

# SENIORS

## NORTH SHORE

 THE SALEM NEWS  
Thursday, June 20, 2019

GOLDEN  
MOMENT:  
A guide to  
aging well





# Aging with grace: 7 healthy habits for seniors

If your age is catching up to you, there may be some lifestyle changes you can make to give you a boost in energy and better overall health.

Try to incorporate a few of these healthy habits, recommended by Parent Giving, to feel better and live longer.

## Quit smoking

Smoking tobacco can cause cancer, stroke and heart failure. It also affects your skin by causing excessive wrinkling, weakening skin elasticity.

If you're having difficulty quitting cold turkey, try cutting back with the aid of nicotine gum or patches.

## Stay active

You should do something that boosts your strength, flexibility and balance.

Participate in activities that help you stay at a healthy weight to prevent heart issues, sleep better and reduce stress.

## Eat well

The right diet will make it easier to remain active. Schedule an appointment with a nutritionist to find the eating plan that will benefit you the most.

Dietary changes and exercise can prevent or control illnesses such as heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes.

## Maintain a healthy weight

Carrying around excessive weight is dangerous for your heart and promotes diseases such as diabetes.

Find out what your ideal weight is for your body type, and work to achieve it. You

can maintain it by staying active and eating right.

## Prevent falls

Analyze your home for fall risks, and eliminate them. Things such as loose carpets or rugs, cluttered walkways and unlit hallways should all be addressed.

According to the National Council on Aging, falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries for older Americans. In most cases, they can be easily avoided.

## Maintain immunizations and screenings

Staying on top of your health is crucial, especially as you age.

Follow your doctors' orders and receive the immunizations and life-saving screening schedule they



Courtesy photo

**Maintaining an active lifestyle is one way older adults can improve their chances for living longer and staying healthy.**

provide to watch for serious health problems.

## Manage stress

Try to limit the amount

of stress you put yourself through.

Exercising and meditation have shown to relieve pent-up frustration. You also

should make time to socialize with friends and peers, as positive thinking has beneficial effects on one's health.

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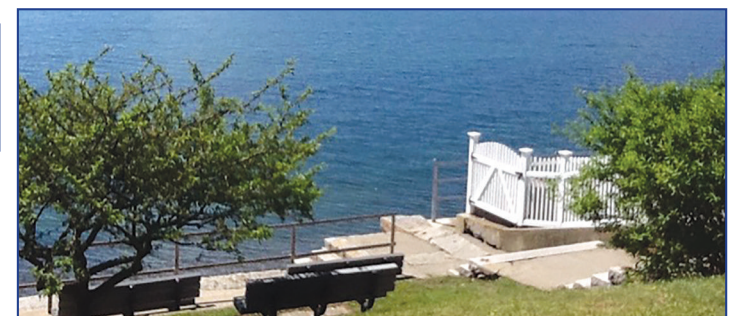
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# The real-life experts

## Researchers seek sage advice of elders on aging issues

BY JUDITH GRAHAM  
KAISER HEALTH NEWS

Rachel O'Connor booted up her slides and began posing questions to six older adults sitting around a table: How should primary care physicians support patients and caregivers after a diagnosis of dementia? And what stands in the way of getting adequate support?

"Please speak louder and go slower," suggested Susanne Smith, a 75-year-old with early stage Alzheimer's disease.

Smith belongs to the Bureau of Sages, a group of vulnerable seniors who advise researchers about what matters to older adults, how to involve them in research about aging and how to communicate with them effectively while doing so. It's a groundbreaking program: Traditionally, ill, disabled and cognitively challenged older adults have been excluded from research and assumed to be too compromised to offer useful insights.

"The recognition that this population has something meaningful to contribute — that's really unique,"

said Robyn Stone, a former adviser to the Sages and senior vice president of research at LeadingAge, a national organization of nonprofit providers that focus on aging.

Everyone who works with older adults would do well to pay attention.

Sages groups are housed at several locations. At the Lieberman Center for Health and Rehabilitation, a nursing home in Skokie, a Chicago suburb, nearly a dozen residents meet every two weeks to discuss academic studies, issues they encounter in their daily lives and potential research projects. A similarly sized group of frail, homebound seniors in Chicago's northern suburbs gets together virtually, via the internet.

At Northwestern University's downtown medical campus, seven adults with dementia gather every couple of months at the Mesulam Center for Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease to offer feedback to researchers.

On this sunny day in mid-April, Jim Butler, 70, acknowledged it took him 18 months to accept

a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment and speak openly about it.

Karen Finesilver, 68, who has Lewy body dementia, stressed the importance of bringing someone along to doctors' appointments.

"When I hear something that makes me nervous, I don't retain it," she explained.

And Smith spoke of how important it is to feel heard by her physician: "One of the best things is when he actually listens to what I'm saying, because a lot of times doctors may know what's going on, but they do not listen."

O'Connor, an assistant professor at Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine, had started the conversation by asking about problems that patients and caregivers face. After the discussion, she said she would focus more on "what helps people build on their strengths" because "the resilience and positivity of people really stood out today."

The Bureau of Sages has received two rounds of funding totaling \$500,000 from the Patient-Centered

Outcomes Research Institute, an organization that sponsors innovative projects that include patients in setting research priorities, designing research studies and evaluating their impact.

Unlike occasional surveys or focus groups, a standing group like the Sages can provide "valuable ongoing context about individuals' lives" that sharpens research and makes it more relevant, said Kristin Carman, the institute's director of public and patient engagement.

At the Lieberman nursing home, on another afternoon, two researchers — a physician and a biomechanical engineer — presented a project they're working on to nine seniors, most in wheelchairs. Their prototype device would help people with compromised mobility stand up from a sitting position, a task that requires a surprising amount of coordination and strength.

"Would I be able to use this (device) if I can't straighten my leg out all the way?" asked Sharon Koretsky, 73, who has diabetes and severe osteoarthritis and can no longer stand on her own.

"If your muscles are atrophied, would this help improve your condition?" wondered Fern Netsky, 76, who has had multiple sclerosis for 35 years and can no longer stand or walk.

Both women use what's known as a "sit-to-stand lift" — a clunky device that helps people transfer from a bed to a chair or from a chair to a toilet seat and that requires two aides to maneuver it. Another commonly used device is a "Hoyer lift," which uses a sling to help people rise.

"I hate the Hoyer: They pull it between your legs and you lay there like a big sack of potatoes with your butt hanging out," Koretsky said.

Anything that someone could strap on themselves and that could help people get up more easily with only one aide's help would be a "wonderful idea," she added.

As other Lieberman residents chimed in, it became clear they wanted help with walking, not just with standing. They wanted to be able to use the device outdoors, as well as inside the facility. And safety was essential.

"I would be willing to try this if I was assured I would not fall and if there was enough protection around me," Netsky said.

The researchers said they found many of the comments helpful. Older adults are often assumed to be resistant to using technology, but this group seemed quite open to technology that improves their quality of life, the physician observed.

After the meeting, Nancy Weinberg, 96, another participant, described a communication gap between researchers and nursing home residents when the Bureau of Sages began.

"They were speaking 'researchese,' and I didn't have any idea what they were talking about," she said. "Now they understand we don't want to hear jargon, and they speak our language."

With characteristic bluntness, Koretsky said she loved the Sages meetings, observing, "It's the only

time people here talk to you like you have a brain left."

The Lieberman Sages are now trying to persuade researchers at Northwestern to investigate the shortage of certified nursing assistants and the need to better train CNAs — problems faced by nursing homes across the nation.

Amy Eisenstein, director of the Leonard Schanfield Research Institute at CJE SeniorLife in Chicago and the project's principal investigator, is working to expand the program to other locations, including Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and the University of Massachusetts Boston. CJE SeniorLife, sponsored by Chicago's Council for Jewish Elderly, provides a variety of services to seniors and is the Bureau of Sages' original sponsor.

Materials that can help any organization launch a Bureau of Sages are available at the Council for Jewish Elderly's website.

"I think that all research on aging needs to include the voices of older adults," Eisenstein said. "They are experts about their lives, and we need to incorporate their perspectives to make research better."





# Adult Foster Care of the North Shore provides financial and emotional solutions to families

Adult Foster Care of the North Shore is a one-of-a-kind organization. For the last 18 years they have been providing financial and emotional solutions to families in need of care for a disabled or chronically ill loved one (clients). Many Adult Foster Care clients are already living with a parent, child or other family member who qualifies as a caregiver. Others are placed in homes with compassionate and diligent caregivers.

In 2000, Dr. Cynthia Bjorlie left her private practice of 17 years and opened Adult Foster Care of the North Shore after reading an article in the NY Times about "Foster Seniors," a program in New Jersey. Having always been interested in the care of people who cannot manage alone, she decided to develop her own program in Massachusetts. With a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, she started Adult Foster Care of the North Shore. Since 2001, Adult Foster Care of the North Shore has grown to a staff of 30 and now serves over 400 clients. The difference between AFCNS and other similar companies is that, even though they share the same mission, the staff at Adult Foster Care of the North Shore actually lives the mission. They believe in a more compassionate and people-focused approach that produces great results.

**If you are interested in becoming a paid caregiver for a disabled family member or qualified disabled adult, visit [AdultFosterCareNS.com](http://AdultFosterCareNS.com) or call today at 978-281-2612.**

## About the Program:

This innovative program provides caregivers with a monthly payment for taking care of a disabled or ill adult. Caregivers are special, dedicated people who may take care of a family member or a new friend and welcome them into their own home.

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### *Adult Foster Care of the North Shore provides the following financial and emotional support:*

**Financial Support:** Through MassHealth, a monthly, tax-free stipend is given to the caregiver.

**Health & Social Support:** Clients and caregivers are assigned a nurse and care manager who visit the homes regularly. Staff members can answer questions about health issues and serve as a resource for medical training, education and needed interventions. On call support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**General Resource Support:** Seasoned nurses and care managers can identify vital resources including:

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- Guardianship and health care proxy information
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***Nhung, Caregiver to mother, Chinh***



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# Home for the golden years

BY STACEY BURLING  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

## Why the aging middle class can't afford assisted living

Senior housing has a problem with middle-class affordability.

There are many alluring options for the wealthy, and there's considerable financial help available for the poor. But middle-class people who need assisted living — help with daily activities and simple medical tasks like medication and meal management — often find themselves priced out of the market.

In an attempt to spur the developers of senior housing to come up with cheaper alternatives before the wave of baby boomers hits old age, a group of researchers analyzed the likely needs and financial resources of the “forgotten middle” in 10 years.

In 2029, 7.8 million Americans age 75 and up won't be able to afford assisted living, according to the team led by Caroline Pearson, a senior vice president at NORC, an independent research institution at the University of Chicago. These 2029 seniors will have annual financial resources of \$60,000 or less, but will make too much to qualify for Medicaid, the state and federal health insurance program for the poor.

Meanwhile, in the report published in the health policy journal *Health Affairs*, the researchers estimated that the average annual cost of assisted living and medical needs would be \$62,000. That does not include clothing or other supplies.

More than 11 million people would find assisted living out of reach if they held onto their houses. The researchers said that resistance to selling the family home keeps some seniors from considering other options. Selling the house can also be a problem when



Dreamstime

As baby boomers age, the affordability of assisted living will be a growing problem for those with middle incomes.

one member of a couple needs assisted living and the other doesn't.

While many people say they prefer to “age in place,” that can lead to loneliness and other health problems as seniors become more physically or cognitively disabled. Marc Cohen, co-director of the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston, said many boomers are open to moving once aging causes disability. Greater availability of affordable housing would give them the option of “aging in community.”

Housing and health care are strongly linked, Pearson said. Changes in health usually drive the need to move to assisted living.

“When you're looking at the problem of aging, it is a problem that is housing and

*“When you're looking at the problem of aging, it is a problem that is housing and health care combined, and yet the system doesn't think about it that way and certainly doesn't pay for it that way.”*

**Caroline Pearson, senior vice president at NORC, an independent research institution at the University of Chicago**

health care combined,” she said, “and yet the system doesn't think about it that way and certainly doesn't pay for it that way.”

Medicaid pays for nursing home care after people have used their other resources. It also often pays for supportive services that can help poor people stay in their homes longer. In most states, it also helps pay for assisted living services,

though not housing itself. Pearson said that a big increase in the number of people who spend all their money and need Medicaid's help in old age would stress the program.

The National Investment Center for Seniors Housing and Care, a nonprofit whose mission is to improve access and choice in senior housing options, partly funded the project to draw more

attention to the affordability problems, encourage conversation and stimulate creative responses.

“This study is meant to be a wake-up call,” said Beth Burnham Mace, NIC's chief economist and a study author.

She added that operators of senior housing wanted data on the size of the middle market.

Many boomers may need professional care because they've had fewer children than earlier generations. The report estimated that 60 percent of middle-income seniors in 2029 would have mobility issues and 20 percent would have three or more chronic medical conditions and difficulty with at least one activity of daily living, like eating or bathing.

On the plus side, boomers

are better educated than their parents and many have earned more income. The percentage of the population that can afford assisted living will also increase for some time. However, the portion that can't will swell after 2029, Mace said. Future seniors, the study said, have lower overall savings and are less likely to have pensions than the previous generation.

The study defined the middle market based on which individuals in 2014 would have trouble paying for assisted living if they kept their houses. That was people who made more money than the bottom 41 percent of seniors and less than the top 20 percent. In 2029, the study's middle-market 75- to 84-year-olds would have annual financial resources of \$25,001 to \$74,298 in 2014 dollars.

Mace thinks more people would move into senior housing if they could afford it. She sees the middle market as the aging equivalent of “workforce housing,” a planning term used to describe housing that firefighters, police officers, government workers and teachers could afford.

So far, Pearson said, “we've seen not a lot of progress from policymakers” in addressing the affordability problem. She hopes experts will now take on the challenge. “It feels like there should be some creative solutions out there.”

The researchers suggested that the private sector could accept lower profit margins, offer less luxurious housing, take advantage of technology and subsidize middle-income residents with higher-paying ones. The government could create tax incentives, expand subsidies, expand Medicare coverage of nonmedical services and create a long-term care benefit.



# Keep your cool: Protect yourself from extreme heat

With warmer temperatures on the horizon, now is the time to prepare your home and body.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more people in the United States die from extreme heat than earthquakes, hurricanes, lightning, floods and tornadoes combined.

With age, our bodies become less able to cool down when temperatures are extreme. Fortunately, there are several proactive steps seniors can take to keep themselves safe this summer.

Don't underestimate the impact heat can have on your health. Remember these tips as the temperatures increase.

## Air-conditioning inspection

Before the heat is in full force, have a certified HVAC

service analyze the integrity of your air-conditioning system. Ensuring it will perform when you need it most is good peace of mind.

A technician will test it and perform preventive maintenance so it's running in peak condition.

If your air-conditioning system breaks down in the middle of the summer, you may face delays before a specialist can make repairs, as it is the busy season. If you should find yourself in this situation, have a backup plan to stay with a loved one or an emergency fund to check into a hotel until the unit is fixed.

## Remain hydrated

A key to keeping safe during the summer is to stay hydrated. Drinking plenty of water is always important, but especially crucial during the heat.

If you find yourself

outside for extended periods, be sure to take numerous sips, not just when you're thirsty, as thirst isn't a good indicator of hydration.

Signs to look for include headache, muscle cramps and dry mouth or tongue. If these symptoms persist, it's important to seek medical attention before they become worse.

## Buddy system or caregiver

Call on a friend or loved one to check in on you every few hours during days of extreme heat. You will have peace of mind that if something goes wrong, you will have someone looking out for you.

If you need more constant care, consider hiring an in-home caretaker. They can help ensure you are remaining hydrated and determine if the heat is beginning to affect your health.



A key to keeping safe during the summer is to stay hydrated.

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# THE SENIORITY TIGHTROPE

## Older Americans more likely to cite workplace discrimination, according to poll

BY ANDREW SOERTEL  
FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Are older workers being discriminated against on the job? The answer appears to depend on the age of the person asked.

About half of Americans think there's age discrimination in the workplace, according to a poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

But there's a split by age. The poll finds 60% of adults age 60 and over say older workers in the U.S. are always or often discriminated against, while 43% of adults younger than 45 say the same.

"I just think they're not really aware of it," said Wendy Sachs, 48, an author and speaker. She often has discussed her own experiences with age discrimination applying for and working at New York City startup companies.

Federal law bars age discrimination in employment. Yet three-quarters of adults 60 and older — and 65% of those between ages 45 and 59 — say they believe their age puts them at a disadvantage when looking for work. One in 10 adults 60 and over and about 2 in 10 of those age 45 to 59 say they have been passed over for a raise, promotion or chance to get ahead specifically because of their age.

"They look at you kind of strange as you apply for a job. And I immediately know, 'Oh, well, I'm not going to get hired,'" said Kevin Kusinitz. The 63-year-old New Yorker spent years being rejected from jobs for which he felt overqualified after an August 2012 layoff.

Kusinitz now works a few days each week as a



RICHARD DREW/Associated Press

**Richard Drew)Kevin Kusinitz, a 63-year-old New Yorker who spent years being rejected from jobs for which he felt overqualified following an August 2012 layoff, walks near New York's East River. About half of Americans think there's age discrimination in the workplace, according to a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.**

background actor in movies and television shows through Central Casting New York, and he said his wife "makes a good salary" to help support them. But after his initial layoff at 56, he says he spent years unsuccessfully trying to land a job.

He believes his age was a primary reason his job search failed to gain traction. As he filled out one particular online application, he was asked to select his birth year from a drop-down menu. He discovered the menu didn't go back far enough for him to

enter an accurate date.

"I think it only went back to the 1970s. I thought, 'Wow, I'm not even in the drop-down range. I really am old,'" he said.

By comparison, younger adults are more likely to think their age puts them at an advantage. Nearly half of those under 30 and about one-third of those ages 30 to 44 said they feel their age is a benefit.

Sachs applied for a handful of startup jobs in New York about five years ago. She said she was often

competing against 20-somethings for positions and was at times made to feel like an outsider because of her age. She recounts one awkward exchange with a younger hiring manager who dismissed the physical résumé she'd brought to her interview, instead insisting on a digital copy.

Sachs eventually landed a position but was let go shortly thereafter. She said she was led to believe her experience commanded too high a salary and that younger, less experienced workers would fill her

role for less pay.

Meanwhile, the survey shows 75% of women over 45 said their age puts them at a disadvantage when looking for work, compared with 65% of older men.

"For women, we see an early onset (cases of age discrimination), and the discrimination is much more severe," said Patrick Button, an assistant economics professor at Tulane University in Louisiana. "I think there is a lot of sexism in aging."

Button and his fellow researchers mocked up and

distributed more than 40,000 fake job applications to online postings. They found that résumés designed to look like they belonged to an older applicant, particularly an older female applicant, were less likely to get a call back.

"There's some evidence of age discrimination against men, but more so men at retirement age rather than men at age 50," Button said.

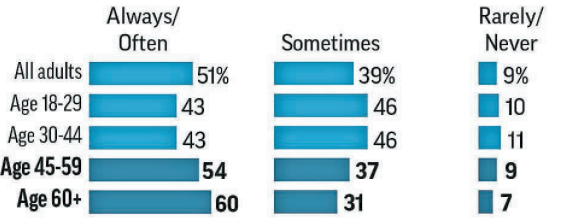
The federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act bars discrimination in the workplace on the basis of age. A recent decision by the 7th



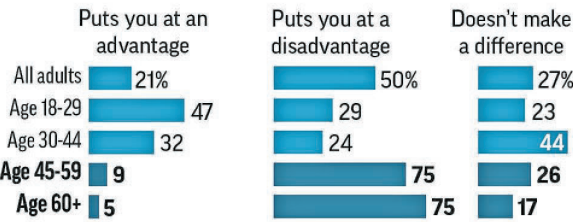
# Older workers see discrimination

An AP-NORC Center poll finds that most older workers believe age-based job discrimination is a frequent occurrence, and that their age is a disadvantage when seeking work.

**Q: How often do you think older workers experience age-based discrimination in the workplace?**



**Q: When looking for work, do you think your age ...**



Results based on interviews with 1,423 U.S. adults conducted Feb. 14-18. The margin of error is ±3.7 percentage points for the full sample, higher for subgroups.

SOURCE: AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research



U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago said that only current employees can be protected by certain elements of the statute, effectively loosening the restrictions on employers screening older individuals out of their applicant pool.

“Hiring discrimination — you almost never have any proof. If you think about how people look for jobs these days, it’s almost all online,” said Laurie McCann, a senior attorney at the AARP Foundation. “You send your résumé off into a black hole. Maybe you receive a reply that thanks you for your application, but you have no idea why you were screened out or who got the job ahead of you. It’s very hard to prove.”

Even as most older adults said older workers face discrimination at work, 21% of adults 60 and over do say they feel more respected at work because of their age. The survey also finds only about 1 in 10 adults over 60 are worried about their ability to do their job.



Kevin Kusinitz believes his age was a primary reason that his job search failed to gain traction following a 2012 layoff. The 63-year-old, seen straightening one of the old movie posters in his collection in his New York apartment, now works a few days a week as a background actor.

William Moore, a 77-year-old resident of Washington state, said he began working at an Enterprise Rent-a-Car outfit after retiring as a mechanic.

“The only issue was, were you able to do the job. If you

were doing it a little slower, OK, we do it slower,” he said. “I think (age discrimination) might be an issue in some jobs, but I didn’t see it in mine.”

Andrew Soergel is studying aging and workforce

issues as part of a 10-month fellowship at The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, which joins NORC’s independent research and AP journalism. The fellowship is funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

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# Hearing better for a happier life



According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, about 1 in 3 people between the ages of 65 and 74 have hearing loss and nearly half of those older than 75 have difficulty hearing.

If you are experiencing a decline in how you hear, it may be time to invest in a hearing aid. There are several considerations you should make before committing to a certain model. Make sure to get your doctor's opinion on the option that is most efficient in your situation.

Here are some factors to consider before you begin shopping.

## Key features

Hearing devices typically consist of four basic components: a microphone, a processor, a receiver and a power source. The microphone recognizes the sounds you hear and transfers them to the processor.

Those sounds are enhanced by the processor, which then amplifies them to your ear canal via the receiver, or speaker. The system is powered by a power source, or battery.

While most operate the same, you can find units with other high-tech features. Here are some to look for.

- Automatic gain control picks up on soft sounds while maintaining loud noises at comfortable levels.

- A feedback manager is helpful to minimize annoying whistling, while boosting amplification.

- Noise reduction is great for reducing background noise so you can concentrate on speech intelligibility.

## Set reasonable expectations

A hearing aid won't completely restore your hearing, so it's important to understand what you should expect.

Most users experience

a better quality of life by picking up on sounds they couldn't hear in the past and enjoying conversations without asking someone to repeat themselves.

You also should allow yourself time to adjust to the new type of hearing experience. There may be a short period before you feel comfortable with your new earpiece and its capabilities.

## Assistive listening device

In addition to a hearing aid, take advantage of assistive listening devices that can make an aid more effective. Installing wireless systems or neck loops in rooms in which you have difficulty hearing can make the sounds more prevalent to someone with a hearing aid.

Before making a purchase, check with your insurance policy to see if they help cover the cost. Some high-end models can be expensive.

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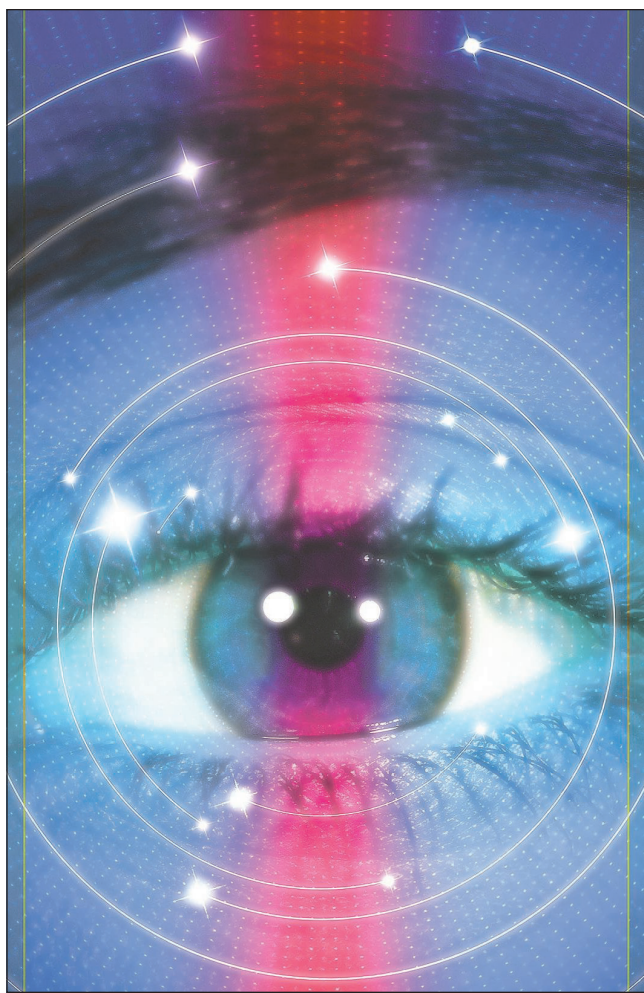
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# LENS WATCH

## Common cataract causes and treatment

Cataracts are the most common cause of vision loss among people ages 40 and older.

According to All About Vision, cataracts also are the principal cause of blindness in the world.

There are more cases of cataracts worldwide than there are glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy, according to Prevent Blindness America. Fortunately, cataracts are easily recognized and treated.

### What are cataracts?

A cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision. The lens is the clear part of the eye that helps focus light — and images — on the retina. The lens must be clear to receive a sharp image. If the

lens is cloudy, vision will be blurred.

Cataracts tend to form slowly. Initially, they only affect a small part of the lens, and they're not very bothersome as a result. However, over time, cataracts can grow and impair vision. Seeing "halos" around lights, fading of colors, sensitivity to light, glare and the need for brighter light for reading and handling tasks are common symptoms.

### What causes cataracts?

Various things, including aging or injury to the eye tissue, can cause cataracts. Prior eye surgery, diabetes, long-term use of steroid medications and inherited genetic disorders also can cause cataracts, reports the Mayo Clinic. Smoking and

alcohol use, as well as consistent exposure to UV sunlight, also may contribute to the formation of cataracts. With aging, the lenses in the eyes become less flexible, less transparent and thicker. Tissues within the lens can break down and clump together, clouding small areas within the lens of the eye, thereby forming a cataract.

Cataracts may be a sub-capsular cataract, which occurs at the back of the lens. A nuclear cataract forms in the center of the lens. A cortical cataract starts in the periphery of the lens and works its way inward to the center.

### Treating cataracts

Cataracts need only be treated if they are affecting vision severely or

preventing examination or treatment of another eye problem. An eye care professional will discuss with patients if surgery is needed.

The National Eye Institute says surgery is safe and effective. In roughly 90 percent of cases, people who have undergone cataract surgery have better vision afterward. The surgery involves removing the clouded lens and replacing it with a clear, artificial one. The procedure is usually done on an outpatient basis, and patients typically stay awake during the surgery.

Routine eye examinations are a key part of an overall health plan. They can shed light on the formation of cataracts and help people develop effective treatment plans.

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# Preventing dementia: Try exercise, not vitamins

By MARILYN MARCHIONE  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

If you want to save your brain, focus on keeping the rest of your body well with exercise and healthy habits rather than popping vitamin pills, new guidelines for preventing dementia advise.

About 50 million people currently have dementia, and Alzheimer's disease is the most common type. Each year brings 10 million new cases, according to a report recently released by the World Health Organization.

Although age is the top risk factor, "dementia is not a natural or inevitable consequence of aging," the report says.

Many health conditions and behaviors affect the odds of developing dementia, and research suggests that a third of cases are preventable, said Maria Carrillo, chief science officer of the Alzheimer's Association,



**Keeping the body healthy will help keep the brain healthy, too, the World Health Organization reports.**

which has published similar advice.

Since dementia is currently incurable and so

many experimental therapies have failed, focusing on prevention may "give us more benefit in the shorter

term," Carrillo said.

Much of the WHO's advice is common sense, and echoes what the U.S.

National Institute on Aging says.

That includes getting enough exercise; treating other health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol; having an active social life; and avoiding or curbing harmful habits such as smoking, overeating and drinking too much alcohol. Evidence is weak that some of these help preserve thinking skills, but they're known to aid general health, the WHO says.

Eating well, and possibly following a Mediterranean-style diet, may help prevent dementia, the guidelines say. But they take a firm stance against vitamin B or E pills, fish oil, or multi-complex supplements that are promoted for brain health because there's strong research showing they don't work.

"There is currently no evidence to show that taking

these supplements actually reduces the risk of cognitive decline and dementia, and in fact, we know that in high doses, these can be harmful," the WHO's Dr. Neerja Chowdhary said.

"People should be looking for these nutrients through food ... not through supplements," Carrillo agreed.

The WHO also did not endorse games and other activities aimed at boosting thinking skills. These can be considered for people with normal capacities or mild impairment, but there's low to very low evidence of benefit.

There's not enough evidence to recommend antidepressants to reduce dementia risk, although they may be used to treat depression, the report says. Hearing aids also may not reduce dementia risk, but older people should be screened for hearing loss and treated accordingly.

## How to choose a dementia caregiver for your loved one

When a loved one is diagnosed with dementia, a family's life can turn upside down. In such situations, families may not know much about the disease, including what to expect with treatment and how soon before the dementia patient begins to need care that the family cannot capably provide.

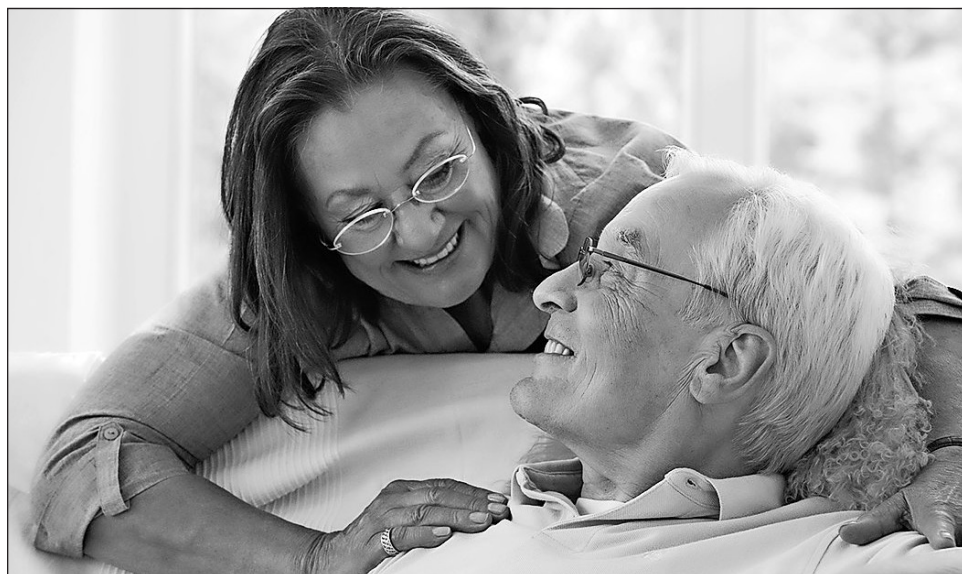
Over time, dementia patients' loved ones are likely to benefit from the expertise and assistance of qualified dementia caregivers. It can be overwhelming for loved ones to offer the right level of care for someone who is unable to perform the activities of daily living. Bathing, medication management, dressing and feeding are often very difficult for dementia patients.

The Alzheimer's Association says that providing good care for someone with dementia goes beyond

meeting basic needs. It also means finding caregivers who treat the whole person and provide an environment that can enable the person to be safe yet independent.

In order to get started, one should first assess the needs of their loved one with dementia. How many services he or she will require depends on whether that person can use the bathroom, walk, eat or bathe independently. Alz.org says care needs tend to be lesser in the early stages of dementia. However, during the middle and end stages of dementia, 24-hour supervision and potentially more intensive medical care may be necessary.

Some families start with a visiting caregiver who can come to the house. Various agencies are certified to offer care according to advanced dementia care



**Finding a quality caregiver can provide invaluable peace of mind for family members of dementia sufferers.**

protocols after working with leading dementia specialists. Caregivers may offer companionship and helpful reminders. Others may

assist clients with personal tasks.

One key aspect of dementia care is preventing wandering. Alz.org indicates

that six in 10 people with dementia will wander. A person with Alzheimer's may not remember his or her name or address and

can become disoriented, even in familiar places. Caregivers can put protocols in place to help reduce wandering. Alert bracelets and GPS tracking devices can help in this regard, as well.

At some point, caregivers can help families transition someone with dementia to nursing facilities with memory care divisions. Social workers and other aides may help families navigate the legalities of medical insurance and long-term care insurance, as well as government assistance programs that may help offset the costs of more intensive care.

It's never too soon to develop a care plan for someone with dementia. Qualified and compassionate caregivers can help ease the burden of dementia on patients and their families.





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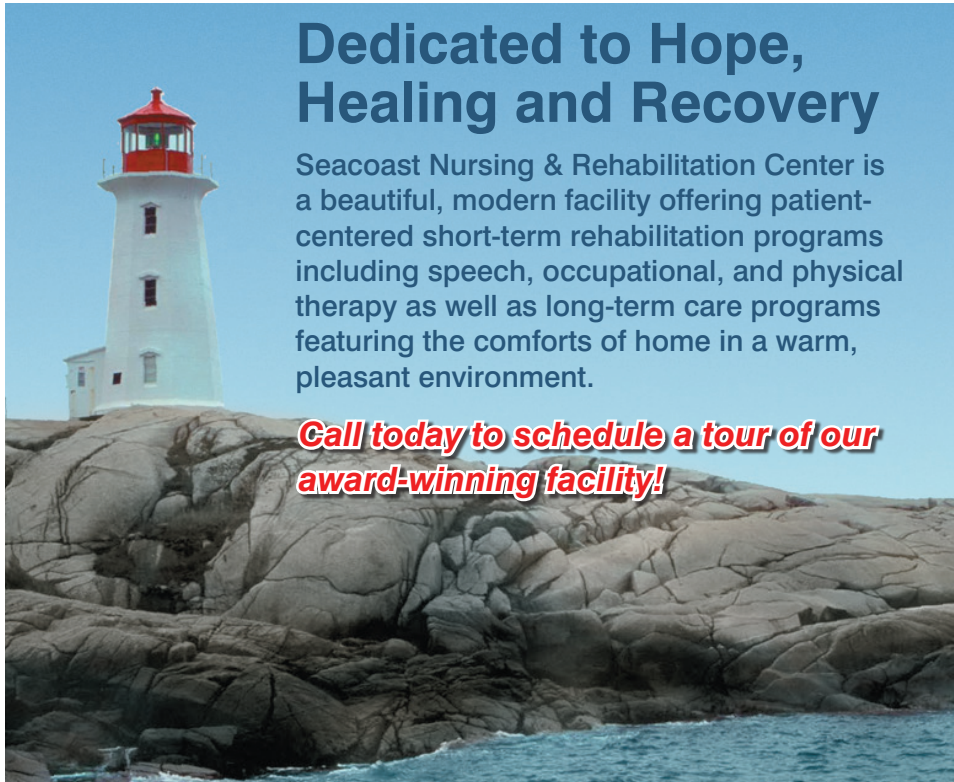
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# TRAVEL TIME



Some retirees find cruises a convenient and worry-free way to travel.

## The destinations are limitless for retirees

When the time comes to bid farewell to conference calls, meetings and daily commutes, retirees have open schedules to fill with whichever activities they choose. Travel is one exciting way to pass the time.

Traveling can be a rewarding prospect for active seniors, particularly those who successfully preplanned for retirement and have the income to fund various excursions. Many seniors find that travel tops their to-do lists once they retire. According to Senior Travel magazine, new travel options are emerging for newly minted retirees looking for something a little different from the status quo.

The list of destinations retirees have at their disposal is limitless. The following ideas are some of the more popular ways retirees choose to travel.

### Road trips rule

Taking to the highways and byways is an excellent way to see the country. Seniors can customize their routes depending on which places they want to visit. RV travel can be as comfortable or as rustic as travelers prefer. Many seniors

spend months traveling in their campers, which offer many of the same amenities of home. Campsites and special RV hookup sites offer the other necessities of traveling the open road.

### Genealogical tourism is popular

People hoping to trace their ancestry and visit their ancestral homelands are one of the fastest-growing travel segments. Visiting an old church in Europe where ancestors were married or buying food from a market in which a great aunt or uncle once worked leads retirees on many international adventures. Such trips provide travelers with a unique opportunity to understand their roots up close and personal while enjoying some international travel along the way.

### Exciting exotic destinations

History buffs or adventure-seeking couples may be particularly attracted to exotic travel destinations that are slightly off the beaten path. Travel tours may take vacationers to destinations such as excavation sites or backpacking through the rainforest. With passport in hand, seniors can go

just about anywhere their desires take them.

### Relaxing seaside trip

A seaside vacation can be the perfect trip for seniors who want to put their feet up and sip some cocktails while watching the waves lap the shores. Many beach resorts offer all-inclusive packages for different age groups. Meals, excursions and hotel rooms can be bundled into one affordable, confusion-free price.

### Go cruising

Speaking of all-inclusive vacationing, cruising seems tailor-made for those ages 50 and older because it offers the convenience of accommodations, food, entertainment and transportation all in one. The various activities offered on the ship mean travelers can find ways to spend their time how they see fit. Cruising couples can opt to spend all of their time on the ship enjoying carefully prepared meals and entertainment or disembark and explore the various ports of call along the way.

Now that they have more free time, retirees can gear up for travel adventures to remember.



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# TAKING OFF: Tips for flying in comfort

If you are retired or approaching retirement, you may be planning to do your fair share of traveling. Sometimes, flying seems like too much of a chore to entertain, but driving long distances can be just as difficult. Don't let your fear of being uncomfortable in flight stop you from seeing the world.

Half the struggle of flying occurs before you even enter the plane. Navigating huge airports while hauling luggage can take a toll on your body. Before traveling, consider investing in suitcases with high-quality wheels to make walking more comfortable.

Check out these other helpful tips to enjoy your flight, from the experts at Parentgiving.

## Preflight planning

Packing lightly for your flight will lessen the strain you feel when boarding. Try to show up early so you have plenty of time to check all your baggage before waiting in line. Only bring along the necessities you will require while you're in the air.



Plan ahead to set the stage for a smooth flight.

You should also wear comfortable clothing and shoes, since you may expect to be standing in lines for long durations. Don't forget to request an aisle seat that provides easy access to the bathroom and

allows you to get up to stretch during a flight.

## Bring medication

Remember to bring the medication your body needs to remain

healthy. It's important to receive a doctor's note before your flight as medication may raise questions when you are going through security. Without a note, you may experience delays or,

worse, have your prescriptions confiscated.

It's also important to prepare an in-flight medication schedule, especially when crossing multiple time zones. You will want to make sure you stick to your body's schedule, not what the clock says.

## Travel aids

Sitting still for long periods of time can wreak havoc on our comfort level. Pack noise-reduction headphones to make the environment more suitable for a power nap or a peaceful experience for enjoying a book. Items to prevent soreness include compression stockings, which can reduce the risk of blood clots if you are on an extremely long flight.

## Pack those snacks

Plan for delays or reroutes by bringing a suitable selection of food. This is especially important if you suffer from a disease like diabetes or eating is required after taking certain medications.

# Making memories: Getting away with the grandkids

Taking your grandchildren with you on a vacation is a wholesome experience for the entire family. Whether it's a cruise, camping trip or visiting an amusement park, the journey will help build the bond you have.

Plan to bring the little ones along for the adventure of your lives.

If you haven't spent an extended time alone with your grandchildren, a trial run before you invest in an expensive trip is important. Talk with their parents about any nighttime issues their children may have, such as nightmares, trouble sleeping or incontinence. While remaining close to home, invite them over for an overnight or weekend visit.

If all goes well, plan your trip, but don't forget to listen for the youngsters' input. This vacation is just

as much for them. Here are some other considerations you should make before leaving for vacation.

## Follow the rules of mom and dad

While you may not be familiar with asking your children for permission, it's respectful to ensure you are following wishes regarding their kids.

Ask about any special instructions they have about their behavior and how to resolve it. For instance, if a child talks back or tries to act out, you should know how to keep punishments consistent. It's important to have your grandchildren's respect so they don't test their limits and bring this misbehavior home.

## Where will you go?

Consider talking with a local travel agent to find a combination tour tailored



Involve grandchildren in vacation planning to make the trip enjoyable for everyone.

to grandparents and their grandchildren. These specialized trips will give the entire group a chance to socialize with peers of the

same age from all over the world.

Booking a rental property nearby favorite tourist locations is another good idea.

These condos are usually less expensive than staying at hotels for a few nights, plus they offer enough room to give everyone their

own space.

Camping is another experience to share with your grandchildren. You can teach them the value of nature and show them useful skills such as fire building, outdoor cooking and fishing.

## What should you bring?

In addition to luggage and supplies you'll need for your vacation, you also should bring a few special documents along.

Get notarized letters from the parents, one giving their permission for you to travel with their kids and another giving permission for you to make decisions about medical care. You'll also want copies of the children's medical and dental insurance cards.

Hopefully these forms will stay in your suitcase, but it's best to be prepared for issues.



# The importance of good sleep

A good night's sleep affects much more than how you feel the next day. With age, it's not uncommon for sleep habits to change. Most seniors notice they are ready to fall asleep earlier in the evening and wake up at later hours.

As we age, our bodies produce less melatonin, which can lead to slight disruptions throughout the night. However, if you experience disturbed sleep, are tired when you wake up or experience other aspects of insomnia, there may be serious underlying issues.

Learn more information regarding your sleeping patterns and if you should visit a specialist, from the American Geriatrics Society.

## Common sleep problems

Problems with sleep can lead to numerous issues for older adults. Here are a few of the most common types they experience.

■ **Insomnia:** A condition that causes you not to fall asleep when you think you should, causes you to stay asleep or gives the feeling

you have not slept enough once you wake up.

■ **Sleep apnea:** A condition that may cause seniors to stop breathing during sleep. A lack of oxygen causes some to wake up gasping for air. This condition may lead to diseases such as high blood pressure and heart conditions.

■ **Restless leg syndrome:** A condition that causes people to repetitively kick their legs during sleep. While it may not wake you up, it's likely your legs will be sore in the morning and it will affect your comfort and ability to rest.

## What can you do?

Your actions throughout the day can play a huge role in how well you sleep. Take the advice from the group Health in Aging to set yourself up for a full night's rest.

■ Avoid caffeine, tobacco and alcohol in the later part of the day.

■ Eat smaller portions before bedtime.

■ Follow a strict sleep schedule and routine.



■ Exercise regularly, especially early in the day.

## Reach out for help

If you have tried to make

yourself tired and are still having difficulty sleeping, visiting a specialist is the next step. Through tests and studies, they can find what is keeping you awake.

They may choose cognitive-behavioral therapy, medical management or sometimes prescription medicine to help you get a better night's sleep.



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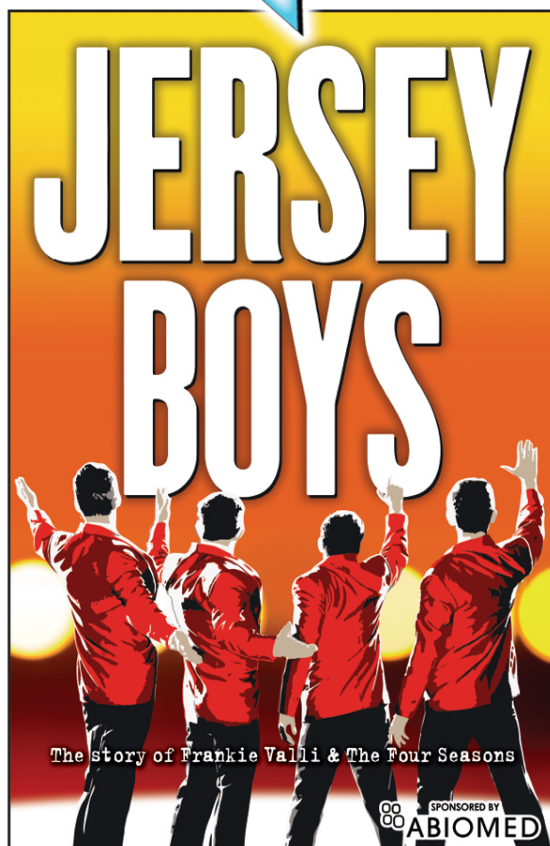


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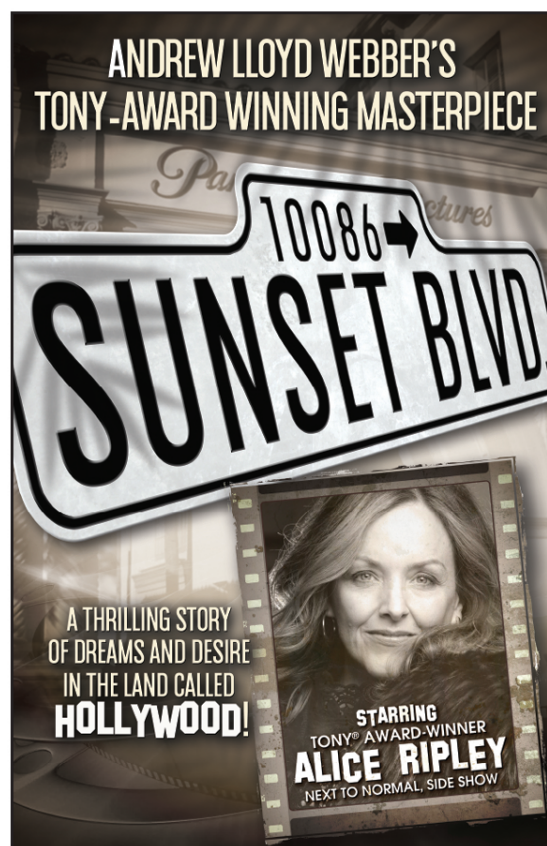


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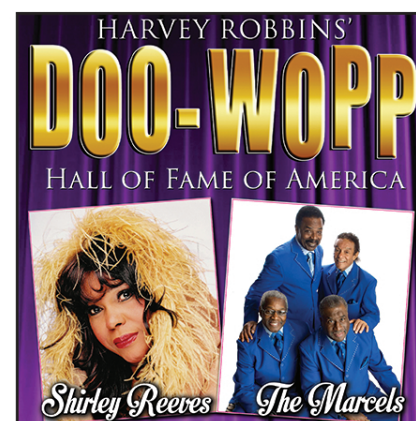
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