

# CAREGIVER NEWS

Region IV Area Agency on Aging Caregiver Newsletter

February/March 2021

## Make the Most of Your Visit

Long-distance caregivers: Does it feel there is just too much to do in the time that you have with your loved one?

You can get more done and feel less stressed by a bit of structural pre-planning. Talk with your loved one ahead of time. Find out their goals and wishes for your visit. Does your mother need to go shopping or visit another family member? Could your father use help fixing things around the house? Would you like to talk with your mother's physician?

Merge their priorities with yours. Based on your combined objectives, set a clear-cut and realistic itinerary. If needed, save less critical tasks for the next visit.

You'll all be pleased with how much is accomplished, and your time together will maximize productivity.

*-excerpted from AgingCare.com article "An Overview of Long-Distance Caregiving and Helping from Afar" by Marlo Sollitto*

Environmentally  
conscious?

Prefer email?

Send us an email at

[info@AreaAgencyonAging.org](mailto:info@AreaAgencyonAging.org)

to be added to our

Caregiver News

email list



### My Life. My Choice.

We can help you know your options and get the support you need to live as independently as possible in the setting of your choice

Call (800) 654-2810

Serving Berrien, Cass and  
Van Buren Counties



### In This Issue

- Optimized Visits with Loved Ones
- Free Zoom Classes
- Cognitive Reserve
- Incontinence Supplies and Tips

... and more!

# Free Zoom Classes Through RIV AAA

Area Agency on Aging's Campus for Creative Aging classes are online, live! And we're ready to enjoy some time with you. If you need instructions on how to use Zoom, we can help!

**Introduction to Microsoft Excel**, February 1-3, 9:00-10:30 a.m., AND **Advanced Excel**, February 8-10, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

**Power of Podcasts**, February 3, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Cooking for a Healthy Heart**, February 10, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Caregiver Support Group Hosted in Conjunction with Caring Circle**, February 16, 1:00-2:00 p.m. AND March 16, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

**Keep Your Microsoft Windows Computers Safe: Safety and Cleaning Up**, February 16, 2:00-4:00 p.m., OR February 18, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

**There Really IS an App for That!** February 17, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Diabetes PATH (Personal Action Towards Health)**, Mondays, February 22—March 29, 5:30-8:00 p.m. (open only to MI residents)

**Sharpen Sushi Skills**, February 24, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Scams in 2021**, March 4, 6:00-8:00 p.m. OR March 10, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

All classes are interactive Zoom sessions. Register online at: <https://campusforcreativeaging.org/classes/> or call Amy Nichols at (269) 982-7748. More classes are added regularly!

## Want to Talk? Check out Our Friendly Caller Program

As Region IV Area Agency on Aging (AAA) continues to help those seeking critical services through our info-line, we also know there are area seniors who may just need someone to talk to so they do not feel isolated or alone. In response, we have launched the Friendly Caller Program.

This program is open to any senior who would like to connect with a friendly person to talk to while sheltering in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During these calls we can provide reassurance, help connect seniors to information regarding services they may need, and mostly, make sure they are not feeling lonely or isolated.

Seniors are encouraged to call **(269) 408-4332** to speak to an Area Agency on Aging staff member.

# Incontinence Tips

Incontinence is a common senior health condition. Being prepared and using swift and proper continence care techniques reduces awkwardness, whether at home or on the go.

## Home Supplies:

- Mattress covers
- Furniture slipcovers
- Plenty of extra bed linens
- Adult diapers (most prefer pull-ups at home)
- Scented trash bags
- Air freshener, cologne

## Travel Bag Supplies:

- Complete change of weather-appropriate clothing
- Plastic bags to contain soiled clothes
- Adult diapers (experiment with various styles for easy public-bathroom removal)
- Booster pads (removable diaper liners)
- Wipes
- Small towel to stand on
- Cologne and/or air freshener
- Good humor

- excerpted from *AgingCare.com* article "How to Handle Adult Incontinence Incidents" by Anne-Marie Botek



## Cognitive Reserve

Athletes and their trainers vary types of exercises to expose weaknesses and challenge muscles in new ways. This maximizes their physical fitness. Likewise, switching up your cognitive exercises can help maximize your mental fitness. Ideas:

- Tackle your brain weaknesses. Is math your strength? Read some classic literature or haiku.
- Try something new. Learn to play an instrument, for example, or bone up on computer skills. Take a class.
- Engage your non-dominant hand. Eat a meal, brush your teeth, open mail with your "other" hand.

Take these new and different tasks slow and have fun. Remember, challenging exercises like this might make you feel a bit foolish, but you're helping preserve mental capacity.

- excerpted from *AgingCare.com* article "The Memory Challenge: 8 Ways to Construct Cognitive Reserve" by Anne-Marie Botek. See more on page 4.

**Region IV Area Agency on Aging**  
2900 Lakeview Avenue  
St. Joseph, MI 49085

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## Keep Cognitively Fit

Concerned about cognitive decline? You can combat it! Consistently engage your brain with new and stimulating experiences. This is the key to cultivating more cognitive reserve and staving off mental decline.

Our cognitive skills are not fixed. At all ages the brain has the ability to respond to new information and new stimuli.

The twin traits of novelty and variety are invaluable to enhance cognitive reserve. Sudoku and crosswords alone won't work; we've got to get creative and use variety to regularly stimulate our brain.

For specific ideas, see page 3.

*- excerpted from AgingCare.com article "The Memory Challenge: 8 Ways to Construct Cognitive Reserve" by Anne-Marie Botek*

Contact us at:

**Info-Line**

for Aging and Disability

**(800) 654-2810**

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Area Agency on Aging**  
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St. Joseph, MI 49085

[AreaAgencyonAging.org](http://AreaAgencyonAging.org)

Region IV Area Agency on Aging supports your caregiving and aging needs