

SENIOR *Living*



WALKING *the* WALK

Why walking is the perfect exercise for seniors

Diet Done Right

Daily dietary habits
that benefit seniors
over the long haul

Managing Mobility Issues

How to stay active
when mobility is limited



*A special publication of The Eagle-Tribune,
The Salem News, The Daily News of Newburyport
and the Gloucester Daily Times*





Tips to avoid exercise injuries after age 50

Exercise is a necessary component of good health. Physical activity improves overall well-being and can help a person maintain a healthy weight and bone density while improving flexibility and muscle strength. It is essential that people continue to exercise into their golden years for all of the reasons mentioned above. But adults age 50 and older should find an exercise program that won't make them vulnerable to injury.

AARP and the Consumer Product Safety Commission says exercise-related visits to the emergency room surpassed 107,000 for those aged 50 and older in 2020. That figure was even smaller than usual due to the COVID-19 pandemic being in effect. Poor form when exercising can be worse for an older adult than doing no exercise at all, particularly for people with arthritis or preexisting conditions. Older adults can keep these tips in mind to avoid exercise-related injuries.

- **Ease into exercise.** It is good to be excited about exercise, but jumping in too quickly or intensely is a recipe for injury. This is particularly true in strength training when lifting too much weight can cause injuries like rotator cuff tears and lower back strain.

- **Stretch regularly.** Johns Hopkins Medicine says as a body ages, tendons get thicker and less elastic. Stretching can help counter this occurrence and help prevent injuries at age 50 or older.

Stretching should be done slowly and smoothly. Do not force stretches or speed through them.

- **Incorporate strength training.** It is important to prevent muscle atrophy as you age, and strength training can help achieve that. Strength training also helps reduce the risk of bone fractures later in life. However, start slowly at minimal weight and low repetitions, and gradually build up. Try 10 to 12 repetitions to start. Work with a qualified physical therapist or personal trainer to learn the proper form.

- **Warm up before exercise.** Warming up involves slow motions to acclimate the body to exercise. It may include walking and other full-body movements. As opposed to stretching, a warm-up involves movements similar to the workout but done more slowly. Warm-ups increase blood flow to the muscles and improve tissue elasticity, says AARP.

- **Vary your activities.** Switch up the exercises you do so that you focus on different muscle groups on alternating days. This can help avoid overuse injuries that occur from working one part of the body or muscle group too frequently, according to Intermountain Health.

- **Invest in good shoes.** Choose workout footwear that is comfortable, supportive and designed for the activity you will be doing. Shop for athletic footwear in the afternoon to account for foot swelling.

Older adults need to take extra precautions to avoid injuries while staying fit.

Why walking is a perfect exercise for seniors

Ageing changes the human body in myriad ways. But even with those changes, seniors' bodies have many of the same needs as the bodies of their younger counterparts.

Exercise is one thing the human body needs regardless of how old it is. But some exercises are better suited for particular demographics than others. Walking, for example, is an ideal activity for seniors, some of whom may be surprised to learn just how beneficial a daily stroll can be.

- **Walking strengthens bones and muscles.** The Mayo Clinic notes that regular brisk walking strengthens bones and muscles. Intensity is important when looking to walking to improve muscle strength. A 2015 study published in the journal Exercise and Sports Sciences Reviews found that achieving a 70 to 80 percent heart rate reserve during workouts lasting at least 40 minutes four to five days per week can help build muscle strength. GoodRx defines heart rate reserve as the difference between your resting and maximum heart rate, so it's important that seniors looking to walking to build muscle strength exhibit more intensity during a workout walk than they might during a recreational stroll.

- **Walking helps seniors maintain a healthy weight.** Overweight and obesity are risk factors for a host of chronic illnesses, including diabetes and heart disease. The Mayo Clinic notes walking can help seniors keep pounds off and maintain a healthy weight. In fact, SilverSneakers® reports that a 155-pound person burns around 133 calories walking for 30 minutes at a 17-minutes-per-mile pace. A slight increase in intensity to 15 minutes

per mile can help that same person burn an additional 42 calories.

- **Walking lowers seniors' risk for various diseases.** It's long been known that walking is a great way for seniors to reduce their risk for cardiovascular disease. In fact, a study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society noted in 1996 that walking more than four hours per week was associated with a significantly reduced risk of being hospitalized for cardiovascular disease. How significant is that reduction? A 2023 report from the American Heart Association indicated people age 70 and older who walked an additional 500 steps per day had a 14 percent lower risk for heart disease, stroke or heart failure. In addition, the Department of Health with the Victoria State Government in Australia reports walking also helps seniors reduce their risk for colon cancer and diabetes.

- **Walking boosts mental health.** Researchers at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health note that replacing one hour of sitting with one hour of a moderate activity like brisk walking can have a measureable and positive effect on mental health. The researchers behind the study, which was published in the journal Psychiatry in 2019, saw a 26 percent decrease in odds for becoming depressed with each major increase in objectively measured physical activity.

Walking can benefit all people, but might be uniquely beneficial for seniors. Walking is free, which undoubtedly appeals to seniors living on fixed incomes, and it's also a moderate intensity activity that won't tax seniors' bodies. Such benefits suggest walking and seniors are a perfect match.



Safeguard your loved ones, your assets, and your legacy

Law Office of Julie Low

When planning for the future, many people overlook one of the most important steps they can take to protect their loved ones: estate planning and asset protection. At the Law Office of Julie Low, based in Beverly, we are dedicated to helping individuals and families navigate this process with care, compassion, and expertise.

What Is Estate Planning?

Estate planning is more than just drafting a will. It's about creating a comprehensive plan to ensure your assets are distributed according to your wishes, your loved ones are cared for, and your legacy is preserved. Whether your goal is to minimize estate taxes, protect assets from long-term care costs, or provide for a family member with special needs, estate planning is a critical step toward peace of mind.

At the Law Office of Julie Low, we guide clients through the planning process with a focus on education and empowerment. Our team works closely with clients to design customized, will-based and trust-based plans tailored to their unique needs.

We also ensure each estate plan is fully funded, meaning every asset is titled correctly to achieve the desired outcome. This critical step, often overlooked by other firms, ensures your estate plan works as intended when it matters most.

Why Is Estate Planning Important?

Life is unpredictable, and planning for the unexpected is an act of love for those you care about. Estate planning ensures that

your wishes are honored in the event of incapacity or death. It can also help avoid costly and time-consuming probate processes, reduce family disputes, and provide financial security for your descendants.

For families with loved ones who have special needs, estate planning can be a lifeline. Our firm specializes in creating plans that protect and provide for individuals with disabilities while preserving their eligibility for essential government benefits.

Expertise in Medicaid Planning

One of our standout services is Medicaid planning and applications. Recognized as a Top Medicaid Planning Law Firm in 2025 by Elder Care Review, we are well-versed in both nursing home care and community-based programs that allow individuals to receive long-term care at home. By reviewing all available options, we help clients make informed decisions to best suit their needs.

Additionally, we have over 15 years of experience drafting irrevocable asset protection trusts for nursing home protection. We have safeguarded over \$50 million in assets, providing clients with unparalleled security and peace of mind.

Compassionate Support During Estate Administration and Probate

In addition to estate planning, we offer services in probate and estate administration. Losing a loved one is never easy and settling an estate or probating a will can be overwhelming. Our

team approaches each case with compassion, ensuring the wishes of the deceased are carried out efficiently and with care.

We also assist families with guardianships and conservatorships, helping them navigate the legal process to protect loved ones who are unable to manage their own affairs.

A Vision for Client-Focused Legal Services

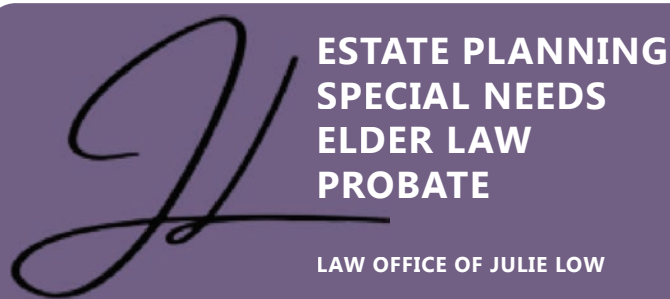
Attorney Julie Low founded her firm with a vision of practicing law in a way that prioritizes clients and quality. Our team is not only knowledgeable but also compassionate, ensuring every client feels supported and understood throughout the process.

The Law Office of Julie Low is a proud member of Wealth-Counsel, the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA), and the Academy of Special Needs Planners. Our commitment to excellence has earned us recognition as a Top Medicaid Planning Firm in 2025.

Take the First Step Toward Peace of Mind

Attend one of our free, virtual estate planning or Medicaid workshops. Registration is required. Call (978) 922-8800 or register at <https://www.lawofficeofjulielow.com>

For more information, visit our Beverly office or contact us today at (978) 922-8800 or at <https://www.lawofficeofjulielow.com>. Planning for the unexpected is one of the greatest gifts you can give to your family. For peace of mind, for those you love—start your planning journey today.



Attend a FREE
Virtual Workshop

Registration is required
Call 978-922-8800 or online at
www.lawofficeofjulielow.com

For Peace Of Mind, For Those You Love!

Receive \$200 off A Consultation When You Attend A Workshop

Estate Planning Workshop

Sat., Nov. 8 from 10:00am-Noon
Tues., Nov. 18 from 6:30pm-8:30pm
Sat., Dec. 6 from 10:00am-Noon
Tues., Dec. 16 from 6:30pm-8:30pm

Medicaid Workshop

Thurs., Dec. 11 from 6:00pm-7:00pm

266 Cabot Street, Suite 1, Beverly

Did You KNOW?

The significance of exercise is well documented, and that even goes for seniors. But in the case of exercise, can there be too much of a good thing? Should seniors be exercising every day? Seniors can exercise most days, but daily, intense workouts are not necessary. Cedars-Sinai says adults 65 and older should aim for between 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate exercise each week, which aligns with recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services. Seniors crunched for time can engage in between 1.25 and 2.5 hours of intense aerobic exercise each week. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. That can translate into 30 minutes of daily exercise for five days, or it can be broken up into other intervals as necessary. Strength and balance training also should be a consideration. Seniors should keep in mind that overdoing intensity or length of workouts may contribute to injury, which can derail efforts to get fit.



Cedars-Sinai says

ADULTS 65 AND OLDER SHOULD AIM FOR BETWEEN 2.5 TO 5 HOURS OF MODERATE EXERCISE EACH WEEK,

which aligns with recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Exercises to keep seniors fit

Physical activity is crucial for people who aspire to maintain their overall health as their bodies age. Exercise improves flexibility, contributes to a healthy weight, reduces the risk for chronic illnesses, and may even help seniors maintain their independence well into their golden years.

The good news is that exercising regularly doesn't have to be high-impact or strenuous to make an impact. Plenty of exercises are geared toward seniors that feature gentle yet powerful movements, and address specific needs like strength, bone health, cardiovascular health, and balance. Although many fitness routines are safe, it is best to consult with a doctor or another health care professional prior to beginning a new regimen so seniors learn which activities



are appropriate for their individual needs and health conditions. As seniors prepare for those

discussions, they can explore the following exercises many of their peers already enjoy.



Cardiovascular activities

It's important that seniors elevate their heart rates and improve or maintain their endurance. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week. These activities fit the bill for boosting the heart.

- **Brisk walking:** Walking is a simple activity that requires no equipment and can be done almost anywhere... even in front of a television. Walk at a brisk pace to raise your heart rate.
- **Swimming:** Swimming and water-based activities are enhanced by the buoyancy of water, which reduces stress on the joints.
- **Cycling:** Whether riding on a stationary bike or a traditional one, cycling is a low-impact way to boost cardiovascular health and strengthen leg muscles.
- **Chair marching:** Individuals with limited mobility can march in place while seated, an activity that can still elevate the heart rate.



Strength training

The CDC advises engaging in strength training at least two days per week for older adults. This doesn't necessarily have to involve lifting weights. Body-weight exercises are quite effective, too.

- **Stand up:** From a seated position, standing up without using hands and sitting back down works the legs, hips and core.
- **Wall push-ups:** This modified push up builds upper body strength without putting strain on shoulders or wrists.
- **Resistance bands:** Using these bands in varying strengths can effectively work arm and leg muscles.



Balance

Seniors need to focus on exercises that promote balance, which can help prevent dangerous falls.

- **Single-leg stands:** Standing on one leg while holding on to a chair or counter for support is a start, with a gradual build-up for longer lengths of time.
- **Sobriety walk:** Individuals can walk a straight line as if they are proving sobriety to a police officer, by placing the heel of one foot directly in front of the toes of another.
- **Gentle hop:** Hopping (or stepping) gently from one foot to another is another balance technique to master.

These are just some of the exercises that are ideal for seniors who are returning to exercise or new to daily fitness. People also can work with trainers who are experienced at helping seniors get fit.

Learn to recognize signs of overexertion

Exercise is a vital component of a healthy lifestyle. When paired with a nutritious diet, routine physical activity promotes long-term health and improves quality of life.

The benefits of a physically active lifestyle are undeniable, but it's important to guard against overexertion. That's particularly important for seniors, as aging produces bodily changes that pose unique challenges to older adults who are physically active. According to Easy Exercising, a Queensland-based organization that specializes in assisting seniors with exercise, aging bodies experience decreased physiological resilience over time, which makes them less adaptable to stress. That reality underscores the need for seniors to recognize the signs of overexertion, a recognition that can help seniors reduce their risk for illness and injury.

• **Dizziness:** The online medical resource Healthline notes a number of things can cause post-workout dizziness, including overexertion. Seniors taking group classes may be especially vulnerable to overexertion-related dizziness, as they may be trying to keep up with classmates and pushing themselves without even realizing it. Dizziness during or after a workout should not be taken lightly, and seniors should sit down immediately, catch their breath and drink water as their heart rate slows. Seniors who become dizzy while taking a group class should alert their teacher immediately.

• **Soreness:** Soreness is another sign of overexertion, but seniors should recognize this symptom can be a little harder to categorize. Some soreness is common

after exercise. After all, a good workout challenges the body. However, soreness that manifests as tightness, sharp pain or a throbbing or burning sensation is likely a sign of overexertion. When such symptoms present, stop exercising immediately and emphasize rest. After sufficient rest, make sure a return to exercise is less taxing (i.e., lower intensity with cardiovascular exercise and less weight with strength training).

• **Nausea:** A workout should never make anyone nauseous, regardless of their age. Healthline notes feeling nauseated or vomiting after a workout are a sign that a change in routine is necessary. As noted, aging bodies experience diminished resilience over time, so feeling nauseated is a sign that a body was pushed too far during a workout. Seniors who push their bodies so far during a workout that they are feeling nauseated also are increasing their risk for injury and muscle and joint strain. Take the first sign of nausea as a warning that a workout has gone too far, and make the necessary adjustments to avoid a repeat episode.

• **Abdominal pain:** The Maryland Pain & Wellness Center notes overexertion during physical activity can cause muscle strain and spasms that manifest as abdominal pain. Rest is necessary when such symptoms present, and a return to exercise should be marked by a lower-intensity workout.

Seniors have much to gain from exercising regularly. But it's vital that seniors avoid overexertion, which can lead to a host of unpleasant and potentially harmful side effects.



How to stay active with mobility issues

Physical activity is crucial for overall health and well-being. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises that most people can benefit from 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week, particularly when that physical activity is paired with two days of strength training. Seniors also should incorporate activities that challenge their balance to improve these skills and offset the risk for falls as they age.

Many seniors face mobility issues. For these individuals, meeting activity goals might seem extra challenging, but it is entirely possible and highly beneficial to exercise even when mobility is limited. Health professionals say gentle, adaptive exercises can improve strength, flexibility, balance, and mood, while reducing pain and preventing further decline. The key is to focus on what people can do and to adapt movements to suit specific needs. Consulting with a doctor or physical therapist before starting a new exercise regimen is recommended. Here are some accessible exercise options.

Chair exercises

Chair exercises build strength and flexibility while providing support and reducing the risk of falls.

- While seated, lift knees alternately as if marching, engaging core and leg muscles.
- Stand up slowly from a sturdy chair without using your hands, then gently sit back down. This builds leg and core strength.
- Lift arms to the sides or front, strengthening the shoulders and upper back. Use light weights for added resistance.
- Tap feet and circle your ankles to

improve ankle mobility and circulation, which is crucial for balance.

Water therapy

The buoyancy of water reduces strain on joints and can help anyone with mobility issues.

- Walking through a pool or in a natural body of water creates gentle resistance that increases the potential of the workout.
- Perform controlled movements with your arms and legs through the water.
- Kick feet through the water while walking or when swimming.

Balance training

Improving balance and stability is critical for fall prevention. Rely on a wall or chair for support as needed.

- Shift your weight from side to side and front to back while holding on to support.
- Lift one foot slightly off the ground while holding on to a support.

Alternate to the other leg. Gradually increase the time spent balancing.

- Use a support to stand to help build core strength and strength in the legs.

Flexibility

Flexibility helps anyone who is physically active. Gentle stretching, tai chi, yoga, and even working with a physical therapist can improve flexibility and mobility.

Seniors with mobility issues who want to exercise should always start slowly and build up gradually. Wearing non-slip shoes is essential as well. Small, consistent efforts can make a big difference in maintaining one's independence and enhancing quality of life.

The Affordable Option! **Assisted Living**



Private units featuring full kitchen and private bathroom.

Schedule a Tour Today!
Call (978) 374-2170



www.bethanycommunities.org



CRUISE PLANNERS®

YOUR LAND AND CRUISE EXPERTS

***There is no charge to
use a travel advisor
to help plan and
book your vacation.***

**Call Kristy at 603-382-3596 or email
at klacroix@cruiseplanners.com**



Hunt Community



A Silverstone
Living Community

Live where possibility meets purpose. Hunt Community is a LifePlan Community (CCRC) in the heart of Nashua—offering city energy, modern comfort, and a vibrant sense of community.

With modern apartment homes available for move-in now, it's the perfect time to discover a lifestyle designed for connection, fulfillment, and you.

SCHEDULE A VISIT TODAY!

(603) 821-1200 | HUNTCOMMUNITY.ORG





**BATH
FITTER®**

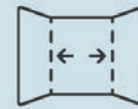
A BETTER *bath remodel*

Time to change your bath from a “before” to an “after”? Our unique tub over tub process means a beautiful tub with a watertight fit. We install it in just a day, and it’s guaranteed for life. Join over 2 million happy customers who know: It Just Fits.

OUR BENEFITS



One day
installations†



Seamless wall for
a watertight fit



Virtually
maintenance free



Book your **FREE** design
CONSULTATION today!

800-928-2284

41 ELM ST. #3, STONEHAM, MA 02180

It Just Fits™ **BATHFITTER.COM**

10% OFF
UP TO **\$750***

on a complete
Bath Fitter system

OR

NO INTEREST
FOR **18 MONTHS****

with approved credit

©Registered trademark of Bath Fitter Franchising Inc. *Save 10% up to \$750. Special offer good on the purchase of a bathtub, wall and faucet kit. One offer per customer. May not be combined with any other offer. Offer must be presented at the time of estimate. Previous orders and estimates excluded. Offer valid only at the above location. †Lifetime Warranty on Bath Fitter®-manufactured acrylic products. See Warranty terms at Bathfitter.com/warranty. Offer expires 11-30-2025. ‡Most Bath Fitter installations are completed in one day. Some exceptions apply. See location for full details. MA Lic. 9654

Did You KNOW?

Age, gender and activity levels affect how much calories the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services advises aging individuals to consume each day. According to DHHS guidelines, sedentary men ages 61 and older should consume roughly 2,000 calories per day. Moderately active men between the ages of 61 and 65 are advised to consume 2,400 calories per day, while men at that activity level age 66 and older are urged to consume roughly 2,200 calories per day. DHHS recommendations indicate active men between the ages of 61 and 75 should consume 2,600 calories per day, while those 76 and up should reduce that consumption to 2,400 calories per day. Women's recommended calorie intake is significantly lower, as DHHS guidelines advise sedentary women age 61 and older to consume 1,600 calories per day. Women 61 and older who engage in moderate physical activity each day are urged to consume 1,800 calories per day, a recommendation that increases to 2,000 calories per day for those in the same age group who live a physically active lifestyle. It's important to note that these recommendations are just guidelines, and seniors should consult a physician familiar with their medical history for more personal recommendations regarding calorie consumption.



Be more active by overcoming back pain

Back pain is one of the most common conditions across the globe. The World Health Organization says low back pain is the single leading cause of disability around the world, affecting an estimated 619 million people in 2020. That number was projected to rise to 843 million by 2050 as a result of aging populations and sedentary lifestyles. The National Institutes of Health says that 80 percent of adults in the United States experience low back pain at some point in their lives.

There are many reasons why back pain can occur. Muscle strain, arthritis, herniated discs, and other conditions can contribute to back pain. The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke advises visiting a doctor if back pain is persistent. Early diagnosis can prevent chronic issues and rule out more serious conditions.

Get moving

Although moving around may be

the last thing on the minds of people experiencing back pain, remaining physically active is essential to good health. Plus, movement actually is the best medicine for back pain itself. A review published in JAMA Internal Medicine in 2016 found that exercise alone reduces the risk of back pain by 35 percent. Low-impact activities like walking, swimming and yoga help to strengthen muscles, improve flexibility and reduce pain in the process. This can be beneficial to seniors who find low-impact activities are best for their health.

Strengthen core

People now sit for long periods of time, which can contribute to back problems. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says Americans sit for an average of 10 hours a day, often with poor posture and non-engaged core muscles. Getting up off of seats and strengthening core muscles can prevent back injury and pain.

The American College of Sports Medicine recommends two days of strength training per week with a focus on the core, back and hips. Individuals who don't know how to start safely should consult with a physical therapist or certified personal trainer.

Alternative treatments

It may be easy to take a pill when pain begins, but people may want to explore alternative methods to alleviate pain. Changing ergonomics of work stations or how a person performs activities can help. The American Psychological Association reports techniques like mindfulness and cognitive behavioral therapy can reduce pain severity and improve quality of life. Massage therapy or even acupuncture are additional treatments to consider for back pain.

Back pain is a common complaint as one ages. There are ways to overcome the pain and remain as active as possible.

IS YOUR HEATING SYSTEM READY FOR WINTER?



(978) 689-8336

office@giard.plumbing

Owned and Operated by Tim & Jeremy Giard



\$25.00 OFF COUPON ON ANY SERVICE CALL

*** Limit 1 per customer, can not be used with any other discounts **.*

Daily dietary habits that have long-term benefits

Food fuels the body throughout the day, ideally providing the energy people need to make the most of each day. But the foods people eat are more than just fuel. Indeed, a delicious meal is hard to forget, and that underscores how significant a variable flavor can be when people choose the foods they eat.

Flavor is certainly important when choosing and preparing meals, but it cannot be the only variable that determines what people eat. That's true for everyone, and especially notable for seniors. Age-related changes to the body should affect seniors' approach to diet. The National Council on Aging notes that metabolism slows as bodies grow older, which means seniors require fewer calories to fuel their daily activities than they needed when they were younger. That's just one of the many notable things seniors should consider when designing their daily diets.

- **Plan a well-rounded diet.** School children learn the basic food groups as youngsters, and it's good for seniors to keep those long-ago lessons in mind when planning their daily diets. The American Heart Association notes the importance of incorporating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and proteins into daily diets. In regard to dairy, the AHA advises consuming the equivalent of three cups of low-fat (1 percent) or fat-free dairy each day. When picking a protein source, the AHA identifies eggs, fish, lean meat, legumes, nuts, and poultry as healthy and protein-rich foods. Even polyunsaturated and monounsaturated oils like olive oil and peanut oil can be healthy.

- **Resolve to read more labels.** Aging adults need not study nutrition to identify what they're putting into their bodies each time they take a bite. The NCOA notes that food labels are useful sources of information that can indicate how much fat, sodium and added sugars are in a given item. Seniors should be especially vigilant when trying to avoid foods



that contain a lot of added sugars, which can contribute to weight gain. That's notable given seniors' naturally slower metabolisms.

- **Practice portion control.** It's not necessarily the foods seniors eat but how much they eat that can derail their efforts to maintain their overall health. Seniors' recommended daily calorie intake varies by both gender and activity levels. Guidelines from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services notes women 61 and over who are moderately physically active should consume roughly 1,800 calories per day, while those living an active lifestyle are advised to eat around 2,000 calories per day. Moderately active men age 66 and older are advised to eat 2,400 calories per day, while active men between the ages of 61 and 75 should aim for 2,600 calories per day. When reading food labels, pay attention to calories per serving, as that can act as a useful guide to control portions. The National Institute on Aging recognizes it can be hard to control portion sizes when dining out, and recommends seniors share an entrée or order from the appetizers menu when picking their main course.

The right daily dietary habits can help seniors live longer, healthier and happier lives, and picking the right foods does not require sacrificing flavor.

5 questions seniors can ask their doctors during routine checkups

Seniors may not have the same busy schedules they did when they were younger and juggling an assortment of personal and professional responsibilities. But one constant on many seniors' schedules is routine trips to see their doctors. Trips to see primary care physicians and specialists are part of many seniors' monthly routines. Such appointments can ensure seniors stay healthy throughout their golden years, especially when patients remain vigilant and engage with their physicians during office visits. One of the most effective ways to remain an engaged patient is to ask questions during each appointment, and the following are five queries seniors can keep in mind as they prepare for their next appointment.



1. Is my blood pressure high?

This is a vital inquiry because high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, has been linked to a host health problems, including cardiovascular disease, stroke, kidney disease, and diminished vision.

2. What can I do to lower my blood pressure?

If doctors discover high blood pressure, ask for a detailed plan to lower that blood pressure, including safe physical activities and dietary recommendations.

3. Do I need to change my medications?

Though the data is somewhat outdated, the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey and the Canadian Health Measures Survey revealed in 2019 that nearly seven in 10 adults between the ages of 40 and 79 in the United States and 65 percent of adults in Canada used at least one prescription drug in the 30 days prior to being surveyed. Roughly one in five adults in the same age group in each country acknowledged using at least five prescription drugs. If seniors find those statistics familiar, then it's wise to ask their doctors if there's anything they need to change or look out for. Adverse medication interactions can be dangerous and even deadly, so it's imperative all of a patient's doctors are up-to-date on any drugs they might be taking.

4. Can I do anything to improve mobility?

A 2020 study published in the journal *Frontiers in Physiology* noted that 35 percent of persons age 70 and over live with mobility limitations. Reduced mobility can increase risk for falls and hospitalization and lead to a reduction in quality of life. When visiting their physicians, seniors can report any mobility issues and ask what they can do to address them and prevent them from progressing.

5. Do I need additional health screenings?

Screening saves lives, even if exams can sometimes be inconvenient if not unpleasant. Seniors can use each doctor's appointment as an opportunity to discuss screenings and determine if there's any additional tests they should be getting each year.

Safe medication management strategies

Medications are necessary to manage health conditions, improve quality of life and prevent illnesses. According to the National Health Interview Survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American adults between



the ages of 18 and 64 take an average of 3.9 prescriptions per person per year. Those age 65 and older take an average of 5.1

prescriptions per year.

It is essential to manage medications properly to avoid serious health risks. Medications can interact with one another and cause adverse drug reactions when paired with over-the-counter products and even certain foods and beverages.

Drugs.com reports drug interactions are a major cause of hospitalizations and side



effects. A 2024 study published in Scientific Reports found that 5 percent of hospitalizations among patients age 65 and older (78 being the median patient age) were caused by side effects associated with polypharmacy (multiple medication use). This underscores the importance of managing medications properly. The following is a guide to help manage medications effectively.

Know your medications

The first step in safe medication use is to be fully vetted about every medication taken. This includes the brand and generic name, dosage, frequency of dosage, timing of taking the drug, how it should be administered, side effects, storage, and interactions. It's important to keep an updated list of all medications taken, including vitamins,

supplements and OTC drugs to share with each health care provider at every appointment.

Follow directions

Strictly adhere to the information on the medication label and any instructions provided by the doctor or nurse. Never alter dosage volume or frequency without first consulting a health care provider. Complete a full course of antibiotics even after symptoms improve to prevent antibiotic resistance. Do not share medications with others or take someone else's prescriptions.

Communicate effectively. Open a dialogue with health care providers to get further clarification about medications and questions that come up. Report side effects promptly and inquire about alternative medications that may be available. Also communicate if the cost of a specific drug is prohibitive, as failing to take a medication due to cost can be a health risk.

Keep organized

Utilize an effective system for storing and organizing medications to prevent missed or accidental double doses. Use reminders on smartphones or health trackers to remember when to take medication doses. Always store drugs in their original containers, away from children and pets. Safely discard old medications when the expiration date has passed. Many communities offer drug take-back programs, and the Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.org) provides instructions on how to dispose of certain medications where take-back programs are unavailable.

Ask for help

Anyone who is experiencing difficulty managing medications should reach out to a relative, friend or caregiver service for assistance.

Managing medications safely is a vital component of senior health care.

Fitness classes for the over-50 crowd

Exercise is a pillar of a healthy lifestyle. When individuals exercise regularly and pair physical activity with a healthy diet and smart lifestyle choices, they can extend their life expectancies and sleep well knowing they're doing everything they can to increase their chances of enjoying a limitless retirement.

Adults over 50 know it's not always so easy to exercise. Hectic schedules can make it seem like there's little time for exercise. And even when adults make time to break a sweat, they might find that traditional workouts combining strength training with

cardiovascular exercise are too time-consuming and possibly even a little dull. In such instances, fitness classes can take the place of more traditional exercise regimens. Various classes provide a challenging workout, and many can do so in an hour or less.

• **Pilates:** Improving balance, core strength and flexibility are three goals of Pilates. Pilates has an interesting history, as it was created by Joseph Pilates, a German prisoner of war who was imprisoned off the coast of England during World War I. Pilates and the exercising phenomenon he created ultimately made their

way to the United States, where the routine was embraced by dancers looking for a way to aid their injury recovery. Pilates is now part of millions of individuals' exercise regimens. This low-impact exercise is designed to strengthen muscles and improve alignment and flexibility. Achieving greater balance after 50 pays untold dividends for older adults, who can decrease their risk for falls and fall-related injuries by increasing their steadiness.

• **Spin:** Spin classes are a wildly popular exercise program that utilizes cycling to help people break a sweat.



Cardiovascular exercise is beneficial for a number of reasons, including its connection to heart health and even cognitive health. But many people lament daily sessions on a treadmill or elliptical that they find boring. Spin classes involve the use of stationary bikes, but instructors typically guide class members through conditions that mimic outdoor cycling sessions. Resistance and pedaling speed changes

throughout a spin class, which serves to keep individuals engaged and burn lots of calories.

• **Kickboxing:** Sometimes referred to as Krav Maga, kickboxing is another unique and challenging class offered at many fitness facilities. Martial arts like kickboxing assist with weight loss and can help people improve their muscle tone, flexibility and stamina. Adults over 50 who are not

accustomed to physical activity may find their energy levels are low, but a few kickboxing sessions may produce noticeable differences in stamina. The balance benefits of kickboxing are similar to those provided by Pilates, so this activity may be particularly beneficial for adults over 50 looking to reduce their vulnerability to falls as they grow older.

• **Dance:** Dancing is widely seen as a fun activity, and rightfully so, as few things can be as enjoyable as cutting a rug. But dancing also provides a great cardiovascular workout. Local community centers and even some fitness facilities offer age-specific dancing classes, which the AARP notes are great for individuals who want to build core strength, improve bone health and protect their heart.

MOVE BY THE END OF THE YEAR AND LOCK IN 2025 RATES!



THREE LEVELS OF CARE, ONE EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY

ENHANCED INDEPENDENT LIVING

Maintain your active lifestyle with optional housekeeping, dining, and wellness services. Perfect for those who value their independence but appreciate having support available.

ASSISTED LIVING

Personalized care services tailored to your unique needs, from comprehensive medication management to daily living assistance, all while preserving your dignity and choice.

MEMORY CARE

The Current Beverly's specialized neighborhood provides compassionate, expert care in a secure, familiar environment designed specifically for those with memory-related conditions.

Located in historic downtown Beverly with its charming shops, restaurants, and cultural attractions, you'll have everything you need within walking distance. Plus, Boston is just 1 hour away for special adventures.

Ready to live life unburdened?

Call **978-778-9880** today to schedule a private consultation and tour.

**THE
CURRENT
BEVERLY**
SENIOR LIVING

SCAN TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE



1 ESSEX ST. BEVERLY, MA 01915 | 978-778-9880 | TheCurrentBeverly.com

FALL MOVE-IN SPECIAL

LOCK IN LOW RATES
UNTIL JAN. 2027*

“There’s always something to do
and someone to do it with.”

Jeanine W. - Resident since 2024

At Benchmark communities, connections with friends, programs in which to learn new things, and personalized support when needed all help seniors connect to what matters most. On average, our residents experience 19 daily interactions with our associates—moments that come together over chef-prepared meals in the dining room, during community concerts, in one of our spacious living areas or even just chats in the hallway.

The Atrium

at Veronica Drive

1 Veronica Drive | Danvers
978.965.3351 | AtriumAtVeronicaDrive.com



BENCHMARK

AT HAVERHILL CROSSINGS

254 Amesbury Road | Haverhill
978.510.3681 | HaverhillCrossings.com



BENCHMARK

AT NORTH ANDOVER

700 Chickering Rd | North Andover
978.662.9386 | BenchmarkAtNorthAndover.com



at PUTNAM FARM

9 Summer Street | Danvers
978.595.0995 | PutnamFarmDanvers.com



242 Main Street | Salem

603.704.4644 | GreystoneFarmAtSalem.com



Get in touch to learn more about life at a Benchmark community.

Assisted Living | Mind & Memory Care

*Terms and conditions may apply.





What to know about alcohol consumption

Change comes with the territory as persons grow older. Many adults recognize the need to change various habits as they approach their golden years. Some might go to bed earlier, while others may resolve to be more physically active. A reconsideration of one's habits regarding alcohol also may be in order as individuals near or surpass retirement age.

Alcohol is perhaps a larger part of older adults' lives than many may realize. According to the 2023 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 3.3 percent of respondents age 65 and older reported heavy alcohol use in the previous month, while 12 percent in that same age group acknowledged binge drinking in the 30-day period prior to the survey. While many adults can consume alcohol without placing themselves in jeopardy, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates 38 percent of all alcohol-related deaths in 2020 and 2021 were people age 65 and older.

The data surrounding seniors and alcohol consumption is eye-opening and suggests that seniors who drink may benefit from discussing their habits with their physicians. In the meantime, seniors can consider these noteworthy tidbits about the effects of alcohol on aging bodies.

• **Alcohol can have a more powerful effect as people age.** The National Council on Aging notes that aging individuals may feel the effects of alcohol more strongly even if they are not increasing the amount they consume. The Mayo Clinic reports that alcohol is a toxin that aging adults' bodies cannot process as easily as they



could when they were younger. That means the effects of alcohol may linger longer and potentially increase aging adults' vulnerability to falls or other injuries

• **Certain bodily changes heighten the effects of alcohol.** A reduction in the speed with which the body processes alcohol is not the only bodily change seniors should recognize before they enjoy a drink. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism notes that aging contributes to a reduction in muscle mass and body water. As a result, some older adults may reach a higher blood alcohol concentration than younger individuals who consume the same amount of alcohol. The tendency to have a reduced tolerance as the body ages is something all seniors should keep in mind when consuming alcohol.

• **Alcohol can worsen chronic conditions that affect many seniors.** The NIAAA reports that various medical conditions that commonly affect aging persons, including chronic pain, cardiovascular disease and respiratory infections, can be made worse when people with them consume alcohol. In addition, the NIAAA notes that consumption of alcohol may increase a person's risk of developing those conditions. For example, the NIAAA notes researchers have found that even low levels of alcohol consumption can increase risk for breast cancer and cardiovascular disease.

Seniors who consume alcohol can discuss their consumption with their physicians to determine if it's in their best interest to have a drink or something that should be avoided in service of their long-term health.

What older adults should know about marijuana use

The legalization or decriminalization of cannabis in many areas of the country has led to a shifting landscape regarding the use of marijuana. A change in societal attitudes and greater accessibility has led to an influx of people using marijuana. Although marijuana is often associated with young people, older adults are increasingly turning to cannabis, particularly for medical reasons.

According to findings from researchers at the University of Michigan's Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation published in the journal *Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research*, one in eight older adults uses cannabis products. Increased use by people over age 50 began with the pandemic, and 12 percent of seniors say they've consumed a THC-containing substance in the past year. Around 4 percent say they do so multiple times a week. In fact, it seems seniors are now one of the fastest-growing groups exploring marijuana and its cousin, hemp, for medical and therapeutic benefits.

Marijuana affects everyone differently. Aging bodies may process the psychoactive component of marijuana differently than young people. As a result, it is essential for seniors to approach marijuana use cautiously, and discuss potential use with their physicians.

Reasons for turning to marijuana

Seniors may be drawn to marijuana for relief from certain age-related conditions. Chronic pain from neuropathy or arthritis is a common draw for marijuana use. Harvard Health says the thinking behind cannabis and pain relief is that THC or CBD in the marijuana binds to specific receptors on the brain and nerve cells, which slows the reception of pain impulses and can ease discomfort. However, experts warn that science is still inconclusive regarding marijuana as a pain remedy.

Marijuana also may be looked to as a way to manage depression, anxiety and insomnia. It also could be a treatment for symptoms associated with neurological disorders, such as Parkinson's disease and glaucoma. A 2021 study published in *The Permanente Journal* indicated



cannabis and cannabinoids have been shown to have a positive impact on a variety of neurological disorders in humans. However, additional research is necessary.

Risks of marijuana use

Even though there may be medical applications when marijuana might be beneficial, use of cannabis is not without risk, especially for seniors. Older adults often have preexisting conditions and take multiple medications with which marijuana can interact. Also, seniors' bodies process substances differently than younger individuals, which can lead to increased sensitivity to marijuana's effects. Side effects to marijuana use can include dizziness and balance issues, compounding the risk for falls.

Another consideration for seniors is that, even where legal, the quality and potency of products can vary. Starting with a low dose and using products with a higher ratio of CBD to THC (CBD produces therapeutic benefits without the "high" of THC) may be a safer approach.

Talk to a doctor

More people are talking about marijuana, and there is less stigma about its use. Therefore, seniors should have no qualms about talking to a health care provider about their interest in trying marijuana. A doctor can assess medical history and current medications to make an informed decision about whether marijuana might be safe and appropriate. Guidance also can be provided on proper dosing and potential side effects.

Marijuana may offer potential avenues for symptom relief for seniors. It is important to be cautious and marijuana use should be medically supervised.

Warning signs for heart disease

Hear disease is the leading cause of death for women, men and people of most ethnic and racial groups, advises the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. One person dies from heart disease every 33 seconds. Understanding the risk factors for heart disease is the first step toward prevention and management.



There are many things people can do to modify their risk for heart disease, but also some that cannot be changed.

Ultimately, education is essential either way, and learning the risk factors for heart disease is vital to such education.

- **Age:** The risk for heart disease increases with age. For men the risk rises after age 45, and for women, it increases after menopause, or around age 55. Aging naturally leads to changes in the heart and blood vessels that increase the likelihood of developing cardiovascular problems, says the National Institute on Aging.

- **Sex:** Initially men are at a higher risk of developing heart disease. However, over time a woman's risk after menopause tends to equal that of a man's. As estrogen levels decline after menopause, fat can build up in the arteries, causing them to narrow, says the British Heart Foundation. After menopause, body weight may increase, which also is a risk factor for heart disease.

- **Family history:** Those with a close relative who developed heart disease at an early age may be at elevated risk.

- **Race:** UChicago Medicine says Black and Hispanic people have an elevated risk of dying from heart disease compared to white individuals.

People may be able to change the following controllable risk factors for heart disease.

- **Hypertension:** Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, forces the heart to work harder and can stiffen the arteries. This can damage blood vessels over time. Medications and additional lifestyle changes can help seniors combat



hypertension.

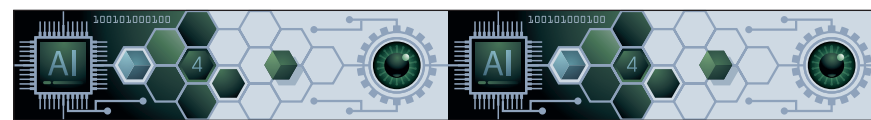
- **Smoking:** Smoking tobacco can damage blood vessels and reduce oxygen in the blood. Smoking also increases the risk of blood clots. Johns Hopkins Medicine says cigarette smokers are two to four times more likely to get heart disease than nonsmokers.

- **Cholesterol:** High levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), known as “bad” cholesterol, contribute to the buildup of plaque in the arteries. This can narrow arteries and restrict blood flow.

- **Sedentary lifestyle:** A lack of physical activity is a risk factor for obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, each of which increases a person's chances of being diagnosed with heart disease.

- **Dental health:** Poor dental health can allow bacteria to enter the bloodstream, which can potentially lead to inflammation that affects heart health.

By understanding risk factors and actively making changes to behaviors that can be modified, people can take strides toward protecting heart health and avoiding cardiovascular disease.



The impact of AI on senior health care experiences

Artificial intelligence (AI) continues to change the world. The “Logic Theorist” program, created by Herbert A. Simon and Allen Newell in 1955, which was designed to prove mathematical theorems, is widely considered to be the first AI program. Today, AI is employed to answer questions, solve problems and even create artwork.

AI can serve amazing purposes in health care settings. Though AI can benefit persons of all ages, seniors may find it especially improves their health care experience. Here are some ways AI can enhance seniors' quality of life, independence and support systems.

- **Monitoring:** AI-powered systems can be used to monitor vital signs like heart rate, oxygen levels and blood pressure. Some wearables even can detect irregular heartbeats or other anomalies and alert individuals or caregivers.

- **Early detection:** Echelon Health says AI can be invaluable in the early detection of illnesses by predicting risk factors in patients. AI can be utilized with the first levels of screening, which may detect the smallest changes that could highlight underlying issues. Research has shown AI can detect serious diseases such as lung cancer or heart disease earlier to offer patients a better chance of effective treatment before diseases progress.

- **Predictive analytics:** Those with a particular health condition can rely on AI to predict the likelihood of certain health events, like heart attacks or stroke, by analyzing data and genetic information. This allows doctors to take proactive approaches to adjusting treatment plans.

- **Chronic disease management:** The integration of AI into chronic disease



management can enhance patient care efficiency and lead to optimized treatment strategies, says the National Institutes of Health. AI can monitor data patterns that offer insight into disease progression and can help seniors manage medications by providing reminders, tracking compliance and dispensing correct dosages.

- **Smart home technology:** A person's environment impacts his or her health. AI-powered devices can automate tasks like adjusting interior temperatures to safe levels, turn on lights for safer navigation, turn off appliances if they have been left unattended, and offer additional safety features like fall detection. This may enable seniors to live securely and independently longer.

- **Daily tasks:** In addition to specific disease management, AI can be used to create healthy meal plans and schedule appointments. This can promote autonomy and reduce reliance on helpers or caregivers.

Artificial intelligence is infiltrating daily life in many ways. In health care settings, AI benefits seniors in many different ways.

DON'T LET THE FLU ROCK YOUR BOAT-GET VACCINATED AT ANCHOR

Flu season is here – and the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones is with a flu shot.



WHEN IS THE BEST TIME?

The CDC recommends getting vaccinated in September or October, before flu activity begins to increase. But it's never too late – protection throughout the season is what matters most.

WALK-INS WELCOME

- Fast and friendly service
- Covered by most insurance plans



Home Medical Supply
PHARMACY

AnchorHomeMedical.com

(978) 720-8170
100 Cummings Center,
Suite 125Q Beverly, Ma 01915



WHY CHOOSE US?

We have been servicing customers for more than 20 years. We maintain your current heating, cooling, hot water and plumbing systems, and when it's time, help you choose the best replacement options.

SERVICES:

- INSTALLATIONS
- AIR CONDITIONING
- BOILERS
- FURNACES
- HEAT PUMPS
- HOT WATER HEATERS
- ON-DEMAND SYSTEMS
- GAS PIPING
- PLUMBING

Your Comfort is our Business!

Callahan

A/C & HEATING SERVICES

91 Belmont St North Andover, MA 01845
www.callahanac.com 978-689-9233

License #: PC 3532, MP-15212



Considerations for your second act

Many people see their careers as one of their defining characteristics. Children are often asked what they want to be when they grow up, and as adults they will likely be asked “What do you do for a living?” more times than they can remember. Work is undoubtedly a major component of life for most people from the time they leave school to the day when they retire. And a growing number of adults value work so much that they pivot to second careers.

A phenomenon known as “unretirement” occurs when people who have previously retired return to the workforce. A 2010 paper published in the *Journal of Human Resources* found nearly 50 percent of retirees followed a nontraditional retirement path that involved partial retirement or unretirement. According to a recent Retirement Saving & Spending Study from T. Rowe Price, around 20 percent of retirees are working either full- or part-time, while 7 percent of study respondents are looking for employment. Some people return to work for financial reasons while others seek the social and emotional benefits employment can bring. But individuals mulling a return to work or those currently working but trying to determine a second act should not feel beholden to previous career paths. A second trip around the employment block can involve an entirely different line of work. The following are some things to look for in a second act.

Flexibility: Choose a career path that enables you to set your own schedule or possibly work part-time if that is your preference. This way you can still reap some of the benefits of retirement, including the flexibility to travel.

Social interaction: Adults may lose daily opportunities to be social when they retire, which can compound feelings of isolation common among retirees. Consider a second career that lets you interact with a number of people and continue to build relationships and a good network.

Personal passions: Reflect on what you might do for work if money were no object. This may help you narrow down new opportunities that are in line with your interests and passions. Find a job that utilizes your skills and experience and meshes with your interests. A former graphic artist, for example, may decide to teach design to young people.

Nonprofit opportunities: Many retirees spent years in high-stress corporate environments where bottom lines may be more important than the bigger picture. Shifting to a career in the nonprofit sector can be a personally fulfilling job that utilizes skills learned in the corporate world.

Consulting or contract work: If you're a retiree who loved your job, you might want to have a second career as a consultant or contractor in the same field.

A number of retirees ultimately explore second careers. Finding a match may be easier than one could have imagined.

Financial strategies to consider as you near retirement

Freedom is often cited as a benefit of retirement. Many professionals look forward to the day when they retire and have more free time and the freedom to spend that time however they choose. Of course, the opportunity to spend retirement how one sees fit typically requires considerable financial freedom.

Financial planning for retirement is often emphasized to young professionals beginning their careers. But it's equally important that people on the cusp of retirement continue to look for ways

to protect and grow their wealth. As retirement draws near, professionals can consider these strategies to ensure they have the financial freedom to make their golden years shine even brighter.

• Plan to grow your wealth in retirement.

It's widely assumed that retirees need less income after calling it a career because the need to save for retirement is no longer present. However, some expenses, including health care, may rise in retirement, which underscores the need to continue growing your wealth. Cost-of-living also will increase over the course of your retirement years, which highlights the need to keep growing wealth in retirement. It can be tricky to protect your existing retirement savings as you approach the end of your career while also growing that wealth, so it is best to work with a financial planner to navigate that situation.

• Maintain a mix with your investments. A model from the Schwab Center for Financial Research indicated that a hypothetical retiree with a \$2 million portfolio in year one of retirement will have slightly less than \$1 million left 30 years later if her portfolio maintains a mix of 60 percent stocks and 40 percent bonds and cash. The model found that a second hypothetical investor with the same size portfolio in year one of retirement will run out of funds prior to year 29 if his portfolio is 20 percent stocks and 80 percent bonds and cash. Though conventional wisdom



suggests limiting risk as retirement nears and eliminating it entirely upon retiring, modern retirees are living longer and may therefore need to maintain a mix of investments to ensure they don't outlive their money.

• Make the maximum allowable contributions. Many aging professionals may not have saved as much for retirement as they might have hoped to upon starting their careers decades ago. In fact, a 2024 survey from Prudential Financial found that many 55-year-olds have fallen far short of establishing the level of financial security they will need in retirement. The Prudential survey found that 55-year-olds had a median retirement savings of less than \$50,000, a number that falls considerably short of the recommended goal of having eight times one's annual income saved by this age. If that situation sounds familiar for professionals nearing retirement age, then now is the time to begin catching up. Make the maximum allowable contributions to a 401(k) plan (\$23,000 in 2024) and/or an IRA (\$7,000). In addition, the Internal Revenue Service notes that IRA catch-up contributions remained \$1,000 for individuals age 50 and over in 2024.

Retirement can provide a sense of freedom professionals have worked hard to achieve over the course of their careers. Some simple strategies can help professionals on the cusp of retirement achieve the financial freedom they'll need to enjoy their golden years to the fullest extent.



Nourished By Care

WINDHAM TERRACE

PREMIER ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

Windham Terrace Offers Superb Assisted Living and Memory Care.

Are you looking for help for your aging loved one on a long- or short-term basis?

Windham Terrace, an award-winning, family-owned business, is an exceptional assisted living and memory care community serving seniors.

Located in Windham, NH, Windham Terrace has warm, intimate settings with caring, professional staff available for your loved one 24/7.

Call Lynda today. (603) 437-4600



3 Church Road, Windham, NH 03087 • WindhamTerrace.com
Uniform Consumer Disclosure Available Upon Request

Fitness regimens for those 50+

Fitness is an important component of overall wellness. Indeed, staying active has been linked to a number of noteworthy benefits, including decreased disease risk and improved mental health.

Routine exercise helps a person burn calories and maintain a healthy weight. Tufts Medicine says weight gain is common among aging individuals, with both men and women tending to put on weight in their mid-sections. Weight gain is a risk factor for diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Older adults may need to step up their fitness regimens to combat growing waistlines.

Staying active also can help with muscle and bone density, which can decline with age. The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons says exercise is important for maintaining bone strength as the body ages. Strength-training exercises put stress on bones so they can make

bones stronger.

Now that it is apparent why fitness is key during senior years, it's time to explore some routines that may be best for people age 50 and older.

Yoga

Yoga is a low-impact practice that improves muscle strength, balance, mobility, and flexibility. All of these factors are important for seniors. For those who find that conventional forms of yoga are too taxing on joints and bones, chair yoga is a lower-impact form of the exercise.

Cycling

Riding a bike is a cardiovascular workout that offers a wide range of benefits. Most people find riding a bike is easy on the joints, and regular cycling can increase muscle strength and enhance flexibility. The pace and intensity of rides can be customized depending on riders' speed and the routes they ride.



Pilates

Joseph Pilates developed an exercise routine that now bears his name in the early twentieth century. Pilates emphasizes core strength and stability, but works all the major muscle groups in the body. Since it is another low-impact exercise, it can be suitable for people with joint issues.

Body Weight Exercises

As individuals age, they may find that working with dumbbells, barbells or weight equipment at the gym is too taxing. Using body weight to build strength is a low-intensity option. Squats, wall push-ups, chair push-ups, and resistance bands can be used to build strength.

Walking

Walking is an unsung hero in the fitness realm. According to Better Health Channel, just 30 minutes of walking every day can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power and endurance. Walking is low-impact and less taxing on joints than jogging or running.

Seniors have a host of options to stay active as they navigate their changing fitness needs.

TO DO! TA DONE

Transition Move Managers and Downsizing Specialists

OUR SERVICES:

- ✓ Real Estate prep
- ✓ Home staging
- ✓ Run Estate Sales
- ✓ Pack and unpack
- ✓ Clear clutter/Organize
- ✓ Broom sweep
- ✓ Online auctions

978.224.2333



Scan here to see our Services, find Estate Sales, Vintage Shop, and Online Auctions. Google reviews too!

Visit our Vintage Shop:
3 Pleasant St., Salem, MA

We have home décor for every room!

We are a full service ophthalmology practice that offers comprehensive eye care.

- Cataracts
- Dry Eyes
- Glaucoma
- Diseases of retina and vitreous



John J. Weiter, M.D. PhD
Associate Professor Part-Time
Harvard Medical School



Namrata Nandakumar, M.D.
Assistant Clinical Professor
Brown Medical School



Retina Consultants of Boston
Preserving the Gift of Sight

100 Milk Street, Suite 202
Methuen, MA

39 Cross Street, Suite 201
Peabody, MA

(978) 854-5090

WE OFFER **MORE** THAN OTHER
SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES.

MORE FOR YOUR MONEY
MORE PEACE OF MIND
MORE AMENITIES AND SERVICES

Learn **MORE** reasons to choose retirement
living at Brooksby Village®. Call **1-888-246-3197**
or visit **BrooksbyVillage.com** for
your FREE brochure.


Brooksby Village
BY ERICKSON SENIOR LIVING®

North Shore
BrooksbyVillage.com





Strategies to manage and tame stress

Stress is a part of life. In small doses, stress can have a positive effect. But when stress is chronic, it can take its toll on the body and mind.

Stress can make people irritable and cause them to lash out at others. Stress also can contribute to high blood pressure and adversely affect sleep. When confronting chronic stress, individuals may have to take action to find relief. These stress-busting strategies can help.

- **Engage in physical activity.** The Mayo Clinic says any form of exercise can help relieve stress. Physical activity boosts chemicals in the brain and endorphins that help a person feel good. Exercise also can refocus attention so a person is not preoccupied with a stressful thought or situation.

- **Listen to music.** Music can be calming and serve as a distraction from stressful feelings. Simply listening to music can be a quick fix for a stressful situation and a bad mood.

- **Review your lifestyle.** It's easy to take on too much, but doing so can lead to feelings of being overwhelmed, says the Mental Health Foundation. Prioritizing some things over others and delegating when possible can tame stress.

- **Practice mindfulness.** Breathing and mindfulness exercises can be practiced anywhere. Research has shown that mindfulness can reduce the effects of stress and anxiety. Deep breathing and being in a quiet moment when stress peaks may help to reduce stress.

- **Step away for a few minutes.** If possible, step away from a stressful situation, whether it is a difficult project at work or a loud room with a lot of activity going on. Many people find commuting stressful. Changing the route to one that avoids busy roads, even if it takes a bit longer to get from point A to point B, might help.

- **Talk it out.** Sometimes connecting with others and sharing experiences can help to relieve stress. Keeping feelings in and fixating on a situation may exacerbate feelings of stress. Social situations that encourage talking and laughing can lighten a person's mental load, says the Mayo Clinic.

- **Don't turn to substances.** Alcohol and drugs may temporarily relieve stress, but this approach can lead to addiction and even worsen the physical and mental toll stress takes on the body.

Stress is a part of life, but finding ways to manage chronic stress is vital to long-term health.

3 tips to get a more restful night's sleep

There is no magic formula to ensure long-term health. However, if there were such an equation, sleep would be a critical component. Though adults may be able to function with less sleep than doctors recommend, the National Institutes of Health note that consistent lack of sufficient sleep can interfere with work, social functioning and driving ability.

The National Institute on Aging notes that adults of all ages generally need the same amount of sleep, typically between seven and nine hours of rest per night. That's an important distinction, as busy adults in mid-life might feel as though they can operate on less sleep without adversely affecting their overall health. However, in addition to the problems noted by the NIH, the NIA reports that ongoing lack of sleep, or even consistently poor sleep quality, can increase risk for cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and obesity.

Adults who feel their sleep quality is poor or those who aspire to sleep more each night can consider these three strategies to ensure a more restful night's sleep.

1. Keep devices out of the bedroom.

Screens are everywhere in modern life, and that includes the bedroom. In fact, the National Sleep Foundation's 2022 Sleep in America® Poll found that 58 percent of survey participants acknowledged looking at screens within an hour before bedtime. The NSF reports that device usage so close to bedtime can adversely affect sleep quality because the blue light emitted from screens has shorter wavelengths than other colors in the visible light spectrum, which results in more alertness than warmer tones. The blue light actually confuses the brain into thinking it's earlier in the day, thus making it harder to fall asleep.

2. Skip late afternoon naps.

Short naps can help people reenergize, but the timing of naps could adversely



affect how well people sleep at night. The Mayo Clinic notes that napping after 3 p.m. can make it harder to sleep soundly at night. And while short naps can provide a necessary jolt, it's important that naps be no longer than 30 minutes. Naps that exceed a half hour can contribute to feelings of grogginess and even compromise your ability to get restful sleep overnight.

3. Avoid alcohol.

Some may consider alcohol a sleep aide, and there's good reason for that perception, even if it's misguided. Hackensack Meridian Health notes that alcohol acts as a depressant for the central nervous system that can cause brain activity to slow down. As a result, alcohol can increase feelings of relaxation and tiredness. However, that effect is not long-lasting, and as alcohol levels in the blood drop, individuals are likely to wake up and may even find it hard to fall back asleep. Waking up in the middle of the night cuts down on the time individuals spend in the most restorative stage of sleep, which is why individuals often feel as if they got little rest after a night of drinking.

Sleep is an important component of a healthy lifestyle. Some simple strategies may help adults get a more restful night's sleep.

Did You KNOW?

Do sleep needs change as adults grow older?

Adults know much about their health changes as they grow older, but health experts note that sleep requirements generally remain the same throughout adulthood. According to the National Institute on Aging, older adults need roughly the same amount of sleep as all adults. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that the recommended amount of sleep for adults is at least seven hours each day, and various organizations recommend adults get between seven and nine hours of sleep per night. Those recommendations can promote optimal health into one's golden years, but that advice is not being heeded by a significant portion of the adult population. The CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) tracked the sleeping habits of men and women between 2013 and 2022 and ultimately found that 37.5 percent of men and 36 percent of women were not getting enough sleep during that time period. The percentage of individuals not getting enough sleep was particularly high among adults between the ages of 39 and 64, among whom nearly four in 10 were falling short of the recommended daily amount of sleep.



The Alzheimer's Association estimates that 6.7 million people have Alzheimer's disease in the United States.

The impact of reading on cognitive decline

Aging and change go hand in hand. Although some may bemoan the gray hairs that start to arrive or stiffness in the knees that seems to sneak up on a person in middle age, such concerns are not necessarily enough to lose sleep over. However, many people 50 or older are nervous about the potential for cognitive issues like dementia as they grow older.

The Alzheimer's Association estimates that 6.7 million people have Alzheimer's disease in the United States. The Alzheimer Society of Canada estimates that there were 733,040 people living with dementia in the country as of January 1, 2024. Alzheimer's disease and other dementias can rob people of their memories, personalities and abilities to live satisfying, independent lives. While it may not be impossible to prevent all cognitive issues completely, there is reason to believe that reading could be an ally in cognitive care.

The American Academy of Neurology says that reading stimulates the brain and has been shown to slow down cognitive decline in old age. Reading also may help slow down memory loss.

The powers of reading were noticed more than 10 years ago when a 2013 study from researchers at Emory University measured readers' MRI scans as they read books. They found the deeper readers went into a story, the more areas of their brains were activated. This activity remained elevated for several days after



The Alzheimer Society of Canada estimates that there were 733,040 people living with dementia in the country as of January 1, 2024.

participants finished their books. The more a person reads, the stronger complex networks in the brain become.

Additional evidence that reading can help the brain was noted by researchers

at the Texas A&M School of Public Health. A 2024 study suggests that older people with mild cognitive impairment who engage in high levels of activities like reading, hobbies and word games have better

memory, working memory, attention, and processing speed than those who do not take part in such endeavors. Furthermore, a 2021 study published in *Neurology* found that high levels of cognitive activity, like reading and writing letters, can delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease by five years among those age 80 and over.

Reading can keep brains functioning optimally and potentially delay age-related cognitive decline.

Don't just
live life ...

Hear
Life.



HEARING AIDS WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Audiologist and owner of Audiology Network Services, Dr. Anderson has been improving her patients' hearing since 1987. She has successfully dispensed hearing devices to adults and children in the North Shore, Greater Newburyport and Merrimack Valley.



Audiology Network Services

158 Bridge Road,
Salisbury, MA 01952

(978) 465-5321

www.audiologynetworkservices.com



5 activities for modern empty nesters

The rewards of parenting are bitter-sweet. Raising children successfully means they will one day leave home and embark on lives of their own. Once the proverbial chicks leave the nest, individuals may be left with a lot of empty home and a lot of time to fill.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 22.5 million empty nesters in the country in 2020, with most having become empty nesters between the ages of 40 and 60. Statistics Canada says roughly one-third of adults between the ages of 20 and 34 lived with their parents in 2023. Although some parents whose children have reached adulthood still provide financial assistance to their grown children due to high costs of living, many empty nesters in their fifties have greater financial resources and much more time to fill their days with activities unrelated to parenting. But how does one spend those hours when they had been filled with parenting-related obligations and activities for so long?

The following are five unique ways empty nesters can stay busy and socially engaged as they seek to avoid empty nest syndrome.

1. **Take care of yourself.** After all those years of putting children first, now is the time to make yourself the priority. Explore all of the ways to engage in self-care. Maybe you were thinking about signing up for a monthly massage package at a nearby wellness clinic but procrastinated because of the added expense? Or you may have wanted to splurge on a facial or new hair treatment? Now is the time to make those

appointments.

2. **Prioritize hobbies.** Identify rewarding hobbies that might have been pushed to the back burner for years. If you always wanted to learn a new language, why not immerse yourself in it and the associated culture by spending a month or more in a country where that language is spoken? Now can be a great time to pick up new hobbies as well. Aim for activities that are social in nature, like the ever-popular pickleball.

3. **Travel far and wide.** Travel is a popular pastime among empty nesters and retirees. When you no longer have to coordinate travel around school schedules and holidays, you can take advantage of great deals on off-peak travel and really see the country or even the world.

4. **Indulge your social life.** If parenting made it hard to attend certain social functions, now you'll have the time to engage with friends more regularly. You can reach out to old friends and start a weekly walking group, join a book club, sign up for a fitness class together, or even do a monthly wine and dine meet-up at new restaurants in the area.

5. **Adopt a pet.** When children were still at home you likely lavished attention on them each day. You can redirect some of that affection to a pet who needs a good home. Visit a nearby animal shelter and pick out a pup or kitten looking for a good home.

Empty nesters have more free time to redirect to their own passion projects and interests.

The importance of wellness exams after the age of 50

Seniors are a growing and increasingly prosperous demographic. As the senior population increases, a greater emphasis must be placed on keeping aging individuals healthy. Wellness checks are important at any age, but they bear even more significance as individuals grow older.

Age brings with it many things, including experience and wisdom. But age also brings an increased risk for health problems. Aging men and women are vulnerable to chronic conditions like heart disease, COPD, cancer, and arthritis. It's noteworthy that many chronic health conditions fail to produce any symptoms until they have progressed to a point where treatment is difficult.

Annual wellness exams can help older adults take charge of their health and stay as healthy as possible. It's possible for a person to preserve his or her health (and possibly life) through check-ups and easy tests. Here are some common screenings and health recommendations that come up in the prime of one's life.

- **Colorectal cancer screening:** A colon cancer screening is recommended for everyone at age 45. Colon cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, and risk increases at age 45. Although people seldom look forward to a colonoscopy and the required prep, putting off this test due to a little discomfort may result in missing colon cancer at its earliest stage when it is most treatable.

- **Cholesterol screening:** This simple blood test can help evaluate the risk for heart disease. High cholesterol can contribute to the buildup of plaque in the arteries, making them narrower and less flexible, according to Sharecare, Inc.

- **Mammogram:** Most health organizations recommend annual mammogram screenings from age 40 until menopause. Then it may be possible to have a mammogram every other year for those who are at average risk. It is important for women to discuss mammogram



frequency with their doctors, particularly if there is a family history of breast cancer.

- **Diabetes:** ChenMed says diabetes may be more common in older adults, so regular screenings for this illness can enable early diagnosis and management.

- **Testicular cancer screening:** This test generally is not recommended without symptoms. Some organizations suggest men with a family history or other risk factors consider performing self-examinations.

- **Vaccination needs:** Doctors can alert patients to recommended vaccinations during wellness exams. Seniors should receive an annual flu shot and updated COVID-19 vaccination as available. Pneumococcal vaccine can protect against pneumococcal disease that can lead to pneumonia, meningitis and bloodstream infections. Adults over 50 also should receive a vaccination for shingles, which can occur in older age in those who have previously experienced chickenpox.

There are additional advantages to routine health checkups. Doctors can inquire about fitness routines, stress, sleep, and diet to see if patients are within the guidelines for healthy living.

Older age may make a person wiser, but the risk for various health issues and certain diseases increases with age. Routine health check-ups can keep doctors and patients on the same page.



**Your future is
in your hands.
Think of
Kevin B. Comeau
for your
Future Funeral
Needs.**



Over the years, many families have taken advantage of the benefits offered by funeral pre-arrangement and pre-payment.

We believe in the advantages of pre-planning so much, we even honor pre-arrangements made at other funeral homes.

You can transfer your arrangements to our funeral home without losing any benefits. In fact, we will most likely be able to offer you more.

Primary Business Address
486 Main Street
Haverhill, MA 01830

Phone: 978-521-4845
Fax: 978-374-8711
Email: kevincomeau1@aol.com
Website: www.comeaufuneral.com

**Kevin B. Comeau
Funeral Home**