

THE FORWARD MARCH

Toward Health and Wellness

HONORING OUR PAST. SUPPORTING OUR PRESENT. PROTECTING OUR FUTURE.

June 2026 Edition

June is PTSD Awareness Month

June is officially designated as **PTSD Awareness Month**. This annual campaign is dedicated to raising public understanding, reducing the stigma around mental health, and highlighting that effective, evidence-based treatments for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are available.

Understanding PTSD

PTSD is a mental health condition that can develop after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening, shocking, or dangerous event. While it is often associated with military combat, it can also stem from serious accidents, sexual assault, abuse, or natural disasters.

Key Symptoms

- **Intrusion:** Flashbacks, nightmares, and severe, uncontrollable thoughts about the traumatic event.
- **Avoidance:** Staying away from places, objects, or conversations that are reminders of the trauma.
- **Alterations in Cognition and Mood:** Negative beliefs about oneself, memory problems, and feelings of detachment.
- **Alterations in Arousal and Reactivity:** Being easily startled, feeling constantly on edge, or having angry outbursts.

How to Take Action & Find Help

- **Self-Screening:** June 27th is PTSD Screening Day, a designated time to take a quick, self-administered assessment. You can access screening tools through the VA National Center for PTSD.
- **Treatment Options:** Evidence-based psychotherapies like Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) and Prolonged Exposure (PE) are highly effective at reducing symptoms. Learn about treatment options or locate a facility on [FindSupport.gov](https://findsupport.gov).

 **National Crisis Resource:** If you or a loved one are in crisis, immediate, confidential help is available 24/7. Call or text 988 (and press 1 for the Veterans Crisis Line).

Beat the Heat: Preventing Heat-Related Illness

Summer temperatures have been soaring and can be dangerous, especially for older adults. As we age, our bodies become less efficient at regulating temperature, increasing the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Warning Signs of Heat Exhaustion:

- Heavy sweating
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea
- Fatigue or weakness
- Headache

Heat Safety Tips:

- Stay indoors during the hottest part of the day (10 a.m. – 4 p.m.).
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.
- Use fans and air conditioning whenever possible.
- Never leave people or pets in parked vehicles.
- Check on neighbors, friends, and family members during extreme heat.

When to Seek Help: If someone becomes confused, stops sweating, has a rapid pulse, or loses consciousness, call 911 immediately. These may be signs of heat stroke, a medical emergency.



Protect Your Skin: Skin Cancer Prevention for Seniors

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States, and risk increases with age due to years of cumulative sun exposure. Fortunately, many cases can be prevented through simple protective habits.

Protect Yourself This Summer:

- Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher before going outdoors.
- Reapply every two hours, especially when sweating.
- Wear wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses, and lightweight long sleeves.
- Seek shade whenever possible between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Avoid indoor tanning devices.

Perform Monthly Skin Checks

Watch for:

- New moles or growths
- Spots that change in size, shape, or color
- Sores that do not heal
- Areas that itch, bleed, or crust

Early detection saves lives. If you notice any concerning changes, schedule an appointment with a dermatologist or healthcare provider.



Healthy Nutrition After 60: Simple Steps to Better Well-Being

Proper nutrition is one of the most important factors in maintaining health, vitality, and independence as we age. As the body changes over time, it requires a more thoughtful approach to food choices. A balanced diet

helps maintain a healthy weight, strong bones, cardiovascular health, and cognitive function while safely reducing the risk of many chronic diseases.

The foundation of healthy aging is the consumption of natural, minimally processed foods. A daily balanced plate should include:

- **Vegetables & Fruits:** Rich sources of fiber, vitamins, minerals, and essential antioxidants that protect overall cellular health.
- **Quality Protein:** Incorporate fish, eggs, lean meats, legumes, and dairy products regularly to preserve muscle mass, which naturally declines as we age.
- **Healthy Fats:** Utilize olive oil, nuts, avocados, and fatty fish to directly support both heart and cognitive brain health.
- **Adequate Hydration:** Consistently drinking water throughout the day is critical to maintain baseline energy and metabolic function.

By intentionally limiting added sugars, sugary beverages, and highly processed items, you can drastically boost your daily vitality. Consistent, balanced eating choices form the true cornerstone of healthy longevity.

Hydration Matters More Than You Might Think

Proper hydration is essential for maintaining energy, supporting heart health, regulating body temperature, and preventing dizziness and falls.

Many older adults do not feel thirsty until they are already mildly dehydrated. Certain medications and health conditions can also increase fluid needs.

Simple Ways to Stay Hydrated:

- Drink water consistently throughout the day, not just when thirsty.
- Keep a refillable water bottle nearby.
- Eat water-rich foods such as watermelon, cucumbers, strawberries, and oranges.
- Limit excessive caffeine and alcohol, which can contribute to dehydration.
- Increase fluid intake during hot weather and physical activity.

Know the Signs of Dehydration:

- Dark yellow urine
- Dry mouth
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Confusion or dizziness

A good goal for most adults is to sip water regularly throughout the day and discuss individual hydration needs with their healthcare provider.

-Nutrition content authored by Maksym Tymofii

Take Action This Summer

If you're in the Wake Forest Area, join **22 Saves Hockey Foundation** for our *Ageless Movement* program!

- **FREE Program:** Open to senior military veterans and/or their spouses.
- **Professional Guidance:** Led by a certified fitness professional and nutrition consultant.
- **Holistic Wellness:** Focuses on improving physical, mental, and emotional health through deliberate movement and mindfulness practices.
- **Schedule:** Offered weekly on Monday mornings from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM.
- **Learn More:** For additional details, visit 22saveshockey.org/ageless-movement/
- **Support the Cause:** If you are unable to attend but want to help keep this program completely free of charge for our seniors, you can make a tax-deductible donation at 22saveshockey.org/donate/

 **Double Good Popcorn Fundraiser (June 20 – June 27):** We will be launching our Double Good virtual fundraiser very soon! We are selling award-winning gourmet popcorn and keeping **50% of every single sale** to directly fund veteran outreach and wellness initiatives. Check out our fundraising page online at <https://popup.doublegood.com/s/4f2icb63> to learn how you can participate, share with your network, or get started!

Thank You for Your Service!

