

# LET'S GET FIT



## Veterans' WELLNESS 2013

A GUIDE TO HEALTHY LIVING FOR THE VETERANS OF UPSTATE NEW YORK

 [www.visn2.va.gov](http://www.visn2.va.gov)



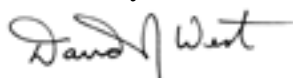
**VA**  
HEALTH  
CARE | Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

# Make Each Day a Healthy Day

It is never too late to make healthy lifestyle changes. Eating more nutritious foods and increasing your activity level will help you manage health issues you have, as well as deter ones you may be at risk of developing. These conditions include cancer, heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

In our last issue of *Veterans' Wellness*, Ed Gates shared how losing weight and eating better helped him survive a series of heart attacks. In our spring issue, you'll meet more inspiring Veterans who beat diabetes, took control of high cholesterol without medication and lost weight — getting back into dress blues again. Each of these Veterans began his success story by taking small steps to improve his health. This health and wellness calendar is designed to support you in doing the same. Turn the page to start learning simple ways you can achieve your best in 2013.

Sincerely,



DAVID J. WEST, MSHA, FACHE  
Network Director

## Share Your Story

Help others by sharing your experience with making healthy lifestyle changes. How are you staying fitter and happier? Email your phone number to [Kathleen.Hider@va.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Hider@va.gov), and we'll call you for the details.



Log on for access to health information, a personal health journal and other resources. Online prescription refill and secure messaging are also available to Veterans who complete the IPA process.



David J. West, Network Director

## Visit Us Online



Visit [www.visn2.va.gov](http://www.visn2.va.gov) or snap a photo of this icon with your smartphone to get immediate access to our home page. Check out our video "Getting Started." Three people share their stories on how to take the first, and often most difficult, step

toward adding physical activity to an already hectic life.



Get the free mobile app at <http://gettag.mobi>

Like Us on Facebook

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[www.bath.va.gov](http://www.bath.va.gov)  
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[www.canandaigua.va.gov](http://www.canandaigua.va.gov)  
[www.syracuse.va.gov](http://www.syracuse.va.gov)

# Acronym Decoder

Here are common VA acronyms and what they mean to you.

**C & P – Compensation and Pension Examination**  
Establishes the severity of a Veteran's current disability in order to help determine a disability rating for financial benefits.

**CBOC – Community Based Outpatient Clinic**  
Provides outpatient services, including health and wellness visits and basic pharmacy and lab functions, so that Veterans can access the care they need in their own communities.

**CLC – Community Living Center** (formerly the Nursing Home) Provides short- and long-stay care to Veterans, helping to prevent decline in health, restore maximum function and independence, or provide comfort at the end of life.

**IPA – In-Person Authentication** Used to validate a patient's identity in order to allow VA's Health Information Management (HIM) Release of Information personnel or other assigned employees. After the completion of the IPA process, VA patient is eligible to receive select copies of their VA electronic medical records via the My HealthVet website.

**PACT – Patient Aligned Care Team** A team of health care professionals assigned to a Veteran that provides patient-centered care focused on preventive care and healthy living.

**PTSD – Posttraumatic Stress Disorder** A mental health disorder resulting from a severe trauma or life-threatening event. Also known as shell shock or combat stress.

**TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury** A head injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain. TBIs range from mild to severe.

**VAVS – Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service** Program that oversees VA volunteers and item and monetary donations to VA health care facilities.



## It's Never Too Late to Start

Every day, Army Air Corps Veteran **George Moline, 87**, goes for a 30-minute walk. It is a habit that's helped him maintain his weight at a trim 170 pounds since leaving the service in 1946. But he also credits his health, happiness and longevity to activities that exercise his mind.

"When I was in my 70s, I read an article about how it might be possible to fend off dementia and Alzheimer's," he says. "The keys were to continue to learn new things and maintain an active social life." Volunteer work and rediscovering his passion for woodworking, a hobby he'd given up until just seven years ago, help him stay on track with both of these goals.

### Stay Sharp

As a member of the Northeastern Woodworkers Association, he won awards at the association's last six Annual Shows for his carvings of songbirds and raptors. He also enjoys creating baseball trophies for deserving kids, including his grandson's Little League teammates. So far, this has meant perfecting three new designs. "I carve a different trophy for pitchers, batters and fielders," he explains.

### Serve Others

For the past 10 years, Moline has also served as one of about 100 volunteer members in the Saratoga National Cemetery Honor Guard Association. "I'm currently the oldest active member," he adds. "I also participate in the Honor Flight Network, which transports Veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit memorials dedicated to their service." In April 2012, Moline received the Thousand Hour Service Award from the Albany VA Medical Center.

*"Exercise, eat well, but most of all, get out and try something different. There's a whole world out there!"*

~ Veteran, George Moline



**VBA – Veterans Benefits Administration**  
Administers monetary and other nonmedical benefits and services to Veterans and their families.

**VHA – Veterans Health Administration** Governs the medical treatment facilities within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**VISN – Veterans Integrated Service Network**  
Regional networks of VA health care facilities providing comprehensive inpatient and outpatient health care, support and other services to eligible Veterans.

**VLER – Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record**  
A secure health record that contains health, benefits, personnel and administrative information from day one of a Servicemember's career through his or her transition to Veteran status. Veterans and Servicemembers, as well as their families, authorized caregivers and service providers, can access these files.

**VRAP – Veterans Retraining Assistance Program**  
A training and education program geared toward Veterans not eligible for other VA education benefit programs. Eligible unemployed Veterans can upgrade their skills for in-demand jobs and receive up to 12 months of education assistance equal to the full-time Montgomery GI Bill–Active Duty rate.

**VSC – Veterans Service Center** Assists and advises Veterans and their widows, dependent parents, children and orphans with completing applications for federal and state health, education and medical compensation benefits. Individual VSCs may provide a toll-free contact (call) center or offer additional services.

**VSO – Veterans Service Organization** Advocacy and service groups, such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and The Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), that provide assistance and support to Veterans and their families with various programs.



# Routine Health Care Monitoring

WHAT IT IS	WHY YOU NEED IT	VA RECOMMENDATIONS	GOAL COMPLETE
<b>Blood pressure reading</b>	High blood pressure has no symptoms	Every year after age 18 and at every primary care visit	<input type="checkbox"/> Blood pressure reading
<b>Cholesterol profile</b>	Low HDL (good cholesterol), high triglycerides and LDL (bad cholesterol), and high total cholesterol can increase heart disease risk	Every 5 years or more frequently if recommended by your VA primary care provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Cholesterol check
<b>Influenza (flu) immunization</b>	To prevent the flu	Every year for all adults	<input type="checkbox"/> Flu vaccine
<b>Pneumonia vaccine</b>	To prevent serious respiratory illness	Once at age 65; sooner for certain medical conditions; single 5-year booster dose recommended if initial vaccine prior to age 65	<input type="checkbox"/> Pneumonia vaccine
<b>Tetanus and pertussis (Tdap) immunization</b>	To protect against tetanus and whooping cough	CDC recommends Tdap immunization in place of tetanus booster once between ages 19 and 65	<input type="checkbox"/> Tdap vaccine
<b>Breast and cervical cancer screenings</b>	For early detection of precancerous tissue growth and cancer	Annual women's health visit with your provider to determine appropriate mammography and Pap test screenings	<input type="checkbox"/> Mammogram and Pap test
<b>Bone density screening</b>	For early detection of osteoporosis	Bone density test routinely for women after age 65; test at age 60 if increased risk for osteoporotic fracture	<input type="checkbox"/> Bone density test
<b>Prostate cancer education and screening</b>	Knowing more about prostate cancer may help you stay healthy	Prostate cancer education every year; discuss screening with your VA primary care provide in order to make an informed decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Prostate cancer education
<b>Colorectal cancer screening</b>	For early detection of precancerous tissue growth and cancer	Begin screening at age 50 until age 75; may need earlier screening if positive family history	<input type="checkbox"/> Colorectal cancer screening
<b>Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening</b>	To detect weakened blood vessels	Test once for men ages 65–75 who have ever smoked	<input type="checkbox"/> AAA screening
<b>Hepatitis C screening</b>	Exposure to the hepatitis C virus can harm your liver	For those with military service during the Vietnam era and those exposed to the virus via sexual contact, tattoos or piercings, blood transfusions prior to 1992, and the sharing of personal items	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis C screening
<b>Tobacco, alcohol and depression screenings</b>	Smoking may lead to serious illness; alcohol abuse and depression can spiral out of control	Every year; your VA primary care staff will identify and treat any psychological issues and help with controlling substance abuse and quitting smoking	<input type="checkbox"/> Quit smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Talked with my doctor about my mental health
<b>Routine eye examinations</b>	To check for glaucoma, cataracts and other eye diseases	As recommended by your VA primary care provider based on your medical conditions, family history or new visual symptoms	<input type="checkbox"/> Eye exam



## CLASSIC BEEF STEW

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon cooking oil
- 1 pound beef trimmed of all visible fat and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 4 small onions, halved
- 4 carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 large potato (about half a pound), cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 cup mushrooms, quartered
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup water

### DIRECTIONS

Heat the oil in a skillet set on medium-high heat. Oil should just coat pan. Add beef and brown, about 5 minutes. Put beef and all other ingredients into an ovenproof dish with a cover. Bake at 325 degrees for about 2½ hours, until meat and vegetables are tender.

The same ingredients can be put into a slow-cooker and cooked on low for 10 to 12 hours or poured into a four-quart pressure cooker, which will finish the stew in less than half an hour. In a pressure cooker, heat until pressure rises and weight starts to rock. Cook on medium heat, so that weight rocks steadily, for 12 minutes. Drop pressure immediately by putting pot under cool running water.

*Serving and nutrition information on flip side of card.*



## SPINACH-STUFFED SOLE

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ½ pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- ½ pound fresh spinach, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon oregano leaves, crushed
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1½ pounds sole fillets or other white fish
- 2 tablespoons sherry
- 4 ounces part-skim mozzarella cheese, grated as needed: nonstick cooking spray

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Coat 10- by 6-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Heat oil in skillet and sauté mushrooms for about 3 minutes or until tender. Add spinach and continue cooking for about 1 minute or until spinach is barely wilted. Remove from heat and drain liquid into prepared baking dish. Add oregano and garlic to drained sautéed vegetables. Stir to mix ingredients. Divide vegetable mixture evenly among fillets and place in center of each. Roll each fillet around mixture and place seam-side down in prepared baking dish. Sprinkle with sherry, then grated mozzarella cheese. Bake for 15–20 minutes or until fish flakes easily. Lift out with slotted spoon.

*Serving and nutrition information on flip side of card.*

## MANAGE YOUR MEDICATIONS

Record all your medications and when and why you take them. Include over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbs.

If you have more than one health care provider, review your list with each provider to avoid duplicate prescriptions and adverse reactions. Cancel any duplicate or unwanted prescriptions to save money. Review your list at every provider visit.

*See the reverse side for safety tips.*

## CURRENT MEDICATION LIST

Keep this list up to date, and discuss it with your health care provider(s) at each visit.

	REASON TO TAKE	DATE STARTED	DATE STOPPED	WHEN TO TAKE
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

## CLASSIC BEEF STEW

### NUTRITION FACTS

Serves 4

Amount Per Serving

<b>Calories</b> 255	Calories from Fat 54
% Daily Value (DV)*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 6 g	<b>9%</b>
Saturated Fat 2 g <b>10%</b>	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 66 mg	<b>22%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 116 mg	<b>5%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 22 g	<b>7%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4 g <b>16%</b>	
Sugars 7 g	
<b>Protein</b> 29 g	
Vitamin A	<b>204%</b>
Vitamin C	<b>46%</b>
Calcium	<b>7%</b>
Iron	<b>20%</b>

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.

## SPINACH-STUFFED SOLE

### NUTRITION FACTS

Serves 4

Amount Per Serving

<b>Calories</b> 273	Calories from Fat 81
% Daily Value (DV)*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 9 g	<b>14%</b>
Saturated Fat 4 g <b>20%</b>	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 95 mg	<b>32%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 163 mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 6 g	<b>2%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2 g <b>8%</b>	
Sugars 7 g	
<b>Protein</b> 39 g	
Vitamin A	<b>113%</b>
Vitamin C	<b>30%</b>
Calcium	<b>32%</b>
Iron	<b>13%</b>

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.

▼ Cut this card out and fold on solid lines to fit into your wallet.

## MANAGE YOUR MEDICATIONS (CONT'D)

Follow these safety tips:

- Never take other people's prescription drugs.
- Follow all label directions.
- Tell your health care provider(s) about any side effects or concerns.
- Consult your health care provider(s) before you stop taking any prescriptions or change dosages.
- Never keep medications in the bathroom. Follow directions for storage.
- Throw out medications that have expired.

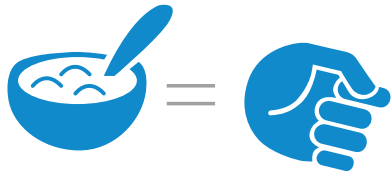
## CURRENT MEDICATION LIST

Keep this list up to date, and discuss it with your health care provider(s) at each visit.

	MEDICATION NAME	REASON TO TAKE	DATE STARTED	DATE STOPPED	WHEN TO TAKE
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					

# Pick the Perfect Portion

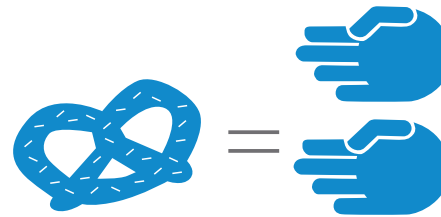
**YOU CAN HAVE TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING** — even when it comes to healthy foods. Eating the proper portions can help you keep calories under control while eating a variety of foods. Luckily, picking the right portion size is as easy as remembering a few common items.



½ cup of cereal = a fist



2 tablespoons of peanut butter = a golf ball (approximate)



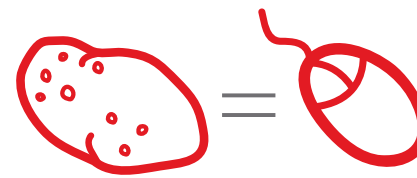
2 ounces of pretzels = 2 handfuls



3 ounces of meat = a deck of cards



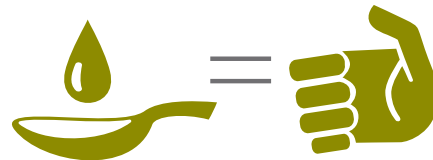
1½ ounces of low-fat cheese = four stacked dice



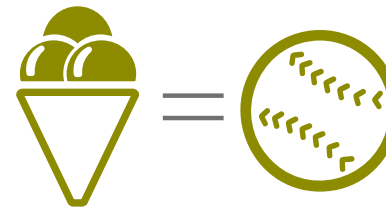
1 medium baked potato = a computer mouse



1 medium fruit = a baseball



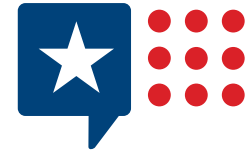
1 teaspoon of oil = the tip of your thumb



½ cup of ice cream = ½ baseball

Toll-Free, confidential help  
available 24/7.

## Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255  
PRESS 1

Online Chat:

[www.VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net)

Text: 838255

## VALUE for Vets COUPON

Enjoy a FREE coffee, tea, bottle of water or fountain beverage with the purchase of a breakfast or deli sandwich. Redeemable at Veterans Canteen Service food court at the Albany Stratton, Batavia, Bath, Buffalo, Canandaigua and Syracuse VA Medical Centers.



**One coupon per enrolled Veteran.**

*Compliments of Veterans Canteen Service.*

Valid 1/31- 2/28/2013

## In with the New

**A**s the new year begins, we all get to take a fresh first step toward getting healthy. Whatever you need to do to improve your health — stop smoking, get in shape or lose weight — start with a plan that will get your journey off on the right foot:

**Define your goal.** Write down your expectations and how you plan to meet them. Track your monthly goals in the space provided in this calendar ... and note your success with the provided stickers!

**Know your triggers.** Think about when you do the behavior you want to change. Decide how you'll avoid or manage those situations going forward. For example, try brushing and flossing your teeth after dinner to avoid snacking before bedtime.

**Get support.** Talk with your spouse, a close friend or other loved ones about your goal and why it's important to you. Ask for support, such as reminders and encouraging words. For tips and inspiration, read Veteran success stories in the next issue of *Veterans' Wellness*.

**Reward yourself.** Write down how you will celebrate meeting your goals. Plan a special trip to a nearby destination you have been meaning to visit. If you've lost weight, buy a new, smaller belt or pair of jeans. Quit smoking? Buy yourself a gift with some of the money you've saved on cigarettes.





# January 2013



**Walking can help you lose weight and lower your risk for heart disease.** Aim for 30 minutes, three to four times a week. If you're busy with work or other responsibilities, break that time into three 10-minute walks.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
<b>My goals for 2013:</b> <hr/> <hr/>		1  New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	
	6	7	8	9	10  Warm up. Start each walk at half speed for 3-4 minutes.	11	12
13	14	15  Fun Fact: On average, there are 1,760 to 2,640 steps in 1 mile.	16	17	18	19	
20  Inauguration Day	21  Martin Luther King Day	22	23	24  Stay positive. Focus on what you like about your new behavior.	25	26	
27	28	29	30	31	Create a walking plan with the Every Body Walk! app from <a href="http://everybodywalk.org/app">everybodywalk.org/app</a> .		
<b>NOVEMBER 2012</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	<b>DECEMBER 2012</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	<b>FEBRUARY</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28				<b>There's no time like the present.</b> For targeted advice on how to eat wisely, be physically active and achieve a healthy weight, visit <a href="http://www.prevention.va.gov">www.prevention.va.gov</a> . Enter your age and gender into the myhealthfinder tool. If you're pregnant, select the check box.	

## Stand Strong

**M**aintain your independence by avoiding falls and the serious injuries they can cause. In addition to making your home safer inside and out, work closely with your VA provider throughout the year.

**Keep an eye on your blood pressure.** Have it checked at each visit. Also, tell your VA provider if you've fainted or felt dizzy, lightheaded or nauseous when getting up from sitting or lying down.

**Discuss your personal risk factors.** If you've fallen before, you may be more likely to fall again. Also report any numbness or weakness you feel in your legs.

**Review your medications at each visit.** Ask if they could cause you to feel dizzy or confused or to lose balance. Common culprits include diuretics, heart or blood pressure medications, and sleeping pills. Make this review easier by using the *Manage Your Medications List* on Page 5.

**Ask how you can improve your balance.** Strengthening and stretching exercises can help. For examples, visit [www.visn2.va.gov](http://www.visn2.va.gov) to view the Spring 2012 issue of *Veterans' Wellness*, which featured *Fall-Fighting Exercises* on Page 9.

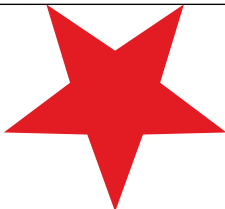


# February 2013



**Find out about your blood pressure.** A low level may signal heart, thyroid or other health problems. Too high and you're more likely to have a heart attack, kidney disease or a stroke. Your VA provider can help you manage your blood pressure.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Most people should eat 1,500 mg of sodium or less daily. Too much can raise your blood pressure.				1 National Freedom Day	2 Groundhog Day
3	4	5 Take medication as it is prescribed for you.	6	7	8	9
10 Chinese New Year	11	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13 Ash Wednesday	14 Valentine's Day National Donor Day	15	16
17	18 Presidents' Day	19	20	21 Rinse canned foods to wash off some of the salt.	22 Washington's Birthday	23
24	25 Overweight? Losing even 10 lbs. will decrease your heart disease risk.	26	27	28	<b>JANUARY</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	<b>MARCH</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



**Be a part of the Million Hearts™ campaign.** This national initiative seeks to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes over five years, in part by promoting the **ABCS** of prevention: **A**ppropriate aspirin therapy, **B**lood pressure control, **C**holesterol management and **S**moking cessation. Find out your risk and how to lower it online at [www.MillionHearts.hhs.gov](http://www.MillionHearts.hhs.gov).

# Check MyPlate Before Setting Your Plate

**TRY TO EAT HEALTHFULLY.** Take a look at your plate — then look at MyPlate. This handy tool was created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to replace the Food Pyramid and help Americans eat a balanced meal. MyPlate is a simple visual reminder of how to build a healthy plate.



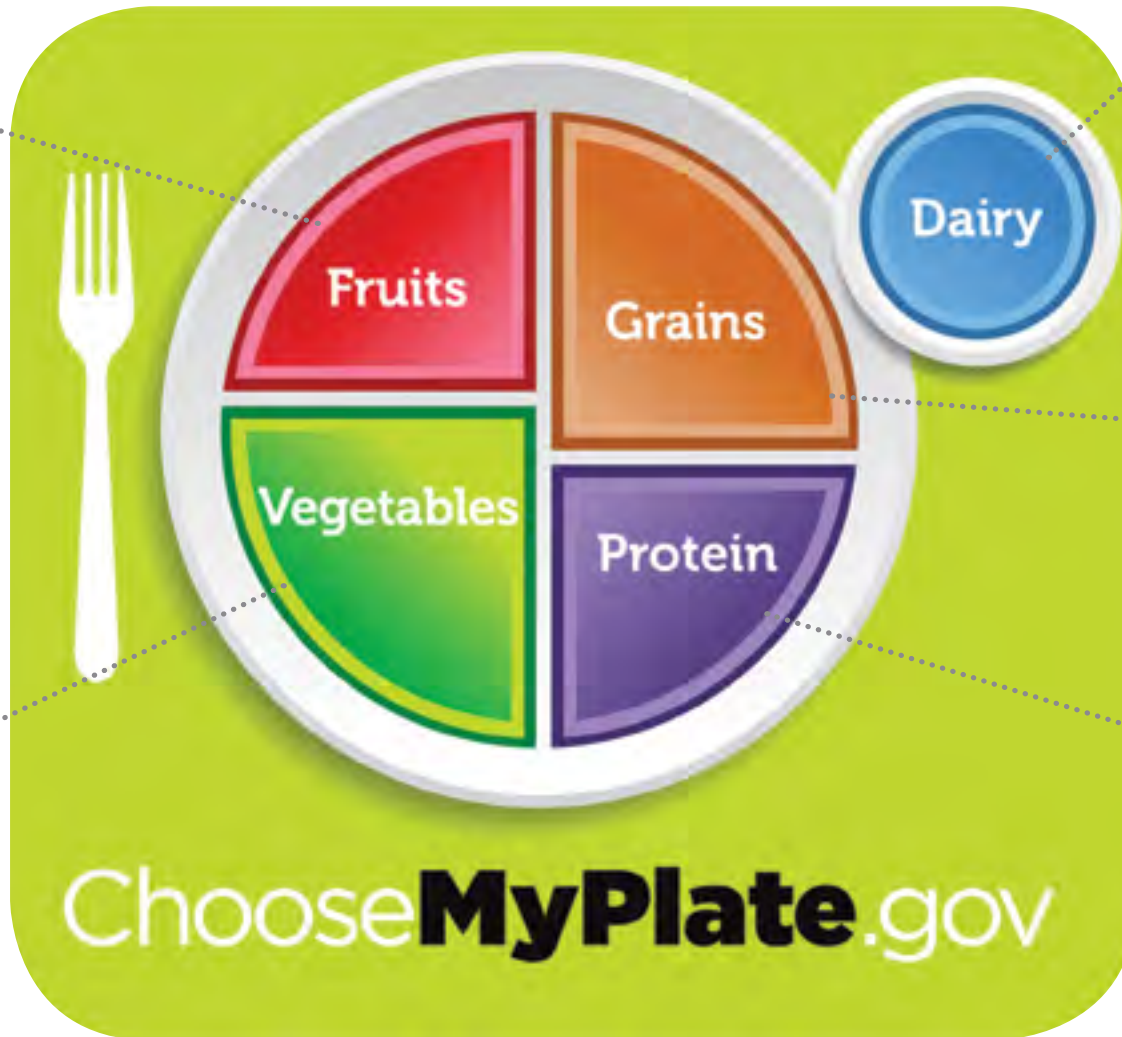
## FRUITS

The smaller portion of the fruits and vegetables half of your plate should be filled with whole or cut-up fruits like bananas, apples and strawberries.



## VEGETABLES

Half of your plate should be veggies and fruit — heavier on the veggies. Include red, orange and dark green vegetables.



## DAIRY

Pour a glass of nonfat or low-fat (1%) milk. You'll get as much calcium and other important nutrients as you would from whole milk, but with less fat and fewer calories.



## GRAINS

A quarter of your plate should be grains. Focus on eating 100% whole grains, like brown rice and whole-grain breads and pasta.




## PROTEIN

Another quarter of your plate should be protein. Eat fish and beans for some meals. And when you pick poultry or red meat as your protein, choose lean cuts in small portions.

# March 2013

**YOUR  
CARE**

Syracuse VA Medical Center's new **Spinal Cord Injury/ Disease Center** offers advanced specialty care to Veterans. It features a 30-bed inpatient unit, seven operating rooms and a comprehensive outpatient program.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
<p><b>FEBRUARY</b></p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>   1 2</p> <p>3 4 5 6 7 8 9</p> <p>10 11 12 13 14 15 16</p> <p>17 18 19 20 21 22 23</p> <p>24 25 26 27 28</p>	<p><b>APRIL</b></p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>         1 2 3 4 5 6</p> <p>7 8 9 10 11 12 13</p> <p>14 15 16 17 18 19 20</p> <p>21 22 23 24 25 26 27</p> <p>28 29 30</p>	<p><b>Keep going.</b> Where do you stand with your goals?</p> <hr/> <hr/>			1		2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
	Buy fruit canned in its own juice, rather than syrup.						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
Daylight saving time begins				Cut 500 calories a day to lose 1 lb. a week. A 20-oz. cola has about 250 calories.			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
St. Patrick's Day			First day of spring				
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Palm Sunday	Passover begins at sundown	Control portions. Put one serving on a plate or bowl. Avoid eating out of a bag or box.			Good Friday		
31			<p><b>A healthy meal doesn't have to be a boring meal.</b> Keep things interesting by trying new dishes and making healthier versions of old favorites. Start with the classic beef stew and spinach-stuffed sole recipes provided with this calendar. For more healthy recipes, download FREE cookbooks and watch how-to videos online at <a href="http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/healthyeating">hp2010.nhlbihin.net/healthyeating</a>.</p>				
Easter							



## Move Your Body ... Find Peace of Mind

**R**egular exercise not only makes your body fit, but your mind and spirit, too. It can help ease anxiety, stress and depression, as well as boost your self-esteem and energy level. An added bonus: People who exercise regularly also tend to eat more nutritiously.

**Exercise for 20 to 40 minutes or more.** This time frame is better for reducing anxiety and increasing energy than shorter bouts of exercise.

**Choose an exercise you enjoy.** You'll be more likely to make it a habit.

**Make exercise a part of your routine.** These strategies can help:

- Enjoy exercise by keeping it at a level that is comfortable for you.
- Maintain a regular schedule — exercise before work or at lunch. Try joining a class, basketball league or other group.
- Change your outlook. Focus on the positives, like how it gives you more energy.

# April 2013



**Fresh air can help.** Studies suggest that outdoor exercise may improve physical and mental well-being more than indoor exercise. This includes feeling revitalized and less tense and angry. It also increases the likelihood of repeating the activity.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>MARCH</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2</p> <p>3 4 5 6 7 8 9</p> <p>10 11 12 13 14 15 16</p> <p>17 18 19 20 21 22 23</p> <p>24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>31</p>	<p>1</p> <p>National Public Health Week® begins</p> <p>April Fool's Day</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Download free PTSD apps at <a href="http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public">www.ptsd.va.gov/public</a>. Select "Mobile Apps."</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Tax Day</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Kids need active minds and bodies, too. Visit <a href="http://www.bam.gov">www.bam.gov</a>.</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Earth Day</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Arbor Day</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Vietnam War ended</p>	<p><b>DID YOU KNOW?</b></p> <p>VA offers a range of <b>behavioral health programs</b>, including care for substance abuse, help for quitting tobacco products and family support classes. Visit <a href="http://www.visn2.va.gov/bh">www.visn2.va.gov/bh</a> for details.</p>			
<p>MAY</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>5 6 7 8 9 10 11</p> <p>12 13 14 15 16 17 18</p> <p>19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p>26 27 28 29 30 31</p>			<p><b>Help is available when you need it.</b> If you feel anxious, have lost interest in your favorite activities, and have no energy or appetite, you may be depressed. Talk with your VA provider. For immediate help, call the Veterans Crisis Line at <b>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</b> and <b>press 1</b>, text <b>838255</b>, or chat online at <a href="http://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net">www.VeteransCrisisLine.net</a>.</p>			





## Stroke: Act FAST to Stay Well

**S**troke occurs more often in seniors, but is also a major cause of disability and death among middle-aged people. In fact, it is the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S. Take these steps to help combat the potential effects of stroke:

### Know When to Act FAST

**F**acial weakness or numbness, especially on one side

**A**rm weakness, especially on one side

**S**peech problems; you can't speak or understand properly

**T**ime is brain; the faster you get treatment, the less damage to your brain

### Get Timely Treatment

**Andrew Bragdon, M.D.**, Chief of Neurology at Syracuse VA Medical Center, also advises you to:

- **Call 911.** It's typically better than having a friend or family member drive. "Paramedics transport patients with possible stroke symptoms to the nearest hospital that administers tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), a powerful, FDA-approved clot dissolving medication."
- **Don't delay.** To be effective, doctors must administer tPA within three hours of the onset of symptoms. "I've seen patients whose symptoms fully resolved within a few hours of receiving tPA and who ultimately recovered completely."



# May 2013

**REDUCE  
RISK**

**Up to 80% of strokes can be prevented** by working with a health care professional to reduce your personal risk, according to the National Stroke Association. To get started, make an appointment with your VA provider.

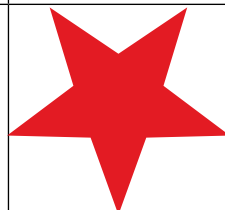
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Fill out your Stroke Risk Scorecard at <a href="http://stroke.org">stroke.org</a> . Share it with your provider.		1	2 National Day of Prayer	3	4
5 Orthodox Easter Cinco de Mayo	6	7	8 Victory in Europe (V-E Day)	9	10	11
12 Mother's Day	13	14 Limit alcohol. Too much can cause high blood pressure.	15	16	17	18 Armed Forces Day
19	20	21	22	23 Learn more. Hear recovery stories. View the <i>Know Stroke</i> video at <a href="http://stroke.nih.gov">stroke.nih.gov</a> .	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day	28	29 National Senior Health & Fitness Day®	30 National Veterans Golden Age Games May 30 - June 4 Buffalo, NY	31	

**APRIL**

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**JUNE**

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**Preventive care can help you stay well.** Use your *Veterans' Wellness* calendar to stay on track with important exams, screenings and vaccines for the rest of the year. For tools that can help you stay healthy and work with your VA provider, log on to My Health eVet at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov). In-Person Authentication will allow you to use secure messaging with your VA health care team.

## Keep Your Mind and Body Active

**Y**ou already know that physical exercise lowers your risk for diabetes, heart disease and certain types of cancer. But you may also be able to prevent or delay the onset of Alzheimer's and other memory disorders with certain physical and mental activities.

In one study, older adults who spent the most time on mentally challenging activities had about half the risk of developing Alzheimer's as those who seldom engaged in such activities. These brain-saving activities included playing cards or checkers, reading, working crossword or other puzzles, and visiting museums.

So keep seeking new mental challenges! And don't let your mind retire when you do. Consider these suggestions:

- Learn new computer software and applications. For help with email, word processing, creating spreadsheets and more, visit [www.digitalliteracy.gov](http://www.digitalliteracy.gov).
- Discover and document your family's story. Genealogy lets you play detective and be creative. Get started at [www.archives.gov/research/genealogy](http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy).
- Play explorer. Go hiking or try orienteering (a race in wilderness navigation using a map and compass). Check out [www.us.orienteering.org](http://www.us.orienteering.org) for information, events and resources.

**DON'T MISS  
THIS MONTH!  
27th National VA  
Golden Age Games**

*Showcasing Veterans in  
activities ranging from  
checkers to cycling*



Veteran George Chamitski from Walworth won a bronze medal in horseshoes during the 2012 National VA Golden Age Games. He will be competing again this year.



# June 2013



**Improve your memory.** Exercise regularly to keep your body and brain healthy. If you have trouble remembering words, spend more time reading. Manage mild forgetfulness with tools such as this calendar and notes to yourself.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																																																																					
<p>MAY</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		<p>JULY</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			<p><b>Don't stop now!</b> Where do you stand with your goals?</p> <hr/> <hr/>					<p>1</p> <p><b>National Veterans Golden Age Games</b> May 30 - June 4 Buffalo, NY</p>
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			<p>Learn about VA's Alzheimer's research at <a href="http://www.visn2.va.gov">www.visn2.va.gov</a>.</p>																																																																																								
9	10	11	12	13	14	15																																																																																					
	<p>New activities and routines can help curb the urge to smoke.</p>				<p>Flag Day U.S. Army Birthday</p>																																																																																						
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<p>Father's Day</p>			<p>Juneteenth (the end of slavery in the U.S.)</p>		<p>First day of summer</p>																																																																																						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29																																																																																					
	<p>To find keys and glasses easier, always put them away in the same spot.</p>			<p>Explore with ease. Get The NY State Parks iPhone app at <a href="http://nysparks.com">nysparks.com</a>.</p>																																																																																							
30			<p><b>"It's never too late to be who you might have been." — George Eliot</b> POST-9/11 GI Bill benefits can be used for school, as well as on-the-job training, apprenticeships and noncollege degree programs. Visit the GI Bill website at <a href="http://gibill.va.gov">gibill.va.gov</a> for information on all educational benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.</p>																																																																																								

## How Sweet It Is

**S**ugar is natural; it's produced from sugarcane or sugar beet. So what's the problem? One concern is that refined sugars added to many foods pack in calories without providing nutrients. Empty calories can lead to extra pounds.

Research also suggests that loads of sugar, especially from sweetened beverages, may affect your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. This puts you more at risk for heart disease.

On average, Americans consume 30 teaspoons (480 calories) of sugar daily. That's well above the suggested intake levels of 6 teaspoons (100 calories) for women and about 9 teaspoons (150 calories) for men. Beware of these top sugar sources:

- Regular soft drinks and fruit punch
- Candy, cakes, cookies and pies
- Ice cream and sweetened yogurt
- Baked goods, such as cinnamon toast and honey-nut waffles
- Sweetened ready-to-eat cereals

While flavored and vitamin-boosted waters sound better than the drinks above, these beverages typically contain empty calories from sugar, but fall short of nutrients.




Other surprising sources of sugar include ketchup, tomato sauce, barbecue sauce, and reduced-fat and reduced-calorie salad dressings.



# July 2013

**READ  
UP**

**Look at nutrition labels before you buy packaged foods.** Avoid those with added sugars in the top three ingredients. These include maltose, sucrose, corn sweetener, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, molasses and fruit juice concentrates.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>JUNE</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 3 4 5 6 7 8</p> <p>9 10 11 12 13 14 15</p> <p>16 17 18 19 20 21 22</p> <p>23 24 25 26 27 28 29</p> <p>30</p>	1	2  Walking a dog burns around 100 calories in 30 minutes.	3	4  Independence Day	5	6
7	8  Ramadan begins at sundown	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18  Get more rest. Less than 5 hours sleep makes you more prone to weight gain.	19	20
21	22	23  Have diabetes? Check your blood sugar before exercising.	24	25	26	27  Korean War ended
28  Parents' Day	29	30  Father-in-Law Day	31		<p><b>HEALTHY LIVING</b></p> <p>For tips and resources to help you eat wisely, be physically active, achieve a healthy weight, manage stress and more, visit <a href="http://www.prevention.va.gov">www.prevention.va.gov</a>.</p>	
<p>AUGUST</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2 3</p> <p>4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>11 12 13 14 15 16 17</p> <p>18 19 20 21 22 23 24</p> <p>25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p>			<p><b>Break through your weight-loss barriers.</b> VA's TeleMOVE! program can help. You'll receive personalized assistance to help you lose weight and keep it off. To start, complete the 23-question survey at <a href="http://www.move.va.gov/Move23">www.move.va.gov/Move23</a>. When you're finished, write down your retrieval code. Then call <b>1-877-619-0106</b> and select <b>option 1</b> to speak with a TeleMOVE! coordinator about your options.</p>			

## Make the Most of Your Days

**W**ork, family and other responsibilities offer plenty of distraction from taking care of you. To make yourself a priority, remember the benefits: Regular physical exercise, for example, helps prevent breast and uterine cancer, lowers your risk for diabetes and high blood pressure, and may slow bone loss.

To exercise more, try thinking about it less. A recent study of 42- to 77-year-olds showed that the most successful exercisers were the ones who thought the least about it. In addition to focusing on the present, make small changes that enable you to get more benefit from the activities you already do.

**Food shopping:** When your list is short, take reusable bags to fill as you walk through the store, instead of pushing a cart. You'll burn more calories, build strength and have less room for high-calorie items that aren't on your list. When you do have a car full of groceries, take bags into the house one at a time.

**Walking the dog:** When it's your turn to take Fido out, add five to 10 extra minutes. Add spurts of fast walking or jogging to cover more ground over the course of the week — without crunching your schedule.




**Keeping it tidy:** Instead of going to an automated car wash, clean your ride by hand. And when it's time to mow the lawn, do it yourself using a push mower. Making tasks like these less efficient may take a little longer, but it'll also work more muscles and burn more calories in the process.



# August 2013

KEEP  
COOL

**40% — The amount of unwanted heat buildup in your home that comes in through windows.** To block direct sunlight, hang curtains made from tightly woven, light-colored, opaque fabrics. Face reflective surfaces toward the windows.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																										
	<p>Watch, listen and learn. Access <i>womenTALK</i> videos and podcasts at <a href="http://healthywomen.org">healthywomen.org</a>.</p>		<p>JULY</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				1	2	3
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4  U.S. Coast Guard Birthday	5	6	7	8	9  When outdoors, put food away within 1 hour if it's hotter than 90 degrees.	10																																										
11	12  Stay safe in extreme heat. For warnings and safety info, visit <a href="http://nws.noaa.gov/om/heat">nws.noaa.gov/om/heat</a> .	13	14	15	16	17																																										
18	19	20	21  Fun fact: Nearly 846,000 people attended the 2012 New York State Fair.	22  New York State Fair in Syracuse begins	23	24																																										
25	26  To help protect your bones, drink more water and milk, less soda and alcohol.	27	28	29	30	31																																										
<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30								<p><b>Take better care of yourself and your baby.</b> Pregnant women and new moms can sign up for a FREE text message program providing tips and resources. Topics include exercise and nutrition, safety, developmental milestones, prenatal care, and labor and delivery. For details, visit <a href="http://text4baby.org">text4baby.org</a>. To get started, text "BABY" (for English) or "BEBE" (for Spanish) to <b>511411</b>.</p>			
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## Tooth Health and Total Health: A Two-Way Street

**B**y taking care of your teeth and gums, you'll keep your smile looking great and safeguard your overall health. If you've been diagnosed with certain health issues, you need to be extra vigilant. Here's what you need to know about the links between oral health and chronic conditions:

**Diabetes:** Diabetes can increase your risk of mouth infections and gum (periodontal) disease. Research suggests gum disease also can make controlling blood sugar more difficult.

**Cardiovascular disease:** Studies show that healthy mouths are linked to healthy hearts. Scientists suspect that the same bacteria that cause gum disease may form plaque deposits in the arteries or contribute to inflammation that can cause a heart attack or stroke.

**Osteoporosis:** Your dentist may be the first to suspect this condition, which causes bones to become less dense. Symptoms may include loose teeth, receding gums or ill-fitting dentures. Research suggests that dental X-rays may be an effective screening tool, although they're not commonly used for this purpose.

Polish your smile and protect your overall health by brushing at least twice a day, flossing once a day, avoiding tobacco, eating a healthy diet low in sugar, and getting regular dental checkups and cleanings.





# September 2013



**Drink milk or water to protect your teeth.** If you want to change it up, try fresh green tea. It offers polyphenols that help keep plaque from sticking to teeth. Plaque can lead to tooth decay. Skip adding sugar to your tea.

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<p><b>Keep it up!</b> Where do you stand with your goals?</p> <hr/> <hr/>				<p>AUGUST</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	<p>OCTOBER</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
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1	2 Labor Day Victory over Japan (V-J day)	3	4 Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown	5 See a dentist twice a year. Don't wait until something hurts.	6	7																																																																																				
8 Grandparents Day	9	10	11 Patriot Day	12	13 Yom Kippur begins at sundown	14																																																																																				
15	16 Brush and floss after every meal. Replace your brush every few months.	17 Constitution Day	18 U.S. Air Force Birthday	19	20 National POW/MIA Recognition Day	21																																																																																				
22 First day of fall	23	24	25	26 Soak dentures in soapy water while you sleep.	27	28																																																																																				
29	30	<p><b>“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” — Benjamin Franklin</b> You've heard it before, but now it's time to put it into action. Use the <i>Routine Health Care Monitoring</i> chart in this calendar as a guide to working with your VA provider. Talk about screenings, immunizations and other care you may need.</p>																																																																																								



## Get Tough on Cancer

**D**on't wait. Take action now to get an advantage in the fight against cancer. "Get the recommended cancer screenings you haven't had yet," advises **Jane Weber, R.N.**, Women Veterans Program Manager at the Albany Stratton VA Medical Center. "Detecting cancer early makes it easier to treat successfully and can help minimize its impact on your health — and life — going forward."

Here's how to screen for three cancers women face most often:

**Breast cancer:** A mammogram, or X-ray of the breast, can help detect lumps before they're large enough to feel.

**Colorectal cancer:** A number of tests can be used to screen for precancerous conditions or cancer. These include fecal occult blood test, flexible sigmoidoscopy, double contrast barium enema and colonoscopy.

**Gynecologic (cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal and vulvar) cancers:** A Pap test can detect precancerous changes in cervical cells, as well as cervical cancer. An HPV test may be done, too. Regular pelvic exams may help find some other gynecologic cancers.

"When and how often you should have screenings depends on your personal risk factors and other variables," Weber explains. Work with your VA provider to schedule preventive care that's right for you.

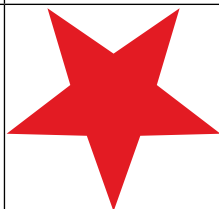
# October 2013



**Stay active as the days get shorter.** It's tempting to get cozy indoors this time of year. Instead, enjoy all that fall has to offer and reap the rewards of stimulating your mind and body. For ideas, visit [iloveny.com](http://iloveny.com) and [nysparks.com/events](http://nysparks.com/events).

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<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</p> <p>8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>15 16 17 18 19 20 21</p> <p>22 23 24 25 26 27 28</p> <p>29 30</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2</p> <p>3 4 5 6 7 8 9</p> <p>10 11 12 13 14 15 16</p> <p>17 18 19 20 21 22 23</p> <p>24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p>	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Women ages 19-50 need 18 mg of iron daily. Try spinach and white beans.	9	10	11 Help protect yourself from melanoma. Skip indoor tanning.	12
13 U.S. Navy Birthday	14 Columbus Day	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Shampoo/conditioner with panthenol helps repair hair breakage.	25	26
27 Mother-in-Law Day	28	29	30	31 Halloween		Be prepared with the free First-Aid app from <a href="http://redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps">redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps</a> .

Omega-3 fatty acids help younger women reduce their heart disease risk. Try salmon and cod.



**Care tailored to the unique needs of women Veterans.** VA Women's Health Clinics offer primary, specialty and mental health care services. From counseling and disease prevention to obstetrics/gynecological and gender-specific heart care, we're here for you. You can even select a female or male provider. For service and contact information, visit [www.visn2.va.gov/vet/women](http://www.visn2.va.gov/vet/women).

## 3 Steps to Avoiding Diabetes

**D**iabetes is a bit like playing cards: You can't control the hand you're dealt — in this case, your genetics and family history — but you can still come out on top.

**Carlos Mendez, M.D.**, Director of the Diabetes Management Program at Albany Stratton VA Medical Center, adds that Veterans may also have other factors that increase their risk, including exposure to herbicides like Agent Orange and the use of certain medications to treat posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He emphasizes that it's still possible to prevent pre-diabetes from progressing into diabetes.

Dr. Mendez offers this advice:

1. Aim to do aerobic exercise that brings your heart rate up to 50 to 70 percent of your maximum rate at least three days per week. Do resistance exercises at least twice a week.
2. Cut down on sweetened beverages and processed carbohydrates in favor of whole grains, vegetables and low-fat meats.
3. Visit your VA provider regularly to monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol, hemoglobin A1c and urine protein levels.




These steps can also help manage diabetes. "We've had patients who required large doses of insulin and took several medications to control their diabetes significantly decrease their insulin doses," Dr. Mendez says. "Some patients were able to discontinue it completely."



# November 2013



**Desserts can still be a part of your holidays** if you have diabetes. But don't just add them to your meals. They count toward your total carbs, so cut carbs elsewhere. Talk with your VA provider about controlling your blood sugar.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																										
	<p><b>VA Caregiver Support Program</b>            Stay strong and informed so you can give the best possible care to your loved one. Check out the Caregiver Tool Box at <a href="http://www.caregiver.va.gov">www.caregiver.va.gov</a>. If you have questions or need to talk, call <b>1-855-260-3274</b>.</p>			<p>OCTOBER</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			1	2
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3  Daylight saving time ends	4	5	6	7  Rake leaves for 20 minutes to burn 100 calories.	8	9																																										
10  Marine Corps Birthday	11  Veterans Day	12	13	14	15	16																																										
17	18	19  Eat white-meat turkey. It has fewer calories and less fat than dark meat.	20	21  Great American Smokeout	22  Native American Heritage Day	23																																										
24	25	26	27  First night of Hanukkah	28  Thanksgiving	29  Start addressing holiday cards now to avoid rushing in December.	30																																										
<p>DECEMBER</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							<p><b>VA Health Care Upstate New York has 89 active telehealth clinics</b> to help you lose weight, manage chronic conditions like diabetes and get specialty care, while saving you travel time and costs. Talk with your VA provider about telehealth services available in your area. To learn about VA's telehealth program and watch video demonstrations, visit <a href="http://www.telehealth.va.gov">www.telehealth.va.gov</a>.</p>			
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## Keep Your Holiday Season Merry and Bright

**M**aking a to-do list is often touted as a way to gain control over stress. But a holiday task list that runs over with should-dos may only set you up for an anxiety-filled season.

Let go of expectations and tear up your list of shoulds. Then move forward with a holiday season that promotes health and joy:

- Scratch out the holiday rituals you can live without. For instance, if you dislike baking, skip the cookies this year. You will have more time for traditions you enjoy — and save on calories and the cost of supplies.
- Prioritize and set realistic expectations for cleaning and decorating your home. Focus your efforts on the areas that your guests will use the most. Make your prep work more fun and less stressful by asking a friend to help you, then return the favor.
- Create a present theme that cuts down on shopping trips. For example, buy everyone books and get all your presents at the same bookstore. And don't budge on your budget. Small, thoughtful gifts can bring great delights and prevent post-holiday financial woes.
- Keep mishaps in perspective. No celebration is perfect. Sometimes mishaps can even become cherished memories that get retold with a smile from year to year.

# December 2013



**Be extra vigilant to protect yourself against identity theft.** If you shop or bank online, only use sites that start with "https," which means it encrypts your information. For tips on spotting and preventing fraud, visit [www.stopfraud.gov/protect.html](http://www.stopfraud.gov/protect.html).

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																																																																				
<p><b>How did you do?</b> Where do you stand with your goals?</p> <hr/> <hr/>				<p>NOVEMBER</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	<p>JANUARY</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
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1 World AIDS Day	2	3	4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day																																																																																				
8	9 Use a humidifier to help ease a sore throat and dry winter skin.	10	11	12	13 National Guard Birthday	14																																																																																				
15	16	17	18	19 Reduce stress and arrive on time. Download a free traffic forecast app at <a href="http://inixtraffic.com">inixtraffic.com</a> .	20	21 First day of winter																																																																																				
22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas	26 First day of Kwanzaa	27	28																																																																																				
29 Use lip balm with lanolin or beeswax several times a day and before bed.	30	31 New Year's Eve	<p><b>Do good for others — and yourself: Be a volunteer!</b> A variety of volunteer opportunities are available throughout upstate New York. Find out how you can get started at <a href="http://www.visn2.va.gov">www.visn2.va.gov</a>. Click on "Volunteer" for contact information, position details and our <i>Volunteer News</i> publication.</p>																																																																																							

10411M

# Reaching us is easy

## Our Locations



### VA Medical Centers

- Albany Stratton**  
113 Holland Ave.  
Albany, NY 12208  
518-626-5000  
1-800-223-4810
- Batavia**  
222 Richmond Ave.  
Batavia, NY 14020  
585-297-1000
- Bath**  
76 Veterans Ave.  
Bath, NY 14810  
607-664-4000  
1-877-845-3247
- Buffalo**  
3495 Bailey Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14215  
716-834-9200  
1-800-532-8387
- Canandaigua**  
400 Fort Hill Ave.  
Canandaigua, NY 14424  
585-394-2000  
1-800-204-9917
- Syracuse**  
800 Irving Ave.  
Syracuse, NY 13210  
315-425-4400  
1-800-221-2883

### Community-Based Outpatient Clinics

- Auburn**  
17 Lansing St.  
Auburn, NY 13021  
315-255-7002
- Bainbridge**  
109 N. Main St.  
Bainbridge, NY 13733  
607-967-8590
- Binghamton**  
425 Robinson St.  
Binghamton, NY 13901  
607-772-9100
- Catskill**  
Greene Medical Bldg.  
159 Jefferson Heights  
Catskill, NY 12414  
518-943-7515
- Clifton Park**  
1673 Route 9  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
518-626-5205
- Coudersport**  
**Satellite Clinic  
of Wellsville**  
24 Maple View Lane  
Suite 2  
Coudersport, PA 16915  
814-260-9342
- Dunkirk**  
Valor Health Center  
166 E. Fourth St.  
Dunkirk, NY 14048  
1-800-310-5001

### Elmira

- Health Services Bldg.  
200 Madison Ave.  
Suite 2E  
Elmira, NY 14901  
1-877-845-3247,  
ext. 44640
- Fonda**  
Camp Mohawk Plaza  
2623 State Highway 30A  
Fonda, NY 12068  
518-855-1247
- Glens Falls**  
84 Broad St.  
Glens Falls, NY 12801  
518-798-6066
- Jamesstown**  
608 W. Third St.  
Jamesstown, NY 14701  
716-338-1511
- Kingsston**  
63 Hurler Ave.  
Kingston, NY 12401  
845-331-8322
- Lackawanna**  
Our Lady of Victory  
Family Care Center  
227 Ridge Road  
Lackawanna, NY 14218  
716-822-5944

### Lockport

- 5883 Snyder Drive  
Lockport, NY 14094  
716-438-3890
- Malone**  
3372 State Route 11  
Main Street  
Malone, NY 12953  
518-483-1529

### Mansfield

- Satellite Clinic  
of Elmira**  
63 Third St., Suite 104  
Mansfield, PA 16901  
570-662-0507

### Massena

- 1 Hospital Drive  
Massena, NY 13662  
315-769-4253
- Niagara Falls**  
2201 Pine Ave.  
Niagara Falls, NY  
14301-2300  
716-862-8580
- Olean**  
465 N. Union St.  
Olean, NY 14760-2658  
716-373-7709

### Oswego

- 437 State Route 104E  
Oswego, NY 13126  
315-207-0120

### Plattsburgh

- 80 Sharon Ave.  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
518-561-6247

### Rochester

- 465 Westfall Road  
Rochester, NY 14620  
585-463-2600

### Rome

- 125 Brookley Road  
Griffiss Park  
Rome, NY 13441  
315-334-7100

### Saranac Lake

- Satellite Clinic  
of Elizabethtown**  
33 Depot St.  
Saranac Lake, NY 12983  
518-626-5237

### Schenectady

- 1322 Gerling St.  
Sheridan Plaza  
Schenectady, NY 12308  
518-346-3334
- Springville**  
**Satellite Clinic  
of Lackawanna**  
Springville Primary Care  
27 Franklin St.  
Springville, NY 14141  
716-592-7400

### Tompkins/Cortland County

- 1451 Dryden Road  
Freeville, NY 13068  
607-347-4101

### Troy

- Troy Primary Care  
Practice  
295 River St.  
Troy, NY 12180  
518-274-7707

### Watertown

- 19472 U.S. Route 11  
Watertown, NY 13601  
315-221-7026
- Wellsville**  
3458 Riverside Drive  
Route 19  
Wellsville, NY 14895  
607-664-4660  
1-877-845-3247 (Bath)

### Westport/ Elizabethtown

- 7426 NYS Route 9N  
Westport, NY 12993  
518-626-5236

### Vet Centers

- Albany**  
17 Computer Drive W.  
Albany, NY 12205  
518-626-5130
- Binghamton**  
53 Chenango St.  
Binghamton, NY 13901  
607-722-2393
- Buffalo**  
2372 Sweet Home Road  
Suite 1  
Buffalo, NY 14228  
716-862-7350
- Rochester**  
2000 S. Winston Road  
Bldg. 5, Suite 201  
Rochester, NY 14620  
585-232-5040
- Syracuse**  
716 E. Washington St.  
Suite 101  
Syracuse, NY 13210  
315-478-7127
- Watertown**  
210 Court St., Suite 20  
Watertown, NY 13601  
315-782-5479

### Caregiver Support

- 1-855-260-3274**  
For help with caring for  
Veterans with disabilities  
[www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)
- National Call Center for  
Homeless Veterans Hotline**  
**1-877-4AID-VET**  
**1-877-424-3838**

- Reliable Health  
Information on the Web**  
[www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

### TelCare

- 1-888-838-7890**  
24-hour, toll-free medical  
advice for enrolled Veterans
- Veterans Crisis Line**  
**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
- Veterans Service  
Contact Center**  
**1-888-823-9656**

- For information on eligibility,  
VA health care benefits and  
enrollment, or questions on  
your billing statement