



IN THIS ISSUE

**National Family  
Caregiver Month**

**Additional Resources**

Upcoming Wise & Well Webinar -  
Register Now!

**Monthly Moves**

Seated Low Back Stretch

**Recipe**

Broccoli Rice Casserole







# Wise & Well

Welcome to the Wise & Well Newsletter, where we promote whole-person well-being each month and highlight health-related topics to help you be your best.



## National Family Caregivers Month

This November is National Family Caregivers Month, a time to celebrate and honor the contributions of caregivers who provide care and support to their loved ones. In the United States alone, over 53 million people serve as unpaid caregivers for family members, friends and neighbors, and of these, around 11 million are caring for elderly parents while also raising children.

### Sandwich Generation and Growing Responsibilities

Currently, millions of caregivers have growing responsibilities as they look after two generations, aging parents and younger children. These so-called “Sandwich Generation” caregivers tend to juggle their demanding caregiving responsibilities along with their career and other family obligations. Although in recent years, the number of Americans taking care of both aging parents and younger children has risen only marginally, the financial and emotional burden of sandwich-generation caregiving continues to grow. For example, according to a 2022 University of Michigan study, sandwich-generation caregivers are twice as likely to report financial difficulty (36% vs. 17%) and more likely to report substantial emotional difficulty (44% vs. 32%) than their peers who only act as a caregiver to a parent over 65.

### Younger Adults Staying Home

A significant tandem contributing to this problem is the coupling of older adults living longer lives and younger adults continuing to live at home with their parents. According to Pew, in July 2022, half of adults ages 18 to 29 were living with one or both of their parents. When placed in the context of families having children later, middle-aged workers find themselves “sandwiched” between providing care for their kids while simultaneously looking after aging parents or grandparents. Although this is not a new phenomenon, the period of juggling all of the accompanying caregiving responsibilities is lasting longer and having an impact on finances and retirement, as middle-aged adults must now plan for their own future needs as well as those of their children and parents.

As evidenced by another 2022 Pew study, 29% of “sandwiched” adults in their 40s and 50s have provided financial help to an adult child. So, for those parents basing their financial future on an end date when they will stop supporting a child, extending that timeline can create significant challenges. These can include straining retirement savings, altering long-term plans around homes and leisure, and working longer than anticipated to maintain a savings baseline depleted by ongoing child support. In a challenging economy with rising costs of living and stagnant wages, for many sandwiched parents, the light at the end of the caregiving tunnel keeps moving a little farther away.

### To Care for Others, Care for Thy Self

Being a sandwiched parent is incredibly stressful, so it is important for this generation to take care of themselves and not get lost caring for both young and aging family members. Although being a caregiver can be a drain on time, resources and energy, it is critical to remember that one cannot truly care for others unless they first care for themselves. Here are a few strategies taken from Care.com to help members of the sandwich generation.

**Take Time to Recharge** — You can’t pour from an empty cup, so self-care is not only essential for the caregiver, it’s essential for the family.

**Share the Load with Your Family** — Enlist the help of your family to perform specific tasks. Make sure ongoing responsibilities like shopping, taking the kids to school or extracurriculars or taking aging parents to therapy are spread out across members of the family and not just born on the back of one parent.

**Hire Help** — Assuming it can fit into the budget, hiring help can be a wise way to take care of the parts of life – like cleaning – that end up getting neglected and causing more stress to the caregiver.

**Talk to Your Employer** — Work flexibility is crucial for sandwiched caregivers, so talking to your employer



can be really helpful. They can also inform you of any resources within their benefit offering that can help. Also, taking advantage of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) benefits can provide some employees with job protection if they need time off.

**Let Go of the Notion of a Perfect Balance** — There will be weeks when you focus more on your children or spouse. There will be weeks when you focus more on your aging parent. Let priorities guide these decisions. Sometimes, it's all about putting out fires, and that's OK.

**Determine Your Needs** — Caregivers must be cognizant of their non-negotiable human needs to prevent burnout or exhaustion.

**Lean on Support** — Having a support system of friends, family, and possibly even a therapist is crucial to the caregiver's mental and physical health.

**Keep Perspective** — Remember that this time in your life will not go on forever.

Other resources for caregivers include AARP Family Caregiving, National Alliance of Caregiving, National Alliance on Mental Illness and Caregiver Action Network.

Supporting both parents and children can cause greater strain and stress within the family structure. This month serves as a crucial opportunity to shine a light on the challenges faced by family caregivers across generations. By raising awareness of the sandwich generation's struggles, we take the first step toward creating meaningful change to better support caregivers nationwide. This November, let us honor caregivers by listening to their stories, understanding their needs and working together to build a more compassionate, inclusive society.

Taken from:

[care.com](#)

[pewresearch.org](#) (Americans Living with Parents)

[pewresearch.org](#) (Sandwich Generation Research)

[medicine.umich.edu](#)

[hbr.org](#)



## Additional Resources

Upcoming Wise & Well Webinar — Register Now!

**Compassionate Caregiving: Honoring Humanity Together Through End-of-Life Planning**

**When: Tuesday, November 14 | Noon – 1:00 p.m. ET**

**Who is this session for?** Everyone! Because guess what? Death is something we're all touched by, no matter our race, religion or socioeconomic status.

**Why are we offering this session?** We know this is a difficult topic, but there are practical tools you can put in place to help prepare for and navigate the end of life. And by doing so, you will be empowered and inspired to live life more fully.

Learn the importance of understanding the 3 Phases of End of Life and what interventions can be used in each phase to ensure the highest quality of life for your loved one and family. Our expert guest speaker, Suzanne B. O'Brien, RN, will also share what choices we need to make before we are in our last phase of life and new progressive options for life celebrations. End of life can be the natural, sacred experience it was meant to be with the right education, resources and support.

To register, [click here](#) or scan the QR code below.



# Monthly Moves

## Seated Low Back Stretch



You're sitting at your office desk when suddenly lower back pain strikes, radiating all the way up your neck. Wincing in discomfort, you resist the urge to stretch out right next to the water cooler.

Though we've all been tempted to discretely practice yoga poses at our cubicles, subtle and inconspicuous movements are often better suited for relieving pain on the job. Seated stretches that can be done while remaining at your desk are ideal for alleviating back pain without drawing unnecessary attention or disrupting your coworkers.

Simple motions such as the seated low back stretch that gently opens the back while keeping your chair upright can offer relief until you have more freedom and space for additional restorative poses. With some slight adjustments, you can address nagging back pain professionally and politely at the office.

**To perform the exercise:**

- 01 While sitting in a chair, slowly bend forward and reach your hands for the floor.
- 02 Placing your hands on the outside of each foot, bend your trunk and head forward and down.
- 03 Hold for 10 seconds and breathe.
- 04 Slowly return to the start position. Begin with rolling up from lower back to upper back and then, head coming up last.

Tap [here](#) for a video demo.

Source: [youtube.com](#)





# Broccoli Rice Casserole

Forget pumpkin spice! Casseroles are the real stars of fall comfort food. These easy one-pot wonders are holiday heroes, assembling a feast with just a single dish. Nothing meticulous is going on here — just dump, stir and serve. We're going casserole crazy this November, and whipping up this super delightful broccoli rice casserole will be the highlight of your next game day spread or Thanksgiving table.

## Ingredients

- (10 ounce) packages of frozen chopped broccoli
- 2 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 2 clove garlic, minced
- 1 (10.5 ounce) can of condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 (10.5 ounce) can of condensed cream of chicken soup
- 2/3 cup milk
- 8 ounces Muenster or Swiss cheese, shredded
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 cups cooked long-grain white rice
- 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs

## Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease a 3-quart baking dish.
2. Place broccoli and 2 tablespoons water in a large microwave-safe bowl; cover with plastic wrap and microwave on high for five minutes, stirring once. Drain.
3. Meanwhile, melt 1 tablespoon of butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add celery, onion and garlic. Cook and stir until tender, about 3-5 minutes; add to broccoli in the bowl.
4. Stir in condensed soups, shredded cheese, milk, mustard, paprika and pepper. Stir in rice until combined; spoon into prepared baking dish.
5. Combine panko with the remaining 1 tablespoon of melted butter; sprinkle evenly on top.
6. Bake in the preheated oven until browned and bubbly, about 30-40 minutes.

Source: [allrecipes.com](https://www.allrecipes.com)