adult residents. Typically, residents have either a private or shared sleeping room and bathroom, and share living and dining space with other residents of the facility. CBRFs are intended for people who cannot live independently, but are neither acutely ill nor need extensive amounts of skilled nursing care. Up to 3 hours of skilled nursing care per week may be provided. Unlimited amounts of supportive and personal care are provided. Facilities vary in size from 5 residents to over 100.

### Residential Care Apartment Complex (RCAC)

An RCAC is a place where five or more adults reside. Apartments must each have a lockable entrance and exit; a kitchen, including a stove (or microwave oven); and individual bathroom, sleeping and living areas. This living option provides no more than 28 hours per week of supportive services, personal assistance and skilled nursing services.

**Adult Family Homes** Adult Family Homes—where 3 or 4 adults who are not related to the operator reside and receive care, treatment or services that are above the level of room and board. May include up to 7 hours per week of nursing care per resident.

*Source: Eau Claire ADRC*

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# The Places We've Been, The Places We'll Go

By Molly A. Kelly, SMP Volunteer Coordinator Volunteer Corner

***"He said he was a representative with Medicare and that my benefits would be cut off if I didn't cooperate with his requests. I need healthcare, so I gave him my information."***

**-Victim of a phone scam**

## **SMP hears stories like this every day**

People who receive calls or emails from scammers claiming to be with Medicare, Social Security, IRS, or the Police. And under normal circumstances we could spot a scam. However, the fraudsters are professional and use language that appears legitimate and authentic. And the critical strategy is that they threaten you. They use fear of having your healthcare cut off, halting your SS checks, or being arrested. Most of us have heard stories of people losing their life savings, having their identity stolen, or fearing arrest. We are aware of the heartbreaking results from those who have been scammed. The impact on their lives can be significant.

## **SMP can help**

Our mission is to inform and educate Medicare beneficiaries on how to protect themselves from fraud, how to detect it, and how to report it. We do this through outreach by attending events around the state, such as Health Fairs, Resource Expos, and conferences. We also give presentations to small and large groups. Knowledge and awareness are important to battle the prevalence of scammers around the country.

## **Outreach is important**

We value the opportunity to attend community events and to share the message of how to prevent, detect, and report fraud. Please let us know if there is an opportunity to come to your neck of the woods!

## **Volunteers are key**

They are key in accomplishing our goal. They are in the communities connecting directly with Medicare beneficiaries. The volunteer team staffs informational tables handing out materials, relaying key messages, and answering questions. They also give presentations of varying length to varying sized groups.

## **You can fight fraud, too!**

We invite you to join our SMP Volunteer Team. To get in touch, or to learn more, please call (888) 818-2611 or go online to Become A Volunteer - Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol ([smpwi.org](http://smpwi.org))



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SMPs are grant-funded projects of the federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL).



## Online Resource Spotlight

This resource is for family caregivers of someone living with dementia. Experts provide free webinars several times per month. You can join by computer or phone.



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For more information on the application process, or to make a monetary donation to this 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, please visit [www.helpfulheartswi.org](http://www.helpfulheartswi.org).



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