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Sandoval County Senior Program Administration

CENTER LOCATION

September 2026

Sandoval County Senior Program
1500 Idalia Rd., Bldg. D
PO Box 40
Bernalillo, NM 87004

Phone: 505-867-7535
Fax: 505-867-7606

Hours of Operation:
Monday – Friday
8:00 am to 5:00 pm

ADMINISTRATION STAFF

Senior Program Manager

Sharon Hicks

Grant Analyst

Sean Lowery

Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Stivers

SAMS Data

Alicia Arriola

Transportation Drivers

Matthew Montoya

Vacant

Greg Shea

All Sites individualize their newsletters to their local area information, activities calendars and games.

September is Healthy Aging Month: A Time to Prioritize Your Health and Raise Awareness for Cancer Prevention & Early Treatment

As we embrace the arrival of September, it's a perfect time to focus on healthy aging and the steps we can take to maintain our well-being as we grow older. September is not only designated as Healthy Aging Month, but it's also a month dedicated to bringing awareness to several dangerous cancers that can increase in risk as we age. This month, let's take a closer look at how we can age in a healthy way while also raising awareness and prevention on Leukemia, Lymphoma, Ovarian Cancer, Prostate Cancer, and Thyroid Cancer—conditions that are vital to monitor for early detection and effective treatment.

Leukemia and Lymphoma: Blood Cancers That Require Vigilance

September is recognized as Blood Cancer Awareness Month, bringing attention to leukemia and lymphoma. These cancers originate in the blood or bone marrow and lymphatic system, respectively, and can affect anyone, though the risk increases with age. Since blood circulates around the body, these cancers are notoriously difficult to contain, making early detection critical. It's important to be aware of symptoms like unexplained weight loss, fatigue, night sweats, and frequent infections. Routine blood tests and physical exams can help catch these conditions early, making treatment more manageable and increasing the chances of successful outcomes.

Ovarian Cancer: The Silent Killer

Ovarian cancer is known for not having any symptoms at the beginning stages and only having non-specific symptoms, such as bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, and changes in appetite or bowel habits, in its later stages. Unfortunately, these symptoms are often mistaken for less serious conditions, leading to late-stage diagnoses. Regular check-ups and paying close attention to your body's signals are crucial, especially for women with a family history of ovarian or breast cancer.

Prostate Cancer: The Importance of Regular Screenings

Also in September, Prostate Cancer Awareness Month emphasizes the significance of regular screenings for men, particularly those over 50 or with a family history of the disease. Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers in men, and early-stage prostate cancer can often have no symptoms. PSA (prostate-specific antigen) tests and digital rectal exams can detect prostate cancer early when it is most treatable. This September, encourage the men in your life to talk to their healthcare providers about their risk and screening options.

Thyroid Cancer: A Growing Concern

Thyroid cancer has been on the rise in recent years. The thyroid gland, located in the neck, plays a crucial role in regulating metabolism, and thyroid cancer often presents as a lump or swelling in the neck. Other symptoms can include hoarseness, difficulty swallowing, and unexplained changes in weight. Early detection through physical exams and, if necessary, imaging tests can lead to successful treatment outcomes. As with all of these cancers, vigilance and early detection are critical for positive results in treatment.

Healthy Aging: Preventive Measures for a Long, Healthy Life

Healthy aging is about more than just the absence of diseases like the cancers mentioned above; it's about living well, feeling good, and staying active and engaged as we grow older. This September, in addition to staying informed about these specific cancers, consider incorporating these general tips into your daily routine to promote healthy aging:

Stay Active: Regular physical activity helps maintain muscle mass, flexibility, and cardiovascular health.

Eat a Balanced Diet: A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains supports overall health and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

Stay Connected: Maintaining social connections and engaging in community activities can improve mental health and reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

Regular Check-Ups: Routine health screenings and check-ups are essential for catching potential issues early and managing chronic conditions effectively.



Nutrition

Overcoming Roadblocks to Healthy Eating

Healthy eating can help you lose or maintain weight, feel better overall, and possibly decrease your chances of getting certain diseases. Making smart food choices is important at any age. But eating healthy can be difficult even if you know which foods you should buy and prepare. Your budget, physical issues, mood changes, and dietary restrictions can be roadblocks to eating food that's best for you. Here are suggestions for dealing with common problems that can make it harder for older adults to follow through on smart food choices.

Trying to eat healthy on a budget?

Even when you know which healthy foods to choose, people living on fixed or limited incomes may not be able to buy what's ideal. Start by deciding how much you can afford to spend on food.

Once you have decided on your budget, look for grocery store advertising in the newspaper or online to see what is on sale. Try to plan some meals around featured items and consider purchasing extra nonperishables such as canned goods when they're on sale. Use coupons when possible and ask your grocery store staff if they have a senior discount or loyalty rewards program. Consider buying store-brand products, which are often the same as more expensive brand-name ones. Focus on buying healthy and inexpensive produce. Many nutritious fruits and vegetables — such as bananas, apples, oranges, lettuce, green peppers, and carrots — may be reasonably priced.

Give cooking a try

It's never too late to learn some cooking skills or refresh those you might not have used in a while. Search online to find information on basic cooking techniques and recipes. Borrow cookbooks with simple recipes and instructions from your local library or try an adult education cooking course. TV cooking shows might be helpful, too, especially if they show you step by step how to prepare and cook foods. Some meal delivery systems also include step-by-step instructions and pre-portioned ingredients

Tired of cooking or eating alone?

Maybe you are tired of planning and cooking dinners every night. Have you considered potluck meals? If everyone brings one part of the meal, cooking is a lot easier, and there might be leftovers to share. Or try cooking with a friend to make a meal you can enjoy together. Food delivery services are yet another option. You could also look into having some meals at a nearby senior center, community center, or religious facility. Not only will you enjoy a free or low-cost meal, but you will also have some company while you eat.

Problems chewing or swallowing food?

Do you avoid some foods because they are hard to chew? People who have problems with their teeth or dentures often avoid eating meat, fruits, or vegetables and might miss out on important nutrients. If you are having trouble chewing, see your dentist to check for problems. If you wear dentures, the dentist can check the fit.

If food seems to get stuck in your throat or is hard to swallow, it might be that you don't have enough saliva in your mouth. Or, there may be other reasons, including problems with the muscles or nerves in your throat, problems with your esophagus, or gastroesophageal reflux disease. Talk to your doctor about what might be causing your swallowing issues.

Physical problems making it hard to eat?

Sometimes illnesses such as Parkinson's disease, stroke, or arthritis can make it harder to cook or feed yourself. Your doctor might recommend an occupational therapist. The therapist might make a custom splint for your hand, give you special exercises to strengthen your muscles, or suggest rearranging things in your kitchen. Special utensils and plates might make mealtimes easier or help with food preparation.

Food tastes different?

Are foods not as tasty as you remember? It might not be the cook's fault! Maybe your sense of taste, smell, or both has changed. Growing older, having dental problems, and medication side effects can cause your senses to change. Taste and smell are important for a healthy appetite and eating. Try adding fresh herbs, spices, or lemon juice to your plate.

Smoking and drinking alcohol can also affect your sense of taste. If you smoke, quitting may not only improve your sense of taste and smell, but also your health in many other ways. If you drink alcohol, consider stopping or cutting back.

Some medicines can change how food tastes, make your mouth dry, or reduce your appetite. In turn, some foods can change how certain medicines work. You might have heard that grapefruit juice is a common culprit when used with any of several drugs. Chocolate, licorice, and alcohol are some others. Whenever your doctor prescribes a new drug for you, be sure to ask about any food-drug interactions.

Just not hungry?

Changes to your body as you age can cause some people to feel full sooner than they did when they were younger. Lack of appetite can also be a side effect of a medicine you are taking. Talk with your doctor about any side effects you may be experiencing. Your doctor may be able to suggest a different drug.

Try to be more active. In addition to all the other benefits of exercise and physical activity, these may make you hungrier. If you aren't hungry because food just isn't appealing, there are ways to make it more interesting. Make sure your foods are seasoned well, but not by adding extra salt. Try using lemon juice, vinegar, or herbs to boost the flavor.

Vary the shape, color, and texture of foods you eat. When you go shopping, look for a new vegetable, fruit, or seafood you haven't tried before or one you haven't eaten in a while. Some grocery stores have recipe cards near items, or you can ask the staff for suggestions about preparing the new food or find recipes online. Foods that are overcooked tend to have less flavor. Try cooking or steaming your vegetables for a shorter time and see if that gives them a crunch that will help spark your interest.

Too sad to eat?

Being unhappy can cause a loss of appetite. Feeling down every once in a while, is normal but if these feelings last a few weeks or months, talk with your doctor. Help and treatment options are available.



Depression and anxiety: Exercise eases symptoms

Depression and anxiety symptoms often improve with exercise. Here are some realistic tips to help you get started and stay motivated.

When you have depression or anxiety, exercise often seems like the last thing you want to do. But once you get started and keep going, exercise can make a big difference.

Exercise helps prevent and improve many health problems, including high blood pressure, diabetes and arthritis. Research on depression, anxiety and exercise shows that the mental health and physical benefits of exercise also can help mood get better and lessen anxiety.

The links between depression, anxiety and exercise aren't entirely clear. But working out and other forms of physical activity can ease symptoms of depression or anxiety and make you feel better. Exercise also may help keep depression and anxiety from coming back once you're feeling better.

How does exercise help depression and anxiety?

Regular exercise may help ease depression and anxiety by:

- **Releasing feel-good endorphins.** Endorphins are natural brain chemicals that can improve your sense of well-being.
- **Taking your mind off worries.** Thinking about something else instead of worrying can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed depression and anxiety.

Regular exercise has many mental health and emotional benefits too. It can help you:

- **Gain confidence.** Meeting exercise goals or challenges, even small ones, can boost your self-confidence. Getting in shape also can make you feel better about how you look.
- **Get more social interaction.** Exercise and physical activity may give you the chance to meet or socialize with others. Just sharing a friendly smile or greeting as you walk around your neighborhood can help your mood.
- **Cope in a healthy way.** Doing something positive to manage depression or anxiety is a healthy coping strategy. Trying to feel better by drinking alcohol, dwelling on how you feel, or hoping depression or anxiety will go away on its own can lead to worsening symptoms.

Is a structured exercise program the only option?

Some research shows that physical activity such as regular walking — not just formal exercise programs — may help mood improve. Physical activity and exercise are not the same thing, but both are good for your health.

- **Physical activity** is any activity that works your muscles and requires energy. Physical activity can include work or household or leisure activities.
- **Exercise** is a planned, structured and repetitive body movement. Exercise can help people get physically fit or to stay fit.

The word "exercise" may make you think of running laps around the gym. But exercise includes a wide range of activities that boost your activity level to help you feel better.

Certainly running, lifting weights, playing basketball and other fitness activities that get your heart pumping can help. But so can physical activity such as gardening, washing your car, walking around the block or doing other less intense activities. Any physical activity that gets you off the couch and moving can boost your mood.

You don't have to do all your exercise or other physical activity at one time. Broaden how you think of exercise. Find ways to add small amounts of physical activity throughout your day. For example, take the stairs instead of the elevator. Park a little farther away from work to fit in a short walk. Or if you live close to your job, consider biking to work.

How much is enough?

For most healthy adults, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services exercise guidelines recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity a week. Or get at least 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity a week. You also can get an equal mix of the two types.

Aim to exercise most days of the week. But even small amounts of physical activity can be helpful. Being active for short periods of time, such as 10 to 15 minutes at a time, throughout the day can add up and have health benefits.

Regular exercise may improve depression or anxiety symptoms enough to make a big difference. That big difference can help kick-start further improvements. The mental health benefits of exercise and physical activity may last only if you stick with them over the long term. That's another good reason to find activities that you enjoy.

How do I get started — and stay with it?

Starting and sticking with an exercise routine or regular physical activity can be a challenge. These steps can help:

Staying Active continued

- **Find what you enjoy doing.** Figure out what type of physical activities you're most likely to do. Then think about when and how you'd be most likely to follow through. For example, would you be more likely to do some gardening in the evening, start your day with a jog, or go for a bike ride or play basketball with your children after school? Doing what you enjoy can help you stick with it.
- **Get your healthcare professional's support.** Talk to your healthcare professional or mental health professional for suggestions and support. Talk about an exercise program or physical activity routine and how it fits into your overall treatment plan.
- **Set reasonable goals.** Your mission doesn't have to be walking for an hour five days a week. Think realistically about what you may be able to do. Then begin slowly and build up over time. Make your plan fit your own needs and abilities rather than setting goals that you're not likely to meet.
- **Don't think of exercise or physical activity as a chore.** If exercise is just another "should" in your life that you don't think you're living up to, you'll think of it as a failure. Instead, look at your exercise or physical activity schedule the same way you look at your therapy sessions or medicine — as one of the tools to help you get better.
- **Think about what keeps you from being successful.** Figure out what's stopping you from being physically active or exercising. If you think about what's stopping you, you can probably find a solution. For example, if you feel self-conscious, you may want to exercise at home. If you stick to goals better with a partner, find a friend to work out with or who enjoys the same physical activities that you do. If you don't have money to spend on exercise gear, do something that's cost-free, such as regular walking.
- **Prepare for setbacks and obstacles.** Give yourself credit for every step in the right direction, no matter how small. If you skip exercise one day, that doesn't mean you can't keep up an exercise routine and might as well quit. Just try again the next day. Stick with it.

Do I need to see my healthcare professional?

Check with your doctor or other healthcare professional before starting a new exercise program to make sure it's safe for you. Talk about which activities, how much exercise and what intensity level is OK for you. Your healthcare professional can consider any medicines you take and your health conditions. You also can get helpful advice about getting started and staying on track.

If you exercise regularly but depression or anxiety symptoms still affect your daily living, see your healthcare professional or mental health professional. Exercise and physical activity are great ways to ease symptoms of depression or anxiety, but they don't replace talk therapy, sometimes called psychotherapy, or medicines.

Brag Moment – High Desert Quilters Shine!

We're excited to give a big shout-out to our very own High Desert Quilters this month! They recently completed and donated over *50 handmade baby bibs* — a beautiful contribution that will support families and little ones in our community.

Thank you, High Desert Quilters, for your creativity, generosity, and for sharing your incredible talents. We're so proud to highlight the amazing work you do!



Aimee Guinotte Benage

Dee Bovenzi

Lorinda Brandon

Susan Drury

Margaret Duran

Aulia Gies

Judy Griffith

Marc Liebert

Barb McKinney

Le Nien Mueller

Teresa Sanchez

Raj Sudarsanam

Dorothy Wood

Betty Ziesmer



Happy Birthday !!

Name: _____ Date: _____



September



APPLES
 ASTERS
 AUTUMNAL
 BACK TO SCHOOL
 BACKPACK
 BONFIRE
 BOOKS
 BUS
 CARAMEL APPLE
 CHILL
 CIDER
 CINNAMON
 COACH
 COLLEGE
 COOLER
 CORN MAZE
 CRISP
 CROPS
 DECIDUOUS
 ELEMENTARY
 EQUINOX
 FALL
 FESTIVALS
 FLANNEL
 FOLIAGE
 FOOTBALL
 FROST
 GAMES
 GOLD
 GOLDENROD
 GOURDS
 GRANDPARENTS DAY
 HARVEST
 HAYRIDE
 HIGH SCHOOL
 HOMECOMING
 HOMEWORK
 LABOR DAY
 LEAF PEEPERS
 LEAF PILE
 LEARN
 LEAVES
 MABON
 MUMS
 NINTH
 NOTEBOOKS
 NUTMEG

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ORANGE
 ORCHARD
 PENCILS
 PICK YOUR OWN
 PRACTICE
 PUMPKINS
 RAKE
 REAP
 RED

SPORTS
 STUDY
 SUNFLOWER FIELDS
 SWEATERS
 SWEATSHIRT
 TAILGATING
 TEACH
 WORKERS
 YELLOW



Name: _____ Date: _____

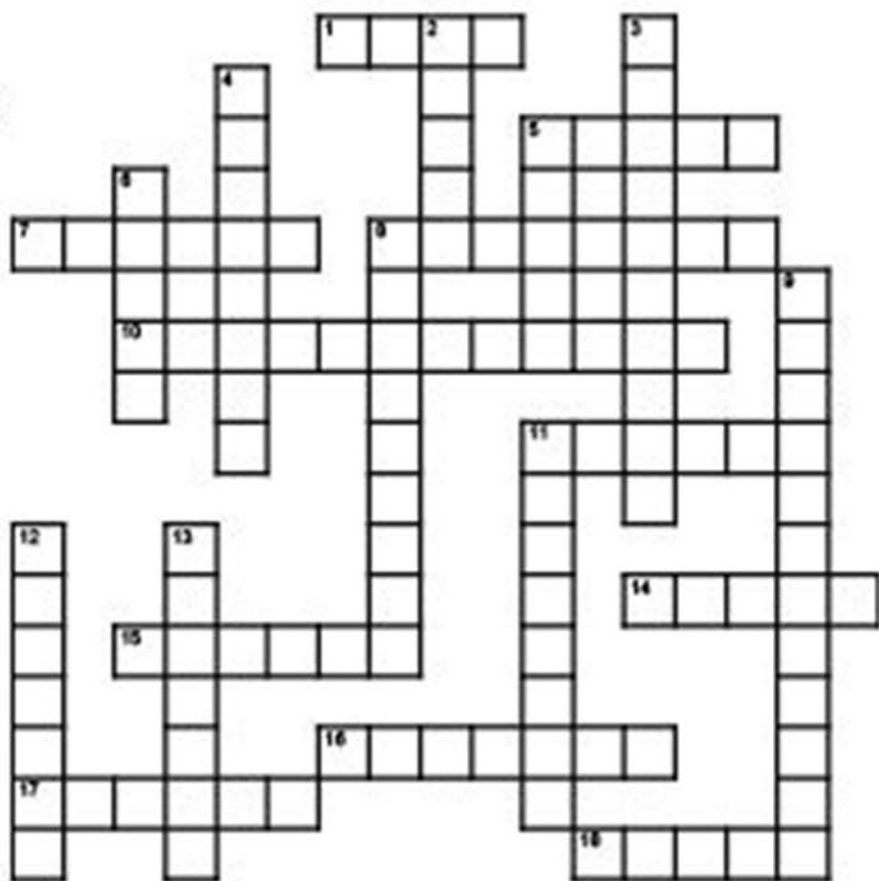
ACROSS

1. Season that begins in September.
5. Flower associated with September.
7. Number of days in September.
8. Birthstone for the month of September.
10. Celebrated on the second Sunday of September: ____ Day.
11. These might get raked into a pile in September.
14. September is the ____ month of the year.
15. Season that ends in September.
16. Where you might pick apples in the fall.
17. This might start up in September.
18. Fruit of the oak tree.



DOWN

2. Astrological sign for the second half of September (pair of scales).
3. September 11th.
4. Team sport often associated with September.
5. Crisp fruit which is often red.
6. Astrological sign for the first half of September (maiden).
8. Name for this month comes from the Roman word for seventh.
9. Celebrated on September 17th: ____ Day.
11. First Monday of September.
12. Gathering of crops at the end of summer.
13. Event which occurs around September 22nd or 23rd.



Acorn	Libra
Apple	Ninth
Aster	Orchard
Constitution	Patriot Day
Equinox	Sapphire
Fall	School
Football	September
Grandparents	Summer
Harvest	Thirty
Labor Day	Virgo
Leaves	



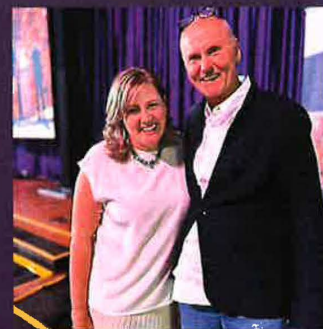
SAVE THE DATE



NEW MEXICO CONFERENCE ON AGING

SEPTEMBER 23-24, 2026

GLORIETA CONFERENCE CENTER



Conference Highlights

NOW TWO DAYS

- Workshops on caregiving, wellness, brain health, tech, fraud prevention, creativity, policy, and more
- Engaging speakers, activities, and entertainment
- Meals and snacks
- Exhibits and networking
- Shuttles to and from Santa Fe and around the venue

Resources

- Multi-state agency expo
- On-site benefits sign-up opportunities
- Recreational activities including pickleball, zip lining, nature hikes, crafts and more!

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Presented by

