



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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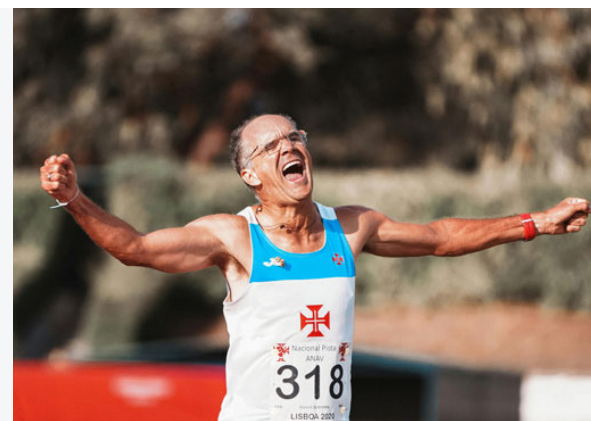
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Just For Fun



Leave us a review



Achieve your New Year's goals with the VA

VA News – Setting realistic, long-term New Year's goals can be challenging, but VA offers tools and resources to help Veterans and caregivers set, track, and turn resolutions into lasting healthy habits.

- **To get better sleep:** Insomnia Coach is a free app offering a five-week program with sleep tracking, personalized feedback, and tools to help Veterans improve their sleep.
- **To manage weight:** MOVE! Coach is a free app with a 16-week plan focused on healthy eating and fitness, plus tools to track progress and connect with a supportive community.
- **To eat healthier:** VA's Healthy Teaching Kitchen offers nutrition tips and cooking classes at VA facilities or online to help you confidently make easy, healthy meals at home.
- **To improve well-being:** Mindfulness Coach is an app with guided exercises, a training program, reminders, and a progress log to help reduce stress and boost emotional health.
- **To stay consistent:** Live Whole Health supports any goal with tools based on VA's holistic, patient-centered approach, helping Veterans, caregivers, and employees stay on track.

Make a resolution to stop smoking

Veteran Affairs – Quitting smoking is challenging, but Veterans have access to strong support and resources. It's one of the best steps you can take for your health at any age and according to the Surgeon General, it could add up to 10 years to your life.

There are no safe tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vapes. In addition to tobacco-related disease and death, the FDA has reported safety concerns linked to vaping, such as lung injuries, seizures, and other neurological symptoms.

Some of the health risks of smoking include:

- Lung cancer
- Chronic bronchitis
- Emphysema
- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Pneumonia
- Leukemia
- Cataracts

If you don't smoke but have loved ones who do, support them by talking about the risks of smoking, the benefits of quitting, and available resources. If you're ready to quit, contact your local VA, call VA's tobacco quitline at **1-855-QUIT-VET**, or visit **SmokefreeVET**.



Research-Backed Tips for Better Health in the New Year

USU News – As the New Year begins, many people set goals to improve health and well-being. Research shows that everyday habits, from managing stress to exercise and daily routines, can shape long-term health, brain function, and even how our cells age.

At the Uniformed Services University (USU), researchers study how lifestyle choices affect mood, memory, metabolism, and overall resilience, offering practical, science-backed strategies for healthier living in the year ahead.

- **Coffee with Purpose:** Caffeine may work best after the morning cortisol peak, around 9:30–11:30AM, to boost metabolism and alertness.
- **Manage Stress:** Chronic stress impacts genes linked to aging and cognition. Mindfulness and meditation can reduce stress and support emotional and physical health.
- **Exercise for Mood:** Physical activity boosts mood and emotional health. Regular exercise strengthens resilience, reduces stress, and eases depressive symptoms.
- **Harness Your Cells' Defenses:** Antioxidants protect cells from damage, and healthy habits – like good nutrition, stress management, and exercise – help maintain these defenses.



Winter weather is here. Are you prepared?

Winter weather can range from light freezing rain to heavy snow or blizzards. While these events are rare, preparing in advance can prevent major problems, including familiarizing yourself with the National Weather Service's winter weather warnings and advisories.

Winter Weather Preparedness Checklist:

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and portable radio (may be your only link to the outside)
- Extra medicine and baby supplies
- Extra food and water (non-perishable, high-energy, no cooking needed)
- First-aid kit
- Heating fuel (deliveries may be delayed after a storm)
- Safe emergency heating sources (fireplace, wood stove, space heater)
- Fire extinguisher and working smoke detectors



If you must travel in winter weather, check conditions along your route and at your destination. Staying informed about snow, ice, or closures helps you plan safely, avoid delays, and reduce accident risk. Use state transportation sites, traffic apps, or local news for updates.

Holiday Calendar



JANUARY

- Jan. 1st New Year's Day – **OFFICE CLOSED**
- 6th Epiphany (Three Kings Day)
- 13th Stephen Foster Memorial Day
- 19th Confederate Heroes' Day (TX)
- 20th Martin Luther King Jr. Day

1st Thursday runs 01-08-26 3rd Thursday runs 01-22-26
2nd Thursday runs 01-15-26 1st Monday runs 01-30-26

**Mercedes only*

1st Monday runs 01-05-26 3rd Wednesday runs 01-21-26
1st Tuesday runs 01-06-26 3rd Thursday runs 01-22-26
1st Wednesday runs 01-30-26 4th Friday runs 12-30-26

**Redlands only*



FEBRUARY

- 1st National Freedom Day
- 2nd Groundhog Day
- 4th Rosa Parks Day
- 8th Super Bowl
- 14th Valentine's Day
- 15th Susan B. Anthony's Birthday
- 16th President's Day – **OFFICE CLOSED**

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**

www.BeTobaccoFree.gov

**HOW TO STAY SAFE WHILE
USING OXYGEN IN THE HOME**



VETERANS CRISIS LINE **DIAL 9-8-8**

Email: **ConfidentialChat@VeteransCrisisLine.net**

VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Phone: **(855) 260-3274**

Website: **www.caregiver.va.gov**

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

Website: **https://tinyurl.com/52uvkwu9**

REPORT ABUSE. BREAK THE SILENCE.

Phone: **(800) 252-5400**

SPEAK-UP CAMPAIGN

Website: **https://tinyurl.com/5n68nt29**

Rights patients have if they feel they are being discriminated

Cottage Cheese Pancakes

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 10 mins

Additional Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hrs 20 mins

Servings: 3



Ingredients

- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 3 large eggs
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon butter
- ¼ cup blueberries, or to taste (optional)

Directions

Step 1 – Strain cottage cheese in a fine-mesh sieve fitted over a bowl, pressing down occasionally, until cottage cheese dries out, about 1 hour.

Step 2 – Beat eggs together in a medium bowl; stir in cottage cheese, flour, 2 tablespoons melted butter, and salt until just blended.

Step 3 – Melt 1 teaspoon butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Drop batter by large spoonfuls into the skillet; sprinkle with blueberries. Cook until lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Repeat with remaining batter and blueberries.

Word Search

blue sky

boots

cloudy

cold

dark

frosty

frozen

gloves

ice

jacket

January

month

new year

rain

scarf

slippery

snow

socks

sunshine

wet

wooly hat

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