

NEI Aging Today

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NORTHEAST IOWA
Area Agency
on Aging

NEI3A helps older persons respond to their evolving needs and choices.

Age my way!



Older adults play vital, positive roles in our communities – as family members, friends, mentors, volunteers, civic leaders, members of the workforce, and more. Just as every person is unique, so too is how they age and how they choose to do it – and there is no “right” way. That’s why the theme for Older Americans Month (OAM) 2022 is Age My Way.

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the celebration of OAM. This year’s theme focuses on how older adults can age in their communities, living independently for as long as possible and participating in ways they choose.

While Age My Way will look different for each person, here are common things everyone can consider:

- **Planning:** Think about what you will need and want in the future, from home and community-based services to community activities that interest you.
- **Engagement:** Remain involved and contribute to your community through work, volunteer, and/or civic participation opportunities.
- **Access:** Make home improvements and modifications, use assistive technologies, and customize supports to help you better age in place.
- **Connection:** Maintain social activities and relationships to combat social isolation and stay connected to your community.

Diverse communities are strong communities. Ensuring that older adults remain involved and included in our communities for as long as possible benefits everyone.

The SMP National Resource Center is Kicking Off an Inaugural Medicare Fraud Prevention Week

- Nicole Liebau, SMP National Resource Center Director at NEI3A

Medicare Fraud Prevention Week focuses on the actions everyone can take to prevent Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse. June 2022 marks the 25th anniversary of the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program. To commemorate this event, the SMP is creating a national week focused on Medicare fraud prevention.

SMP is a national program that educates Medicare beneficiaries about Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse. Learn how you can protect yourself and your loved ones from Medicare fraud by joining us on 6/5 to kick off this week of celebration and education!

Why is this week important?

Medicare loses an estimated \$60 billion each year due to fraud, errors, and abuse. Every day, issues related to these concerning matters affect people across the country, often costing them money, time, and well-being. Medicare-related errors contribute to this annual loss even though errors can be honest health care billing mistakes. However, a pattern of errors committed by a physician or provider could be considered a red flag of potential fraud or abuse if not corrected.

When people steal from Medicare, it hurts us all and is big business for criminals. Some common examples of fraud or abuse could include:

- Charging for services or supplies that were not provided
- Misrepresenting a diagnosis, a person's identity, the service provided, or other facts to justify payment
- Prescribing or providing excessive or unnecessary tests and services

Falling prey to consumer scams or health care fraud may mean that your Medicare number has been "compromised" as a result of medical identity theft. Theft from Medicare leaves less available funds for those needing services now as well as those needing Medicare in the future.

How will this week be celebrated and observed?

The most effective way to stop fraud from occurring is to prevent

it in the first place. Educating yourself and your loved ones on how to prevent Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse is the best place to start.

If you are a **Medicare beneficiary**, kick off the week on 6/5 by learning how to read your Medicare statements! Read your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) in the paper form that is mailed to you or go online to Medicare.gov and review them digitally.

Caregivers, help by educating yourself and your client or loved one on how to prevent and detect health care fraud, errors, and abuse. Be on the lookout for items such as durable medical equipment (like boxes of knee braces) lying around the house that may have been shipped to the beneficiary without their or their doctor's approval. Remind your client or loved one to never give out their Medicare number or other personal information over the phone.



Beginning *6/5*
**MEDICARE
FRAUD
PREVENTION
WEEK**

Celebrating 25 Years of the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)

Families, help by talking to your loved ones about protecting their Medicare number just as they would a credit card number. Encourage them to check their Medicare statements for fraud, errors, or abuse and never give out their Medicare number over the phone for any reason. Help your loved ones create a Medicare.gov account to access their Medicare statements online or remind them to open and review them when they come in the mail every three months. You can also register their phone number on “do not call” lists and go to [prescreen.com](https://www.prescreen.com) to opt out of mailings.

Partners and professionals, help by sharing SMP information on social media, referring clients and consumers to the SMP, and inviting the SMP to speak during a shared event. Identify ways to collaborate on mission-related topics and information.

Health care providers, help by talking to patients about health care-related scams such as those related to durable medical equipment and genetic testing schemes. Remind them that products and services should only be ordered by physicians they regularly see. Needed medical items should never be ordered through TV ads or unsolicited calls.

Lastly, as a **community**, help by looking out for your older neighbors. When in public, be aware of older individuals purchasing gift cards in large amounts. If you overhear someone talking about Medicare, don't be afraid to offer information about SMP and SHIP. Encourage those you know to talk to a trusted source about their Medicare questions and tell your neighbors about the most recent Medicare scams. Consider volunteering with your local SMP!

To learn more, visit [smpresource.org](https://www.smpresource.org) or follow the Iowa SMP and the SMP National Resource Center on Facebook.

An Ounce of Prevention

-Ginny Paulson, State Health Insurance Assistance Program National Technical Assistance Center Director at NEI3A

Did you know that Medicare pays for services to prevent or detect illness, not just services to treat illness? It's called preventive care, and there is usually no cost to you. Preventive care can hold the key to maintaining your health and well-being.

Some Medicare-covered preventive services include:

- An annual physical, called a “wellness visit”
- Bone mass measurements
- Certain cancer screenings
- Certain vaccinations (such as COVID-19, Flu, Pneumonia)
- Depression screenings
- Diabetes screenings

Though there is usually no cost to you for preventive care, your

provider may charge for problems that are investigated or treated. Medicare does not cover all preventive services. For example, routine foot care or most genetic testing are not covered. In fact, genetic testing scams are becoming common. Visit [smpresource.org](https://www.smpresource.org) to learn more about these and other scams.

To find out if Medicare covers your test, service, or item, you can:

- Contact Iowa's Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP): 800-351-4664 or [shiip.iowa.gov](https://www.shiip.iowa.gov).
- Contact Medicare: 800-633-4227 or [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov).
- Read your 2022 Medicare & You handbook.

Monthly Medicare blogs are in the “About” menu at [shiphelp.org](https://www.shiphelp.org). Medicare preventive services was the subject for February 2022.

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Want to Learn More About Tai Chi?

Join an upcoming class! Tai Chi is a low impact exercise that helps promote strength, flexibility, and balance. Modifications can be made for those who need to remain seated.

Upcoming Classes:

Dates: May 3 - June 30
Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays
Time: 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.
Location: Fredericksburg City Hall
 151 West Main - Fredericksburg
Register: Carol Mackintosh
 handcmack63@gmail.com
 319-269-0509

Join us for a World Tai Chi Day Event

World Tai Chi Day is a global health and healing movement celebrated annually to promote the health benefits of these two activities. Events are held on the last Saturday in April at 10:00 a.m. local time worldwide – starting in the earliest time zones in New Zealand. Then, as the planet turns, events unfold, creating a wave of exhibitions and education wrapping the globe in a 24 hour world-wide Tai Chi movement.

NEI3A will participate in World Tai Chi Day with Patty Scholtes, Tai Chi Instructor for NEI3A conducting the exhibition.

Date : Saturday, April 30

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Decorah Fish Hatchery
 2321 Siewers Spring Road
 Decorah, Iowa

The event is open to the public, and anyone can attend. Please call Patty at 563-379-9737 if you are interested in attending.

In the event of inclement weather, the event will be held at the Spectrum Building located at 200 Railroad Street in Decorah.



Home Modification Assistance

Do you want to remain in your home as you age but need some assistance making the proper modifications to your home? NEI3A is looking for individuals in the city of Waterloo aged 60 and over or disabled who need assistance making home modifications. With this special funding, NEI3A can help with:

- Grab bars
- High rise toilets
- Lift Chairs
- Stairlifts
- Ramps
- Walk-in showers
- Tub cut-outs
- Door widening

Emergency assistance for the Cedar Valley area may be available for:

- Furnace/air conditioning repairs
- Fans
- Utility shut-off prevention

**For more information, please call
 1-800-779-8707.**

Take Active Steps to Reduce Falls

Would you like to improve your balance? Do you want to feel more comfortable participating in your favorite activities? NEI3A is offering *A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls* workshop.

Matter of Balance is an award-winning workshop designed to increase the activity levels of older adults who have concerns about falling. During 8 two-hour sessions, participants learn to:

- Promote exercise to increase strength and balance
- Set realistic goals for increasing activity
- Improve environment to reduce fall risk factors
- View falls and fear of falling as controllable

The Centers for Disease Control report that falling is the most common cause of injury in people over 60. More than one third of adults age 65 years and older fall each year.

Don't become a statistic! Take active steps to reduce the risk of falls; register today for *A Matter of Balance*. Upcoming workshop:

Date: May 16 - June 13

Days: Mondays and Wednesdays

Time: 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Birkwood Village
308 2nd Avenue
Toledo, Iowa

Register: Deb Peska

Deadline dpeska@nei3a.org

May 9 641-485-7163 or 641-484-3839

Colleen Lawler

clawler@nei3a.org

563-380-3239

There is a suggested contribution of \$20 to cover the cost of materials fees for each participant.

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Protect Yourself from Social Security Scams



Be on the lookout for fake calls and emails

The Social Security Administration will never threaten, scare, or pressure you to take an immediate action.

If you receive a call, text, or email that...

- Threatens to **suspend your Social Security number**, even if they have part or all of your Social Security number
- Warns of **arrest or legal action**
- Demands or requests **immediate payment**
- Requires payment by **gift card, prepaid debit card, Internet currency, or by mailing cash**
- Pressures you for **personal information**
- Requests **secrecy**
- Threatens to **seize your bank account**
- Promises to **increase your Social Security benefit**
- Tries to gain your trust by providing **fake “documentation,” false “evidence,”** or the name of a real **government official**

...it is a scam!

Do not give scammers money or personal information - Ignore Them!

Protect yourself and others from Social Security-related scams

- **Try to stay calm.** Do not provide anyone with money or personal information when you feel pressured, threatened, or scared.
- **Hang up or ignore it.** If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email, hang up or do not respond. Government employees will not threaten you, demand immediate payment, or try to gain your trust by sending you pictures or documents.
- **Report Social Security-related scams.** If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email that mentions Social Security, ignore it and report it to the SSA Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Do not be embarrassed if you shared personal information or suffered a financial loss.
- **Get up-to-date information.** Follow SSA OIG on Twitter @TheSSAOIG and Facebook @SSA Office of the Inspector General for the latest information on Social Security-related scams. Visit the Federal Trade Commission for information on other government scams.
- **Spread the word.** Share your knowledge of Social Security-related scams. Post on social media using the hashtag #SlamtheScam to share your experience and warn others. Visit oig.ssa.gov/scam for more information. Please also share with your friends and family.



Powerful Tools FOR Caregivers

Feeling stretched caring for a family member or friend?

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a class designed to provide you—the caregiver—with skills to take care of yourself. The series of six classes, held once each week, offers tools and support to help you reduce stress, solve problems, and communicate confidently when faced with tough decisions. Class participants are given The Caregiver Help book to accompany the class and provide additional caregiver resources.

When you take care of yourself, everyone benefits.

Date: Six Fridays
Starting May 6 through June 10

Time: 1:30– 3:00 p.m.

Location: Dysart UMC
602 Tilford Street, Dysart

Cost: \$10.00
The fee for service used to offset direct expenses and to support the Human Services County Extension Program.

For more information:

Cheryl Bruene
Email: cbruene@iastate.edu
Phone: 641-484-2703



To Register visit: <https://go.iastate.edu/KUSBFY>



Visit your Local Farmers Market

Farmers markets are becoming more popular, serving not only as a way for people to purchase locally grown produce, but also a way for them to connect and socialize with others in their community. Are you shopping at your local farmers market? If not, here are some reasons you should!

Farm Fresh: The fruits and vegetables at the farmers market are the freshest and tastiest available. Fruits and vegetables you find at the grocery store are often several days old before they reach the produce aisle sometimes going through processes to stimulate ripening. Farmers market foods are as real and fresh as it gets – fresh from the farm!

Enjoy the Season: The food you buy at a local farmers market is seasonal, reflecting the truest flavors. Some nutritionist suggest eating seasonally available foods is better for your body, because that was the way humans ate for thousands of years before refrigeration.

Peak Nutrition: Farmer's market food is generally picked at the peak of their ripeness

when the plants' natural sugars are at their peak. Eating produce when it is ripe not only tastes better, but it also provides the best nutrition possible.

Variety to Spice up Your Life: At the Farmer's Market you will find many different types of fruits and vegetables that you won't find in your local supermarket. And that's not all! Many times the farmers will give you tips on how to cook the items they are selling.

Affordable: You can find a variety of fresh, great tasting produce at more affordable prices than a supermarket.

Connect with Your Community: The Farmers Market is a great place to gather and feel connected to your community - but also keeping safety and COVID requirements in mind. Many Farmers Markets are held outside allowing for extra safety with access to fresh produce!

To find a local farmers market in your area visit: tinyurl.com/iowafarmersmarkets

Farmers Market Checks

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides qualified seniors aged 60 and over with coupons (checks) to use at farmer's markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs for unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs, and honey. Ten checks totaling \$30 are given to each eligible participant once each program year. The checks are valid through October 31.

Eligible participants must:

- Be 60 years of age or older, born in or before 1962
- Live in the NE13A service area
- Gross household income (i.e., before taxes) must be no more than \$25,142 for a single person and \$33,874 for a married couple.

If you received an application for farmers market checks last year, you will automatically be mailed an application this year. If you would like to receive an application, please visit our website at (address) or call 1-800-779-8707.

Meatless Meals

Eating plant-based meals improves your heart health by lowering cholesterol levels and blood pressure. Eating meatless meals may also save you money at the grocery store. According to the American Heart Association, “People who eat less meat tend to consume fewer calories, and foods such as beans are one of the most cost-effective sources of protein available.”

Follow MyPlate, myplate.gov, to plan healthy meatless meals that include fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans and legumes, unsalted nuts, and/or lower fat or fat-free dairy foods.

Eating one meatless meal a week is a great way to start. Visit the American Heart Association, www.heart.org, for more tips on keeping your heart healthy.



Easy meatless meal ideas include the following:

- Vegetable quesadillas
- Spaghetti with tomato sauce
- Macaroni and cheese
- Bean burritos
- Vegetable stir-fry with tofu
- Lentil tacos
- Stuffed potatoes

Source: American Heart Association, www.heart.org, and *Spend Smart. Eat Smart.*, spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu.



Santa Fe Stuffed Potatoes

Serving Size: 1 potato | Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- 4 medium potatoes
- 1 cup black beans (drained and rinsed if canned)
- 1 cup salsa
- 1 cup corn (canned or frozen)
- 1 cup cheese, shredded

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Scrub potatoes and prick with fork. Bake for 1 hour or until cooked through.
3. Stir together beans, salsa, and corn in a saucepan about 10 minutes before the potatoes are done. Heat over medium heat until simmering.
4. Remove potatoes from oven. Cut in half lengthwise on plates. Spoon bean mixture over the top of each potato.
5. Sprinkle 1/4 cup cheese over each potato.

Nutrition information per serving:

380 calories, 10g total fat, 6g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 30mg cholesterol, 730mg sodium, 59g total carbohydrate, 11g fiber, 5g sugar, 17g protein

This information is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit Spend Smart. Eat Smart., spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu.



Tend to a Garden to Make Your Health Bloom

Spring is finally here, and many families are enjoying the warmer weather by planning their gardens. The fresh produce from gardens certainly improves our diets. As a bonus, gardening helps us be active!

The Centers for Disease Control considers gardening a moderate intensity activity. Gardening helps get us the recommended 2 1/2 hours of activity we need each week. Working in a garden allows us to get vitamin D from the sun. It helps relieve stress. It might even lower our risk of dementia!

To learn more health benefits of gardening, listen to the Sow, Grow, Eat, and Keep videos, bit.ly/3JiahSB.

Supporting You in Your Caregiver Journey

Being a family caregiver can be stressful. We are here to help! Connect with our caregiver professionals and other caregivers to share experiences and learn about available resources at one of our support group options:

Join by phone:

- Each Wednesday from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
- Third Monday of each month from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Dial 1-800-264-8432 and use participant code 961847#.

Attend Virtually:

Meet face to face with other caregivers each Monday from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. by Zoom. To join, click on the link on our website at www.nei3a.org/our-services/caregiver-resources.

Meet In Person:

- Decorah: 3rd Monday of each month from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
NEI3A Office - 607 Washington Street in Decorah.
- Dubuque: Last Monday each month from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.
NEI3A Office - 2728 Asbury Road in Dubuque



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For questions call 1-800-779-8707

Increased doctor visits?
 Difficulties managing meds?
 Wanting to stay at home?



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 and see how we can help!*

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Sudoku Puzzle

			4		1	2	3	
						9		4
							7	
	7				8			
9			2		3	4		
	2		7			5		
	1	4		6				5
		2			9			
	9		3			1		

Flower Word Find

Spring is here and so are many flowers! Find and circle all of the flowers that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a quotation from *Romeo and Juliet*.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------|------------|
| Alstroemeria | Foxglove | Marigold |
| Amaryllis | Freesia | Orchid |
| Anthurium | Fuchsia | Pansy |
| Aster | Geranium | Peony |
| Baby's Breath | Gerbera | Petunia |
| Bell Flower | Ginger | Rose |
| Bird Of Paradise | Gladiolus | Snapdragon |
| Bouvardia | Golden Rod | Stalice |
| Calla | Heather | Stock |
| Carnation | Hollyhocks | Sunflower |
| Chrysanthemum | Hyacinth | Tulip |
| Clematis | Hydrangea | Violet |
| Cornflower | Iris | Yarrow |
| Daffodil | Lavender | |
| Daisy | Lilac | |
| Delphinium | Lily | |
| Forget-Me-Not | Lisianthus | |

P L A V E N D E R A C R O A R A O S A
 Y I A I N U T E P E D A N E E E R D R
 S U L O I D A L G O G T L S W G C L E
 I C B U Y A N T R Y H N K I O N H O B
 A H A S T E R N O U N C I Y L A I G R
 D R E H T A E H R N O O A G F R D I E
 F Y E O B D D I H H E L E L N D B R G
 O S T W L I U E Y T S M I P R Y E A A
 X A A O O M R L L T N S T H O H L M M
 G N G I E L L D R P I I R E C S L N A
 L T F A S O F O O A H K C M G I F D R
 O H U E H E E N N F C I C A W R L A Y
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 T E L O I V B O U V A R D I A W S O E
 S L I L Y S N A P D R A G O N E T E N

NEI Aging Today is published quarterly to entertain, educate, and inform our readers. The opinions expressed in **NEI Aging Today** do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Agency on Aging, its governing bodies, or Advisory Councils. Articles and other comments are welcome. NEI Aging Today reserves the right to publish all or part of material submitted. Deadline is the 10th of the month prior to printing.

In accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Aging Discrimination Act of 1975, it is the policy of Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging to provide services to all persons eligible under the provisions of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, or age.



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