

Caring Solutions

Cool



760 469 4633
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Indoor Activities During Hot Summer Months



Living in the Coachella Valley is one of the coolest places to live, during the winter! Summertime is a completely different scenario. With temperatures topping triple digit, for 4 months at a time, indoor activities become essential.

Caregivers play a vital role in keeping seniors engaged by suggesting activities that keep their minds, as well as their bodies active. Here are some suggestions for keeping the summer months fun!

Alzheimer's or dementia patients may enjoy scrapbooking or organizing old photos. Perhaps put together photos to give as gifts to family members. Old family photos are always fun to receive.

Recently, we gave my father an iPhone. It was a bit of a challenge to get him oriented and comfortable with it, but now, he is enjoying all of the benefits that a smart phone affords. He is googling questions he has, taking pictures of the garden, texting, and putting phone numbers into memory. He is 92 years old! Connecting with family members on Facebook is a fun pastime, too!

Ask your elderly companion to teach you a craft or skill that you may not know how to do. It will help them use their brain, and give them the enjoyment of helping someone else for a change.

The Coachella Valley is a great place for seniors. Every city has a senior center that offers dozens of fun activities daily. There is yoga, chair exercises, lunch and dinners, jam sessions for senior musicians, card games and much more. Just go online and find a whole world of fun, and it's always in a cool environment.

How about dancing? There are dance classes and parties provided by senior centers and many of the country clubs. It's great exercise, and a great way for seniors to mingle and have some social activity.

How about a shopping trip to the indoor mall? A leisurely stroll through the mall is a great way to get a little walking in, and maybe find some cool things to buy!

There is always a trip to the coffee shop. Have a refreshing latte and socialize. Bring a book or magazine to look at while you sit and enjoy the day.

By all means, don't forget the movies!! Some of the senior centers show the old movies that might provoke some fun memories for them.

I can face-time with my dad, now. There are other ways to video chat, such as Skype. These are fun ways for visiting with distant friends and family.

Many cities, country clubs, and parks have water aerobics. Some of the assisted living facilities have classes that are open to the public. It is imperative that you take caution by protecting from harsh rays of the sun by applying at least SPF 30 sunblock. Make sure you book early morning hour classes. Check with responsible parties, doctors and family, to make sure the patient is fit enough to engage in water aerobic activity.

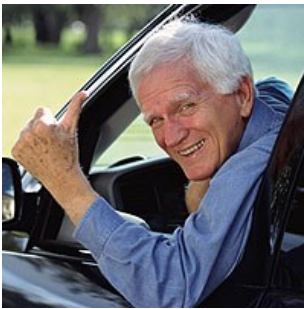
It's always fun to help make meals that seniors can participate in preparing. Mixing various fruits in water to make hydration more enjoyable and flavorful can aid in overall health, too. Staying hydrated is one of the most important tasks. Summer and winter, as well.

Encourage card games with neighbors, family and friends. Board games are fun and good activities for the brain. My mom and dad take pride in the fact that they add the "Yatzee" dice, faster than I do. Whatever!!

Summer is here, enjoy it, and get your loved one or patient engaged. There are lots of fun activities to do indoors.

When Is It Time To Stop Driving?

Your aging loved one is no doubt, one of the most important people in your life. Are you worried every time they get behind the wheel? To those of us concerned, it seems like such a practical and safe idea to simply take the keys and say, "ok, no more driving..." As you can imagine it's not that simple. To the aging person, who make think he or she is driving perfectly, it's very hard to understand. How will they get to the doctors and grocery store, and what about going to the movies and out to dinner? It is life altering! Unfortunately, there is no easy answer. Enduring that loss of independence may have to become a fact of life for them.



There are some signs that will help you identify risk factors that you can point out to your aging loved one, that may help them come to the realization of impending danger. Most of the time, for those that are driving and think they are doing "just fine," it is very hard to get them to even listen to words of reason. You have to be patient and understanding. It can get frustrating to say the least. After you talk with your loved one, maybe a trip to the department of motor vehicles may be necessary to have he or she checked out. Also, talking with the doctor to get his or her perspective can be an option.

We googled "[Caring.com](https://www.caring.com)" to find these tips, go to their website for complete information. We found it to be very helpful and informative. The article entitled: How to Know When It's Time to Stop Driving.

If there are health conditions such as Parkinson's or dementia encourage your loved one to consult with their doctor. Have them raise the issue of driving safety. The doctor should discuss this with the patient and not a loved one. They cannot talk to you without the patient's permission, unless you are the power of attorney.



It's probably better if they bring it up and get the words right from the doctor, themselves, that way there is no distrust in you, relaying the outcome of the doctor's conversation.



Vision Impairment is another cause for concern. I noticed first-hand with my dad that he was cutting drivers off and pulling out in front of them. I would ask him if he saw that car. His answer would be, "no, I didn't see him". Then, as I watched him more closely, I realized he was having a hard time turning his head to get a clear look. At that time, he started doing "range of motion" exercises and that helped him a bit. Also, eyesight may play a role in not being able to judge distances and speed of other vehicles. Have your loved one's eyes checked to be on the safe side. Changes in vision can happen rather quickly, and should be monitored, regularly.

Hearing can be another problem. Make sure hearing tests are done frequently. Higher pitched sounds are sometimes the first to go. Horns and sirens may become hard to hear for the aging driver.

Prescription drug and drug interaction can be a problem. Also, Alcohol abuse can be an issue. Make sure you are reading the warnings and checking with doctors and pharmacists to ensure that there are no drug interactions that could cause drowsiness. If a loved one likes to have a drink, make sure they understand someone else has to drive.



You can also look for new dents in the car, speeding tickets and other traffic violations, forgetting to use seatbelts, not wanting to drive at night, easily distracted when behind the wheel, doesn't realize when the lights have changed, not noticing other cars and pedestrians on the road, all of these signs are good reason to bring up the subject of, it's time to stop driving.



Power Outage??

Here are some tips for Keeping Your Cool

It happens regularly in the desert, power gets interrupted for one reason or another in the summer months.

Here, our houses rely on the air conditioner to keep us cool. Other places of the country, homes are built with basements. Since warmer air rises, the basement stays relatively cool as the cooler air collects in the basement which is usually below ground level.

So, how can we stay cool while our power is interrupted?

Thousands of years ago, the Egyptians wet sheets that were hung in the windows to cool the breeze coming into the house, the same way an evaporator cooler works. It's a thought, but not really practical. As a last resort, it could be a bit of a help.

A few more practical solutions could be as simple as having a misting bottle for everyone in the home. Misting yourself and standing in a breezy location in the shade can really bring the body temperature down.

There are special cooling towels that are made to be wet and placed on the body. They work quite well and can provide instant relief.

Invest in some battery operated fans. It's estimated that a fan can make it feel an instant 10 degrees cooler, couple that with misting or the cooling towel, and you can really keep surprisingly cool.

Make sure to wear loose fitting clothes. Also pick

clothes that are light in color. Above all, make sure you are staying hydrated.

Have awnings installed over your windows. There are some types that have up to 97% UV blockage.

Make sure the air that you have cooled down, doesn't escape. Have all air leaks sealed so you keep the cool air in.

Trees planted around the house help keep it cool by shading your roof. If you don't have any planted, consider that option.

Do not cook inside and eat hot foods. Have cool salads and fruit, making sure to eat during the cooler times of the day. Even if your food is cold, it takes energy to digest it, which can still warm you up.

Don't sleep in the upstairs bedroom. Remember, heat rises.

Did you remember to close the fireplace flue? It's another place where air can escape.

If the power goes out, remember to keep the freezer and refrigerator closed as much as possible to keep your food fresh.

If you are able to leave the home, the senior centers of the Coachella Valley are cooling stations. In an emergency please go to one of them. Find one close to you and make note of it so you can easily find it.