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Comprehensive listings of state agencies and programs, including contact telephone numbers.

Local contact numbers for national programs like Medicare and Social Security.

Regional listings, alphabetized by city, of local organizations and services

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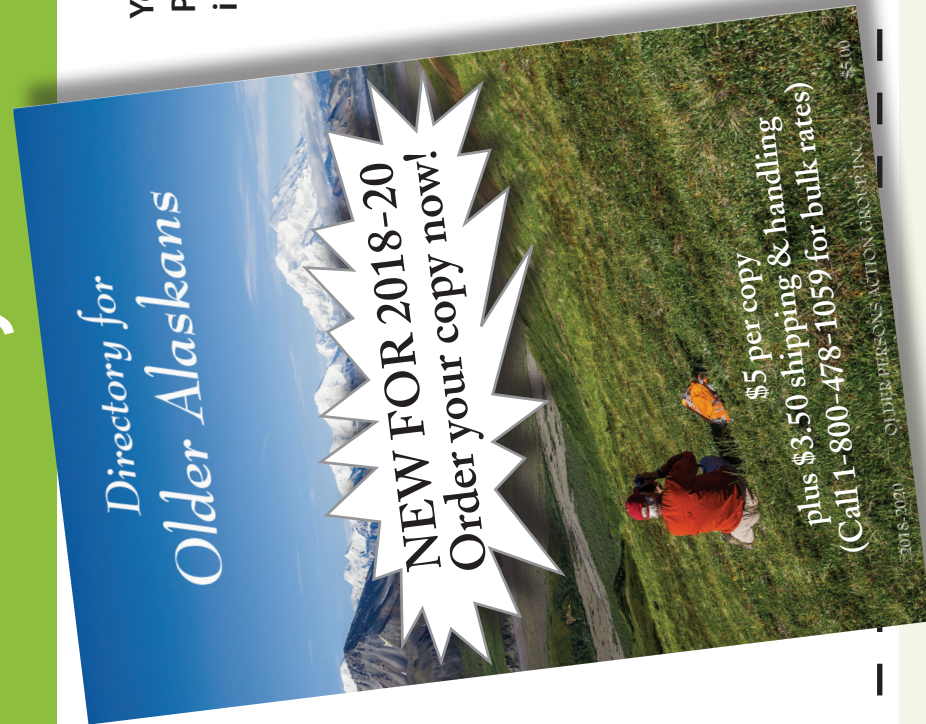
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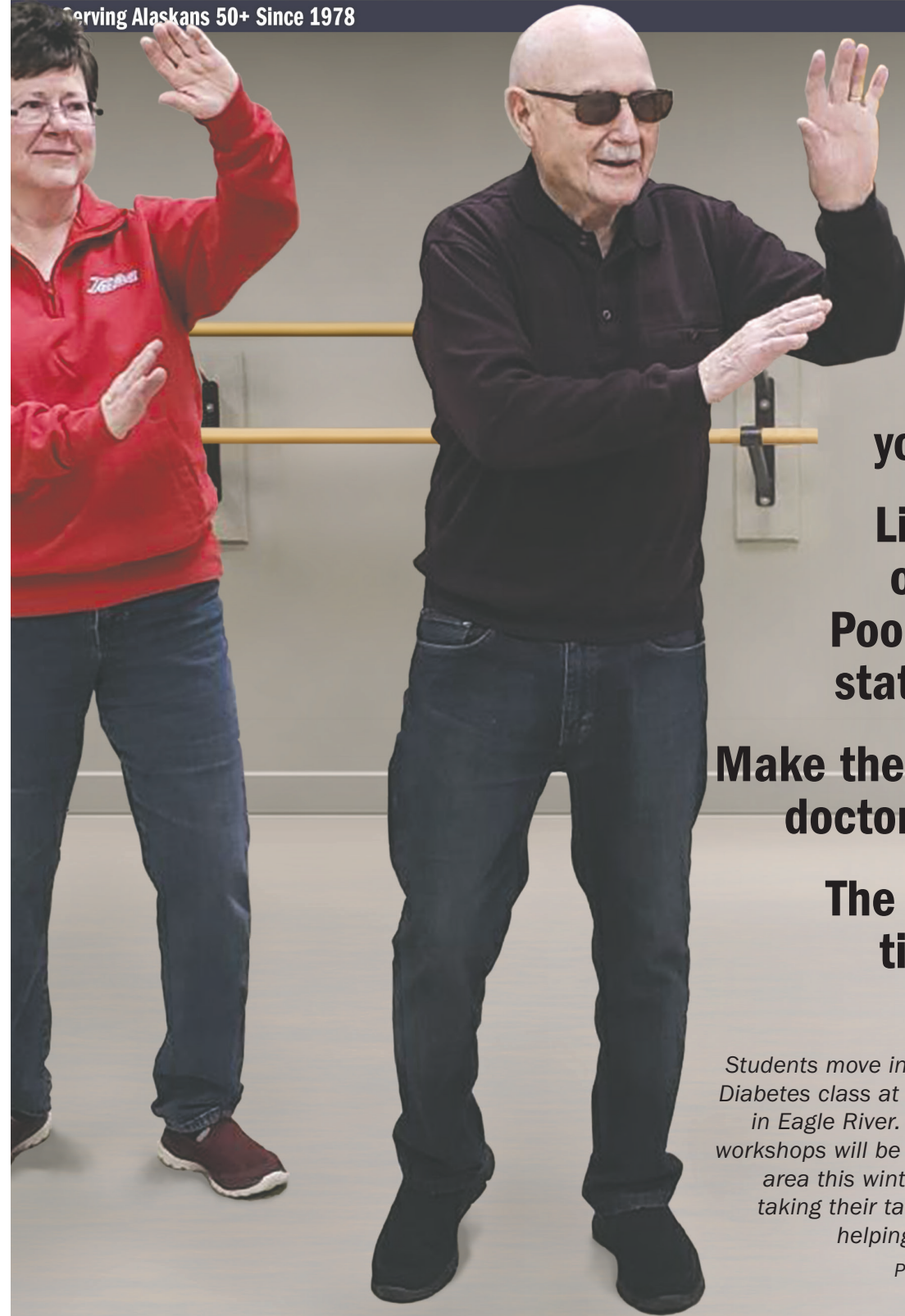
Senior
Voice

Health & Fitness

A publication of Older Persons
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January 2019



**New activity
guidelines:
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or swimming?
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Students move in sync during a Tai Chi for Diabetes class at the All Life is Yoga studio in Eagle River. Tai chi instructor training workshops will be offered in the Anchorage area this winter for those interested in taking their tai chi to a new level, while helping others. Story on page 5

Photo courtesy Dana Paperman



New activity guidelines highlight opportunities

By **BRITTENY M. HOWELL**
and **KATHRYN DAVIS**

For Senior Voice

You may have heard that physical activity guidelines in the U.S. have been recently updated. What might be less clear is how the new guidelines are different from the old guidelines, and what these changes might mean for older adults.

In November 2018, the U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) released the updated “Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans,” based on the latest scientific research. To summarize the second edition, older adults striving for substantial health benefits should get at least 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity exercise, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous intensity exercise, or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous intensity aerobic activity and muscle-strengthening exercises.

Although these recommended amounts of physical activity per week for older adults are unchanged from previous guidelines, the new recommendations eliminate the requirement that exercise occur in bouts of at least 10 minutes. New evidence suggests that older adults benefit from moving more throughout the day, no matter how long the duration. For example, taking that five minute walk around your yard or apartment building just might actually be worth it.

The physical activity guidelines also suggest that older adults consider doing more “multicomponent physical activity.” This refers to activities that combine balance training, aerobic exercise and muscle strengthening all into one fun activity. Balance training is important because it can substantially decrease fall risk, which remains a leading cause of hospitalizations and life-threatening injury among older adults.

Examples of multicomponent physical activity include yoga, tai chi, dancing, sports or even

gardening. Research shows that regular yoga practice (twice a week) has a significant positive effect not only on increasing or maintaining flexibility, strength and balance, but also has positive effects on mental health indicators such as decreased risk of depression, better quality sleep and overall health improvements for older adults. You can look for yoga classes at your local senior center, churches, fitness studios and gyms, or try yoga at home with DVDs or free YouTube videos made for older adults such as: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-FhG-ZzLNN4>.

The new physical activity guidelines also include additional information on the health benefits of regular exercise related to brain health, cancer and fall-related injuries. Research can now demonstrate the positive connections between regular exercise and brain health, including improved cognitive function, sleep patterns and quality of life along with reduced anxiety, depression, and Alzheimer’s risk. You can achieve the most brain health benefits by also incorporating a healthy diet that centers on fresh fruit and vegetable intake and to stay socially active. Research shows that older adults who maintain connections with friends and family have better health outcomes than those who spend all of their time alone.

Do what you can, when you can

Although these physical activity recommendations have been improved and expanded, not everybody feels like they can achieve these exercise guidelines; 150 minutes equates to more than two hours of physical activity per week. However, these updated guidelines recognize that everybody has different abilities. If you are unable to stand, you can still benefit from more movement in the upper body, such as side bend stretches and weight-lifting, if you are able. If you can walk,



Above, line dancing instructor Scott Myers leads a session last fall at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center. Newly updated federal exercise guidelines recommend older adults do more fun activities like line dancing, which are “multi-component”, combining balance training, aerobic exercise and muscle strengthening all into one fun activity. Above right, the line dancing classes are popular and the Anchorage senior center will continue offering them on the third Thursday of each month, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. For information, call 770-2000. Michael Dinneen photos



the great news is that walking is one of the best forms of aerobic exercise for seniors. Research has shown that walking has many health benefits, such as improved heart, joint, and mental health. While there are many sidewalks, trails, and pedestrian paths throughout Alaska that are available to the public, these can be difficult to

traverse in the winter due to cold weather and slick surfaces. So, get creative with finding indoor walking opportunities, such as treadmills or mall walking.

In Anchorage, there is a mall walking club at the Northway Mall that is free to the public, with access to lockers that are free to use. This is a great way to get exercise that is at

a low cost to the public and provides an opportunity for participants to socialize while they get their heart rate up. Current evidence suggests that, in general, older adults and people with chronic conditions and disabilities should move more and sit less throughout the day,

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Alaska Health Fair, Inc.

We want to wish you a Happy and Safe New Year; and may “2019” have many wonderful moments for you and those you cherish. Our Alaska Health Fair Team (in both Anchorage and Fairbanks) look forward to seeing you during

this new year and helping you to seek better health. Thank you for providing generous support for our 39 year old 501 (c)(3); which was founded in 1980.

What sort of agency is Alaska Health Fair?

Alaska Health Fair, Inc.

New benefits reviewed at retirees meeting

Alaska AFSCME Retiree Chapter 52

The next Alaska American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Retiree Chapter 52 (AARC52) “Lunch n’ Learn” is scheduled at the Anchorage office, 2601 Denali Street, on Thursday, Jan. 17 at noon. Workshop topics will concentrate on two programs that become effective Jan. 1, 2019:

Enhanced Employer Group Waiver Plan (EGWP), a program offered by the federal government that will increase federal subsidies for prescription drugs for the retiree health trust. This is an administrative change to how pharmacy benefits are managed for Medicare-eligible retirees and dependents.

OptumRx® Pharmacy Manager, the new pharmacy benefit manager

hired to process AlaskaCare pharmacy claims.

Cammy Oechsli Taylor, vice-chair of the Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board, will facilitate the workshop. Cammy worked in various state departments including the Dept. of Law, Dept. of Natural Resources and the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. Since retiring, she has worked as a volunteer with retiree groups on various retiree benefits issues.

For those attending in person, a \$5 donation toward is requested. Other members may participate via teleconference. Please RSVP by Friday, Jan. 4, so we can get an accurate lunch count and mail the PowerPoint™ presentation to those participating via teleconference. The call-in number is 1-888-557-8511. Enter access code 5239261 followed by the “#” key.

was founded almost four decades ago, with a focus on meeting the needs of residents statewide, at both rural and remote locations, providing affordable and comprehensive blood tests, improving health screening availability to those in need and providing strong health education. We coordinate over 100 community and worksite health fairs each year in locations such as schools, businesses, senior centers, villages and urban communities throughout Alaska. We travel to and provide services anywhere we are invited.

Our health fairs are free and open to the public, offering free health screenings, free refreshments, free exhibiting with a good selection of affordable and comprehensive blood tests. This enables participants to take responsibility for their own health and well-being with a goal of improving quality of life and increased

longevity, saving lives in the process – from finding leukemia and other cancers, to severe diabetes, thyroid imbalances, vitamin deficiencies and other life changing conditions.

We attribute our success to thousands of committed medical and non-medical volunteers. With a statewide staff of only four, and our volunteers, who are our life blood, we successfully support local residents in their goals for seeking and finding better health. Time volunteered for Alaska Health Fair meets continued competency requirements for RN license renewal and reinstatement, and continuing education requirements for some non-RN fields. If you would like to volunteer at a health fair in your community, a local worksite or the Alaska Health Fair offices, please contact us.

Our Spring 2019 Community Events calendar should be posted on our

website at www.alaska-healthfair.org by Jan. 10, so please check out the variety of events offered in your local area between January and May. Our Fall 2019 Community Events calendar is usually published the first week of August at the same website, showing events from mid-August to mid-November. Check our site out regularly for updated information, health newsletters, creative ideas for taking care of your health and agency announcements. Sign up for the Alaska Health Fair newsletter and be the first notified of new schedules, and the availability of volunteer and exhibitor applications.

We would love to receive general feedback or creative ideas on how to improve our services. Give us a call at the Anchorage office (907) 278-0234 or Fairbanks office (907) 374-6853.

Have a great 2019.



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  mlandp.com/utilityfraud

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Senior Voice, January 2019

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You too can join the pickleball movement

By **MACKENZIE STEWART**

Senior Voice

Pickleball, a combination of tennis, badminton, ping pong and racquetball, has gained mass popularity across teens and seniors alike for its gentle movements and social benefits. The sport can be played indoors or outdoors on a badminton-sized court with a slightly modified tennis net, a paddle and a plastic ball with holes. Most facilities offer open play where players can team up with a partner for doubles or play one-on-one singles. If you're looking to take your playing to the next level, seek out pickleball classes or a league at a gym, rec center or badminton court

near you.

Anchorage

- Alaska Club East, 5201 E. Tudor Rd. Members free, \$15 guest fee, open play. Contact for class offerings: Ben Cuaresma, 301-6344
- Alaska Club South, 10931 O'Malley Centre Dr. Members free, \$15 guest fee, open play. Contact for class offerings: Ben Cuaresma, 301-6344
- Anchorage Sports Association, The O'Malley Center, 11111 S. Center Dr. Ladder League, \$55 League Player fee. Sign-up by Jan. 16, 2019. Contact: Daniel Vernon, 562-1504
- The Dome, 6501 Changeloint Dr. Members free, \$10 day pass, open play. 770-3663



It's customary for pickleball players to end each match with a tap of the paddles.

Michael Dinneen
photo

Around the State

Eagle River Alaska Club Eagle River, 12001 Business Blvd., members free, \$15 guest fee, open play. Contact for class offerings: Ben Cuaresma, 301-6344

Fairbanks Fairbanks North Star Borough Big Dipper, 1920 Lathrop St., open play. Marcia Boyette, 479-4900

- Fairview Community Center, 1121 E. 10th Ave. \$5 drop-in fee, open play. 343-4130
- The O'Malley Center, 11111 O'Malley Centre Dr., \$5 drop-in fee, open play. Gabe Donnelly, 868-4304
- Salvation Army Corps Community Center, 1701 C

St. \$3 drop-in fee, beginner and advanced clinic, open play. alaskapickleball-club@gmail.com

- Spenard Community Recreation Center, 202 W. 48th Ave., \$5 drop-in fee, open play. 343-4160

open play. Contact for class offerings: Ben Cuaresma, 301-6344

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Make the most of your local swimming pool

By **MACKENZIE STEWART**

Senior Voice

Swimming, a low impact activity that works your entire body while also managing to take the pressure off hips, joints and knees, is an excellent way to stay active during the coldest, darkest time of the year. Classes like water aerobics provide a guided experience and another way to connect with others and cultivate friendships while various high schools, gyms and community centers around the state offer open swim hours for those interested in independent practice or looking to spend extra time with children and grandchildren.

Check out the list below to find a pool near you.

Anchorage

- Southside YMCA at Dimond, Dimond Center Mall (907) 344-7788. Lap swim, water exercise, arthritis water exercise, private lessons, more.
- Anchorage Community YMCA, 5353 Lake Otis Pkwy., 563-3211. Lap swim, water exercise, arthritis low impact water exercise, more.
- University of Alaska Anchorage Public Pool, 3211 Providence Dr., 786-1231. Lap swim, open swim
- H2Oasis Indoor Wa-

terpark, 1520 O'Malley Rd., 522-4420. Lap swim, Riverwalk, water exercise

- Moseley Sports Center at Alaska Pacific University, 4400 University Dr., 564-8314. Lap swim, water exercise, adult training classes.
 - Alaska Club East (membership required), 5201 E. Tudor, 337-9550. Lap swim, water aerobics, private swim lessons.
 - Alaska Club South (membership required), 10931 O'Malley Centre, 344-6567. Lap swim, lessons, more.
 - Buckner Physical Fitness Center Bldg., 690 D St., Fort Richardson, 384-1308. Lap swim, water exercise.
 - High school pools: contact city Dept. of Recreation (343-4402) for pool schedules, activities in Anchorage
- ## Fairbanks
- Fairbanks Athletic Club South (membership required), 747 Old Richardson Hwy., 452-6801. Lap swim, water exercise.
 - Mary Siah Recreation Center, 805 14th Ave., 459-1081. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim.
 - Hamme Swimming Pool, 931 Airport Way, 459-1086. Lap swim, open swim.
 - Patty Pool in Patty Center at University of

Alaska Fairbanks, Tanana Loop. 474-7744. Lap swim, open swim

Juneau

- Augustus Brown Pool, 1619 Glacier Ave., 586-5325. Lap swim, water exercise, aqua aerobics.
- Dimond Park Aqua Center, 3045 Dimond Park Loop, 586-2782. Lap swim, water exercise, swim lessons, sauna

Around the State

- **Barrow** Barrow High School Pool, 1684 Okpik St., 852-8950. Lap swim
- **Bethel** Yukon-Kuskokwim Regional Aquatic Health and Safety Center, 267 Akiachak Dr., 543-0390. Lap swim, water exercise
- **Eagle River** Alaska Club Eagle River (membership required), 12001 Business Blvd., 694-6677. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim
- **Cordova** Bob Korn Memorial Pool, 609 Railroad Ave., 424-7200. Lap swim, open swim
- **Craig** Craig Aquatic Center, 1400 Watertower Rd., 826-2794. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim, sauna
- **Haines** Haines Pool, 274 Haines Hwy., 766-2666. Lap swim, senior aquatics class, open swim

Homer Kate Kuhns Aquatic Center, Homer High School, 600 E. Fairview Ave., 235-4600. Lap swim, senior exercise class, open swim.

Kenai Kenai Central High School, 9583 Kenai Spur Hwy., 283-7476. Lap swim, open swim

Ketchikan Gateway Aquatic Center, 601 Schoenbar Rd., 288-6650. Lap swim, senior swim, open swim

Kodiak Kodiak Com-

munity Pool, 800 Upper Mill Bay Rd., 481-2519. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim

Naknek Kvimarvik Pool, School Road, 246-7665. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim

Nikiski Nikiski Pool, 55525 Poolside Ave., 776-8800. Lap swim, open swim

Ninilchik Ninilchik School Pool, 15735 Sterling Hwy., 714-0351. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim

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Tai chi instructor training offered in-state

By **MACKENZIE STEWART**
Senior Voice

Looking for a new way to workout and beat the icy winter blues? Want to save money by not having to travel out of state to become a certified tai chi instructor? Look no further than the Tai Chi for Health Institute's latest Tai Chi for Arthritis "Train the Trainer" workshop, taught by Master Trainer Linda Ebeling on Feb. 9 and 10 at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. both training days.

Scholarships are available to help cover costs for people traveling to the training from elsewhere in the state.

Developed by Dr. Paul Lam in conjunction with a team of medical experts and tai chi masters, Tai Chi for Arthritis (TCA) uses the Sun style of tai chi to create a program that is easy to learn, safe and effective, and covers all the information needed to instruct others in the TCA form, including knowledge of senior specific safety procedures and how to demonstrate movement modifications for practitioners with arthritis and other mobility issues using the Stepwise Progressive Teaching Method. Continuing Education Credits are also available for eligible participants.

Lynn Pillion, left, leads a Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention class through warmups at the Thomas Center in Anchorage. The classes meet Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m.

Photo courtesy Lynn Pillion

Tai chi is good for you

Lynn Pillion, a TCA instructor based in Chugiak, has been teaching TCA for three and a half years between the Thomas Center for Senior Leadership, Chugiak Eagle River Senior Center and All Life is Yoga, a studio in Eagle River. She is also certified to teach Tai Chi for Diabetes, Seated Tai Chi for Arthritis and Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention, to name a few other courses.

"Tai chi is good for you," said Pillion. "It relieves depression and isolation. It improves balance and posture. It's mildly aerobic and strengthens your muscles. It's a practice you can take right out the door — and it's great for icy winter roads!"

Pillion's love of tai chi began with learning the Yang style of tai chi in the 80s and 90s.

"I had to stop for a while, as I was sick for several years," Pillion shared. "As part of my recovery, I wanted to practice tai chi again. Eventually, I got my stamina back, my balance issues were resolved and the smile returned to my face."

While tai chi originated



as a Chinese martial arts practice, TCA uses a lighter footwork and smaller steps with an emphasis on very careful stepping methods and slow controlled movements that lend well to falls prevention, decreasing the risk of falls in practicing seniors by 70 percent.

"Tai chi radically reduces symptoms of arthritis, a disease that already creates mobility problems, contributing to a risk of falls from weak muscles and balance issues," said Pillion. "Seniors and health organizations who rely on funding can believe in this evidence based and certified program. This form saves lives."

When Dana Paperman, Executive Director of

Seward Senior Center (SSC) and avid tai chi practitioner, first began working at SSC in 2001, she wanted to join her passion for exercise enhancement with already existing senior services.

"The problem was that we didn't have access to trained instructors in programs like TCA," said Paperman. "At the time, it was harder to secure state or federal funding for evidence based exercise programs."

To fill the exercise void, Paperman began running her own tai chi classes at SSC for several years in addition to offering yoga and light resistance weight training.

Finally, Paperman and Pillion joined forces when Pillion was invited to teach

TCA at SSC.

"At last, we're here!" said Paperman on bringing TCA to Seward.

"Once Dr. Lam's program arrived in Seward," added Pillion, "we realized that this service could be provided statewide."

TCA requires trainers to update their certificates every two years. Most training programs are located out of state, forcing interested Alaskans to pay hundreds more than the certificate fee.

"Normally, you would have to go somewhere like Miami, where there's \$1,800 in roundtrip airfare from Alaska, let alone thinking about the cost of hotels, transportation and food in addition to the certificate training," said Paperman.

Paperman realized it would be more cost effective to fly a master trainer to Alaska rather than send interested instructors out

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How to make the most of your doctor visit

By JIM MILLER

Savvy Senior

Dear Savvy Senior: I manage a large health clinic that treats thousands of seniors each year, and we've have found that patients that come prepared when they visit our doctors are much more satisfied with the care they receive. Can you write a column educating patients on how to prepare for doctor's appointments? - *Healthcare Helper*

Dear Helper: There's no doubt about it. Studies have shown that patients who help their doctors by providing important health information and preparing themselves for appointments tend to get better care than patients who don't. Here are some simple things we can all do to help maximize our next visit to the doctor.

Before appointments

Gathering your health information and getting

Patients who help their doctors by providing important health information and preparing themselves for appointments tend to get better care than patients who don't.

organized before your appointment are the key steps to ensuring a productive meeting with your doctor. This is especially important if you're seeing multiple doctors or are meeting with a new physician. Specifically, you need to:

Get your test results. If you're seeing a new doctor for the first time, make sure he or she has copies of your latest X-ray, MRI or any other test or lab results you've recently had, including reports from other doctors that you've seen. In most cases, you'll need to do the leg work yourself, which may only require a phone call to your previous doctor asking them to send it, or you may need to go pick it up and take it yourself.

List your medications. Make a list of all the medications you're taking, including prescription and over-the-counter drugs, supplements and herbs, along with the dosages, and take it with you to your appointment. Or, just put all your pill bottles in a bag so you can take them with you.

Know your health history. Being able to talk to your doctor about any previous medical problems and procedures, even if they're not the reason you are going to the doctor this time, can make an office visit much more efficient. Write it down if it's complicated. Genetics matter too, so knowing your family's health history can also be helpful.

Prepare a list of questions. Make a written list of the top three or four issues

you want to discuss with your doctor. Since most appointments last around 15 to 20 minutes, this can help you stay on track and ensure you address your most pressing concerns first. If you're in for a diagnostic visit, you should prepare a detailed description of your symptoms.

During appointments

The best advice when you meet with your doctor is to speak up and get to the point. So right away, concisely explain why you're there. Don't wait to be asked. Be direct, honest and as specific when recounting your symptoms or expressing your concerns. Many patients are reluctant or embarrassed to talk about their symptoms, which makes the doctor's job a lot harder to do. It's also a good idea to bringing along a family member or friend to your appointment. They can help you ask questions, listen to what the doctor is telling you and give you support.

Also consider taking some notes or ask the doctor if you can record the session for later review. If you don't understand what the doctor is telling you, ask him or her to explain it in simple terms so you can understand. And if you run out of time and don't get your questions answered, ask if you can follow up by phone or email, make another appointment, or seek help from the doctor's nurse.

For more information, the National Institute on Aging offers an excellent booklet called "Talking With Your Doctor: A Guide for Older People," that can help you prepare for an appointment and become a more informed patient. To get a free copy mailed to you, call 800-222-2225 or visit order.nia.nih.gov.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

Pickleball: Many places to play

continued from page H4

Homer HERC Gym, \$3 drop-in fee, open play. Mike Illg, 235-6090

Juneau The Alaska Club Juneau Valley, 2841 Riverside Dr., \$5 drop-in fee, open play and class offerings. Barney Norwich, barneynorwich@gmail.com.

Juneau Arts and Humanities Council, 350 Whittier St., \$5 drop-in fee, open play. Barney Norwich, barneynorwich@gmail.com.

Ketchikan Gateway Recreation Center, 601 Shoenbar Rd., members free, \$3 drop-in fee, open play. 228-6650

Kodiak North Star Elementary School Gym, 961 Mallard Way. Open play. 486-8665

Metlakatla RJ Elementary School, 4th & Milton St. Open play. 886-4121

Palmer MTA Sports Center, 1507 Double B St. \$10 drop-in fee, \$5 for Senior Circle Members. Open play. 746-7529

Sitka Hames Center, 121 John Brady Dr. \$6 member fee, \$11 senior drop-in fee. Open play. 747-5080

Sterling Sterling Community Center, 35085 Sterling Hwy. Members free, \$3 drop-in. Open play. Kelly Reilly, 262-7224

Wasilla Menard Sports Center, 1001 S. Clapp St. Senior drop-in fee \$5, drop-in fee \$8. 357-9100

Links

•The Alaska Club: Thealaskaclub.com/pickleball

•Pickleball Alaska: Facebook.com/pickleballalaska

•USA Pickleball Association: Usapa.org



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Gut microbes may affect weight loss efforts

By JOHN SCHIESZER

For Senior Voice

New research is suggesting that certain microbes in our gut may affect how we metabolize food and lose weight. The findings are preliminary, but they suggest that by altering the gut through special probiotic mixtures it may be possible to help overweight adults lose weight who in the past failed.

A small study was conducted at the Mayo Clinic with 26 individuals, and researchers found that gut microbial carbohydrate metabolism may hinder weight loss in overweight adults. The objective of the study was to examine whether compositional and functional characteristics of the gut microbiota may be able to predict responses to a comprehensive lifestyle intervention program in overweight adults.

Foods believed to be gut-friendly, like kimchi, have soared in popularity as people try to consume more foods better for their health. But research is ongoing and while some findings seem to hold potential, researchers also worry that probiotic foods and supplements are being over-sold.

Senior Voice photo

The researchers found that an increased abundance of phascolarcto bacterium in the gut was associated with success, but an increased abundance of dialister bacterium was associated with failure. The findings suggest that manipulating gut bacteria may be one way of helping some individuals who are overweight to lose weight and keep it off.

Help or hype?

Dr. Kenny Davin Fine, a gastroenterologist who has



specialized in the research of gut health, said these findings are intriguing but in his opinion gut microorganisms are not something that are causing obesity. He said adults age 50 and older should not be tricked into buying any probiotics that offer more than they can provide.

“I’ve been treating people with probiotics since the mid-90s and I appreciate the excitement in the health community for healthy gut flora. However, I think bad gut flora is a symptom

of obesity, rather than the cause. Part of the problem is that we now eat for pleasure rather than for necessity. The food industry has figured out how to make people crave and eat food and not be able to stop eating it,” said Dr. Fine, who heads up the Intestinal Health Institute in Dallas, Texas.

He said the food industry makes eating so pleasurable that our brain gets confused between pleasure and function and our satiety mechanisms are overwhelmed. He said the amount of weight loss that intestinal flora can contribute to versus what you eat is actually minimal. The key to weight loss is still diet and lifestyle changes.

“You can do testing for flora and treat it specifically, but that would not be necessary if we can improve our intestinal flora in general. Food sensitivity prohibits our intestines from

absorbing food providing flora with a feast. You cannot maintain health when there is a lot of food stuffs sitting in your colon. Bad gut flora is the consequence of obesity, not the cause,” Dr. Fine told Senior Voice. “The lesson of my approach to oro-intestinal fitness is that having healthy gut flora begins with treating malabsorption and immunologic food sensitivity issues. You want good flora, less bad bacteria and minimal to no yeast in your gut.”

He said if an individual is having malabsorption and immunologic food sensitivities, then they will need to rehab their intestinal flora, starting with a complete cleanse. However, he said it cannot be an over-the-counter product. His method is a one-day intestinal renewal kit that produces results similar to a colonoscopy prep.

John Schieszer is an award-winning national journalist and radio and podcast broadcaster of The Medical Minute. He can be reached at medicalminutes@gmail.com.

The findings suggest that manipulating gut bacteria may be one way of helping some individuals who are overweight to lose weight and keep it off.

This common fitness tip is a bad idea



By DAVID WASHBURN

Senior Voice

I used to have a fitness class instructor who liked to say about workouts, “Once you turn 40, it’s all rehab.” It brought chuckles, but it’s true that over the years we will inevitably subject our bodies to wear and tear. Various mishaps lead to injuries, some minor, some worse, some that will scar and haunt us forever. Our stories of how we’ve acquired these

hurts may be humorous or downright horrific. I have my share of colorful tales – a spinal injury on the beach in Hawaii; a leg-crushing snowmachine wreck on the Yentna River. But I’m afraid the accident and injury that’s caused the worst, lingering impact on my life is not very interesting. I fell on the ice in a fast food restaurant parking lot.

It’s been well-documented that falls are a serious health hazard. Just this month, the State of Alaska Div. of Public Health reported that falls are the number one cause of serious injury requiring medical care among Alaskans age 55 and older, and a leading cause of death and loss of independence.

Which is one of the reasons I cringe and shake my head whenever I hear or read this common health and fitness “tip”:

Instead of parking close to

Just this month, the State of Alaska Div. of Public Health reported that falls are the number one cause of serious injury requiring medical care among Alaskans age 55 and older, and a leading cause of death and loss of independence.

a building, park far away and walk for the extra exercise.

No, no, no. Don’t do that!

It may be good advice if you live in sunny Phoenix or Southern California. But in Alaska, parking lots are a horrible choice for walking exercise. Especially in cities, where car exhaust

intensifies the freeze-thaw cycle that’s turned our towns into sheets of ice the past few winters. Parking lots are treacherous. In addition to the ice, they are dark. Even with street lights motorists will have a hard time seeing you when they back up. Pedestrians

must contend with everything from car fumes to berms to other people on foot who are staring at their phones and not watching where they are going.

I’d like to offer this health tip instead: Park as close as you can to the entrance. Use that disabled parking spot if you’re eligible. And if you want the extra exercise, walk a few laps once you get inside the store.

David Washburn is the Senior Voice editor.

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Tai chi: Upcoming instructor training

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of state and went to the state to secure funding for in state instructor training workshops. In 2017, two TCA ‘Train the Trainer’ workshops were hosted in Kenai and Fairbanks, yielding 16 new instructors around the state.

Participants from outside of Anchorage interested in receiving training are encouraged to apply for travel scholarships covering the cost of transportation to Anchorage and a two night hotel stay in addition to the \$100 workshop fee. Students must show a six month commitment to serving the senior community after becoming certified.

“There will not be a more economical opportunity to train in TCA,” said Pillion. “We would like to see as many institutions represented as possible, especially from small rural communities. We want to see the advancement of tai chi across Alaska, and we need instructors to teach others.”

“Don’t be afraid to apply!” added Paperman. “TCA is adapted for a particular population — seniors. As I have always said, tai chi is the dance of

Tai Chi for Arthritis requires trainers to update their certificates every two years. Most training programs are located out of state, forcing Alaskans to pay hundreds more than the certificate fee.

my future.”

To register for the training or to request a scholarship form, contact Dana Paperman at ssc@seward.com. The deadline for registration is Jan. 11. For more information about the Tai Chi for Health Institute visit taichiforhealthinstitute.org.

Already have your TCA training and interested in furthering your qualifications? This spring, Master Trainer Linda Ebeling returns to the Anchorage Senior Activity Center with TCA Part Two, “Train the Trainer,” on March 16 and 17, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. The \$100 workshop fee includes certificates for teaching TCA Part 2 and Seated TCA.

To register for the March training, contact Dana Paperman at ssc@seward.com.

Updated: Guidelines for better physical activity

continued from page H2

regardless of how much “exercise time” this might actually add up to. So do not feel discouraged, just get up and move if you can.

Work those muscles

One last physical activity recommendation for older adults is to remember to do muscle strengthening and/or weight-bearing activities twice a week. Researchers have shown that it is important to keep muscles strong as we age because healthy muscles help to maintain bone mass, which decreases the risk of fractures. Safe ways to maintain muscle and bone mass include lifting small weights (2 to 5 pound dumbbells or even soup cans), using resistance bands, or doing weight-bearing exercises like squats, push-ups

New evidence confirms that older adults benefit from moving more throughout the day, no matter how long the duration.

against the wall, or climbing stairs.

Online resources

By now you might be asking how you can add more physical activity into your week. Luckily, the ODPHP has created a fact sheet for older adults called *Move Your Way* which includes an activity planning tool on their website at <https://health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner/>. Also check out the *Alaska Workout To Go* (at <https://bit.ly/2BCe2AL>) which has exercises and physical activity ideas specifically designed for older adults in the Last Frontier. Please remember, as with any health-related changes you are consider-

ing, it is important to determine a safe fitness routine in consultation with your physician or medical provider.

Brittney M. Howell, PhD is a Credentialed Professional Gerontologist (CPG), a certified yoga teacher and Assistant Professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage in the Division of Population Health Science. She is currently developing a new course at UAA called “Public Health for an Aging Society.” Kathryn Davis is a senior in the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BSHS) program at UAA, in the pre-professional track. She is currently finishing up a needs assessment research project with the Anchorage Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC).

Pools: Statewide

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Nome Nome Beltz Jr./Sr. High School, 2920B Nome-Teller Hwy., 443-5717. Lap swim, open swim

North Pole Wescott Pool, 300 E. 8th Ave., 488-9402. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim

Palmer Palmer Pool, 1170 W. Bogard, 861-7676. Lap swim, swim lessons

Petersburg Community Center, 500 N. 3rd St., 722-3392. Lap swim, swim exercises, open swim

Seward Seward Jr./Sr. High School Pool, 2100 Swetmann Ave., 224-3900. Lap swim, swim exercises, open swim

Sitka Blatchley Pool, 601 Halibut Point, 747-5677.

Lap swim, swim lessons, open swim

Soldotna Soldotna High School Swimming Pool, 425 W Marydale Ave., 262-7419. Lap swim, swim exercises

Unalaska Unalaska Aquatics Center, 55 E. Broadway, 581-1649. Lap swim, swimming lessons

Valdez Valdez Swimming Pool, 319 Robe River Dr., 835-5429. Lap swim, therapy swim

Wasilla Wasilla Pool, 701 E. Bogard Rd., 861-7680. Lap swim, swim lessons, senior swim, open swim

Wrangell Wrangell Pool, 321 Church St., 874-2444. Lap swim, arthritis swim, water aerobics, open swim.

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