

Holiday SOCIAL

DECEMBER 9TH
11 a.m. - Noon

40 ET 8 Boxcar Room

7607 NE 26th Ave., Vancouver, WA 98665
(next to Bingo)

**Join us for light refreshments
and desserts, and visit with
your local law enforcement.**

All seniors in Clark County are invited. No RSVP needed. Bring a friend!

To receive the free monthly S.A.L.T. Times Newsletter, call (564) 397-3380 or send an e-mail to: sheriffcommunityoutreach@clark.wa.gov. **For other formats:** Clark County ADA Office, Voice (564) 397-2000, Relay (800) 833-6384, E-mail ADA@clark.wa.gov

Seniors and Law Enforcement Together
Clark County Sheriff's Office
P.O. Box 410
Vancouver, WA 98666

Sheriff Chuck E. Atkins



S.A.L.T. TIMES

December 2019

“Pass it On” at the Holidays

Holidays often mean time with family and friends. If you're looking for conversation starters that avoid tricky topics – like who should've won the World Series – why not chat about scams? Pass it On, an FTC education campaign, gives you new ways to talk about scams and how to prevent them.

Sharing what you know can protect someone who you know from a scam. That's why the FTC created Pass it On – articles, presentations, bookmarks, activities and videos – to get you talking about scams. Now, Pass it On has an updated website with four new topics. <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0030-pass-it> Here's a glimpse:

Maybe your retired aunt is looking for ways to make extra money and saw ads promising big money working at home – for a fee. Remind her to check out the company first and share this advice about work-

at-home scams: don't pay money to earn money.

Commiserating about leaky roofs, old windows, or repairing a home after storm damage? Be sure to discuss home repairs scams. Before starting repairs, get three written estimates and proof of license and insurance.

If you want folks to kvetch about something other than why kids don't eat their vegetables, bring up unwanted calls. We all get them and many are from scammers. Remind people to just hang up and don't trust caller ID. It can be faked. Ask your carrier about call blocking – or consider buying a call blocking device as a holiday gift.

Or maybe you prefer a little friendly competition? Quiz your friends and family about what a money mule is. Not sure yourself? The short answer is: when someone sends you money and asks you to send it on to someone else, you could be what law enforcement calls a money mule. Don't do it. You could lose money and get into legal trouble.

This year, when you pass the turkey, pass on your knowledge about scams. And if you know someone who's alone this holiday season, reach out to them too. You'll probably brighten their day and may even help prevent a scam.



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Seniors and Diabetes: What You Need to Know

Beth was concerned about the chocolate candies and potato chips she spotted on the table by her dad's TV. Having been diagnosed with diabetes six months before, she suspected her father wasn't following doctor's orders.

After speaking with her 81-year-old father, Beth realized her dad hadn't changed his diet, he wasn't exercising like his doctor recommended, and Beth wasn't even sure Dad was taking his medications.

Beth has good reason to be concerned, as do many other family caregivers whose loved ones are living with diabetes, a potentially dangerous disease that increases a senior's risk of

developing cardiovascular disease, stroke, vision loss, kidney failure and the amputation of limbs.

More than 100 million U.S. adults are now living with diabetes or prediabetes, according to a 2017 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The report finds that as of 2015, 30.3 million Americans – 9.4 percent of the U.S. population – have diabetes. Another 84.1 million have prediabetes, a condition that if not treated often leads to type 2 diabetes within five years.

The disease continues to represent a growing health problem: Diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S. in 2015, according to the CDC. The good news is that diabetes can be managed, often through physical activity, diet, and the appropriate use of insulin and other medications to control blood sugar levels, according to CDC doctors.

How Family Caregivers Can Help

So what can family caregivers such as Beth do to help a loved one control diabetes? The experts offer this advice:

1. Be tactful. Since lifestyle issues such as poor diet and obesity often play a part in this disease, discussing this issue with a loved one could be tricky. At the same time, healthy choices are so important to managing the disease.

Home Instead Senior Care® Gerontologist and Caregiver Advocate Lakelyn Hogan suggests approaching the topic from the perspective of the health effects of weight issues. Instead of calling out a person for being overweight, try having a discussion

about the ways in which certain chronic health conditions are affected by weight. For instance, obesity not only reduces blood glucose control, but it can cause high blood pressure. The health effects of obesity may be reduced or eliminated by losing even a small amount of weight, experts note. If possible, try to determine the root cause for your loved one's overeating.

Loneliness, depression, anxiety, and boredom can all prompt an older adult to consume too many calories. With compassion, you may be able to address these underlying issues and possibly improve your senior's emotional and physical health in the process.

2. Educate to empower. Diabetes management can feel like a complex, overwhelming thing, especially for an older adult who may have multiple health conditions. You can help your loved one feel more confident and empowered to take on the task of diabetes management by arming them with key information, such as:

- How to recognize the signs and symptoms of diabetes, hypoglycemia, and hyperglycemia
- Things they can do to reduce their risk of complications
- The emotional effects of diabetes on seniors and caregivers, and how to recognize the signs of depression

3. Provide resources. Reach out to organizations like the American Diabetes Association <https://www.diabetes.org/> for help and support to manage this condition. For seniors who need assistance with



Tis the Season for Open Enrollment Scams

Winter is coming, which means open enrollment season is here. With 2020 just around the corner, now's the time to add or change your health coverage through Medicare or the Affordable Care Act (ACA). You have until December 7 (Medicare) or December 15 (ACA) to make any changes. As you compare your options, watch out for scams. Here are some tips to protect your wallet and your personal information this open enrollment season.

Eligible for Medicare?

- Anyone who tries to sell you

larger issues, like housing or prescription costs, your local Area Agency on Aging <https://www.n4a.org/> could help provide assistance.

4. Offer practical tips. Many people know that diet and exercise are key components of successful diabetes management. But telling a frail 81-year-old man to walk 5 miles a day may not be a useful prescription for success. Work with your loved one's doctor to tailor an individual plan. For example, suggest making small, incremental adjustments to nutrition and activity.

For some seniors, simply adding an extra helping of vegetables to each meal could be a better route to successful dietary change than recommending they throw out a lifetime of eating habits in favor of adopting a full-blown diabetes diet. Together, with your senior, study up on good eating and exercise habits for diabetes and then add in one change per week as a way to march steadily toward the goal of a full-featured diabetic eating plan.

5. Ask for help. An older adult – especially one who lives alone – could have difficulty managing

Medicare insurance while claiming to be an "official Medicare agent" is a scammer. There are no Medicare sales representatives.

- Ignore anyone who says you must join a prescription drug plan to keep your Medicare coverage. The Medicare prescription drug plan (also known as Part D) is voluntary and has nothing to do with the rest of your Medicare coverage.
- Never give information over the phone to someone who says they need it so you can keep

your coverage. Hang up on anyone who asks for a quick payment, threatens you, or offers you free equipment or services in exchange for your information.

- If you need help with Medicare, call 1-800-MEDICARE or go to [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov).

If you spot a scam, report it to the FTC at [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint). If the scam is Medicare related, report it at 1-800-MEDICARE. The more we hear from you, the more we can help fight scams.

the disease and find, like Beth discovered with her father, that it can be challenging to follow doctor's orders. An exasperated senior could give up on trying to do anything at all. But inaction or misinformation could put a senior at risk and even turn deadly. For example, the CDC reports that mismanagement of four medications accounts for two-thirds of emergency hospitalizations each year. Of those four, two meds – insulin and oral hypoglycemic agents – are medications that are used to control diabetes.

If you can't be there to help a senior, consider hiring a home care company. Home Instead <https://www.homeinstead.com/> for example, can assist with medication management as well as meal planning and activities to help keep older adults properly managing health conditions such as diabetes.

The good news is that many seniors are living long and healthy lives controlling this disease with the help of family and professional caregivers. Exercise and nutrition also can be important for fighting other diseases such as osteoporosis.