

DEAR MAC MEMBERS

Greetings MAC Friends!

The Summer, 2026 edition of the MAC Healthy Living Newsletter is devoted to “The Keys to Healthy Aging”. I know you will enjoy the information included providing insight and tips as we age. Take note of all the MAC opportunities we have scheduled! From Alaska to Australia, Branson to the Badgett Theater, Patti’s to Portugal and one day bus trips - the MAC Club has so much going on! We will announce dates and new events between newsletters via email. If you are not receiving emails, please confirm your settings on your email account and also email us with your correct email. We want to be sure you know all the news!



Hope to see you soon!

Regina Smith

Guest and Senior Services Manager
West Tennessee Healthcare

AGING WELL

As we grow older, we experience an increasing number of major life changes, including career transitions and retirement, children leaving home, the loss of loved ones, physical and health challenges—and even a loss of independence. How we handle and grow from these changes is often the key to healthy aging. Coping with change is difficult at any age and it’s natural to feel the losses you experience. However, by balancing your sense of loss with positive factors, you can stay healthy and continue to reinvent yourself as you pass through landmark ages of 60, 70, 80, and beyond.

Aging well tip 1: Learn to cope with change

As you age, there will be periods of both joy and stress. It’s important to build your resilience and find healthy ways to cope with challenges. This ability will help you make the most of the good times and keep your perspective when times are tough.

Focus on the things you’re grateful for. The longer you live, the more you lose. But as you lose people and things, life becomes even more precious. When you stop taking things for granted, you appreciate and enjoy what you have even more.

Accept the things you can’t change. Many things in life are beyond our control. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems. Face your limitations with dignity and a healthy dose of humor.

Look for the silver lining. As the saying goes, “What doesn’t kill us makes us stronger.” When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth. If your own poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.

Staying healthy through humor, laughter, and play. Laughter is strong medicine for both the body and the mind. It helps you stay balanced, energetic, joyful, and healthy at any age. A sense of humor helps you get through tough times, look outside yourself, laugh at the absurdities of life, and transcend difficulties. See: Laughter is the Best Medicine.

Tip 2: Find meaning and joy

A key ingredient in the recipe for healthy aging is the continuing ability to find meaning and joy in life. As you age, your life will change and you will gradually lose things that previously occupied your time and gave your life purpose. For example, your job may change, you may eventually retire from your career, your children may leave home, or other friends and family may move far away. But this is not a time to stop moving forward. Later life can be a time of exciting new adventures if you let it. Everyone has different ways of experiencing meaning and joy, and the activities you enjoy may change over time. If your career slows down or you retire, or if your children leave home, you may find you have more time to enjoy activities outside of work and immediate family. Either way, taking time to nourish your spirit is never wasted.

The possibilities are endless. The important thing is to find activities that are both meaningful and enjoyable for you.

One of the greatest challenges of aging is maintaining your support network. Staying connected isn’t always easy as you grow older—even for those who have always had an active social life. Career changes, retirement, illness, and moves out of the local area can take away close friends and family members. And the older you get, the more people you inevitably lose. In later life, getting around may become difficult for either you or members of your social network. It’s important to find ways to reach out and connect to others, regardless of whether or not you live with a spouse or partner. Along with regular exercise, staying social can have the most impact on your health as you age. Having an array of people you can turn to for company and support as you age is a buffer

against loneliness, depression, disability, hardship, and loss.

The good news is that there are lots of ways to be with other people. It doesn't matter what you do, so long as you find ways to get out of the house (if possible) and socialize:

Tip 3: Connect regularly with friends and family. Spend time with people you enjoy and who make you feel upbeat. It may be a neighbor who you like to exercise with, a lunch date with an old friend, shopping with your children, or playing with your grandkids. Even if you are not close by, call or email frequently to keep relationships fresh.

Make an effort to make new friends. As you lose people in your circle, it is vital to make new connections so your social life doesn't decline. Make it a point to befriend people who are younger than you. Younger friends can reenergize you and help you see life from a fresh perspective.

Spend time with at least one person every day. Whatever your living or work situation, you shouldn't be alone day after day. Phone or email contact is not a replacement for spending time with other people. Regular face-to-face contact helps you ward off depression and stay positive.

Volunteer. Giving back to the community is a wonderful way to strengthen social bonds and meet others interested in similar activities or who share similar values. Even if your mobility becomes limited, you can get involved by volunteering on the phone.

Find support groups in times of change. If you or a loved one is coping with a serious illness or recent loss, it can be very helpful to participate in a support group with others undergoing the same challenges.

Tip 4: Get active and boost vitality

Don't fall for the myth that growing older automatically means you're not going to feel good anymore. It is true that aging involves physical changes, but it doesn't have to mean discomfort and disability. While not all illness or pain is avoidable, many of the physical challenges associated with aging can be overcome or drastically mitigated by exercising, eating right, and taking care of yourself. And it's never too late to start! No matter how old you are or how unhealthy you've been in the past, caring for your body has enormous benefits that will help you stay active, sharpen your memory, boost your immune system, manage health problems, and increase your energy. In fact, adults who take up exercise later in life, for example, often show greater physical and mental improvements than their younger counterparts—because they aren't encumbered by the same sports injuries that many regular exercisers experience as they age. Similarly, many older adults report feeling better than ever because they are making more of an effort to be healthy than they did when they were younger.

Exercise

A recent Swedish study found that exercise is the number one contributor to longevity, adding extra years to your life—even if you don't start exercising until your senior years.

But it's not just about adding years to your life, it's about adding life to your years. Exercise helps you maintain your strength and agility, increases vitality, improves sleep, gives your mental health a boost, and can even help diminish chronic pain. Exercise can also have a profound effect on the brain, helping prevent memory loss, cognitive decline, and dementia.

As you age, your relationship to food may change along with your body. A decreased metabolism, changes in taste and smell, and slower digestion may affect your appetite, the foods you can eat, and how your body

processes food. But now, more than ever, healthy eating is important to maintain your energy and health.

Avoiding sugary foods and refined carbs and loading up on high-fiber fruits, vegetables, and whole grains instead will help you feel more energetic, while eating with others is a great way to stay in touch with friends.

Get plenty of sleep

Many studies connect poor sleep with a variety of health problems. For instance, a 2025 meta-analysis published in *GeroScience* found that sleep disorders, such as insomnia, increased the risk of dementia and cognitive decline. Unfortunately, many adults complain of sleep problems as they age, including insomnia, daytime sleepiness, and frequent waking during the night. But getting older doesn't automatically bring sleep problems. Developing healthy sleep habits as you age can help you ensure you get enough quality sleep each night.

Avoid artificial light from screens for at least one hour before bed, and increase your activity levels during the day. A soothing bedtime ritual, like taking a bath or playing music can help you wind down and get a good night's sleep.

Tip 5: Keep your mind sharp

There are many good reasons for keeping your brain as active as your body. Exercising, keeping your brain active, and maintaining creativity can actually help to prevent cognitive decline and memory problems. The more active and social you are and the more you use and sharpen your brain, the more benefits you will get. This is especially true if your career no longer challenges you or if you've retired from work altogether.

Challenge your brain. For some people, challenging your brain could involve playing new games or sports. Other people may enjoy puzzles or trying out new cooking recipes. Find something that you enjoy and challenge your brain by trying new variations or increasing how well you do an activity. If you like crosswords, move to a more challenging crossword series or try your hand at a new word game. If you like to cook, try a completely different type of food, or if you're a golfer, aim to lower your handicap.

Vary your habits. You don't have to work elaborate crosswords or puzzles to keep your memory sharp. Try to work in something new each day, whether it is taking a different route to work or the grocery store or brushing your teeth with a different hand. Varying your habits can help to create new pathways in the brain.

Take on a completely new subject. Taking on a new subject is a great way to continue to learn. Have you always wanted to learn a different language? Learn new computer skills? Learn to play the piano? There are many inexpensive classes at community centers or community colleges that allow you to tackle new subjects.

Information provided by Melinda Smith, M.A., Jeanne Segal, Ph.D. and Monika White, Ph.D. in HealthGuide.org

LET'S PARTY



MAC Christmas Party! - Save the Date!

MAC Annual Christmas Party - Monday, December 14th
Details to follow!

COMING SOON

Coming this fall! New MAC office hours. Beginning this fall, we will have new hours for the MAC office. With the new hours, we will have someone in the office to greet you when you stop by!

VOLUNTEERS

Interested in volunteering? The MAC office is in need of an additional two-three volunteers. Requirements: friendly/outgoing personality, computer skills, telephone skills, filing and other office needs. Volunteers are needed on a weekly basis each Thursday – 4 hours per week. Volunteers must complete training requirements through our WTH Volunteer Services.

Interested in planning MAC events, day and overnight trips? We are putting together a MAC Steering Committee to help us plan for future events and travel opportunities. If you are interested, please call the Senior Services office at 731-541-8757 and leave your name and phone number.



LUNCH BUNCH

- Dutch treat lunch together at Rock n Dough Pizza: Tuesday, August 27th at 11 am. Afterwards we can stroll over to take a tour of the LIFT!

Call the MAC office for reservations: 731-541-8757.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group

Meeting August 6th, September 3rd, October 3rd

Meetings are held at the Pat Summitt Resource Center, located inside the Senior Services Department, 569 Skyline Drive, Suite 201 (upstairs). Reservations encouraged but not required. Please call 731-541-8757 for more information.

Pat Summitt Resource Center – providing information for families facing the journey of Alzheimer's Disease and other Dementias.

Call the Senior Services office at 731-541-8757 for an appointment.

LET'S TRAVEL



Collette Tours

September 2026	Alaska – Land and Cruise
November 2026	Sunny Portugal Discovery
December 2026	Southern Charm Holiday
March 2027	South Pacific Wonders
June 2027	Discover American Heritage
October 2027	Magical Rhine and Moselle River Cruise
November 2027	Christmas Markets of Montreal, Quebec

Just added! (Sign up now for \$100)

Be sure you plan to join the cruisers for this fun annual trip together!

January 2027	Annual January Cruise
October 2026	Branson Bus Tour

Call the MAC office for brochures and sign up info! Act quickly - trips fill up fast!

DAYTRIPS

Tuesday, August 11th: (note date change) \$105 per person The Redneck Comedy Bus Tour of Nashville. Lunch at the Loveless Café (dutch treat)

Saturday, September 26th: Neil Diamond Tribute at the Badgett Theater, Grand Rivers, KY. Lunch at Patti's. \$150 per person (includes show, lunch at Patti's and charter bus)

Saturday, December 19th: Vince Gill and Amy Grant Christmas Concert – A MAC Tradition – matinee performance. Dutch treat lunch in Nashville before the show. \$150 per person.

TRAVEL MEETING



Sawyer Shoates with Collette Travel will join us on August 31st for our Fall Travel update. He will provide detailed information on our upcoming trips, including 2027.

Meeting times/locations:

- Jackson Madison County General Hospital, J W Barnes Conference Center - 9:30 am
- WTH Henry County Hospital, Paris, TN - 4:00 pm



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WORD LIST

SUMMER	SUNSET	GRILL	WETSUIT	SEAGULL	GOGGLES
BIKINI	SHORTS	CASTLE	SPLASH	POOL	CAMPING

[illegible]

ACROSS

4. Small insects you often see outside.
6. Lotion that protects your skin from the sun.
8. Cooking food outside over a grill.
9. A tall tree found in tropical places.
10. Shoes you slip on for the beach.
13. A wooden path near the water.
15. A tube that helps you breathe while swimming.
17. A big fire built outdoors at night.
18. Colorful rock like structures found

DOWN

1. Clothing worn for swimming.
2. A juicy fruit with a green rind.
3. A toy that flies in the wind.
5. A boat powered by wind.
7. A sweet, tangy summer drink.
8. A big, light ball you throw at the beach.
11. Where you can swim, play, or relax.
12. A hot summer month in the U.S.
14. Cooking outside over flames.
16. A box that keeps food and drinks cold.
19. A light hat worn in the sun.