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Avocado **HYDRATION** Like you really need another reason to love avos. They're packed with healthy mono-unsaturated fats and vitamin E that help maintain skin's barrier function and prevent moisture loss.



Ginseng **BRIGHTENING** Sipping tea made from this antioxidant-rich root can help defend your body against stress. In an eye cream, it also protects you, but this time the enemy is inflammation-causing free radicals, which can result in dark marks and dullness.



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Chiropractic and Homeostasis

by Judy Soborowicz DC CCN, Active Health Chiropractic

Chiropractic is well known as a reliable remedy for back and neck pain. Oftentimes, back pain is what gets us in the chiropractor's door, and the multitude of additional benefits keeps us coming back. On top of reduced pain, patients who receive chiropractic adjustments report benefits such as improved sleep, boosted immune function, reduced brain fog, and improved cognition. Most importantly, however, chiropractic improves our own body's ability to restore health by directly optimizing nerve system function. This is how chiropractic positively influences our health—by allowing our body to maximally express its full healing potential.

The foundation of chiropractic is based on our body's innate healing ability—every adjustment improves nerve system function. B.J. Palmer, the developer of chiropractic, stated, "The power that made the body, heals the body. It happens no other way." We are designed to regulate our bodies through our nerve system, maintaining a stable and functioning internal environment. This principle is known as maintaining homeostasis, and it is much more than an internal thermostat. Homeostasis is maintained across all body functions. What we call healing or wellness is our nerve system restoring our internal environment, or homeostasis. In other words, chiropractic improves the ability of our nerve system to maintain a stable internal environment, thereby improving our overall health.

This innate self-sustaining ability to maintain homeostasis and heal is incredibly powerful. Even without direct support through chiropractic, the vast majority of injuries are completely silent. Our nerve system restores homeostasis, and we heal without ever being aware. Even with significant injuries that require weeks or months to heal, only our body and nerve system can maintain homeostasis and restore health. However, there is a limit to what our body and nerve system can

handle. Sometimes we overwhelm our nerve system, causing compensations and slowing our speed of healing with an accumulation of stress on our nerve system.

The state of stress eventually leads to compensatory inefficiencies and interference in the nerve system. This is known as subluxation: interference disrupting nerve system function. Over time, interference can contribute to slower recovery, persistent symptoms, and declining overall health that may be misinterpreted as signs of aging. Chiropractic care directly addresses this issue through gentle adjustments to the spine and body. By correcting subluxation and removing nerve interference, adjustments reduce stress on the nerve system, restore clear communication between the brain and body, and revitalize our body's natural ability to heal and maintain homeostasis.

Chiropractic care goes far beyond relieving back and neck pain. The effects are felt throughout our whole body, from improved sleep to improved cognition and reduced pain. By correcting subluxations and reducing nerve system stress, specific chiropractic adjustments allow our nerve system to shift out of compensations. Essential chiropractic adjustments assist our body in restoring our innate ability to maintain homeostasis and express our optimal healing potential. For over a century, chiropractic patients have benefited from optimizing healing potential and function through safe, effective chiropractic care.



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As autumn arrives, local orchards become more than just beautiful destinations filled with colorful leaves and crisp apples—they become an important part of supporting the families and farms that keep our communities thriving. Every visit to a neighborhood orchard helps sustain local agriculture, preserves farmland, and strengthens the regional economy.

When you purchase apples, pears, pumpkins, cider, honey, baked goods, or other seasonal products directly from an orchard, more of your money stays in the local community. These purchases help farmers cover the costs of planting, maintaining, and harvesting their crops while allowing them to invest in equipment, employees, and future growing seasons.

Supporting local orchards also helps protect valuable farmland from development. Many family-owned orchards have been passed down through generations, preserving agricultural traditions and providing fresh, locally grown food. By choosing to shop locally, consumers help ensure these farms remain productive for years to come.

Beyond the economic benefits, local orchards offer opportunities for families to connect with agriculture firsthand. Visitors can pick their own fruit, learn how apples are grown, enjoy hayrides, navigate corn mazes, and experience the changing seasons together. These experiences foster a greater appreciation for the hard work and dedication that goes into producing fresh food.



Fresh produce from nearby orchards is often harvested at peak ripeness, providing exceptional flavor while reducing the transportation required to bring food to market. This supports a more sustainable food system and lowers the environmental impact associated with long-distance shipping.

This fall, consider making a trip to a local orchard part of your seasonal tradition. Every apple picked, pie purchased, and gallon of cider enjoyed is an investment in local farmers, local businesses, and the future of your community.

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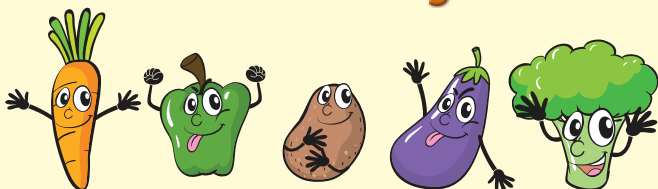
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SPROUT CAFÉ BRINGS FRESH, LOCAL FLAVOR TO AUGUSTA



If you have driven through Augusta as of late, you'll see a new sign donning the main drag and you absolutely must stop! Sprout Café combines farm-fresh ingredients, culinary genius, and a welcoming smile and with Head Chef Tyler Thelen and his fiancé Danielle Menting at the helm, you won't be disappointed.

Recently voted **Best Chef in the Chippewa Valley**, Chef Tyler has a reputation for creativity and passion for showcasing quality ingredients, Thelen brings years of culinary experience to Sprout Café. His philosophy centers on letting fresh, local products shine, transforming simple ingredients into memorable dishes that keep guests coming back.



One of the café's defining features is its commitment to a seasonal menu. Sprout Café embraces Wisconsin's growing seasons by adjusting dishes as fresh ingredients become available. Diners can enjoy vegetables from **Sam's Produce**, sweet **Augusta Blueberries** in addition to Door County Cherries and other local fare from local farmers.

The result is a menu that continually evolves, giving customers something new to discover with every visit while highlighting the best flavors Wisconsin has to offer.

Whether stopping in for a hearty breakfast or a Friday fish fry guests will find meals prepared from scratch with care and attention. From comforting favorites to creative seasonal selections, the menu is designed to appeal to a wide range of tastes while emphasizing freshness and quality. And, let me just say, the Fruit cereal cheesecake topped with a rich cherry compote and ube whipped cream was out of this world!

Sprout Café's commitment to the community extends beyond its kitchen. The business also hosts **Sprout Community Days** that invite local farmers, makers, and artisans to showcase their products. These market days provide valuable opportunities for local entrepreneurs while giving residents a chance to shop locally, meet the people behind their food and crafts, and strengthen community connections.

More than just another restaurant, Sprout Café represents an investment in Augusta's growing downtown and local economy. By purchasing ingredients from nearby farms and creating a welcoming gathering space, the café helps keep dollars circulating within the community while celebrating the agricultural heritage.

With Chef Tyler Thelen's talent, a menu inspired by the changing seasons, and a deep commitment to supporting local farmers and businesses, Sprout Café will no doubt quickly becoming one of western Wisconsin's most talked about culinary destinations. Whether you're a longtime Augusta resident or simply passing through, it's a place where fresh food, local pride, and genuine hospitality come together on every plate.



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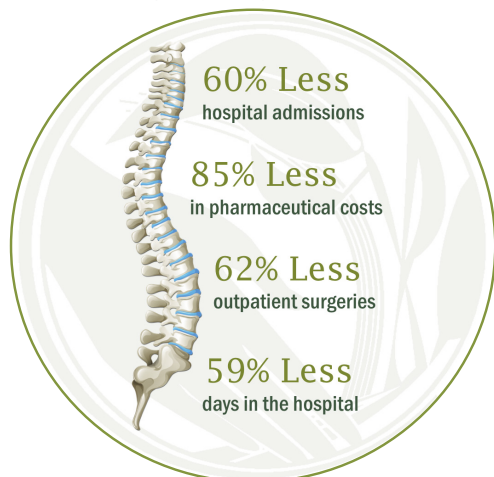


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Natural Nourishment No Matter the Season

By Ann Brand

The 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 schedules tighten 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 fall into 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 ones.

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 unstructured summer to scheduled fall, add a brief mindfulness practice to your day. 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 descriptions of mindfulness instruction and mentoring on my website www.annbrandmindfulness.com. May the intention to stay connected to your experience support you in being present this fall, indoors and outdoors.



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Smooth Sailing Into the School Year: A 2026 Guide for Parents

By Sandi Anderson, R.M, LUT.CHtP; Life & Spiritual Coach, Intuitive Healer/Channel



Summer vacation is winding down, and the “back-to-school” season is on the horizon. For both parents and children, this period often presents challenges as families shift from the relaxed days of summer activities to the structured routines of school. Implementing new routines at home is essential for a smooth transition for everyone. Parents, it’s also prime time to take stock of what your children need for the new academic year.

Create Proactive Strategies for a Seamless Transition

One of the most effective approaches is to be proactive. Start shifting sleep and wake-up times approximately two weeks before school begins to align with the new schedule. Remember, adolescents require adequate sleep for optimal functioning. Rehearse the school morning routine of getting dressed, preparing breakfast, packing lunches, and organizing backpacks. Establish a daily schedule that incorporates designated times for study, physical activity, and relaxation.

Nourish Body and Brain

It’s not too early to discuss healthy lunchbox meals and snacks. Depending on age and activities, involve children in selecting their favorite options. By stocking up on groceries ahead of time, you can simplify busy school mornings throughout the week.

Cultivate New Routines and a Positive Mindset

It is important to initiate open discussions about children’s feelings and expectations regarding their return to school. Whether your child is new to a school or returning to a familiar one, planning a couple of playdates with future or former classmates can ease the apprehension of the first day. Attending back-to-school events and meet-and-greets prior to the official start can also be effective stress relievers for “first-day jitters.” Encourage your children to share what they are excited about for the new year, whether it’s making new friends, reconnecting with old ones, or participating in new activities.

Navigating Academic Integrity in the Digital Age

For pre-teens and teenagers, engage in calm conversations about academic integrity. Discuss the nuances of cheating, plagiarism, and fact-checking. Share your personal experiences and insights—your life lessons can provide valuable nuggets of advice. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into learning environments, guide your children on ethical usage.

Discuss how tools like AI-powered research assistants or personalized learning platforms can be leveraged responsibly, emphasizing critical thinking and the imperative to verify all information, whether human or AI-generated

Practical Preparations and School Connections

Start the school year with a school-centric home environment. Gather new school supplies early and give them a designated space. A chalkboard or whiteboard can be a helpful tool for keeping track of family activities and schedules. Establish a study space and set clear expectations, such as a “no phone zone” to foster concentration. If your family is involved in carpooling, conduct a test run or two to determine the most efficient routes.

Stay Informed and Connected

It’s highly beneficial for parents to establish connections with teachers and the school. If this is a new school for your family, request a tour and meet the teachers before the year commences. Even if you’re generally tech-savvy, explore the school’s communication portal. Understand how information is disseminated and note any changes. Be informed about the school’s policies regarding AI, academic integrity, and expected student behavior. In 2026, recognize that digital interactions with schools may extend beyond computers to phones, tablets, and other devices.

It truly takes a village to shape our future leaders with care. Our children need a well-rounded, open education that aligns with their individual learning styles to help them become their best versions.

Sandra Anderson (Sandi) is a Life & Spiritual Guide. Drawing from her own parenting journey, she offers practical insights for parents navigating the back-to-school season, helping families create smooth transitions and foster a successful school year.





Back-to-School Success Starts with a Routine

by Amy Huempfer, Association Marketing Director, YMCA of the Chippewa Valley

As summer winds down and school supplies start filling shopping carts, families everywhere begin preparing for the transition back to school. While the return to classes often means busier schedules, earlier mornings, and packed calendars, it also provides the perfect opportunity to establish healthy routines that support family time, physical activity, and mental well-being.



A consistent routine also plays an important role in mental health. Knowing when and where activities will take place reduces daily decision-making and creates a sense of control, which can be especially valuable during the sometimes-chaotic back-to-school season. Regular exercise, adequate sleep, family meals, and downtime all contribute to lower stress levels and improved emotional well-being for both children and adults.

Routines are more than just schedules on a calendar—they create structure, consistency, and predictability. For children, knowing what to expect each day helps reduce stress and anxiety while increasing confidence and independence. Children thrive when they have clear expectations and consistent daily patterns, whether it's waking up at the same time each morning, completing homework after school, or following a regular bedtime routine.

Adults benefit from routines just as much. One of the biggest challenges many parents face is maintaining healthy habits when life becomes busy. Exercise is often one of the first things to disappear when schedules get packed. However, establishing a set workout routine at the beginning of the school year can help create consistency and make physical activity a non-negotiable part of the week. Whether it's attending a group fitness class, taking a morning walk, or spending time in the weight room, scheduling exercise like any other appointment increases the likelihood of sticking with it long-term.

Of course, creating a routine is easier when families have support. That's why it is important to find organizations and community resources that help make busy schedules more manageable. The YMCA, for example, offers a variety of programs designed to support working families and help maintain healthy routines throughout the school year.

For parents with young children, Child Watch services can provide a safe and engaging environment while parents focus on their own health and wellness goals. School-age families can benefit from programs like Around the Bell School Care, which offers reliable before- and after-school care that keeps children's schedules consistent and provides peace of mind for parents.

Unexpected school closures and holiday breaks can also interrupt routines. Programs like School's Out Care help bridge those gaps, ensuring children remain engaged in a safe environment while parents maintain their work and family schedules. And because strong families need opportunities for connection and self-care, monthly Parents' Night Out events offer parents a chance to recharge while children enjoy a fun evening with friends.

As the new school year approaches, take some time to think beyond pencils and backpacks. Consider the routines that will help your family thrive. By prioritizing consistency, making time for physical activity, supporting mental wellness, and utilizing community resources, families can create a strong foundation for a successful school year. After all, when everyone knows what to expect, life feels a little less hectic—and a lot more manageable.



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- After School Care in Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Menomonie, & Elk Mound
- School's Out Care in Chippewa Falls & Eau Claire

SUMMER CAMPS

- Camp Manitou Overnight Camp
- Day Camps in Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, & Menomonie

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Sideline Safety: How to Avoid Pain While Cheering on Your Young Athlete

By Emily Smith, DC, DICCP-Chiropractic Pediatric Specialist

Back-to-school season means back to sports, and while your child is gearing up on the field, court, or track, many parents are returning to their familiar place: the bleachers. As a chiropractor, I see more than just student-athletes for sports-related injuries—I see plenty of parents, too.

Long hours spent sitting on hard bleachers, folding chairs, or standing in awkward positions can cause real strain on your spine, hips, and neck. Here are some simple ways to prevent pain and protect your posture while supporting your athlete all season long.

1. Bring Back Support

Bleachers weren't made for comfort. If you're planning to spend several hours sitting, consider investing in a portable seat with lumbar support. Look for one that supports your lower back and encourages a natural upright posture. This can prevent slouching and reduce stress on your spine.

Even a small lumbar roll or a rolled-up towel can help maintain the curve in your lower back and prevent that "bleacher back" feeling.

2. Sit Smart

Try to sit with your feet flat on the ground, knees at a 90-degree angle, and avoid crossing your legs for long periods. If the bleachers are too tall or your feet dangle, bring a small footrest or use a bag to prop your feet up. Keep your weight evenly distributed and avoid leaning too far forward or to one side.

If you're using your phone to check scores or take photos, be mindful of "tech neck." Holding your phone too low strains your neck, so bring it to eye level when possible.

3. Keep Moving

Our bodies were made to move, not sit still for two-hour games. Set a reminder to stand up and stretch every 30–45 minutes. Walk around during halftime, do a few gentle stretches, or even cheer while standing to engage different muscles.

Small movements like shoulder rolls, neck stretches, or standing hip shifts can keep blood flowing and reduce stiffness.

4. Use the Right Gear

If you're standing or walking a lot during events, make sure your shoes offer good arch support and cushioning. Flip-flops or unsupportive shoes can cause lower back, hip, or knee pain over time. Consider bringing a portable cushion or gel seat for longer tournaments.

5. Stretch at Home

A few minutes of stretching before and after games can go a long way in preventing pain. Focus on your lower back, hamstrings, and hips. Gentle yoga poses like child's pose or cat-cow can relieve tension and improve flexibility.

Final Thoughts

As parents, we spend countless hours supporting our kids from the sidelines. But taking care of our own bodies is just as important. With a few smart adjustments, you can enjoy every play, point, and goal—without paying the price later.

If you experience lingering pain after a game or tournament weekend, consider seeing a chiropractor. We're here to help keep you in alignment, both on and off the sidelines.

Dr. Emily Smith has been practicing chiropractic in Eau Claire and Menomonie for 25 years. Though her specialty is in pregnancy and pediatrics, she enjoys helping patients of every age. At Smith & Prissel Chiropractic and Massage you can find the treatment you need from people who care. www.myECchiro.com



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month!



A Holistic Approach to Breast Health

By Thermography of Wisconsin

Taking care of your breast health is about caring for your whole self. Managing stress, staying active, eating well, getting restorative sleep, maintaining a positive outlook, and having regular screenings all contribute to your overall wellness.

Thermography of Wisconsin supports this holistic approach and encourages you to use a variety of tools along with building a trusted healthcare team to monitor your health. Thermography is one of those screening tools.

Thermography is a no-touch, non-invasive, pain-free, and radiation-free screening tool which uses a specialized infrared

camera to measure temperature patterns on the surface of your skin. These patterns visualize physiology, including inflammation, circulation, lymphatic activity, and hormonal influences. The resulting image, called a thermogram, is interpreted by a medical doctor specially trained in thermology, who provides a written report with findings and recommendations.

Breast thermal patterns are as unique as your fingerprints; therefore, two screenings spaced three months apart are needed to establish a personal baseline. If no changes are identified and your results remain stable, your baseline is established and annual screenings are generally recommended.

Thermography is not a replacement for any structural screening such as mammography, ultrasound or MRI, and no screening is diagnostic on its own. Instead, they provide different but complementary information. Structural screening evaluates the structure of breast tissue and may identify findings such as tumors, calcifications, cysts and dense tissue. Thermography screening evaluates function by measuring physiological changes that may indicate inflammation, vascular changes, lymphatic activity, or hormonal influences. Early detection of physiological changes can result in earlier treatment and better outcomes. When combined with structural screenings, monthly self-breast exams, clinical breast exams, and healthy lifestyle choices, thermography can be an important part of your overall breast health plan.

Thermography of Wisconsin serves clients in Eau Claire, River Falls, Spooner, Stratford, and Phillips, Wis., as well as four locations in Minnesota. Shawn Seufferer is a Certified Clinical Thermographer and a proud member of the American College of Clinical Thermology (ACCT).

Bring this article with you to receive \$25 off your regular-priced thermography screening. Expires 10/31/2026.





Breast Health Is Modifiable

by Joyce Sobotta

Perhaps the most important point never mentioned is breast cancer risk is largely modifiable. Only 10-15% or less of breast cancer cases have any genetic component, which means that 85-90% of risk has to do with other factors such as diet, stress, and environmental factors (1). This is why Thermography, or Digital Infrared Thermal Imaging is a benefit—it offers much earlier detection of breast abnormalities than is possible with self-exam, doctor exam, or mammography.

Thermography is a lesser-known, but increasingly popular, screening test that works by imaging thermal patterns on the skin. The procedure is a 15-minute noninvasive test of physiology. A thermogram does not do the same thing as a mammogram. It does not “see” tumors. It is a physiology test measuring subtle differences in skin temperature that can be associated with an underlying tumor (as well as other pathology). It is important that women know about this option!

It has some advantages that a mammogram does not, including the ability to detect physiology changes in a cancer while it is still in the cellular phase—sometimes years before it is detectable with a mammogram. It is especially appropriate for younger women who have dense breast tissue and do not get mammograms. It offers these younger women a valuable imaging tool that they can add to their regular breast health check-ups beginning with baseline imaging at age 20.

Thermography is different. It allows time to adjust diet, beliefs, and lifestyle to transform abnormal cells before they become cancerous. Thermography 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 safe for pregnant and nursing women.

Thermography can detect the subtle physiological changes that accompany breast pathology, whether it be cancer, fibrocystic disease, an infection, or a vascular disease. With lifestyle changes, improvement can be seen on follow-up thermogram scans.

It is not a replacement for mammography. But for women who do not wish to have mammograms, it is a great option. If a body were heading in the direction of developing breast cancer, wouldn't it be extremely important to know that before the tumor formed, instead of finding out after there is a tumor?

It is good to understand what you want to do with your body. We all have choices. Many women do not feel well informed about their breast options before they are forced to decide. Medical considerations are only part of the equation. Your choice may affect how you want to live, survive, or thrive.

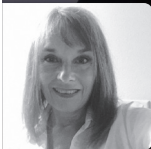
As more women learn about alternatives and find early detection with thermography, they learn that breast health is modifiable and know they are ahead of the game!

Excerpt taken from my book “Breast Health Is in Your Hands, Tips for Breast Vitality and Sensuality.”

1. <https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-cancer-facts>



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ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES AN IN DEPTH LIST OF QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

BASICS

- Distance from loved ones?

TRAINING FOR STAFF

- Type of training for staff?
- Certifications required before hiring staff?
- Staff trained to handle refusal to bathe, eat, drink fluids, etc.?

SAFETY

- Cameras on the hallways and doorways?
- How is community security?
- Secure buildings/grounds?

RATE

- Monthly rate for housing/care?
- What does the rate include?

THE FACILITY

- Private rooms?
- Memory care available?
- Are residents grouped by cognitive level?
- Ratio of staff to resident during day/night?
- Walking paths?

- How often are housekeeping and laundry provided?
- Meals in dining area or in-room?

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

- Level of personal assistance?
- Policy for handling medical emergencies?
- Nurse on duty 24/7?
- Visiting physician?
- Medical services available?
- Each resident have individual care plan?

RESIDENT'S WELL-BEING

- Programs offered (exercise, PT, social activities)?
- Therapy (physical, pet, music)?
- Communication w/ family about residents' well-being?
- Transition residents from assisted living to memory care to skilled nursing?

OTHER

- Transportation
- Discharge policy



Faith That Moves with You: Spiritual Care in Assisted Living



By Carl A. Trapani, MA, MS, LPC, Chippewa Manor Campus Chaplain

When a person moves into an assisted living community, they bring more than a suitcase full of clothes and some pictures to put on display. They bring their life story, their memories, and their lifetime of faith. When we change addresses, our new surroundings can feel unfamiliar. The furniture may be different, the view from the window new, and the daily routines uncertain. But one thing does not need to change—our faith. God is still the same and He comes with us – wherever we go.

For many, belief in God, spiritual values, and cherished religious traditions have been constant companions through life's joys and challenges. As the idea of moving into an assisted living community approaches, it's natural to wonder—will my faith feel as strong there as it does now?

The reassuring truth is that faith doesn't have to be checked at the door. In fact, in many of today's assisted living facilities, faith-based programs are intentionally designed to ensure that your spiritual life moves right along with you—sometimes growing even richer within the community setting.

A New Chapter, Not a Loss

While the thought of moving into assisted living can feel daunting, it's important to see it not as a loss of independence, but as an opportunity to gain comfort, peace of mind, and renewed purpose. With professional support for medical needs, daily living, and housekeeping, residents can spend more time on what matters most—nurturing relationships, enjoying activities, and deepening their faith.

Spiritual Care That Goes Beyond Routine

Modern assisted living communities understand that spiritual well-being is just as important as physical health. Spiritual care is not merely about maintaining old traditions, it's about fostering meaningful connection—to oneself, to others, and to what one holds sacred. Many communities offer on-site chaplains who do far more than lead weekly services. They provide personal counseling, facilitate Bible studies, visit residents before medical procedures to offer prayers, and lend a listening ear during difficult times. Chaplains walk alongside residents at every stage of their spiritual journey—whether deeply rooted in faith, quietly reflective, or exploring new perspectives.

And when a full-time chaplain isn't available, communities often welcome local clergy to visit regularly, ensuring that residents have ongoing access to worship, teaching, and fellowship.

Faith for All

One of the hallmarks of modern senior living is inclusivity. Many facilities celebrate all faith traditions, creating a respectful and welcoming environment where no one feels marginalized. This openness allows spiritual life to flourish and fosters a unique sense of unity among neighbors, even across different belief systems.



An Anchor in Transition

Just as assisted living represents a new way of navigating daily life, spiritual care helps ensure that personal beliefs continue to inspire, guide, and nurture during this chapter. With the support of chaplains, clergy, and faith-based programs, many residents find that their spiritual practices not only endure, but actually deepen within the bonds of community.

Faith is not bound to a particular building or season of life—it travels with us, uplifts us, and steadies us during times of change. For those moving into assisted living, it can be a powerful anchor, reminding us of who we are, what we believe, and what truly matters.

When visiting a prospective assisted living facility, consider asking:

- What faith-based programs are available? (Worship services, prayer groups, Bible studies, etc.)
- Is there an on-site chaplain or regular visits from local clergy?
- How are different faith traditions accommodated?
- Can residents request private spiritual counseling or prayer?
- Are there opportunities for residents to lead or participate in services?
- Does the community partner with local houses of worship?
- Are transportation services available for off-site religious activities?

Asking these questions can help ensure that your faith journey continues to thrive in your new home.

Carl Trapani, MA, MS, LPC serves as campus Chaplain at Chippewa Manor. He has more than 50 years of pastoral service and professional counseling experience. For more information please call (715) 723-4437 or email him at carl.trapani@chippewamanor.com.



THE
YEARS

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), an 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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How 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 several ways in which assisted living can significantly enhance the lives of residents.

Safety and Security

Assisted living 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.

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 can provide personalized care plans with the appropriate level of support needed, allowing residents to maintain their dignity and independence.

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.

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.

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.



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 also typically included.

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.



Why "I Don't Want to Talk About It" Is Still a Conversation

By Stokes, Prock & Mundt Funeral Chapel

When a loved one says, "I don't want to talk about it," it can feel like the conversation has ended. For adult children, spouses, or close family members, those words can be frustrating, especially when important decisions need to be made. You may be worried about your parent's health, future care, finances, funeral wishes, or what would happen in an emergency. But for the person being asked to plan ahead, the topic may feel overwhelming, frightening, or simply too painful to face.

In many families, resistance to end-of-life planning is not really about stubbornness. It is often about fear.

Talking about aging, illness, assisted living, funeral arrangements, or final wishes can make the future feel suddenly real. A person who has spent a lifetime being independent may feel as though these conversations take away their control. Others may worry that talking about death will upset their children or make them appear weak. Some may believe that avoiding the topic protects everyone from discomfort.

Denial can also be a form of coping. When someone says they do not want to talk about it, they may be saying, "I am scared," "I am not ready," or "I do not know where to begin." They may need time to process the reality of aging before they are ready to make decisions. Understanding this can help families approach the subject with more patience and compassion.

It is important to remember that planning does not have to happen all at once. Families often imagine one big, serious conversation around the kitchen table, where every decision is made in a single afternoon. In reality, planning can begin with small, gentle questions over time. Instead of asking, "What kind of funeral do you want?" you might begin with, "Have you ever thought about what would make things easier for us someday?" Rather than pushing for immediate answers, you can simply open the door.

Sometimes the best first step is to talk about practical matters instead of emotional ones. A loved one may not be ready to discuss final wishes, but they may be willing to show you where important documents are kept. They may be comfortable sharing the name of their attorney, insurance agent, doctor, or preferred funeral home. These small pieces of information can make an enormous difference later.

It can also help to frame the conversation as an act of care, not a loss of control. Planning ahead allows a person's wishes to be known and respected. It can prevent

family members from having to guess during a stressful time. It can reduce disagreements and give loved ones the comfort of knowing they are honoring what the person truly wanted.

For families, the key is to listen more than you speak. If your loved one becomes uncomfortable, pause. If they change the subject, let the conversation rest for a while. You can return to it later. A gentle comment such as, "I know this is hard to talk about, but I want to make sure we do things the

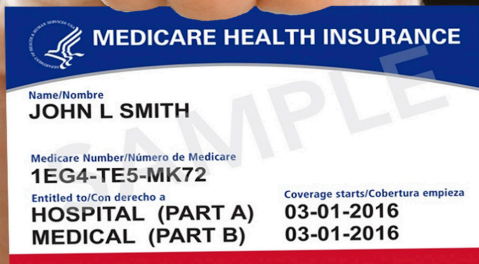
way you would want," may be enough for now.

Even silence tells us something. It tells us the topic matters. It tells us there may be fear, uncertainty, or grief beneath the surface. And it reminds us that these conversations require trust.

"I don't want to talk about it" does not have to be the end. It can be the beginning of a slower, more compassionate process. With patience, honesty, and respect, families can move toward planning in a way that feels less like pressure and more like love.



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