



Hand in Hand

eNewsletter



Enjoy the sights, sounds, flavors, and traditions of autumn *your way*

September and October bring some of the most enjoyable days of the year – cooler temperatures, colorful leaves, football games, fall festivals, and the comforting sights and smells of the season. For older adults, fall is also a wonderful opportunity to get out, stay engaged, and create meaningful moments with family and friends. The key is choosing activities that match each person's interests, energy level, and abilities.

For those who enjoy getting out and about, fall is the perfect time for a scenic drive or leisurely outing. Take a drive through the countryside to enjoy the changing leaves, visit a local farmers market, attend a fall festival, or stop for a warm drink at a favorite café. Even a short outing can pro-

vide a change of scenery and something to look forward to. If walking is difficult, many of these experiences can still be enjoyed from the comfort of a vehicle or with a wheelchair or mobility aid.

For moderately active seniors, bring a little fall adventure closer to home. Take a gentle walk around the neighborhood to enjoy the crisp air and colorful trees, visit a pumpkin patch, go apple picking, or spend an afternoon watching a high school or college football game. Invite a grandchild, friend, or family member along to turn an ordinary outing into a shared experience. The goal isn't how far you go – it's enjoying the season *together*.

For those who prefer staying close to home, fall can come indoors. Bake a favorite apple or pumpkin recipe, make a seasonal craft or decorate with pumpkins and fall flowers. Looking through old family photographs can also become a wonderful activity. Ask questions about the people, places, and memories in the pictures and let the stories unfold. Sometimes the best conversations begin with a simple photograph.

For seniors with limited mobility activities can be lighter while still being meaningful. Sit outside on a sunny afternoon with your caregiver, watch the leaves change, listen to favorite music, enjoy a seasonal puzzle, or have a cup of cider with a family member.

For individuals living with memory challenges, familiar fall traditions can provide comfort and connection. Look through family albums, sing familiar songs, sort photographs, fold towels, decorate cookies, or help arrange simple decorations. Focus less on completing a task perfectly and more on being involved. A familiar activity can create opportunities for conversation, reassurance, and moments of connection – even when memories themselves may be difficult to recall.

Don't forget the little adventures. You don't need a big event or elaborate plans to make autumn memorable. Have a backyard "fall picnic," enjoy lunch on the patio, watch a favorite movie with popcorn, visit a library, pick out a new sweater, or take a drive to see Halloween decorations. For family members who live nearby, consider starting a simple seasonal tradition that everyone can look forward to each year.

This fall, look for opportunities to make the season fit the person – not the other way around. Whether it's a scenic drive, a pumpkin on the porch, a favorite recipe, or simply watching the leaves fall together, meaningful moments can happen at every ability level. Sometimes, the simplest activities become the memories families treasure most.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the time to raise awareness, encourage early detection, and honor the many individuals and families whose lives have been touched by breast cancer.

Breast cancer can affect people of all ages, making awareness and regular conversations about breast health important. Women should talk with their healthcare provider about recommended screenings based on their age, personal health history, and individual risk factors.

For families caring for an older loved one, October can also be a reminder to offer encouragement and support. Help make healthcare appointments easier, provide transportation when needed, or simply be there to listen. Sometimes, knowing someone is by your side can make all the difference.

In October, wear pink, share a message of hope, and take a moment to appreciate the strength of survivors, remember those we have lost, and support everyone affected by breast cancer. Together, awareness can inspire action – and support can bring hope.

Step into fall safely

Fall is a beautiful time of year, but it's also a good reminder to take a closer look at fall prevention and safety. Falls can happen quickly and may result in serious injuries, especially for older adults. The good news is that many falls can be prevented with a few simple changes and a little extra awareness.

Start by keeping walkways clear of clutter, cords, and loose rugs. Make sure rooms, hallways, and stairways are well lit, and consider adding night-lights in bedrooms and bathrooms. Outdoors, watch for wet leaves, uneven sidewalks, and other seasonal hazards.

Encourage safe footwear with good support and non-slip soles, both inside and outside the home. If a cane, walker, or other mobility aid is recommended, make sure it is properly fitted and used consistently. It's also important to take your time when standing up, turning, or walking – especially when moving from a seated or lying position.

Fall Prevention Awareness Week, September 21–25, is a great opportunity for families to walk through the home together and look for potential hazards. A few minutes spent identifying and correcting safety concerns today can help an older loved one remain safer, more confident, and independent tomorrow.

At Assisting Hands, we understand that safety is an important part of quality care. Our caregivers can provide supportive assistance with everyday activities while helping families create a safer, more comfortable home environment.

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JUST FOR FUN: *Harvest Festival*

ANNUAL
APPLES
AUTUMN
CELEBRATION
CONTESTS
CORN
CORNUCOPIA
CROPS
FARMER
FEASTING
FESTIVAL
FIELDS
GAMES
HARVEST
HAYRIDE
LEAVES
MERRIMENT
MUSIC
OCTOBER
PUMPKINS
SCARECROW
SEPTEMBER
SQUASH





Pumpkin Lasagna

Prep: 25 Min. Bake: 55 Min. + Standing; Yield: 6 Servings

Ingredients

- 1/2 pound sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, divided
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
- 1/2 cup half-and-half cream
- 1 teaspoon dried sage leaves
- Dash pepper
- 9 no-cook lasagna noodles
- 1 cup reduced-fat ricotta cheese
- 1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 3/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Directions

- In a small skillet, saute the mushrooms, onion and 1/4 teaspoon salt in oil until tender; set aside. In a bowl, combine the pumpkin, cream, sage, pepper and remaining salt.
- Spread 1/2 cup pumpkin sauce in an 11x7-in. baking dish coated with cooking spray. Top with 3 noodles (noodles will overlap slightly). Spread 1/2 cup pumpkin sauce to edges of noodles. Top with half of mushroom mixture, 1/2 cup ricotta, 1/2 cup mozzarella and 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese. Repeat layers. Top with remaining noodles and sauce.
- Cover and bake at 375° for 45 minutes. Uncover; sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese. Bake 10-15 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 10 minutes before cutting.

Chunky Applesauce

Prep: 15 Min. Cook: 30 Min.; Yield: About 3-1/2 Cups

Ingredients

- 8 cups chopped peeled tart apples (about 3-1/2 pounds)
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract



Directions

- In a Dutch oven, combine apples, brown sugar and cinnamon. Cover and cook over medium-low heat 30-40 minutes or until apples are tender, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Mash apples slightly if desired. Serve warm or cold.

Southern Sweet Potato Pie

Prep: 15 Min. Bake: 55 Min. + Chilling; Yield: 8 Servings

Ingredients

- 1 sheet refrigerated pie crust
- 1-2/3 cups sugar
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Pinch salt
- 1 cup mashed sweet potatoes
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 3/4 cup evaporated milk
- Whipped cream, optional

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350°. Unroll crust into a 9-in. pie plate; flute edge. In a small bowl, combine sugar, flour, nutmeg and salt. In a large bowl, beat potatoes, eggs, butter, corn syrup and flour mixture. Gradually stir in milk. Pour into crust.
- Bake for 55-60 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours before serving. If desired, serve with whipped cream. Refrigerate leftovers.

– courtesy of tasteofhome.com