



**THE VILLAGE AT  
ORCHARD RIDGE**

A National Lutheran Community

# Garden Your Way to Wellness

Gardening is a fulfilling activity at any age with numerous health benefits but it can become more challenging as you age. View our guide to learn more about how gardening can improve your mental and physical wellness as well as tips to help make it easier on you.



## The Many Benefits of Gardening

- **Calm and de-stress:** The repetition of watering plants, pulling weeds, etc. along with being outside in the fresh air and the warmth of the sun can be very relaxing and a great way to calm your mind if you're feeling stressed.
- **Maintain strength and mobility:** Walking outside, bending down to tend to your plants, picking up a watering can — even these simple movements can help you maintain your flexibility, strength and balance which is important for preventing injuries, especially as we age.
- **Opportunities for social engagement:** Life Plan Communities, like The Village at Orchard Ridge, often offer activities such as gardening clubs for residents, which is a great way to make new friends while doing something you love.
- **Enhanced mental health:** Gardening has multiple positive effects on your mental health as well. Having something to take care of can give you a sense of purpose and growing something successfully can give you a sense of accomplishment as well. Plus, gardening provides the opportunity to learn new things about different types of plants, their benefits, and so on.
- **Improved physical health:** Gardening is also known to help boost immunity through the production of vitamin D from exposure to the sun, regulate blood pressure through physical activity, and may even prevent dementia through physical and mental engagement.
- **Healthier eating habits:** Fruits and vegetables are filled with important nutrients that help keep us healthy and growing your own is a great way to encourage yourself to eat more of them!

Continued on page 2



Call 540-486-2956 or visit: [www.thevillageatorchardridge.org](http://www.thevillageatorchardridge.org)

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## Gardening Tips for Older Adults

- **Have the right tools:** Bending over, kneeling down and carrying a heavy watering can or hose around the yard can get more difficult as you get older but certain tools can help make it easier to plant, water and prune.
  - **Raised garden beds, planters or long-handed tools** can make your plants easier to reach.
  - **A kneeling pad or a gardening seat/stool** will help make a long day outside more comfortable.
  - **A garden trolley** can help you carry all of your tools to the garden, even the heavier ones, in one trip.
  - Consider investing in an **irrigation system** to make watering your plants a breeze, or place your plants closer to the water spigot.
- **Practice sun safety:** The sun can be beneficial in the production of vitamin D but be sure to stay hydrated and wear a hat and sunscreen to protect your skin from overexposure.
- **Choose low-maintenance plants:** Minimize upkeep with native plants or low-maintenance varieties like perennials.

Contact The Village at Orchard Ridge to learn more about our Life Plan Community and the various activities offered.



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