

Embrace the Five Pillars of Aging Well in Celebration of Healthy Aging Month



Maintaining a healthy lifestyle can significantly improve an individual's quality of life. At our Front Porch retirement communities, we embrace a holistic approach to healthy aging and wellbeing that focuses on the mind, body, and spirit to help residents find meaning and enjoyment in life.

In honor of Healthy Aging Month, September, 2020, these five pillars for healthy aging from Taunya Bachellor, Life Enrichment director at Wesley Palms can be implemented at any age. During the pandemic, embracing these pillars are more important now than ever as they can impact both personal wellbeing and the wellbeing of the community at large.

1. **Diet & Nutrition** - Good nutrition and food safety is essential to leading a healthy lifestyle. Combined with physical activity, a nutritious diet can provide energy, help you reach and/or maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of chronic disease, and promote overall health. Our residents have access to chef-prepared meals delivered door-to-door daily.
2. **Exercise & Movement** - Regular exercise and movement can reduce the risk of and impact from illness and chronic disease. It also helps maintain mobility longer; lowers stress; and can

improve sleep, skin and bone health, and mood. While some residents enjoy home workout packets, live workout classes via Zoom, or trips to the fitness center by appointment, others stay active through safely distanced walks or by participating in garden club.

3. **Community & Social Engagement** - Living in community combats isolation and loneliness which can negatively affect health. Community gives residents opportunities to feel protected, learn something new, and enjoy a sense of connection and belonging. Through telephone buddies and Caring Companion groups, residents offer support and check in on each other. Others cultivate new and meaningful relationships through various clubs that meet virtually or safely in small groups, such as community choir, current events group, a play reading group, or sewing group. Some community residents have also gotten creative by decorating their porches and participating in photo competitions.
4. **Brain Fitness** - As we age, challenging and stimulating our minds can keep us sharp and improve memory retention. Fun printed games, puzzles, books, videos, packets of trivia questions, and more, are all available and sanitized. Residents have enjoyed safely distanced scavenger hunts, which require the assembly of clues to solve a riddle. Meditation classes for residents via Zoom can increase focus, reduce stress and anxiety, and enhance coping skills for chronic illness.
5. **Purpose** - Developing a sense of purpose through work, passions, or hobbies can create meaning and motivation to sustain us through life's ups and downs and help guide life decisions, goals, and direction. From discussion groups via Zoom to poetry projects, residents can choose from many options to stay engaged.

“Our residents are at the center of all that we do at Front Porch,” said Taunya Bachellor. “We are committed to enhancing their wellbeing in meaningful and creative ways that allow them to celebrate their individuality.”

Despite the pandemic, Front Porch retirement communities continue to offer opportunities for residents to live out these five pillars every day. With a variety to choose from of convenient and accessible resources and group or virtual activities (following safe health protocols), residents have the tools and support they need to live life their way.