

# BRAIN Waves

FEBRUARY 2024



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## Contact us ...

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 Follow Us!

## Quote of The Month ...

Music is  
what Feelings  
Sound like.

## Leah's Notes ...



Leah Zehel, Director

So, its February. Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years have all passed; along with all the fun, excitement, parties and family gatherings. But there is still a lot of winter left. Shorter days and colder weather can cause a serious case of the "blahs"- a dip in feelings of physical, mental, and emotional well-being, until the warmer days of spring return. Here at The Gathering Place and at home there are still lots you can do to beat those winter "blahs"!

Most people react to seasonal changes based on the amount of daylight. Scientists know that our circadian rhythm, our internal clock that regulates our body in regard to sleeping, eating and feeling good is tied to sunlight.

### What can you do? Open your curtains.

Even if the day is overcast, sitting near an unshaded window is helpful. Turn on your lights at home. Keeping your regular hours, getting up and going to sleep at the same time every day, even on weekends, will help you feel like being more active.

### What else can you do? Exercise regularly.

Regular exercise is key to feeling good any time of year, but especially on the

dreary days of winter. The endorphins that are released during exercise are natural mood elevators that can make you feel happier and more relaxed.

**Eat smart.** When its cold and cloudy outside, its natural to want to be comforted by warm drinks and hot hearty food. The good news is that hot and hearty can be healthy too. Its just a matter of making smart choices. Eating a variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables is especially important during the winter months.

**Stay engaged.** Its easy to feel like huddling indoors when its cold, but its important to stay engaged with the

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# SOUPER SUNDAY COOK OFF

*TASTY soup, chili, bread, and melt in your mouth desserts.*



**SUNDAY  
MARCH 3  
10:45-1:00**

**or until the Nescos are empty**

**\$12<sup>00</sup>**  
per person

Children 4-12 yrs - \$5  
3 yrs. & under - Free

**ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
730 County Road PPP • Sheboygan Falls

*All proceeds will go to The Gathering Place and  
Memory Matters day programs for adults with memory loss.*





# Memory Minute

By Leah Zehel

## Stay Active

It's especially important for seniors to stay active during the winter months, as the effects of inactivity can take a toll on both their physical and mental health. Therefore, it's essential to make sure they stay active when the weather is cold, when going outside is not a viable option.

### Effects of Inactivity

Exercise is important for everyone, but seniors are especially prone to the ill effects that occur when they're not active. Some of those effects include:

- Reduced muscle mass
- Intolerance to physical activity
- Increased risk of falling

Exercising and staying active also helps reduce the chances of conditions such as cardiovascular disease and can help regulate blood pressure. In addition, staying inactive and isolated during the winter months can lead to depression or stress.

### Ideas to Stay Active

Fortunately, there are many simple fun and healthy ways seniors can be active indoors!

#### INDOOR EXERCISES

Homes, gyms, and senior living communities are great places for you and your loved one to perform a variety of exercises, including:

- Chest stretches.
- Wall presses
- Step-ups
- Light weightlifting
- A brisk walk (even outdoors if the path is void of ice and snow)

#### SOCIALIZING

Family gatherings and social activities can keep both the mind and body active. Game systems like Wii Fit not only allow seniors to get physical activity but are also great for socializing with family and friends.

#### STRETCH OFTEN.

It doesn't matter what your age is, stretching and improving flexibility are both important to function and perform basic daily activities. However, as we age, our muscles become shorter and lose their elasticity, which in turn causes a decreased range of motion.

These easy stretching exercises will improve your flexibility and keep or improve your range of motion. Many stretching exercises can be done while sitting in a chair too. The main takeaway is to stretch key muscle groups at least 10 minutes twice a week.

#### ENGAGE IN LOW IMPACT EXERCISES.

A simple stroll around the block, a spin on a stationary bike or a water aerobics session are all examples of great, low impact exercises. They not only burn calories, but these exercises help your joints and bones while keeping osteoporosis and arthritis at bay.

#### TRY RECREATIONAL GAMES AND SPORTS.

Keep your mind and body sharp by taking up a game with a group of friends. Many of our senior living communities offer a billiards room with a pool table and other games like air hockey and darts. Other great games to try including bowling, shuffleboard and bocce ball. ■

## Memory Matters Calendar

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>February 1</b>  | <b>Science Class</b>                               |
| <b>February 8</b>  | <b>Music with Jim Olschmidt</b>                    |
| <b>February 15</b> | <b>Dance Class with Sue Alby</b>                   |
| <b>February 22</b> | <b>Self Gratitude, Relaxation Therapy with Jen</b> |
| <b>February 29</b> | <b>Art with Claire from JMKA</b>                   |



Leah's Notes continued from pg.1

world and maintain social contacts. Stick with your schedule as much as possible, continue to attend religious services, keep volunteer commitments, meet friends for coffee or lunch and exercise with a group. Feelings of isolation, loneliness and depression are more common during the winter and are a major component of the "blahs".

**Be extra good to yourself during cold weather.** Enjoy a relaxing bath, read a favorite book or watch a good old movie with friends or family. Try putting on your favorite upbeat music, it can be a real mood changer, and dance even if you are alone! ■

## TGP Special Events & Activities

*Families always welcome to our Entertainment Events!*

- February 1 *Science with Vicky*
- February 6 *Music with Bob Welsch*
- February 7 *Music with Daniel Lovett*
- February 13 *Fat Tuesday, Line Dancing*
- February 15 *Music with Jeff Behrens*
- February 19 *You be the judge*
- February 20 *Elvis*
- February 21
  - *Outing to SPARKS*
  - *Music with Rob Peterson*
- February 26 *Music with Rob Peterson*
- February 27 *Bell Choir*
- February 28 *Music with Jim Rosetti*

