

OCEANSIDE SENIOR VIBE

2026



Mental
Wellness
After 55

A Visit to
Your Friendly
Neighbourhood
Farm

YOU'LL FIND MORE
THAN A LITTLE HISTORY

Mindful Eating
and Activity

Alberni-Clayoquot Continuing Care Society

Fir Park - 4411 Wallace St



ECHO VILLAGE

67-Bed Residential Multi-level Care Home

Adult Day Services Overview

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 Medication: Supervision available if needed.
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Fir Park Adult Day Services

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 Director of Programming & Adult Day Services
 724-6541 Extension 253
 Maria Law,
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A photograph of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a grey and white striped sweater, and a young girl with brown hair in a ponytail, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. They are in a kitchen, smiling and looking at each other while preparing food. The woman is holding a knife and cutting vegetables on a wooden cutting board. The girl is holding a piece of paper. There are various kitchen items in the background, including a white kettle, a pepper mill, and some potted plants.

Mindful Eating and Activity

Article by:
Sandra Gentleman, RD

Co-host of My Wife
the Dietitian podcast

www.mywifethedietitian.com

Many people today rarely experience true physical hunger. For some, it has been years—perhaps even decades—since they last felt the unmistakable sensations of an empty stomach: the growling, the slight hollowness, or the gentle ache that signals the body’s need for fuel. Modern life has made it easy to avoid hunger entirely. Food is available everywhere, at all times of day, and often in forms that require little effort or preparation. As a result, hunger can feel uncomfortable or even alarming, prompting people to

reach quickly for convenient, highly processed foods that are typically high in fat, sugar, and salt. These quick fixes satisfy urgency but do little to nourish the body.

This disconnect between the body’s natural hunger cues and the way people eat is partly rooted in how dramatically society has changed over time. Early humans lived in environments where food was scarce and unpredictable. Survival depended on hunting, gathering, and constant movement. Hunger was a

normal, expected part of daily life, and eating was directly tied to energy needs. Today, however, we live in a world of abundance. Food is no longer something we must chase or forage for; it is something we can access with a walk to the kitchen, a short drive, or even a quick tap on a screen. Yet while our environment has transformed, our bodies and brains still operate with ancient instincts that evolved under very different conditions.



Because of this mismatch, many people have developed eating habits that are out of sync with their body’s true needs. Cultural beliefs, diet rules, misinformation, and emotional triggers often influence when and how people eat. Over time, this can lead to chronic health issues such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and even certain cancers. Reconnecting with internal cues—rather than relying on external ones—is essential for long-term health and wellbeing.

One of the most effective ways to rebuild this connection is to practice mindful eating. Before beginning a meal, individuals can pause and assess their hunger on a scale from one to ten. This simple act encourages awareness and helps distinguish between physical hunger and emotional or habitual eating. Once eating begins, slowing down and fully engaging the senses can transform the experience.

Paying attention to the smell, texture, and flavour of each bite—whether it’s the salty chewiness of pizza or the crisp sweetness of a fresh snow pea—helps people tune into their body’s responses. As the meal progresses, noticing how flavours change and how satisfaction builds can guide more intuitive decisions about when to stop eating.

This process also raises an important question: do we trust our bodies, and can our bodies trust us? When people consistently override hunger and fullness cues—by eating too quickly, eating out of boredom, or ignoring hunger until it becomes overwhelming—the body learns to be on guard. Rebuilding trust requires consistency, patience, and a willingness to listen. Understanding cravings, portion sizes, and the nutritional content of meals can offer valuable insight into personal eating patterns and help shape healthier habits over time.

Nutrition, however, is only one part of the equation. Physical activity plays an equally important role in supporting long-term health. For some individuals, structured exercise programs provide the motivation and routine needed to build fitness gradually. For others, incorporating small bursts of movement throughout the day can be just as effective. Simple choices—such as parking farther from a store entrance, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, or doing a few pushups or leg raises at home—can reduce sedentary time and increase overall activity.

Even modest increases in movement can have significant health benefits. Research involving 400,000 people in Taiwan found that just 15 minutes of daily physical activity reduced the risk of chronic disease by 14 percent and increased life expectancy by an average of three years. These findings highlight an encouraging truth: improving health does not require extreme workouts or dramatic lifestyle changes. Small, consistent actions accumulate over time and can lead to meaningful improvements in endurance, balance, flexibility, and overall wellbeing.

That said, starting a new exercise routine should be approached with care. More is not always better, especially for individuals who are not accustomed to regular physical activity. Jumping into intense workouts too quickly can increase the risk of injury, particularly to the back and muscles that may not yet be conditioned for new movements. Stretching and warming up before exercise are essential steps that help prepare the body and reduce strain.

Communities often offer a wide range of accessible fitness opportunities. Local recreation centres and clubs provide programs tailored to different ages, abilities, and interests. Options may include yoga, bootcamp classes, swimming, skating, Nordic walking, aerobics, dance, badminton, pickleball, gymnastics, and various team sports such as soccer, rugby, and hockey. These programs not only support physical health but also foster social connection, which is another important component of overall wellbeing.

For those who prefer outdoor activities, nature offers countless ways to stay active. Walking, biking,

paddling, or sailing in local parks, trails, and waterways provides fresh air, scenic views, and a sense of adventure. Outdoor movement can also reduce stress, improve mood, and strengthen the mind-body connection.

Ultimately, both mindful eating and regular physical activity are essential for long-term health. By learning to recognize hunger cues, paying attention to the sensory experience of eating, and making thoughtful choices about food, individuals can nourish their bodies more effectively. At the same time, incorporating movement—whether through structured exercise or small daily habits—supports physical strength, cardiovascular health, and longevity.

Together, these practices help people build a healthier, more balanced lifestyle. They encourage awareness, intention, and self-trust, allowing individuals to make choices that support their wellbeing now and in the future. Even small steps, taken consistently, can lead to meaningful improvements in quality of life and long-term health outcomes. **SV**



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PHOTO BY PHYLLIS LILIENTHAL

Mental *Wellness* After 55

Mental wellness after 55 is rarely about a single issue. More often, it's shaped by subtle shifts - changes in routine, relationships, health, or purpose. In the Oceanside area, where many people arrive later in life or find themselves navigating a new phase, these changes can quietly influence emotional wellbeing. The good news is that Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Nanoose Bay offer both the environment and the community support that make it easier to stay mentally well, connected, and engaged.

One of the most common challenges after 55 is isolation, especially during periods of transition. Retirement can remove the built-in social structure

of work. Adult children may live far away. Long-time friends may move or face health challenges of their own. Even in beautiful surroundings, it's possible to feel disconnected if social contact begins to thin out.

What makes a difference in Oceanside is how many opportunities exist to reconnect - often in low-pressure, welcoming ways. Community centres, libraries, and seniors' hubs across Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Nanoose Bay offer programs that naturally encourage interaction. From casual drop-in activities to classes and discussion groups, these spaces help turn routine outings into meaningful connections.

Staying socially engaged doesn't always mean expanding your circle dramatically. For many people, it's about maintaining a few consistent points of contact each week. A walking group, a fitness class, a volunteer shift, or even a regular coffee meetup can provide a sense of rhythm and belonging. These small anchors often play a big role in emotional wellbeing.

Curiosity is another powerful contributor to mental wellness, and it's something that doesn't diminish with age - if anything, it becomes more important. Learning something new keeps the mind flexible and engaged. In Oceanside, opportunities for lifelong learning are woven into the community. Workshops, lectures, art classes, music groups, and informal learning circles invite people to explore interests without pressure or competition.

Trying something new can feel daunting, especially later in life, but many residents find that Oceanside's relaxed culture makes it easier to take that first step. Classes and groups tend to be inclusive and supportive, welcoming beginners and encouraging participation at any level. The focus is on enjoyment and connection rather than performance.

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Nature also plays a significant role in mental wellness here. Access to beaches, trails, and green spaces offers daily opportunities for reflection, movement, and stress reduction. A short walk along the shoreline or a quiet moment watching the water can provide perspective and calm. These moments don't need to be dramatic or time-consuming to be effective; they simply need to be consistent.

Physical activity, even at a gentle level, supports mental health in powerful ways. Walking, swimming, tai chi, and stretching programs common in the Oceanside area help regulate mood, improve sleep, and reduce anxiety. Just as importantly, they create shared experiences where conversation and connection happen naturally.

It's also important to acknowledge that mental wellness includes recognizing when extra support is needed.

Feelings of sadness, anxiety, or loneliness that linger or interfere with daily life deserve attention. Seeking support is not a sign of weakness - it's a practical step toward maintaining quality of life. In Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Nanoose Bay, residents have access to counselling services, peer support programs, and community-based mental health resources designed to meet people where they are.

Many people hesitate to reach out because they don't want to "make a fuss" or feel unsure about where to start. Often, a first step can be as simple as talking to a trusted friend, healthcare provider, or community resource who can help point the way. Oceanside's strong sense of community means support is often closer than it appears.

Purpose also plays a central role in mental wellness after 55. For some, this comes through volunteering

or mentoring. For others, it's caring for grandchildren, contributing to a local organization, or pursuing a long-held interest. Feeling useful and valued helps anchor emotional health, particularly during times of change.

Volunteering is especially impactful in Oceanside, where many organizations rely on experienced, dependable people. Giving time and skills not only benefits the community but fosters connection, confidence, and a sense of contribution.

Mental wellness isn't about avoiding difficult emotions - it's about building resilience and having tools to navigate them. Life after 55 includes both freedom and loss, growth and adjustment. Oceanside doesn't promise a life without challenges, but it does offer the conditions that make those challenges easier to face: natural beauty, accessible activities, and a community that values connection.

In Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Nanoose Bay and surrounding areas, mental wellness is supported not

by grand gestures, but by everyday choices. A walk, a conversation, a class, a willingness to stay curious. Over time, these choices add up to a life that feels grounded, engaged, and emotionally supported.

Aging well isn't just about the body - it's about staying connected to yourself, to others, and to the world around you. In Oceanside, those connections are there, ready to be nurtured. **SV**

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YOU'LL FIND MORE THAN A LITTLE HISTORY...

*Article and photos by:
Kisselle Reid, Operations Manager,
Qualicum Beach Museum & Archives*

Have you ever seen an Ice Age walrus? Or how about a chair that John Wayne might have sat in? What about a fossilized flower, or an arrowhead made of volcanic glass? If not, your next stop should be the Qualicum Beach Museum!

Across from the train station lives a pair of red brick buildings – the home of the Qualicum Beach Historical & Museum Society. With our heritage architecture, charmingly picturesque garden, and totem pole watching over the Salish Sea, it's easy to see how the museum is one of the town's hidden gems.

Inside the museum you'll find an array of permanent exhibitions as well as a temporary display area that rotates its theme with the changing seasons. On occasion, community exhibitions are also put on display here, most recently with the Brant Wildlife Festival in April.

First Nation's culture, Town history, and a fascinating fossil collection – millions of years of history in a single place! Step into our main building to walk through the Ice Age, all the way back to the Paleozoic Era, discovering all kinds of creatures along the way. Then journey to the second floor where a cedar plank house welcomes you to explore the culture and language of the Qualicum First Nation peoples. Press a button

to hear words from the Pentl’ach language spoken by Xwulqsheynum Jesse Recalma, who also designed the illuminated installation in the centre of the round-about at the bottom of Memorial Avenue.

As you continue your path through the museum, you’ll also discover the social history of Qualicum Beach, which includes the formative industries of fishing, logging, and tourism. The Town began its story as a resort destination, famed for its sandy beach, sport fishing opportunities, and large golf course. When the local QB Hotel was requisitioned as a convalescent hospital during WWI, the fabric of the community began to take shape as more people settled in the area. Industries boomed with the introduction of the railway, and the town officially became incorporated in 1942. Throughout this exhibition, you can find logging equipment, a WWI “Bluebird” nurse uniform, fishing flies hand-tied with polar bear hair, and an autograph from Bob Hope, who frequented the QB Hotel.

The secondary building on the museum grounds is affectionately known as “The Powerhouse”. Built in 1929, it housed the diesel generator that provided electrical power to Qualicum Beach until 1935 when the town joined the B.C. Hydro grid. It continued as storage for B.C. Hydro until the Town purchased the property with the express purpose of leasing the building to the QB Historical Society in 1984 for use as a museum. After extensive renovations in 2021-22, the Powerhouse is now home to its own exhibition, titled We Have The Power. Here you can explore the history of power and energy in Qualicum Beach and learn about the steps our community is taking towards a greener and more climate-adaptable future.

Summer is an exciting time at the museum. After being open only part-time through the winter, our doors open June 2nd to full time hours. Programs take place throughout the summer that include educational days for kids, events for the Historical Society’s membership (check out our website for more information on joining!), and presentations from local writers and researchers. The museum also participates in local events such as Qualicum Family Day, Beach Day, and Thursday Night Markets.





“As you continue your path through the museum, you’ll also discover the social history of Qualicum Beach, which includes the formative industries of fishing, logging, and tourism.”

The museum’s biggest event of the year – Children’s Museum Day – happens every August! This year, expect fun and games on Saturday August 22, 2026. Children of all ages are invited, along with their families, to visit the museum and participate in history-based activities, such as fossil drawing, “Guess the Artefact”, sending Morse code messages, and costume dress-up. The event is primarily volunteer-run, so it’s also a great time to join the museum community!

From June through September, the Qualicum Beach Museum is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. In October, our schedule is reduced to Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 1 – 4 p.m. or by appointment. Guided Tours are also available, for your family or organization upon request, and can be tailored to your specific historical interests! The museum is run by professional and experienced staff, along with an army of volunteers, who are all eager to help with any questions.

Want to know if the rock you found on the beach is significant? Show it to our archaeologist! Curious what used to be on your property before your house was

built? Our archivists can find out! Need help researching a family heirloom? We love a challenge!

For more information about the historical society, coming events, or becoming a member or volunteer, visit our website www.qbmuseum.ca or give us a call at 250-752-5533. You can also stay up to date by following us on social media, @qualicumbeachmuseum on Facebook or Instagram. More importantly – stop by in person when you have the chance, because Rosie the Walrus would love to meet you! 



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A Visit to Little Qualicum Cheeseworks

Article and Photos by: Little Qualicum Cheeseworks



**Where the journey
from pasture to
plate is short
enough to walk and
simple enough to
understand.**

In the heart of Vancouver Island, nestled between the mountains and the sea on a heritage dairy farm, sits Little Qualicum Cheeseworks. It's a place where fresh milk from a grass-fed herd of cows is processed on-site, and visitors are invited to see for themselves how cheese begins long before it reaches their table.

In a quintessentially pastoral setting, classic red-and-white barns stand against a backdrop of mountains and evergreens. The sights, sounds, and smells, in all their authenticity, will quickly whisk you away to the country. A vintage tractor, decommissioned and now enjoyed by children, rests near the lane, while a nearby rabbit enclosure offers a gentle introduction to visiting with animals on the farm. The farm provides a scavenger hunt for the littles (and the young at heart!) and a self-guided tour map, encouraging guests to wander thoughtfully through the property. This is no ordinary farm; it has been intentionally designed to welcome visitors while maintaining the daily routines essential to animal care and milk production.

Stepping into the barns offers a closer look at the dairy herd. Between naps and play sessions, calves peer curiously from their pens, moody heifers hang out together, and the milking cows move with familiar ease through their daily routine. It's here that you might begin to notice the diversity within the herd. While the iconic black-and-white Holstein is present, other breeds stand alongside them: Jerseys, curious and friendly, are smaller fawn-coloured cows known for milk rich in butterfat, while Brown Swiss cows, with their soft grey-brown coats and calm demeanour, contribute milk valued for its quality and protein content. Each breed brings particular strengths, and together their milk creates a balanced foundation for making cheese.

Yet the story of the milk begins even earlier, beneath your boots! On the farm, soil health is treated as the starting point of the dairy cycle as this is where grasses and forage crops draw nutrients from—the very plants that will nourish a milking herd of 50 cows. Careful

oversight of feed quality, pasture management, and herd well-being are a year-round practice. In agriculture, scale often shapes philosophy; here, the proximity of field, barn, and creamery allows each stage to influence the next.

Milk collected from the herd is processed on-site, an arrangement that shortens the journey between cow and cheesemaker. By crafting cheese just steps away from the milking parlour, the creamery maintains a close connection between raw ingredient and finished product. After all, you can only make good cheese from good milk—and good milk only comes from a contented, stress-free cow with access to quality feed, making attentive animal care and land stewardship the core of the operation.

Inside the creamery, milk is transformed through time-honoured techniques. Cultures are added, curds are cut and stirred, whey is drained, and wheels are



pressed or moulded according to each recipe. The farm produces more than a dozen varieties, ranging from fresh cheese curds to aged selections with firmer textures and deeper flavour. Temperature, humidity, and patience play their part in aging rooms where cheeses gradually develop character. Though modern equipment ensures food safety and consistency, the underlying process remains rooted in traditional cheesemaking practices.

Education forms a quiet thread throughout the visitor experience. Informational signage explains the milking routine, introduces the breeds, and outlines how cheese is made. Even those distracted by the ever-so-charming cows may glean insights about dairy farming and cheesemaking during their visit. The setting becomes

a living classroom for all ages where agriculture is seen not as an abstraction, but as something tangible and observable.

After touring barns and being completely charmed by the cows, many visitors step into the small farm shop. Cheeses made from the herd's milk are proudly displayed as a final step for Little Qualicum Cheeseworks in the farm-to-table process. On the shelves, other local food staples and thoughtful pairings, such as crackers, preserves, and meats, reflect the broader agricultural community of the region. One corner often draws particular attention: two milk-on-tap dispensers offering cream-top milk. Unlike homogenized milk found in most supermarkets, cream-top milk allows the natural layer of cream to rise. Customers bring (or purchase)

clean glass bottles to fill and refill, reinforcing a sense of participation in a more cyclical, less disposable food system. Bridging modern life and older patterns of food gathering, it prompts reflection on how rarely most people witness the origins of everyday staples. Milk and cheese are often perceived as finished products rather than processes shaped by land, labour, and living animals.

As visitors make their way back down the gravel drive, goodies in tow, the experience lingers. Not only might you leave with cheese or milk, but with a clearer sense of connection between soil and grass, grass and cow, cow and creamery. In an era when food systems can feel distant and industrial, this small dairy farm offers an accessible window into how milk becomes cheese, and how careful stewardship at each step shapes the final result.

After 25 years in business, multiple course-shaping events, and an ownership change in recent years, Little Qualicum Cheeseworks continues to be a family business and remains committed and passionate about quality local food, sustainable agriculture, animal welfare, and providing a fun, educational, and delicious agricultural experience. It may be a modest operation by global standards, but its scale allows something increasingly uncommon: transparency. Here, the journey from pasture to plate is short enough to walk, and simple enough to understand. **SV**





Caring for Area Rugs at Home

*Article by By Ken Bentkowski,
SaniTECH Mid Island*

PHOTO BY ALEX T.

Area rugs are more than just decorative pieces, they add warmth, comfort, and personality to your space. They also act like large filters, trapping dust, dirt, allergens, and pet hair that would otherwise circulate through your home. Because of this, keeping your rugs clean isn't just about appearance, it's also about maintaining a healthier living environment.

With regular care and a few simple habits, you can keep your area rugs looking great and lasting for years.



Why Area Rug Cleaning Matters

1. Protects Your Investment

Area rugs can be a significant investment. Dirt and grit trapped in the fibers can wear them down over time, causing premature aging. Regular cleaning helps preserve their look and durability.

2. Improves Indoor Air Quality

Rugs collect dust, allergens, and pet dander. Without proper cleaning, these can build up and affect the air you breathe, especially important for households with kids, pets, or allergies. A typical British India thick wool rug can hold up to 10 pounds of soil per sq/ft.

3. Keeps Your Home Looking Fresh

Clean rugs instantly make a room feel brighter and more inviting. Removing stains, odors, and dullness restores their original beauty.

Simple Ways to Keep Your Rugs Clean

1. Vacuum Regularly

Frequent vacuuming is the easiest and most important step.

- Vacuum high-traffic areas 2–3 times per week
- Vacuum less-used areas at least once a week
- Go slowly to allow the vacuum to lift embedded dirt
- Occasionally vacuum the back of the rug to remove trapped dust

This helps remove dry soil before it settles deep into the fibers.

2. Shake Out or Beat Smaller Rugs

If your rug is small enough, take it outside and shake it out or gently beat it. Practice your tennis swing.

- This loosens deep dust and grit
- It’s especially helpful for entryway rugs and mats
- Do this every few weeks if possible



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3. Rotate Your Rugs

Foot traffic and sunlight can wear rugs unevenly.

- Rotate rugs every 3–6 months
- This helps prevent fading and uneven wear patterns
- It keeps the rug looking balanced over time

4. Clean Spills Quickly

Accidents happen, but quick action makes all the difference.

- Blot spills immediately with a clean cloth (don't rub)
- Use mild soap and water if needed
- Work from the outside of the stain inward
- Avoid soaking the rug

The faster you respond, the less likely the stain will set.

5. Manage Pet Hair and Odors

If you have pets, rugs tend to collect fur and odors.

- Use a vacuum with a pet hair attachment
- Brush the rug occasionally to loosen trapped hair
- Sprinkle baking soda, let it sit for 15–30 minutes, then vacuum to reduce odors

6. Let Rugs Breathe

Moisture can lead to mildew and odors.

- Avoid placing damp rugs back on the floor
- Ensure rugs are fully dry after any cleaning
- Open windows or use fans to improve airflow when needed





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7. Use Rug Pads

A good rug pad does more than prevent slipping.

- Reduces wear by absorbing impact from foot traffic; this is especially important with investment grade rugs.
- Improves airflow underneath the rug
- Helps keep the rug in place and maintain its shape

8. Deep Clean Occasionally

Even with regular maintenance, rugs benefit from a deeper clean once in a while.

- Use a gentle carpet cleaner or mild detergent
- Test a small area first for color safety
- Avoid over-wetting, especially for delicate rugs
- Allow plenty of time for drying

For delicate, antique, investment grade or heavily soiled rugs, professional cleaning may still be the safest option.

Final Thoughts

Taking care of your area rugs doesn't have to be complicated. With consistent maintenance, vacuuming, quick spill cleanup, and occasional deeper cleaning, you can extend their life, keep your home healthier, and maintain their beauty.

A little routine care goes a long way in keeping your rugs fresh, comfortable, and looking their best every day. **SV**



PHOTO BY JACKIE BEST

An advertisement for Parksville Denture Clinic. At the top is a blue logo of a tooth. Below it, the text reads "Parksville Denture Clinic" in large blue letters, followed by the tagline "Changing Lives One Smile At A Time!" in a smaller, italicized font. The central image shows a smiling man and woman sitting on a black leather chair. The man is wearing a light blue shirt and a dark tie, and the woman is wearing a blue button-down shirt and a black skirt. The background is white with a large, faint blue outline of a tooth. At the bottom, there is a blue banner containing a QR code, the phone number "250-248-3734", and the website "parksvilledentureclinic.ca" and email "parksvilledentureclinic@yahoo.com".



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