



**MID-CITIES**  
**MEDICAL**

JANUARY 2024  
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ISSUE 01

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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**Just for fun!**

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## Set your New Year's Intention

VA.gov – Another year, another chance to think about what really matters in your life. But this year, instead of resolutions, how about setting intentions?

Intentions are different from a specific goal or resolution, coming from the heart while also reconnecting you to your true mission, aspiration, and purpose. You know what they say about “good intentions” but without them, we may end up living out the same patterns year after year.

Before setting your intentions for the year, take a few minutes to answer two questions, either by writing them down or just thinking about them in your mind:

1. What really matters to you in your life?
2. What brings you a sense of joy and happiness?

There is no right or wrong answers for these questions and both answers may be similar. For example, you may consider setting an intention to live a healthier lifestyle versus a resolution to go to the gym.

Do your 2024 intentions include making changes related to your health and well-being? The VA's Live Whole Health mobile application is a free, easy-to-use tool created for anyone ready to take the next step in their Whole Health journey.

# Military Mental Health and The Brandon Act

VA News – The year 2023 has seen increased access to mental health evaluation and treatment across the military and more emphasis on reducing stigma associated with seeking mental health support.

To improve service members access to mental health services and honor U.S. Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Brandon Caserta, who died by suicide in 2018, the Department of Defense implemented the Brandon Act in May 2023. The three military departments rolled out their implementation of the Brandon Act following the publication of DOD's guidance, and their message to service members is mental health is health.

Working together to ensure all service members can seek support by requesting a referral for a mental health evaluation, the Defense Health Agency and the military services have collaborated to implement training for commanding officers and supervisors so that they will reply in an appropriate and timely manner.



## Holiday Calendar



### JANUARY

- 1st New Year's Day – **OFFICE CLOSED**
- 15th Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 19th Confederate Heroes' Day (TX)

1st Monday runs 01-08-24  
2nd Monday runs 01-15-24  
3rd Monday runs 01-22-24

1st Tuesday runs 01-02-24

*\*Mercedes only*

1st Monday runs 01-08-24  
1st Tuesday runs 01-09-24  
2nd Tuesday runs 01-02-24

*\*Redlands only*

3rd Wednesday runs 01-17-24  
3rd Thursday runs 01-18-24  
4th Thursday runs 01-25-24  
4th Friday runs 01-26-24



### FEBRUARY

- 1st National Freedom Day
- 2nd Groundhog Day
- 4th Rosa Parks Day
- 10th Chinese New Year – Year of the Dragon
- 14th Valentine's Day
- 15th Susan B. Anthony's Birthday
- 19th President's Day – **OFFICE CLOSED**

2nd Monday runs 02-05-24  
3rd Monday runs 02-12-24

4th Monday runs 02-26-24  
2nd Wednesday runs 02-14-24

*\*Mercedes only*

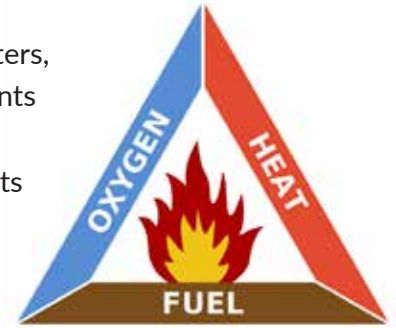
1st Monday runs 02-05-24  
1st Tuesday runs 02-06-24  
2nd Monday runs 02-05-24

*\*Redlands only*

2nd Wednesday runs 02-21-24  
3rd Wednesday runs 02-14-24  
3rd Thursday runs 02-15-24  
4th Thursday runs 02-22-24  
4th Friday runs 02-23-24

# What You Need To Know

All the VA Medical Centers are focusing on Fire Safety this quarter and with winter's arrival, new fire dangers can appear in patients' homes. As space heaters, electric blankets, candles, lamps, and other items are introduced to help patients stay warm, these new additions increase fire hazards in a home environment. Heating elements, no matter the size, can ignite oxygen on and around patients using oxygen. **This includes smoking and vaping.**



The VA Medical Center recommends that you practice oxygen safety **before** you engage with open flames, heating elements, sparking items, or any heat source. Their safety guidelines state that patients should take-off and turn-off their oxygen, wait 10 minutes, and move 25 feet away from their oxygen before interacting with open flames, heating elements, or sparking items.

Remember that the Fire Triangle requires

- **Oxygen**, which is found on you and in your residence,
- **a Heat source**, and
- **a Fuel source**; e.g. hair, clothing, furniture, and other combustible items.

If you remove one of these three elements from the Fire Triangle, you cannot start a fire, that is why we always instruct patients to turn off their oxygen, move out of the area, and then engage with heat sources.

## Stay Safe Before, During, & After Winter Storms

*FEMA* – Taking the time to prepare for a winter storm can mean the difference between comfortably riding it out or barely surviving, and it is highly recommended that you know how to prepare yourself before, during, and after winter storm hits.

During extremely cold weather or winter storms, staying warm and safe can be a challenge. Winter storms can bring cold temperatures, power failures, loss of communication services and icy roads.

Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms, listening for emergency information and alerts. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio can provide vital emergency alerts and early warnings of dangerous weather.



**Don't get stuck in the cold!**

# Important Health Contact Numbers

## EMERGENCY

DIAL 9-1-1

## EMERGENCY SITUATION

DIAL 7-1-1

Use if you have a TTY and cannot obtain emergency services.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

DIAL 2-1-1

## NON-EMERGENCY OR DOWN EQUIPMENT

Phone: TEXAS (888) 450-6676

Phone: AZ & CA (833) 986-4267

## YOU CAN QUIT SMOKING

Phone: (800) QUIT-NOW

Website: [www.SmokeFree.gov](http://www.SmokeFree.gov)

[www.BeTobaccoFree.gov](http://www.BeTobaccoFree.gov)

## VETERANS CRISIS LINE

DIAL 9-8-8

Phone:

(800) 273-8255

Email: [ConfidentialChat@VeteransCrisisLine.net](mailto:ConfidentialChat@VeteransCrisisLine.net)

## VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Phone:

(855) 260-3274

Website:

[www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)

## REPORT ABUSE. BREAK THE SILENCE.

Phone:

(800) 252-5400

If you are being abused, suspect abuse or have witnessed someone being abused, call today.

## SPEAK-UP CAMPAIGN

Website:

<https://tinyurl.com/5n68nt29>

Rights patients have & what they can do if they feel they are being discriminated against & receiving substandard care.

## Black Beans and Rice

Black beans and rice make a great 30-minute vegetarian meal that's filling, delicious, and cheap! Great as a side dish or in a burrito bowl, too.

Prep Time: 5 mins

Cook Time: 25 mins

Total Time: 35 mins

Servings: 6



### Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup uncooked white rice
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups low sodium, low fat vegetable broth
- 3  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups canned black beans, drained
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon cayenne pepper

**Step 1** – Heat oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; cook and stir until onion has softened, about 4 minutes. Stir in rice to coat; cook and stir for 2 minutes.

**Step 2** – Add vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce to a simmer, and cook until liquid is absorbed, about 20 minutes.

**Step 3** – Stir in beans, cumin, and cayenne; cook until beans are warmed through.

## Word Search

auld lang syne  
calendar  
celebration  
clock  
confetti  
countdown  
December

family  
festivities  
fireworks  
friends  
happy  
holiday  
January

midnight  
music  
party  
resolution  
tradition  
year

S	C	F	S	A	U	L	D	L	A	N	G	S	Y	N	E	C	C
R	L	R	T	U	Y	F	I	R	E	W	O	R	K	S	R	A	O
D	O	N	O	I	T	I	D	A	R	T	H	R	A	A	S	Y	U
W	C	N	A	V	F	S	Q	E	I	T	O	Y	E	R	T	K	N
S	K	P	T	B	H	C	F	A	M	I	L	Y	A	L	E	M	T
C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	I	R	F	S	W	M	D
A	A	W	I	E	T	P	P	D	N	L	D	A	F	K	G	C	O
M	A	L	D	H	C	Y	M	P	N	S	A	U	S	I	H	O	W
L	J	B	E	T	R	I	N	F	Y	T	Y	N	D	S	D	N	N
O	H	R	C	N	P	T	S	T	P	E	O	A	N	D	A	F	A
T	E	E	E	L	D	L	N	U	A	T	C	J	E	N	F	E	Y
A	E	P	M	N	R	A	O	L	M	I	D	N	I	G	H	T	T
N	E	U	B	D	S	Y	R	I	L	R	U	S	R	S	O	T	R
U	R	F	E	S	T	I	V	I	T	I	E	S	F	S	D	I	A
W	F	M	R	E	S	O	L	U	T	I	O	N	K	B	I	O	P