



Engaged Aging Lab

June Newsletter



Mission Statement

To evaluate the connections among the environment, personal characteristics, and meaningful occupations (how one occupies their time) through a multi-disciplinary lens of translational science. This is conducted through training, advocacy, and research on telehealth/technology, health outcomes, and underlying biology with an emphasis on community-based research and maximizing health resources for all.

Novelty

Happy June! Summer is finally upon us in Kentucky. The summer solstice starts on June 21, 2026, and marks the start of summer. This month, the Railbird Music Festival is coming to Lexington. No tickets? No problem! Just listen to your favorite song at home or check out the “Events” section to find local music events. Listening to music has great effects on our health and aging. Have you ever had a wave of memories while listening to a song? That’s because listening to music releases dopamine and helps connect signals from the brain’s auditory cortex to the Limbic system- the part of the brain responsible for emotion, memory, and reward processing^{1,2}. Check out our “References” section if you want to learn more!

Sleep

Did you know that sleep is a shared behavior among many different species? Sleep helps maintain many body systems, and one of these systems is the newly described “Glymphatic System”⁴. The glymphatic system connects the lymphatic system to the brain. Any “brain waste” (such as extra proteins or chemicals) collected during the day is taken out through this system by glial cells while we sleep. Research even shows that damage to this system (such as chronic sleep deprivation) may contribute to Alzheimer’s disease and other disorders⁴. Check out our “References” section to learn more!



Nutrition

Zucchini is in season this month in Kentucky, so we’ve picked out a delicious MIND Diet-Friendly zucchini muffin recipe to satisfy your sweet tooth. Zucchini adds moisture and tenderness to these muffins while providing fiber and nutrients to promote healthy digestion and vision³. [Click here to view the recipe for these muffins.](#)



Photo credits: TheOfficialMINDDiet.com

Events

- **June 4, 2026: Southland Jamboree at Moondance Amphitheater in Lexington, KY**

[Click here to view a webpage with additional information for the Southland Jamboree event.](#)

- **June 6, 2026: Unity in the Community Event at First Baptist Church in Frankfort, KY**

[Click here to view a webpage with additional information for Unity in the Community.](#)

- **June 6-7, 2026: Railbird Music Festival in Lexington, KY**

[Click here to view a webpage with additional information for the Railbird Music Festival](#)

- **June 10, 2026 Scam Prevention Free Workshop by AARP in Lexington, KY**

[Click here to view the registration link for the scam prevention workshop.](#)

- **June 20, 2026: Soulteenth Juneteenth Celebration in Lexington, KY**

[Click here to view a webpage with additional information for the Soulteenth event.](#)



Caregiver Corner

Driving can become challenging as we age. Our joints and muscles can stiffen, our eyesight weakens, and we may experience hearing loss. These challenges are often made worse at night⁵. Try these safe driving tips to keep ourselves and others safe on the road:

1. Avoid driving during sunset, sunrise, or night- when there's too much sun glare, or when it's dark.
2. Avoid driving if you feel lightheaded or drowsy.
3. Avoid areas or times of day with heavy traffic and give yourself plenty of space to brake safely.
4. Stay physically active! Exercise can improve our strength and coordination.

If you'd like additional information, AARP is hosting a free, online workshop about safe driving for elders and people with vision challenges on June 8, 2026. [Click here to view the registration link.](#)

There are also additional education resources from the National Institute of Health on our "References" section.

Exercise

Have you heard of the health benefits of Tai Chi? Tai Chi is a type of traditional Chinese martial arts. It engages the mind and body with gentle movements and is backed by research to improve balance and lower stress for seniors and people with dementia^{6,7}. Tai Chi can be done standing or seated and taken at your own pace. We found a great YouTube video with seated and standing modifications⁸. [Click here to view a link to the video.](#)



Research

We are excited to launch the official UK HealthCare Website for our research-based dementia care program, Harmony. [Click the link here to visit the official website.](#)

If you are interested in joining a research study, [click the link here to view our current studies.](#)

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References

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4. Reynolds, S. (2024) Brain-waste clearance system shown in people for the first time. *National Institutes of Health*. [Click here to view a link to this article](#).
5. (2022) Safe Driving for Adults. *National Institute on Aging*. [Click here to view a link to this article](#)
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