

# Trending Healthy

## *All Things Spring*

April 2022

### Spring Is About Rejuvenation How Can You Make a Fresh Start?



Spring is always welcome after a long winter. There's more sunlight, the harsh winter weather gives way to milder days, and things start to blossom.

In this issue, explore some ways you can rejuvenate your health and well-being, your community, and your home. Caring for ourselves, our friends and families, our neighbors, and our living environment has so many benefits! So pack up those winter clothes, open the windows (unless we get more spring hail...), and welcome the changing season.



Welcome to our newest Trending Healthy readers!

**Welcome** Glenda F, Darlene A, Jeralee C, Mariana R, Scott B, Patricia D, Kristi S, Billie W, Barbara D, Federik, Bonnie M, Jason P, Tory F, Yvonne E, DeeDee J, Bogdanlyz B, Wil M, Colleen M, Willie N, Janet P, Cassandra L, Mus M, Beketov B, Tanikka W, and Suzanne T!



Editor's Note: A quick note to introduce myself, since I'll be editing Trending Healthy temporarily. My name is Michelle Fogus and I can be reached at [michelle.fogus@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:michelle.fogus@dshs.wa.gov) if you have any comments or suggestions about stories you'd like to see. I'm excited to work on the newsletter and look forward to hearing from you!

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**Wondering what services are available for older adults and caregivers?**  
**Call us or stop in!**

Call or stop by one of our offices to learn more about the many resources available in each of the communities we serve.

**Clallam County:** Forks Office (360) 374-9496, Sequim Office (360) 452-3221

**Grays Harbor:** Aberdeen Office (360) 532-0520

**Jefferson County:** Port Townsend Office (360) 385-2552

**Pacific County:** Long Beach (360) 642-3634, Raymond (360) 942-2177

**Or visit our website: [www.O3A.org](http://www.O3A.org)**

**Spring Ahead...And Stay There?**



If you're like the majority of Americans, you aren't a fan of the twice-yearly changing of the clocks as we **spring ahead** and **fall back**.

As of this writing, the US Senate has passed a bill that would keep us on Daylight Savings Time year-round. It now goes to the House of Representatives. If it passes there, it goes to President Biden for his signature.

Proponents say the extended daylight hours are good for kids, who have more time to play outside after school; good for businesses; and good for health, as there's a small increase in car accidents, strokes, and heart attacks whenever we change the clocks. It may also benefit those with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Opponents worry that more children will have to go to school in the dark, potentially increasing the risk of accidents. For early risers, the winter days will take even longer to start as it remains dark an extra hour. This may actually increase depression among this group, say critics.

If the proposal goes through, it would take effect in November of 2023.  
Stay tuned!

## Spring Cleaning Tips & Tricks

You might be surprised to see what you can do with a lemon, a dryer sheet, or a coffee filter! Did you know you can make a cream of tartar paste to shine your stainless steel? If the goal is to work smarter, not harder, some of the tips below may be helpful. They can also save money in some cases, using things you already have rather than investing more in cleaning products--and most use natural ingredients, which has the added benefit of reducing exposure to harsh chemicals.



Freshen up your cleaning routines by checking out some of these [great tips](#) from Nationwide. And explore other sites--the Internet is chock full of places with ideas for cleaning everything from crusty oven racks to stained coffee mugs and beyond.

Looking for some guidance with spring cleaning? For a (very) [comprehensive list of what to clean in each room](#), visit Taste of Home.

**Warning:** it can be daunting to look at long lists--so choose a room, or even one task in one room, and work through at your own pace. And give yourself permission to NOT complete the whole list. Celebrate what you do get done.

## Wellness Corner: Exercise for Everyone

Whether you're training for a marathon or have chronic pain, there are exercise options to help you maintain or improve your health. Thanks to the pandemic, there are more telehealth training programs, too. If you have an Internet connection, you can join remote classes and exercise right at home.



Evidence-based programs have been tested and found to be effective, based on data. Several of these programs are available online now, and many are geared towards older adults with varying levels of mobility and strength. Here are some exercise programs suggested by the National Council on Aging.

- Love bingo? Then **Bingocize** might be just right for you! It combines fun, social time, exercise, and health tips. Learn more [here](#).



- If you're looking for an exercise program for people with osteoarthritis or those experiencing other joint pain and stiffness, **Fit & Strong!** might be for you. Learn more [here](#).
- Improve strength and balance with **Tai Chi**. Read more [here](#).

## Wellness Corner: Spring Recipes

According to [Feasting at Home](#), "Crisp asparagus, tender spring greens, sprightly spring peas, earthy spring mushrooms, carrots, radishes, new potatoes, artichokes, tarragon, dill, strawberries and rhubarb... all will be coming into their peak of flavor in the next couple months!" Uh, YUM! Here are a couple of recipes from their website.

### [Lemony Asparagus Risotto](#) (pictured)

"Here's a springy recipe for Asparagus Risotto that is lemony & creamy yet light and flavorful - delicious on its own as a vegetarian main, or a beautiful base for fish, seafood or mushrooms. Vegan adaptable and Gluten-free. With a video!" (From Feasting at Home)



Check out their other healthy recipes full of fresh spring flavors.

[Spring Minestrone Soup with Chickpeas](#)  
[Chicken Orzo Soup with Coriander and Dill](#)

...and many more!

Several of the recipes are vegetarian/vegan friendly or can be adapted.

## Wellness Corner: COVID Updates

Although caution is still advised, there is good news about the pandemic. Are we seeing the light at the end of this very long tunnel? Let's hope.



**State vaccination rates** are above the 70% needed for herd immunity. As of April 4, 81.4% of Washingtonians 5 and older have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 73.9% of people 5 and older are fully vaccinated, according to the state Department of Health. Keep in mind that many areas are still below the 70% and may have a higher risk of transmission.

Most counties are now in the **low or moderate risk** group. "Low" risk means there are fewer than 10 cases per 100,000 people, while "moderate" means there are 10-50 per 100,000, measured as an average

over a 7-day period.

### **Second boosters approved for people over 50.**

If you are interested in getting a vaccine or booster, visit <https://vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov/> to find locations near you. Simply enter your ZIP code.

### **Free rapid tests available.**

If you haven't already received your tests from the federal government, you can sign up through the USPS [here](#).

To see if you're eligible to get free at-home COVID tests from the state, visit [this Department of Health page](#).

For more information about COVID, including cases and vaccination rates for different counties, visit the [state Department of Health website](#).



### **Do You Have a Heart for Helping? Check out these volunteer opportunities.**

#### **Volunteer Drivers and Many Other Opportunities**

Do you have a car and are you willing to drive people to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other places they need to go? Many older people and people with disabilities, especially those living in outlying areas, do not have reliable transportation and may not have friends or family to help. In Grays Harbor or Pacific, contact the Coastal Community Action Program ([CCAP](#)) or Catholic Community Services ([CCS](#)) and in Jefferson and Clallam contact Olympic Community Action Program ([OlyCAP](#)) or Ecumenical Christian Helping Hands Organization ([ECHHO](#)) in Jefferson to find out more about how to volunteer.

**Ombuds Program.** Ensure the rights, dignity, and quality of care for people living in long-term care facilities. Training is provided as well as ongoing mentoring and mileage reimbursement. Volunteers are needed in Grays Harbor/Pacific/Jefferson/Clallam Counties. For more information, contact Amber Garrotte, 360-986-0657.

**Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA)** provide free, unbiased information about health care coverage and access to help improve the lives of all Washington state residents. We cultivate community commitment through partnership, service and volunteering. SHIBA volunteer advisors give seniors and people with disabilities the latest Medicare and health care coverage information. Information & Assistance sponsors the SHIBA program that is part of the Washington Office of the Insurance Commissioner's consumer protection services. Training is provided. For more information, contact [SHIBA.o3a@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:SHIBA.o3a@dshs.wa.gov).

**Join the O3A Advisory Council.** O3A is guided by an active Advisory Council that includes consumers, providers, health and social service

specialists, community representatives, tribal and minority population advocates. We are currently looking for a Pacific County representative and regional Tribal and Minority representatives.

Learn more at <https://www.o3a.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

There are also many other ways to help your community through these and other organizations! Find the right fit for you, whether it's a one-time donation or short time commitment or ongoing work.

## Medication Safety Tips

You probably already know that it's important to **keep a current list of medications** at home (post on the fridge for easy access) and also with you. There are other things you can also do, from keeping medications safely stored at home to using automated medication dispensers, to help with medication management.

### Safe Storage Tips

- Keep your medications out of direct sunlight and heat.
- Keep your medicine away from pets and children.
- Don't store your medications with other family member medicines or household cleaners.
- Keep medicines in their original bottles.

(from the Cleveland Clinic Martin Health)

### Medication Dispensers

If it's hard to remember when to take medication or whether you've already taken it, consider using a **medication dispenser**. The simplest are pill boxes that have designated spaces for a.m. and p.m. meds and are marked with days of the week. For extra security, there are automated dispensers. These are preloaded, usually with 1-2 weeks worth of medication, and timers are set so the medication is dispensed appropriately. Most have audible reminders as well. Med dispensers help avoid the problems of both missed doses and taking extra doses. Look at dispenser options available from Amazon [here](#).

### Guard Against Interactions

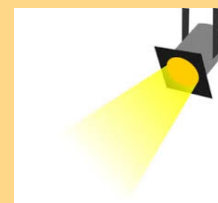
Whenever possible, use the same pharmacy for all of your medications so the pharmacist can check for interactions. If you need to use more than one pharmacy, make sure your primary care provider and/or pharmacist are aware of ALL medications.

## TRENDING HEALTHY

## SPOTLIGHT

### Aging in Place

### Making Your Home Safer As Your Needs Change



Many people prefer to stay in their own homes as long as they can, but as we age, staying safe at home might require some changes to keep



the home environment as safe as possible. Avoiding serious falls and other injuries is the best way to remain independent.

### Prevent Falls

- Ensure that any area rugs have non-skid backing and are low pile, or remove them.
- Reroute or remove any cords that extend across walkways.
- Install grab bars in the bathtub or shower. If you are unsteady or prone to dizziness, get a bath seat and a handheld shower.
- Consider installing a transfer pole if needed next to your bed and/or next to your favorite seat in the living room. Poles are mounted and extend from floor to ceiling, and they have a handle to assist with standing up safely.
- Lift chairs can also help those who need an extra boost, but keep in mind they can be a hazard for someone who is unsteady on their feet or can't bear much weight. Consult with your primary care provider to see if a lift chair is right for you.

### Other helpful tips

- Minimize the need to bend and reach into awkward areas by installing electrical outlets higher on the wall.
- Swap out round doorknobs for levers if you have arthritis or another condition that affects your ability to grasp and turn.

For more ways to make your home safer and more comfortable, check out [this list of tips](#) from Real Estate Boston.

### Editor's Invitation:

Is there a topic related to healthy aging that you want to learn more about? If so, let us know!

Please send comments to [michelle.fogus@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:michelle.fogus@dshs.wa.gov)



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