

# May S.A.L.T. Meeting

## Topic: Emergency Planning and Procedures

Guest speaker Eric Frank, Emergency Management Coordinator, Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency, will be speaking about disaster planning tips for older adults and people with disabilities.

While each person's abilities and needs are unique, every individual can take steps to prepare for all types of emergencies. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan that fits those needs, you and your loved ones can be better prepared for anything that life throws your way.

Due to the Memorial Day holiday, there is no East meeting. Please attend the West meeting on May 21. Meetings are free and open to all seniors!

To receive the free monthly S.A.L.T. Times Newsletter, call 360.397.2211 ext. 3380 or send an e-mail to: [sheriffcommunityoutreach@clark.wa.gov](mailto:sheriffcommunityoutreach@clark.wa.gov) For other formats: Clark County ADA Office, Voice 360.397.2322 Relay 711 or 800.833.6388 E-mail [ADA@clark.wa.gov](mailto:ADA@clark.wa.gov)



**WEST Meeting**  
**Monday, May 21**  
**11:00 a.m.-noon**

**40 et 8 Community Room**  
**7607 NE 26th Ave.**  
**Vancouver, WA 98665**  
**(next to Bingo)**

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



Seniors And Law Enforcement Together

# S.A.L.T. TIMES

May 2018

## Don't Take the Bait of Free Health Screenings

**"Free health screening!"** This offer often pops up at local health fairs, senior housing, and community centers. Screenings are mostly an affordable way to stay on top of your health, and most providers are legitimate, but BBB has been hearing about scammers who use them as bait to steal sensitive personal information from unsuspecting victims.

### How the Scam Works

You show up for your free health screening, and the representative asks you to fill out a sign-in sheet. This sheet asks for standard information, such as your name. But it also requests sensitive information, such as your Medicare or Social Security number. In some versions, "health company reps" claim that your health plan will cover the cost and send you the results. All you need to do is provide your ID and plan information.

Don't fall for it! Scammers may go through the motions of the health screening – such as taking your blood pressure or cholesterol levels -- only to use your personal information later. Scammers can use this information to bill your insurance for thousands of

dollars' worth of tests, gain access to your personal genetic information, or simply to steal your identity.

### Protect Yourself from Free Health Screening Scams

- **Guard your personal information carefully.** Never give your medical insurance ID number, Social Security number, or banking information to strangers.
- **It is illegal to accept anything of value in exchange for medical services.** Never trade personal information for "free" tests.
- **Don't consent to lab tests without direct orders from your doctor.** Protect yourself and your health insurance benefits.
- **Keep a close eye on correspondence from your medical insurance provider.** Inform your provider right away if you notice any unauthorized changes or charges.



Read more about healthcare scams at <https://www.bbb.org/en/us/article/news-releases/16916-bbb-tip-healthcare-scams>. Learn more about how to protect yourself from Medicare fraud at <https://www.medicare.gov/>.

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# Senior Care Tips for Spring Cleaning

For some, spring cleaning might seem like a big job to tackle. But the benefit for seniors, especially those who require—or may soon require—senior care are too big to sweep under the rug. With yearly spring cleaning, you can:

- *Improve the safety of your loved one's home by eliminating hazards*
- *Increase ease of living by reorganizing or replacing items*
- *Evaluate your loved one's quality of life*
- *Identify if increased assistance is needed*

With all that in mind, here are some tips to make spring cleaning easy when caring for a senior loved one...

1. **Have a Plan.** Before you start cleaning, make a checklist of the areas you need to cover and tasks that you want to accomplish. Go over this plan with your loved one and use their input to add to, modify, and improve your cleaning goals.
2. **Invite Other Family or Friends to Help.** Cleaning as a team makes spring cleaning easier and faster. More importantly, it gives you an excuse to get friends and family together, providing your loved one with company. Treat your loved one to a home-cooked meal or to dinner on the town with you and your fellow cleaners when the job is finished.

3. **Involve Your Loved One.** As any senior care expert can tell you, getting your loved one involved in any task is important. With spring cleaning, your loved one will be able to provide useful information about what should stay, what should go, and what should be removed for improved accessibility. Even better, if your loved one has the strength to help with lighter tasks, cleaning can be great exercise.

4. **Go After Clutter First.** Getting rid of clutter helps improve home safety. It also makes it easier to clean. Organize items and get rid of unused clothing, furniture, and appliances. It will make your job easier and your loved one's home safer.

5. **Check for Expired Items.** Having expired medication or food around can be dangerous-



-especially if your loved one struggles with memory issues. Do a thorough clean of their medicine cabinet, fridge, and pantry to reduce the risk posed by expired items. Throw out expired food. For info on proper disposal of expired medication, visit <https://clarkgreenneighbors.org/reduce-and-recycle/unwanted-medication-disposal>.

6. **Test Safety Precautions.** When spring cleaning, test any safety precautions or senior care safety items in your loved one's home. Check the secureness and stability of grab bars, test fire and carbon monoxide detectors, and perform an overall evaluation of the safety of the home.

<https://www.visitingangels.com/>

## Brain Health- What is it?

Throughout your life, your brain's job is to help you make sense of the world and help oversee your daily operations and life. Brain health refers to the ability to remember, learn, play, concentrate and maintain a clear, active mind. It's being able to draw on the strengths of your brain—information management, logic, judgement, perspective and wisdom. Simply, brain health is all about making the most of your brain and helping reduce some risks to it as you age.

### Your Brain Is Always Changing

The only constant about your brain is that it's always changing—even after it reaches maturity. So change in brain functions is to be expected as you age.

This process is called “brain plasticity”—as we experience the world, practice habits and learn new information, our brains change, grow new connections and repair broken ones. As we age, our experiences and knowledge keep our brains working, developing and learning. You may experience noticeable changes, but not all changes are a sign of concern. We all lose our keys and forget people's names. We do it throughout our entire lives. It's not until we're older that these common mishaps cause us to worry. It's also important to know there are several other reasons lapses in memory occur, like taking certain medications, lack of sleep and excessive alcohol.

### Engage Your Brain

While changes to your brain are natural, there are things you can do to help stay on top of your game.

**Discover a New Talent-** When you learn new things, you engage your brain. Pick up a new hobby or just do something you haven't done before.

**Get Moving-** Did you know being active may help you reduce some risks to your brain? It doesn't matter if you're taking nightly walks or even playing with the grandkids—as long as you're getting your heart pumping for 30 minutes most days.

**Maintain Your Balance-** By strengthening your body and doing regular balance exercises, you may help reduce your chances of a fall-related head injury which can cause memory issues and impaired thinking. Work to improve your balance and talk to your doctor if you've experienced a fall.

**Stay Connected-** Keep in touch with your family and friends. Invite them over for a healthy meal, go on a hike together or volunteer. Science has shown having regular engagement in social activities can help reduce some risks to your brain.

**Eat Up-** By simply changing what you eat, you may be able to help increase your chances of staying engaged as you age. Try eating a healthy, low solid fat diet with lots of veggies and fruits.

**Know Your Blood Pressure-** High blood pressure in midlife can have serious effects on your brain health down the road. If your blood pressure is high, talk to your health care provider about how to get in under control. It may just help reduce some risks to your brain.

<https://brainhealth.nia.nih.gov/>



### 1. Age 50 to 60

- Conceptual understanding, language and vocabulary is still sharp.
- The ability to understand how things work can remain strong, as can creativity and wisdom.
- Multitasking may be a little harder than before and learning new things can take a bit longer, but both can still be successfully accomplished.

### 2. Age 60 to 70

- Knowledge, experience, reasoning, creativity and problem solving can remain strong.
- Changes in our 50s continue into our 60s.
- Cognitive processing speed may take longer as some parts of the brain may be shrinking.

### 3. 70 and Beyond

- Most individuals' reasoning, creativity, language and procedural memories will remain sharp.
- Cognitive health can begin to vary. Early signs of brain issues like Alzheimer's and dementia can occur.
- For some, genetic predisposition, lifestyle and health issues will begin to show noticeable effects.

## Older American's Month 2018

Every May, the Administration on Aging, part of the Administration for Community Living, leads our nation's observance of Older American's Month. The 2018 theme, Engage at Every Age, emphasizes that you are never too old (or young) to take part in activities that can enrich your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It also celebrates the many ways in which older adults make a difference in our communities.

Participating in activities that promote mental and physical wellness, offering your wisdom and experience to the next generation, seeking the mentorship of someone with more life experience than you—those are just a few examples of what being engaged can mean. No matter where you are in your life, there is no better time than now to start. We hope you will join in and Engage at Every Age! <https://oam.acl.gov/>