



Traditions



MARISTONE



COVID-19 Comprehensive Guide for Seniors

Not that long ago the words coronavirus, COVID-19 and social distancing weren't even in our vocabulary and now our lives are centered on them.

It's scary, and what's even more so is that seniors are at high-risk for more serious illness and complications from the virus.

Experts have advised seniors to go beyond social distancing, with precautions that include staying home and avoiding others entirely. While it's hard to accept that keeping our loved ones safe means cutting ourselves off from them physically; it's even harder for the seniors themselves.

How do you prepare? How do you maintain your health? How do you stay connected and active? What are the best ways to support your loved one from a distance during this time? And is there another way?

We're here to help you find answers as we all adjust to this new reality and come out stronger for it.





SECTION ONE

Safety First

There is no truer statement during this time. Safety must be what you focus on first. We're all familiar with the CDC guidelines of staying home, washing hands often, getting no closer than 6 feet if you must be in contact with people, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, avoiding travel and calling your doctor first if you have COVID-19 symptoms or concerns regarding an underlying condition. But let's discuss how you can put these precautions into action.

What to have on hand – It's recommended to have at least a 30-day supply of prescriptions as well as a two week supply of water and food. Harvard Medical School has created a list of what to stock up on.

Medication and Supplies:

- prescription medications
- prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- fever and pain medicine, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen and cough and cold medicines
- antidiarrheal medication
- thermometer
- fluids with electrolytes
- soap and alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, garbage bags
- laundry detergent, dish soap, household cleaner

Groceries:

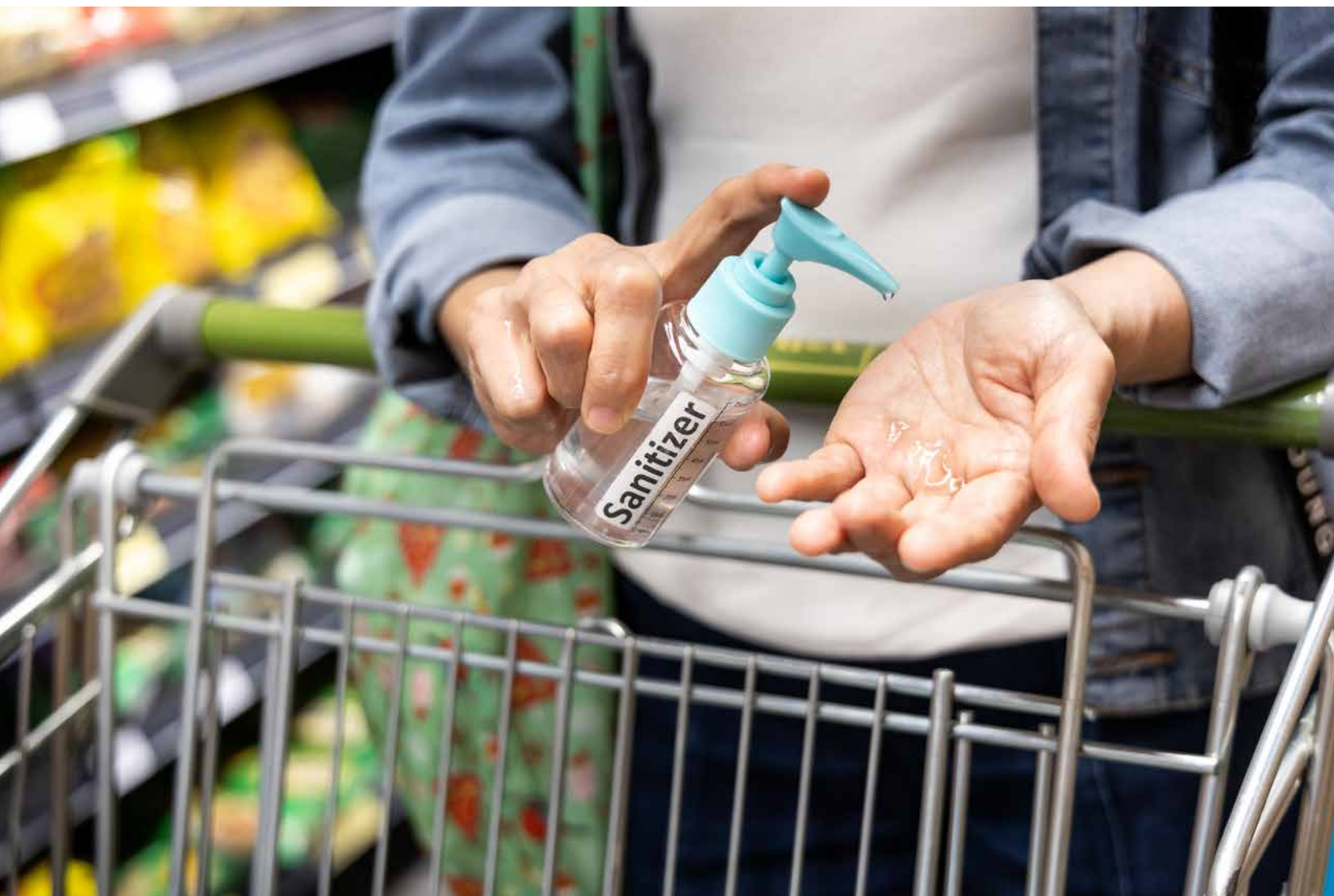
- canned meats, beans, fruits, vegetables, and soups
- frozen fruits, vegetables, and meat
- protein bars, fruit bars, and crackers
- dry cereal, oatmeal, and granola
- peanut butter or nuts
- pasta, bread, rice, and other grains
- chicken broth, canned tomatoes, and jarred pasta sauce
- oil for cooking, flour, and sugar
- coffee, tea, shelf-stable milk, and canned juices
- bottled water
- pet food

Delivery Options

Most grocery stores and pharmacies are now offering delivery and/or shipping as well. Also many local restaurants are delivering now and don't forget services like Door Dash and Uber Eats.

In the Store

If you have to go in-store, check locally to see if they are offering special hours for seniors. Many are dedicating their first hour for seniors to shop with less risk of exposure.





If You Have to Go Out

Sometimes it just can't be helped, but you can still take precautions.

- **Hand Sanitizer:** Bring a bottle with you and use it right after you check out at the store.
- **Credit Cards:** Use instead of cash as they harbor less bacteria.
- **Disposable Bags:** Forgo your reusable bags right now and go back to paper or plastic. If you feel you must stick with reusable bags, wash or sanitize them after each use.
- **Disinfecting Wipes:** Wipe down at least the handles of your shopping cart using either the ones the store provides or bring your own.

Skip These Things

You should only wear a facemask if you are caring for someone who is sick (and they aren't able to wear one) as they are in short supply and should be saved for caregivers. The same holds true for gloves. Unless you are changing them between every interaction, it's the same as wearing no gloves at all!

Safe Shopping

Washing your produce is standard practice but more so than ever now. Food safety experts are suggesting you can minimize your risk from multiple shoppers touching the same produce by grabbing a plastic bag and putting your hand inside to pick up the items. Then drop it into another bag and seal it up. Once home proceed with proper washing (and hand cleaning after).

Cleaning and Disinfecting

The CDC recommends doing this daily for all frequently touched surfaces such as tables, door-knobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks.

- **Store-Bought:** Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work; just make sure to select the one most appropriate for the surface you're cleaning.
- **Make Your Own:** Dilute your household bleach using 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.
- **Use an Alcohol Solution:** It must contain at least 70 percent alcohol to be effective.

What to Do about Office Visits

Most hospitals and physician's offices are advising patients to reschedule elective procedures and to consider telemedicine options for non-emergent medical issues.

- **Telemedicine Uses:** Sinus infections, bronchitis, pink eye, allergies, keeping tabs on existing conditions like diabetes and asthma, examining moles or even treating anxiety or depression as examples.
- **How it works:** In general, you'll have a video visit with a remotely located care provider over a secure connection. You use a website link or an app to connect with them.
- **Insurance Coverage:** The federal government is working to expand telemedicine access for those with Medicare and urged states to do the same with Medicaid. Many insurance companies and other providers are temporarily waiving fees as well. Always check your specific coverage before making an appointment.





SECTION TWO

What to Watch For

The facts around COVID-19 can be confusing, and in a sense, many seniors may feel even more vulnerable to it when home alone (or even with a spouse) because all the responsibility of identifying and potentially managing symptoms would be on your shoulders. To make sure you know what to look for and what to do, here are the CDC guidelines.

Signs and Symptoms – Illnesses have ranged from mild to severe, however symptoms may appear between 2 – 14 days after exposure and typically include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

**This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any severe or concerning symptoms.*

When to Test – Decisions about testing are at the discretion of state and local health departments and/or individual clinicians, however the CDC has provided guidance based on priorities such as:











- Hospitalized patients
- Those at highest risk of complication
- Individuals with symptoms in areas experiencing high COVID-19 hospitalizations

Fact versus Fiction – Inaccurate information abounds when it comes to COVID-19 which only leads to fear, and in some cases the advice can actually harm your health. According to Johns Hopkins Medicine:

- Fact: The coronavirus can spread through the air and on surfaces.
- Fact: The novel coronavirus COVID-19 lives on surfaces for at least 48-72 hours.
- Fiction: Everyone who contracts the novel coronavirus COVID-19 has the same symptoms.
- Fiction: Gargling warm water or salt and vinegar or bleach, taking acetic acid or steroids, using essential oils, ethanol or other substances eliminates the virus from your system.
- Fiction: A hot bath can keep you from contracting the virus.
- Fiction: Drinking water will prevent infection.
- Fiction: A vaccine to cure COVID-19 is available.



Comparing COVID-19 to Flu and Colds – It can be confusing because symptoms can be similar between these illness. According to the CDC, here are general differences.

SYMPTOMS		COVID-19	COLD	FLU
	Fever	Common	Rare	Common
	Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
	Cough	Common (usually dry)	Mild	Common (usually dry)
	Sneezing	No	Common	No
	Aches and Pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
	Runny/Stuffy Nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes
	Sore Throat	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
	Diarrhea	Rare	No	Sometimes for kids
	Headaches	Sometimes	Rare	Common
	Shortness of Breath	Sometimes	No	No

**Keep in mind everyone experiences symptoms differently. Only a doctor can make a diagnosis.*

Please note: This resource is not a compliance document, but rather a collection of good practices and industry standards, provide by professional 3rd parties. Vitality Living has made every attempt to provide the most accurate information available. This resource is provided with the express knowledge and understanding that Vitality Living employees and the producers of content will not be responsible or in any way liable for the results of any act done or omitted to be done on the basis of information contained in this document nor for any errors or omissions in the said information. Vitality Living expressly disclaim all and any liability for any loss or damage which may be suffered by any person or corporate entity which may make use of this resource or any person arising out of or as a result of or in connection with any act done or omitted to be done by the person using the training.



Social Distancing versus Quarantine versus Isolation

We've all seen these terms used interchangeably lately but there are distinct differences between them.

Social distancing: Limiting contact with others lowers the chances of infection and passing the virus onto others. This is usually done collectively and for an undefined amount of time to slow outbreaks.

Quarantine: When currently healthy people who have recently been in contact with someone who was sick, or suspect that they were, stay home and avoid all contact with other people just in case they've been infected. This is usually done for about two weeks or for however long health officials advise.

Isolation: When sick people who know they have the virus— or who have symptoms consistent with the virus — cut off all contact with others, except healthcare providers, until symptoms go away or they are no longer contagious. This includes isolating themselves from loved one by staying in a separate room, if possible, or at least six feet away from others in the household.

Where to Get Up-to-Date Information

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are the best resources for accurate information.

SECTION THREE

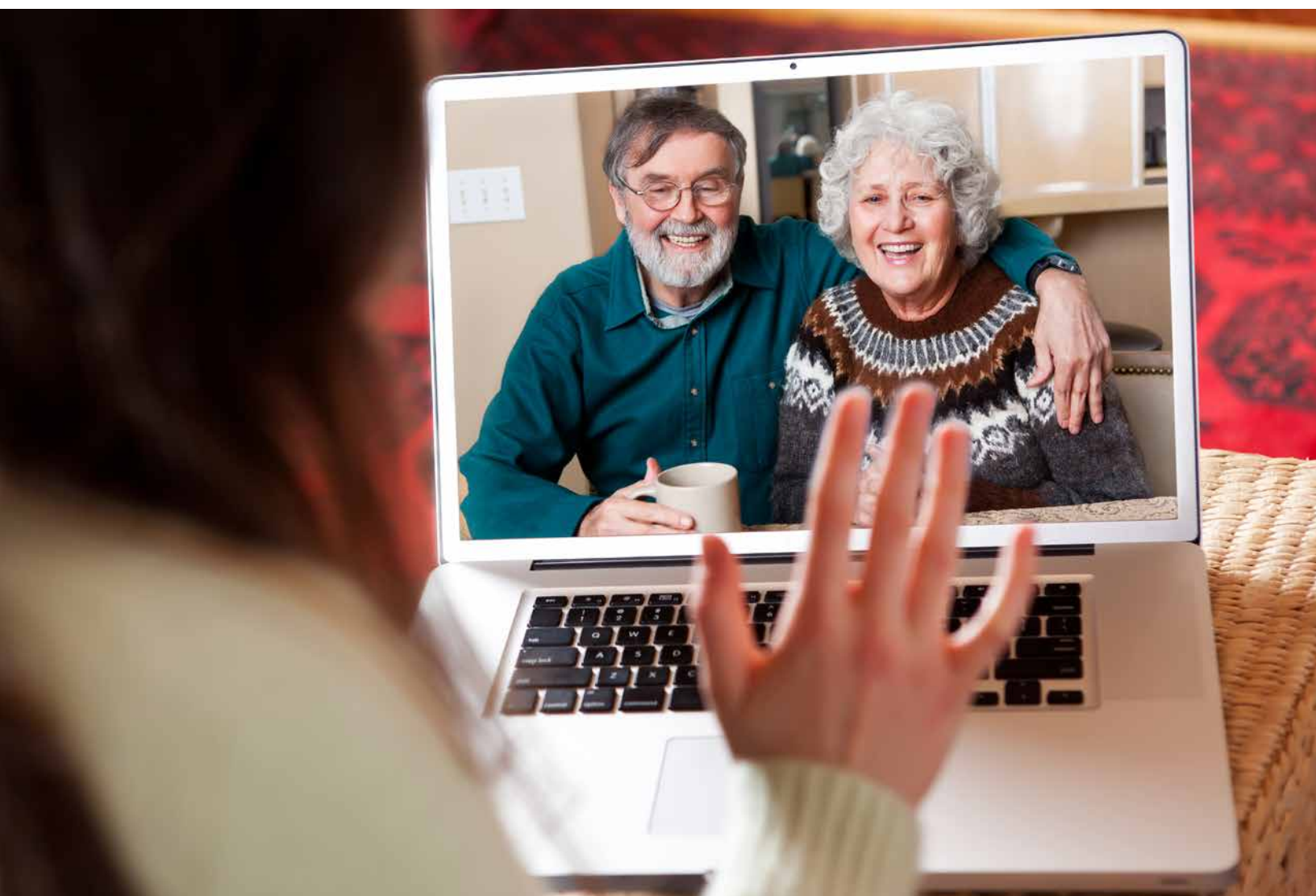
Staying Connected During Social Distancing

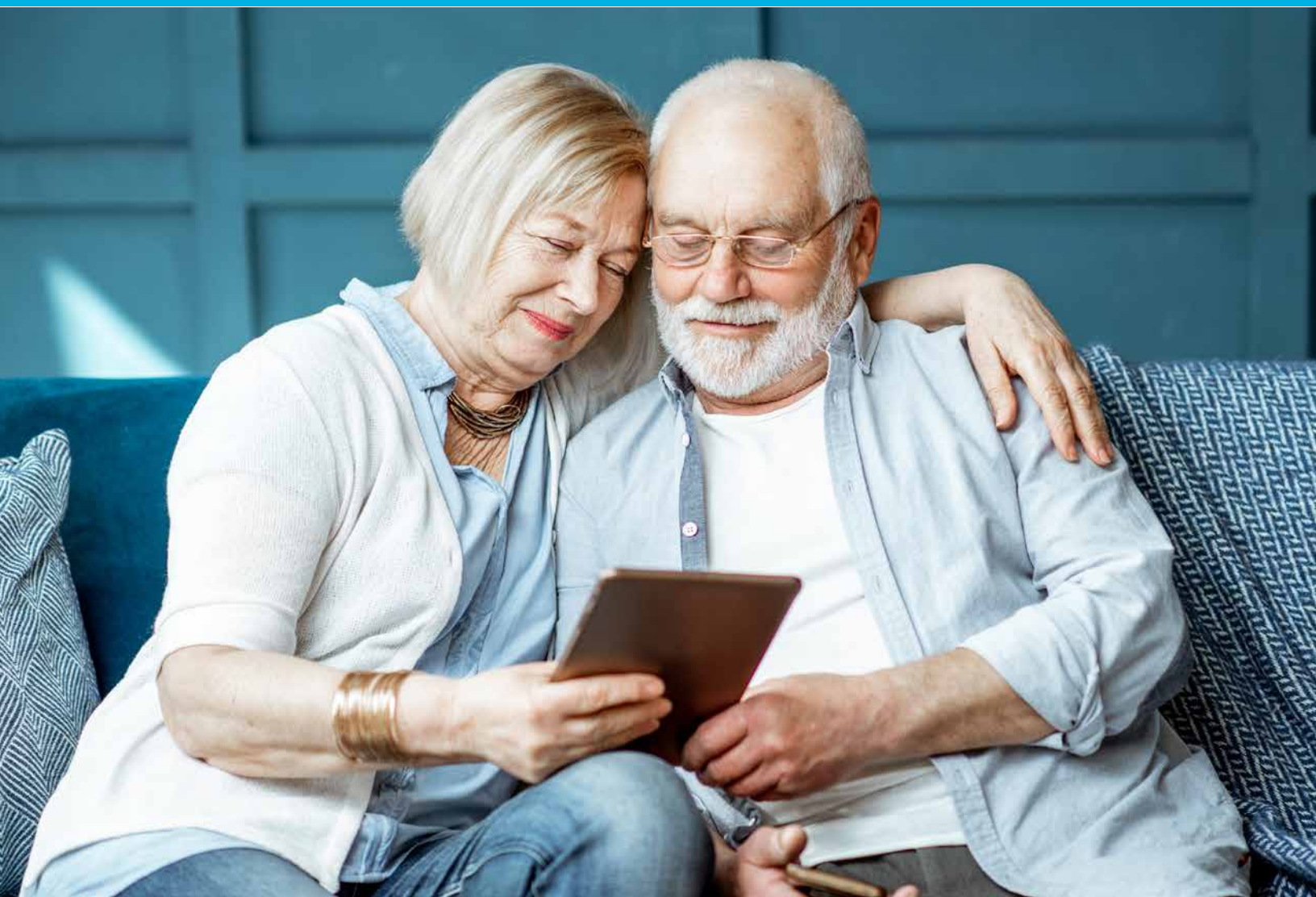
Not only can social distancing be a logistical challenge, it can also be extremely difficult emotionally. As humans we crave connection and being apart at a time when senior isolation is already a growing concern can pose additional health risks. Luckily, with technology you can connect at a distance.

Video chat with friends and family using Skype and FaceTime and set a goal to talk with one friend or loved one each day.

Engage your competitive side with sites like [Arkadium.com](https://www.arkadium.com) where you can play card and board games with others. There's also Words with Friends which is similar to Scrabble.

Get creative with the [Sketch Club](https://www.sketchclub.com) app to draw, paint and share your creations with friends, family or fellow artists.





Become part of an online community through social media, [Facebook Groups](#), [AARP forums](#) and [Reddit](#) threads. You can chat, learn and find a sense of community among people who share your interests.

Stay active in church as most are moving services online including bible studies and small groups. Check your local church for more information.

Try virtual reality with [Facebook Oculus' Horizon](#) where you can explore, play games, build your own world and interact with users from around the globe.

The Dangers of Social Isolation

When you become detached physically or psychologically, or are disconnected from family, friends and community it's known as social isolation. It already affects nearly one in five seniors, and that's before social distancing became the norm. The AARP Foundation calls it a "growing health epidemic" in which the health risks of prolonged isolation are equivalent to the dangers of smoking 15 cigarettes a day. That's why it's so important to continue to make connections during this challenging time.

SECTION FOUR

Boredom Busters

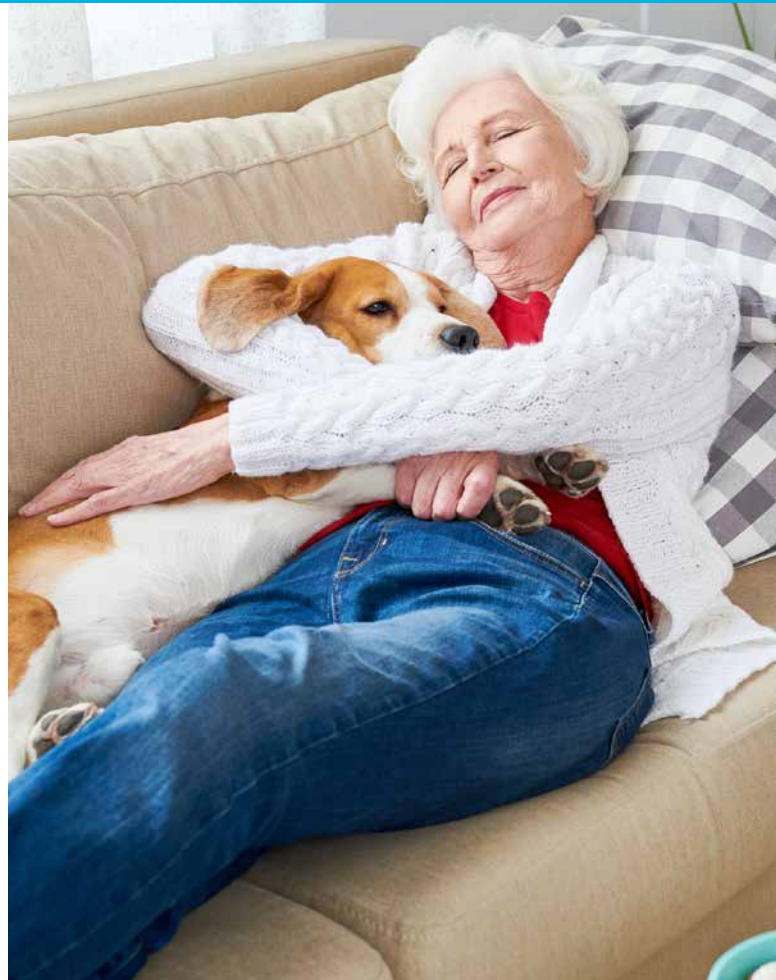
It's been said that the cure for boredom is curiosity and we sure hope that's true as most of us have much more time on our hands these days. So, why not put it to good use by learning new things, having some fun and going on adventures, virtually of course!

Virtual Field Trips – You can explore the [San Diego Zoo](#), the [Georgia Aquarium](#), [Yellowstone National Park](#), the [Louvre](#) in Paris, the [Great Wall of China](#) – even [Mars](#)!

Virtual Events – Experience live theatre performances though [BroadwayHD](#), favorite musicians performing on [NPR's Tiny Desk Series](#) or check out your favorite artists' social media as many are hosting live shows. You can also see live performances from the [Philadelphia Orchestra](#) or opera at some of the world's most famous venues through [OperaVision](#).

Virtual Classes – Learn something new with free Ivy League courses from [Class Central](#). [Milk Street Online Cooking School](#) is offering free classes and artist Mo Willems is offering “lunch doodle” classes on [Kennedy Center's YouTube channel](#). Not necessarily a class, but you can also learn about business, science, tech and just about anything else with [Ted Talks](#).

Virtual Fun – Enjoy extended free trials of a variety of streaming services such as Hulu, Netflix, AppleTV+, Amazon Prime and Sling TV. Or, look at resources for free eBooks from Kindle as well as your local library.



Sleep It Off

Another way to pass the time is by sleeping. While stress can make it harder to sleep, at the same time getting good sleep can reduce the effects of stress; seven to nine hours is recommended.

To sleep better at night:

- Follow a regular schedule
- Minimize naps
- Create a safe and comfortable place to sleep
- Have a bedtime routine to help you wind down
- Use your bedroom for sleep, not watching the TV, phone or iPad

SECTION FIVE

Staying Active While Staying at Home

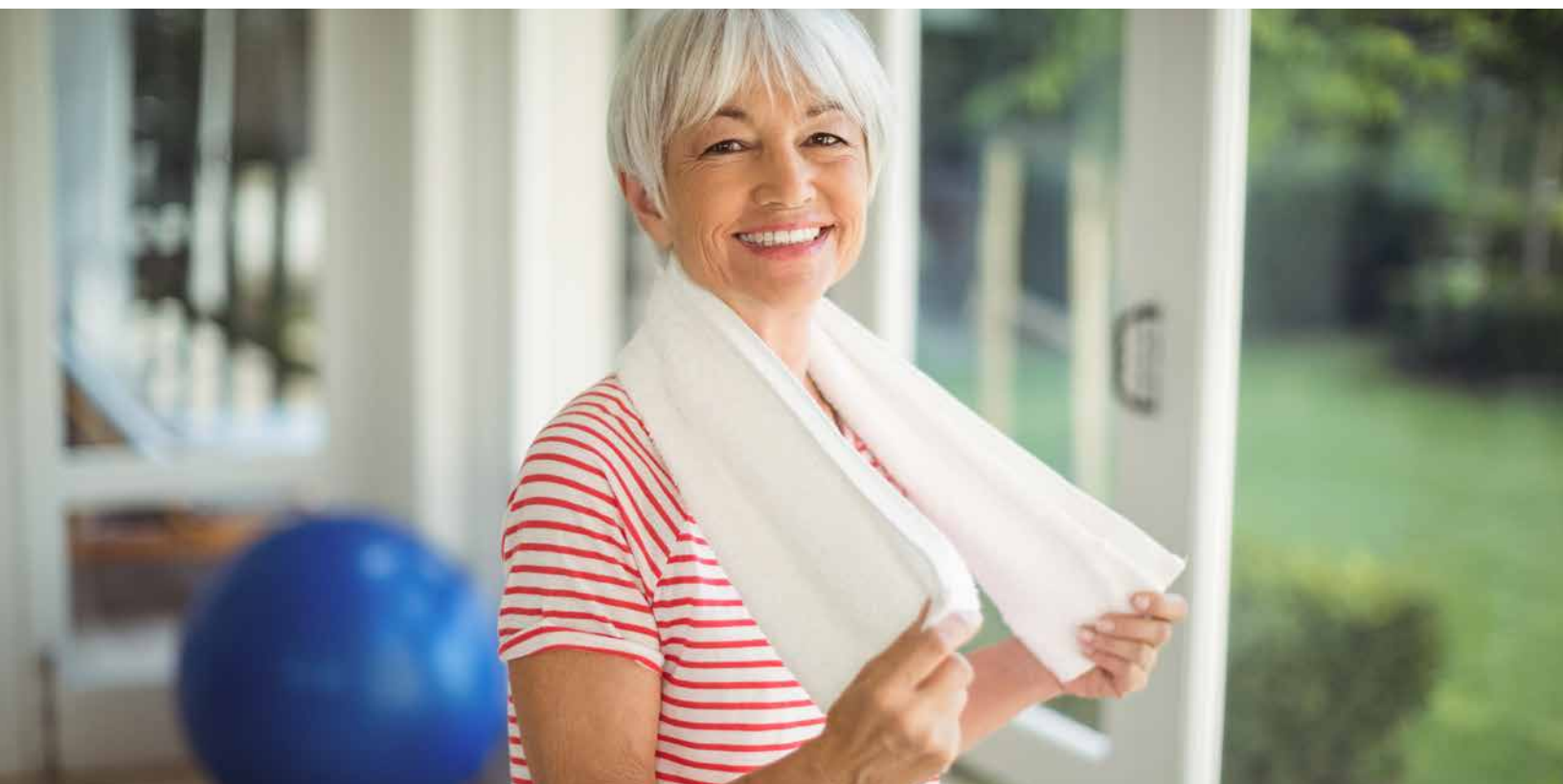
In addition to battling boredom, it's important to stay active while you're at home to maintain your health and wellbeing. Being sedentary, which is already a concern among seniors, can put you at risk for a number of conditions such as high blood pressure, stroke, cardiovascular disease, some cancers, Type 2 diabetes and even cognitive decline. Here are some ways to stay active at home.

Get Moving – The [YMCA](#) is offering free, on-demand classes, as are [Gold's Gym](#) and [Orangetheory](#). [Planet Fitness](#) is live-streaming workouts each day.

Spend More Time with Pets – Take them for walks, teach them new tricks, play Tug-of-War and other favorite games, catch up on grooming, and you could even create an Instagram account with photos of them.

Take Up a New Hobby – Start journaling, learn how to knit with [Third Piece's](#) interactive classes, get instructional quilting videos from the [National Quilters Circle](#), try scrapbooking as [CVS](#) and [Shutterfly](#) can deliver photos to you and [Michael's](#) is offering curbside pickup for supplies while [Hobby Lobby](#) delivers. Or, throw back to you your childhood and start coloring again with free adult coloring pages through [Crayola](#) or the Colorfy app on your phone.

Enjoy Nature at Home – Spend more time gardening (or take it up), read on the back patio, chat with neighbors from your porch, have lunch outside, sit by the window with your coffee or simply keep the windows open.





Mind Your Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

While most of the focus has been on avoiding risk and what to do if you become sick, your mental and emotional wellbeing is just as important during this time. To prevent anxiety, fear and stress from taking a toll on your health you should:

- Take breaks from news stories and social media
- Help relax by taking deep breaths, stretching or meditating
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals
- Make time to unwind with activities you enjoy
- Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling
- Call your healthcare provider these feelings affect your daily activities for several days in a row

And of course, there's an app for that! [Headspace](#) offers a collection of guided audio meditations for free that are focused on relieving stress and [Calm](#) has a free library of meditations, livestreams and mindfulness tools.

SECTION SIX

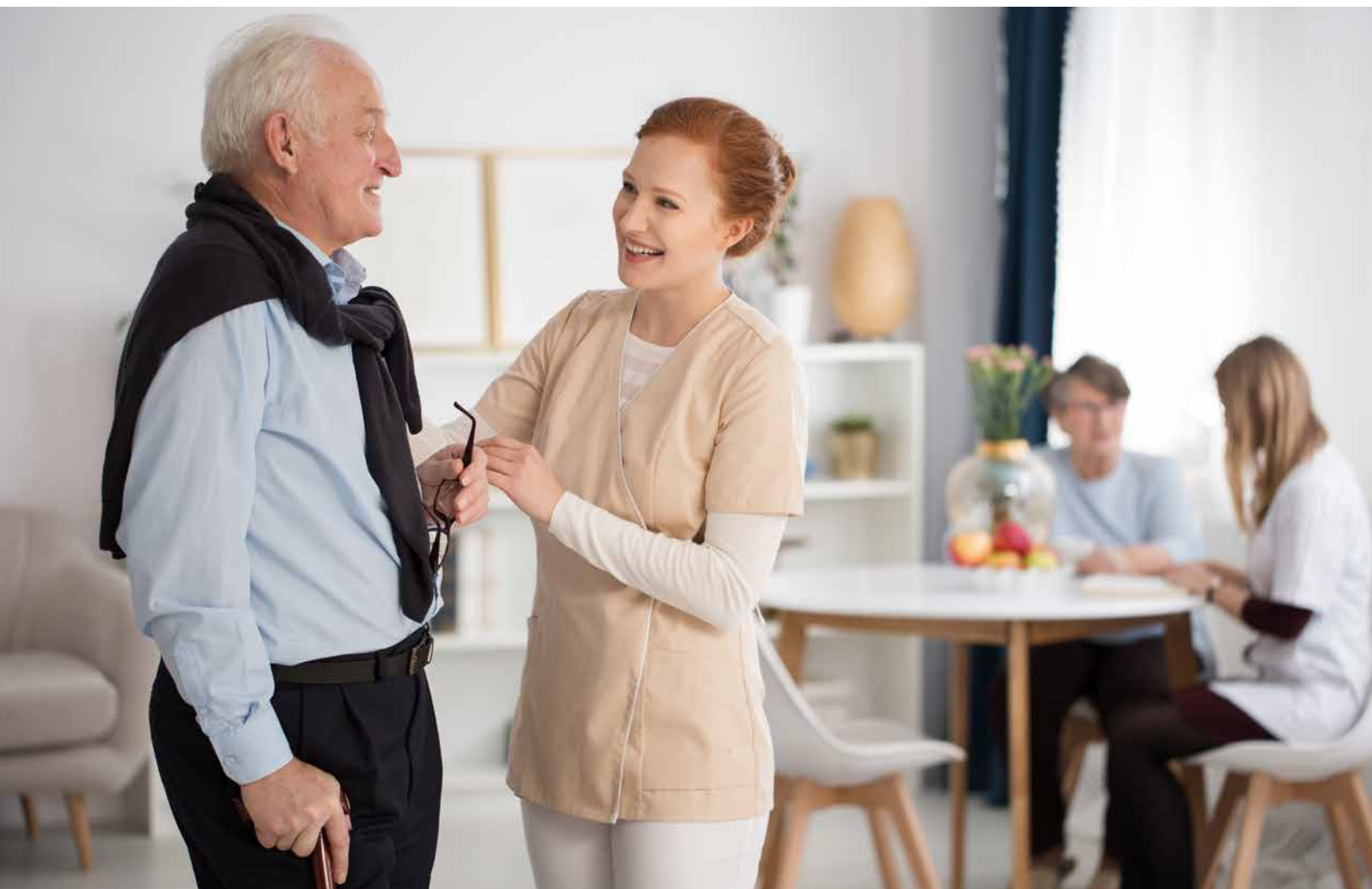
Advantages of Senior Living

It may seem counterintuitive; however there are advantages to being in a senior living community during this time rather than navigating COVID-19 challenges on your own. In fact, in senior living you'll have an entire community of experienced professionals dedicated to the health and safety of residents, patients and associates.

Trained Healthcare Staff -While this pandemic is new to all of us, the healthcare staff in senior living is experienced with outbreaks such as the flu and Norovirus and already has protocols in place to slow the spread. In addition, there's 24-hour staffing to watch for symptoms and provide prompt assistance.

Interested in Senior Living?

If you believe senior living would be beneficial for yourself or your loved one you can still visit virtually. Our communities are offering virtual tours with links to videos, interactive floor plans and room planners. You can also follow the community on social media to get the most up-to-date information. Or, call anytime us anytime at 615-538-3200. We'd love to hear from you and answer your questions!





Convenience - If you've been worrying about how you'll have enough supply of food, medications and other necessities to get you through; in senior living that's all taken care of. We have a dependable supply chain and our cupboards are well-stocked!

Peace of Mind - Senior living communities are acting with an abundance of caution including following the most up-to-date CDC recommendations for seniors such as stringent cleaning and sanitation protocols, limiting non-essential visitors and social distancing within the community. In addition, communities are communicating regularly with residents and families with information you can trust.

You Won't Be Alone- Although senior living communities are practicing social distancing, doing so in a community setting means that you still have access to engagement and enrichment opportunities such as virtual field trips, technology to keep connected with loved ones from afar and other creative activity opportunities.

SECTION SEVEN

Supporting Your Loved One From a Distance

It's so hard to stay apart from loved ones when you may feel they need you most. But know that it's what's best to protect them from the dangers of COVID-19, AND that there are still plenty of ways you can still support them. Plus when this is over, we'll all know how to stay better connected even when far apart.

Arrange deliveries for food, supplies and prescriptions or shop in-store for your loved one and drop supplies off without coming in contact.


Check in regularly with video chat or by phone but make sure you don't just focus on COVID-19 updates. Keep them informed, listen and make sure they're protecting themselves, but make time to chat about the grandkids or other more light-hearted topics.

Have some fun by setting up a family Facebook group and/or use Facebook Liveto share stories, play games like 'Have You Ever,' or '20 Questions', do a watch party of your favorite shows and have dinner together. It's a great way to bond and have a laugh together while not actually together.

Encourage telemedicine rather than cancelling as seniors often have a number of regular doctor's appointments that are important to their wellbeing.

Keep fear at bay by making sure they are getting COVID-19 information from reputable sources and let your loved one know you're always there should they have any questions, fears or concerns.

Send your love with cards and care packages with puzzles, books and art supplies; anything that would bring a smile to their face (have them sanitize items they receive and wash hands after).



Your best resources to support and care for your loved one now are creativity, technology, and of course, your time!



Traditions



To learn more or to arrange a personalized tour please call **615-538-3200**

www.myvitalityliving.com