



## Fresh ideas to keep you connected during this time of social distancing

It's been a long year as the coronavirus has turned life upside down for everyone. With guidelines and restrictions in place to protect them from being exposed to the virus, seniors have deeply felt isolated and lonely. While it's of the utmost importance that they are protected, it's also vital that they stay physically and mentally active, and connected to others.

With the development of vaccines, we are all very hopeful that an end is finally in sight. However, it's still important to follow the social distancing guidelines until we are in the clear. In case you feel as though you've exhausted ideas, or are just looking for something new to do, here

are a few activities everyone can enjoy.

### **Family activities for seniors and their loved ones**

With many senior centers closed, family caregivers have been spending more time at home with their loved ones. Here are some activities you can do as a quarantined family to stay engaged during social isolation.

**Sort through old keepsakes.** Do you have photos tucked away in boxes that haven't been opened in years? Dust off albums and reminisce together. Go through your old yearbooks and share stories about days past. Organize

your cherished photos and mementos in acid-free boxes to keep them from fading.

**Learn about your family history.** Online resources such as ancestry.com offer at-home test kits that can help trace your genetic line back dozens of generations. You can find endless amounts of information for building a family tree as well. The results can be a great start to conversations about your family's history.

**Grow a garden.** Now is the time to think about your spring garden and flower pots. Being outside in nature decreases stress and fosters a sense of well-being. Gardening is beneficial to everyone, even if you only have space for a flower pot or two. Many home improvement and hardware stores offer curbside pickup or delivery.

**Take a virtual trip.** Google Earth is an amazing way to “travel” safely during social distancing. Try looking up your childhood home or the town you visited on your honeymoon. If you have old photos, compare with how it looks today. Check out Google Arts & Culture for a vast array of museums from all over the world that offer you a tour from the safety of your home.

**Redecorate a room.** Refreshed indoor spaces can make social isolation a little less dreary. If you've been meaning to clear out clutter or rearrange rooms, this is a great opportunity to do it. Even small changes, such as new bedding, or an updated rug can brighten a room. Look for tips on how to decorate on a budget in books or online.

**Bake.** Does your family have a recipe that has been passed down for generations? Set aside a date and time and host a video chat with other relatives and make Aunt Ellie's special cake recipe - together.

### Solo activities for seniors during social isolation

If you are isolating in your own home without contact from others, here are some unique ways for seniors to spend time alone:

**Volunteer.** If you enjoy giving back to the community, check out charitable organizations that have set up ways to volunteer from home. One option connects isolated seniors with children learning to read!

**Play games.** Brain games for seniors may reduce the likelihood of dementia and improve cognitive health. Virtual activities are a great way to stay mentally stimulated and learn new skills. Everyone will benefit from the challenges

of friendly competition. There are many games you can play – Bingo, Checkers, Dominoes, and Scrabble to name a few – thanks to online communities such as Board Game Arena.

**Focus on mental health.** Many seniors experience anxiety and depression. With the coronavirus preventing family activities, it can be even easier to feel overwhelmed. Free apps for your phone, such as Headspace, allow you to follow along with morning meditations, or listen to inspiring stories from others.



**Follow your artistic pursuits.** If your loved one is an artist or writer, encourage these creative activities! Ask them if they need supplies such as brushes or art canvases. It can be difficult to find motivation during these stressful times, but the patience and practice that go into achieving a finished product is a rewarding experience for everyone. You don't have to be a pro; adult coloring books, doodles, and journaling are all beneficial.

**Read a book.** Reducing stress, enhancing sleep, and improving brain health are a few of the benefits of reading a book. Reading is also a great distraction from the present. In a time of practicing social distancing, reading a book can transport you to a different time and place. If your loved one doesn't have the eyesight or attention span to read traditional books, consider interesting podcasts or books on tape. Start a mini family book club and have others read along with you, then discuss it on video chat together.

We all need social connection now more than ever. Fighting the loneliness we are feeling does not need to be difficult. By introducing a few of these activities you and your loved one can create a connection to keep loneliness and isolation at bay safely - hopefully for just a little longer!



Parkinson's is a lifelong, neurodegenerative disease – meaning that symptoms will slowly worsen over time. The condition causes tremors, gait and balance issues, limb stiffness, and slowing of movements. Parkinson's disease can manifest itself in the form of non-motor symptoms such as pain, short-term memory loss, depression, dementia, fatigue, sleep issues, digestive problems, loss of self-esteem, and stress, as well.

All this can make activities of daily living challenging. Assisting Hands® Home Care understands how daunting living well with Parkinson's can be for clients and their family caregivers. We have skilled and compassionate home caregivers who can help them through the routine of daily living.

## April is Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month

April is National Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month and the Parkinson's community gets into high gear to raise awareness of this disease that touches so many lives. It is estimated that more than one million people in the U.S. have Parkinson's disease, and that number makes supporting the Parkinson's community even more important. By raising awareness, the hope is to improve the quality of life of those who have been diagnosed and to advance research toward medical breakthroughs, and one day, a cure.

**What is it?** Parkinson's Foundation study to determine Parkinson's disease (PD) prevalence in North America.

**930,000** people in the U.S. with PD by 2020

**1.2 million** people in the U.S. with PD by 2030

**1978** Study nearly doubles 1978 Parkinson's prevalence total.

Study confirms men are more likely to have PD than women.

Study confirms number of people diagnosed with PD increases with age, regardless of sex.

**Parkinson's Foundation**

While there is no cure for Parkinson's disease, prescribed medications, surgery, along with healthy lifestyle choices such as diet and exercise can alleviate some of the symptoms. Alternative therapies such as acupuncture may provide relief from symptoms as well. By taking an active role, those with Parkinson's can live a full life for many years. Visit [parkinson.org](http://parkinson.org) to learn more about the disease and find out how you can get involved.

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2	4							
	5		9		4			1
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			7	4	6			
		6				7		
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## Sudoku:

The aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Each number can only be used once in each row, once in each column, and once in each of the 3x3 boxes. This puzzle is CHALLENGING!

Visit [www.krazydad.com](http://www.krazydad.com) for further tips and help about how to play – and good luck!

*Sudoku puzzle courtesy of [www.krazydad.com](http://www.krazydad.com)*



# Simply Delicious

## Linguine with Lemon & Tomatoes

This roasted lemon & tomato linguine pasta is a simple, yet elevated dinner. *Courtesy of loveandlemons.com.*

**Prep Time:** 5 mins; **Cook Time:** 30 mins;  
**Total Time:** 35 mins; **Serves 2**

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup roasted tomatoes
- 4 very thin lemon slices
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 6 ounces linguine pasta
- 1 1/2 cups arugula
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme
- 3 ounces fresh mozzarella, torn
- 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts
- 1/2 cup fresh basil
- Sea salt and ground black pepper

### Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a small baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Place the lemon slices on the baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Roast for 15 to 20 minutes or until they're golden brown around the edges. Finely mince the lemons and set aside.
- In the bottom of a medium-sized (cold) pot, combine the olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, and 1/4 teaspoon sea salt.
- Prepare the pasta according to the package directions, cooking until al dente. Reserve 1/4 cup of the pasta cooking water. Scoop the hot pasta into the pot, along with the reserved pasta water, the arugula, and toss. If necessary, gently heat until the arugula wilts and the pasta is warmed through. Add the thyme, tomatoes, lemons, and toss again. Top with the mozzarella, pine nuts, and basil. Gently toss, season to taste and serve.



## Cherry Clafoutis

This cherry clafoutis recipe is a delicious dessert! *Courtesy of Diala's Kitchen by Diala Canelo.*

**Prep Time:** 10 mins; **Cook Time:** 30 mins; **Resting Time:** 40 mins; **Serves 8**

### Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/2 cup whole milk Greek yogurt
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- Zest of 1/2 lemon
- 1 cup pitted sweet cherries or tart cherries
- powdered sugar, for dusting
- Toasted sliced raw almonds, for serving

### Instructions:

- In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, milk, yogurt, granulated sugar, flour, salt, vanilla, and almond extract. Whisk until just mixed. Add the melted butter and lemon zest and stir until thoroughly combined. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit for 30 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease eight 6-ounce ramekins.
- Divide the batter among the ramekins. Spread a layer of cherries on top of the batter.
- Bake for 30 to 35 minutes until lightly golden brown and barely set in the middle. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving.
- To serve, dust with powdered sugar and sprinkle with almonds, if desired.