



## *Fun fall activities* to enjoy with seniors

After a hot summer, there's nothing better than that first cool day you can actually *feel* the weather start to break. In many parts of the country, hues of orange, red and yellow will soon be painting the trees as they prepare to shed their leaves. This season of harvest brings a variety of activities, sights, smells, and flavors like no other. Toasting marshmallows for s'mores, carving pumpkins, picking apples, enjoying warm apple cider, apple pie – apple everything!

As we age, one of the most important things we can do for our health is to remain as active as we possibly can. Getting out of the house while spending time with someone you care about can boost everyone's mood and create wonderful memories. Even if you or your loved one are unable to get out of the house, there are many ways to enjoy autumn. The changing season brings plenty of opportunities to try

new things. Here are a few fall-centered ideas that will help you take advantage of this beautiful season.

### **Enjoy nature's colors.**

One of the biggest highlights of fall is the turning of the leaves. Short walks and leisurely drives allow seniors with varying levels of mobility to admire the fall foliage and get some fresh air at the same time. Many parks offer wheelchair accessible paths that make it possible for everyone to enjoy the outdoors. Another way to enjoy the fall color change is to simply go for a drive. It may not be physical activity, but it still gets you out of the house. For seniors with very limited mobility, gathering some leaves for crafts and bringing them indoors can help them feel connected and enjoy the season as well.

## Go birdwatching.

While you're outdoors, why not take some time to watch the birds? Fall is one of the best times to birdwatch as many species begin to migrate to different parts of the country. Grab a bird book and a pair of binoculars. Choose an area and see how many varieties of birds you can identify as they call back and forth to each other. Birdwatching in a park could be a nice activity for a senior and their caregiver to enjoy together.

## Pick a pumpkin.

Head to your local pumpkin patch together and pick your own pumpkins and gourds, then spend the afternoon carving and decorating for fall. Choose smaller, saw-like utensils that are safer to use. Make your pumpkin a traditional jack-o-lantern, or look for new ideas for pumpkin decorating. For instance, plant lovers can make a succulent pumpkin by simply attaching moss to the top of the pumpkin and adding succulent cuttings. This is the perfect activity to schedule when the grandchildren visit. As for the leftovers, creative food lovers can try their hand at making a pumpkin pie, and roasting the seeds for a healthy snack.

Falls Prevention Awareness Week is September 18-24

# Take Control of Your Health: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall

Every **11 seconds**, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury. **Many falls are preventable.**  
**Stay safe with these tips!**

**1**



### Find a good balance and exercise program

Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for referrals. Find a program you like and take a friend.

**2**



### Talk to your health care provider

Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.

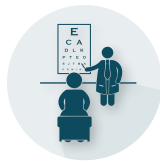
**3**



### Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist

Make sure side effects aren't increasing your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed.

**4**



### Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses

Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.

**5**



### Keep your home safe

Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in key areas.

**6**



### Talk to your family members

Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a seniors' issue.

## Pick your own apples.

Apple picking at a local orchard is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, buy local fruit, and get some fresh air and exercise. If apple picking is too strenuous on your own, bring a friend or grandchild along to help. Call ahead to see if your local orchard is handicap accessible. For those with limited mobility, many farms offer hayrides to explore the grounds. Later, you can work together to turn your harvest into a homemade apple pie. Don't forget the apple cider and donuts.

The beauty of the changing leaves and autumn scenery gives many a reason to look forward to this time of year. Seniors who stay active and keep their minds stimulated are more likely to improve their overall health and wellness. Talk to your loved one to find out what kinds of activities they're interested in. Ask about what they used to do when they were younger and how they would celebrate fall. Whatever fall activities you choose, enjoy your time together and make the most of each day!

To learn more, visit [ncoa.org/FallsPrevention](http://ncoa.org/FallsPrevention).

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# Just for FUN

Find these autumn words hidden within the puzzle above. Have fun!

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>PUMPKIN</b>   | <b>SQUIRREL</b>     |
| <b>COOL</b>      | <b>HALLOWEEN</b>    |
| <b>ORANGE</b>    | <b>SQUASH</b>       |
| <b>OCTOBER</b>   | <b>PEARS</b>        |
| <b>YELLOW</b>    | <b>THANKSGIVING</b> |
| <b>NOVEMBER</b>  | <b>CORN</b>         |
| <b>ACORN</b>     | <b>HAYSTACK</b>     |
| <b>SEASON</b>    | <b>FALL</b>         |
| <b>CHESTNUTS</b> | <b>RAINCOAT</b>     |
| <b>PINECONE</b>  | <b>HARVEST</b>      |
| <b>LEAF</b>      | <b>SEPTEMBER</b>    |
| <b>APPLE</b>     | <b>CHANGE</b>       |



*“And the fruits will outdo what the flowers have promised.”*

— François de Malherbe

# Simply Delicious

## Creamy Pumpkin Pasta Sauce

**Prep Time:** 20 mins; **Cook Time:** 50 mins; **Serves:** 4

This recipe works best in a high speed blender, such as a Vitamix. If you're using a regular blender, be sure to soak your cashews overnight.

### Ingredients

- ½ kabocha squash or small sugar pie pumpkin, to yield 1 heaping cup cooked mash
- ½ yellow onion, sliced into wedges
- 2 garlic cloves, unpeeled
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, more for drizzling
- 5 large fresh sage leaves
- ¾ cup vegetable broth
- ½ cup raw unsalted cashews, soaked for 4 hours or overnight, drained and rinsed
- 16 ounces uncooked penne pasta
- ½ teaspoon sea salt, more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper

### Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a baking sheet with foil. Place the pumpkin, onion, and garlic on the baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Turn the pumpkin cut-side down and pierce a few holes in the skin with a fork. Cover with another sheet of foil and bake until the onion is soft and the pumpkin flesh is very tender, 35 minutes to 1 hour.
  - Add the sage to the pan during the last few minutes. Remove the pan from the oven, keeping everything covered, and let it continue to steam for another 10 to 15 minutes.
  - Pour the vegetable broth into a high-speed blender. Remove the skin and add the pumpkin flesh to the blender along with the onion, peeled garlic, sage, cashews, ½ teaspoon salt, and freshly ground black pepper. Blend until smooth and creamy. Add the 2 tablespoons olive oil and blend again. (If your sauce is not smooth and creamy, add a little more broth or olive oil and blend it longer).
  - Cook the pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water according to package directions or until al dente. Reserve ½ cup of the starchy pasta water before draining the pasta.
  - Drain the pasta and return it to the pot. Stir in half the sauce, adding more as needed to coat the pasta. Add the reserved pasta water, ¼ cup at a time, to thin the sauce and make it creamy. Add the remaining sauce as desired. Taste and season with more salt and pepper. Serve hot.
- *courtesy of loveandlemons.com*



## Apple Crumble

**Prep Time:** 10 mins; **Cook Time:** 33 mins; **Serves:** 6

### Ingredients

Spiced apple filling

- 5 apples, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- Pinch of sea salt

Topping

- ½ cup almond flour
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup whole rolled oats
- ⅓ cup crushed walnuts
- \* ⅓ cup brown sugar or coconut sugar
- ⅓ cup melted coconut oil
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- Heaping ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon water, if needed

### Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 400°F and grease an 8x8-inch baking dish.
- Make the filling: Combine the apples, apple cider vinegar, and water in a saucepan and simmer over very low heat, covered, stirring occasionally (making sure the apples don't burn on the bottom of the pan) for 15 minutes. Uncover, stir, and add the cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and salt and stir again. The apples should be tender, and the juices should be thick.
- Make the topping: In a food processor, place the flours, oats, walnuts, sugar, coconut oil, cinnamon, and salt and pulse until crumbly. Add the water if needed.
- Scoop the apple filling into the baking dish and sprinkle with the topping. Bake for 18 to 22 minutes or until lightly crisp on top. – *courtesy of tasteofhome.com*