

HealthWatch

Health Care in Northeastern Oklahoma
Winter 2019



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- STAYING ACTIVE

TAHLEQUAH

**DAILY
PRESS**





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Intensive care	Urology
Internal medicine	Women's health services
Labor and delivery	Wound care and hyperbaric medicine





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**TAHLEQUAH
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HealthWatch is a quarterly publication of the Tahlequah Daily Press. For advertising opportunities, call a member of the advertising team at 918-456-8833.
www.tahlequahdailypress.com

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A Different Kind of Care
The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly

Cherokee Elder Care

A community PACE program

1387 W 4th St., Tahlequah OK 74464



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Qualifications

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- Live within the service area, CEC covers several zip codes



Call us at 918-453-5554 or visit us at <http://eldercare.cherokee.org> to discuss your options.

* Individuals DO NOT have to be Native American to qualify • CEC PACE participants may be liable to the cost of services obtained without their CEC teams approval.

Nothing to be sneezed at

Get ready for cold and flu season

With winter right around the corner, the number of respiratory infections lurking among us is on the rise. While there's no miracle cure for the flu or common cold, here's some advice to help you get through the season.

Preventing colds

While a wide assortment of preventive measures is routinely touted, the only way to truly protect yourself from the common cold is to wash your hands regularly and often.

Garlic, both fresh and in supplement form, can help reduce the incidence of colds and their duration.

As for vitamin C, while it doesn't prevent colds, some studies indicate that it may slightly shorten them in people who take it on a regular basis.

Preventing flu

Flu prevention is a more serious issue. Of the millions of Americans infected last year, 80,000 vulnerable patients died.

While its effectiveness can vary from year to year, the influenza vaccine remains the single best way to protect yourself, and others, from contracting the flu.

Treating flu and colds

If you've gotten sick despite your best efforts, here are a few ways you can relieve your symptoms:

Get lots of rest

Drink plenty of fluids

Use throat sprays and lozenges

Use nasal irrigation

Take over-the-counter drugs (analgesics, decongestants, expectorants, etc.)

Over-the-counter cold and flu medications can provide relief but be careful: most contain a cocktail of ingredients and some may be inappropriate under certain circumstances. Consult your pharmacist to ensure you select a safe and effective product.

When to see a doctor

If your symptoms are severe or last longer than ten days, consult a healthcare professional. Keep in mind that antibiotics won't help combat colds and flu and that antiviral drugs are only recommended for patients who present a high risk for complications. In most cases, getting lots of rest is what's required to get better.



DID YOU KNOW?

Contrary to popular belief, cold air isn't to blame for cold and flu infections. People tend to spend more time inside during the cold months, which increases the risk of transmitting illnesses.

DID YOU KNOW?

Using a humidifier can help relieve respiratory symptoms, but only if you scrupulously follow the manufacturer's directions. Unless they're cleaned thoroughly and regularly, humidifiers provide an ideal environment for mold and bacteria to grow, which means you could end up breathing in more pathogens.

DID YOU KNOW?

While using your hands to cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing helps limit the number of pathogens you spray into the air, it also means you'll be contaminating everything you touch afterwards. Public health agencies recommend that you sneeze or cough directly into a paper tissue. If that's not possible, use the crook of your elbow or your upper arm.



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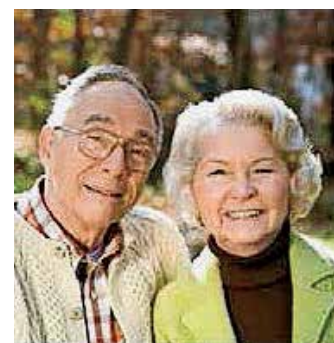
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Childhood Obesity

Preventing childhood obesity begins at home



THE 5-2-1-0 RULE

To make sure everyone in your family has a healthy body shape and weight, follow the 5-2-1-0 rule. Every day, eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables, have no more than two hours of screen time, get at least one hour of exercise and drink zero sugary beverages.

Did you know that obesity affects one-in-five children in the United States? The National Childhood Obesity Awareness Foundation provides information for Americans to address this issue and offers strategies to help overcome it.

HEALTH ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH OBESITY

Children with obesity are more likely to have chronic health issues such as asthma, sleep apnea and type 2 diabetes, among others.

They're also more likely to be bullied and may continue to struggle with obesity as adults.

TREATING AND PREVENTING OBESITY

Childhood obesity is both treatable and preventable.

The more kids are taught to make healthy choices, the better able they are to maintain a healthy body weight. Here's what parents can do:

- Encourage eating meals together. Studies show that when families regularly eat together, children are more likely to make healthy food choices. Eating at home also ensures that everyone eats the appropriate serving size.
- Avoid buying sugary snacks and drinks. Instead, stock the kitchen with healthy snacks like fruit, vegetables, hummus, nuts and yogurt.
- Model good behaviour. Children learn by watching you, so they're more likely to exercise and eat well if they see that you do. Make

having a healthy lifestyle a priority in your family.

- Don't put them on a diet. Restricting what your child consumes may lead to bad eating habits and low self-esteem as they get older. Offer balanced meals and snacks at regular times during the day and encourage more physical activity.

While children come in a range of shapes and sizes, obesity presents serious health risks and needs to be dealt with accordingly. If your child is overweight, be sure to consult a doctor or other health professional as soon as possible.



Yoga

Bring balance to your life



5 major benefits of doing yoga

Yoga is one of the few types of exercise that can be done by almost anybody, regardless of their age or level of fitness. Here are some of the key benefits you can expect as a result of practicing yoga.

1. Reduced stress. Yoga combines deep breathing, mindfulness and physical movement to create a meditative experience that makes you feel calmer.



2. Increased flexibility. Increasing your flexibility will loosen your joints and muscles. This will lead to better posture as well as fewer aches and pains.

3. Enhanced overall health. Yoga strengthens your muscles and helps you maintain a healthy body weight. It can also lower your blood pressure, decrease your cholesterol and increase your bone density.

4. Relief from pain. If you suffer from ongoing head, back or neck pain, yoga could help relieve or mitigate the discomfort.

5. Improved diet. People who regularly practice yoga tend to develop more awareness of how different foods make their body feel. Consequently, they gravitate towards healthier choices that make them feel great.

Wondering if yoga is right for you? Sign up for a class today and find out.

TYPES OF YOGA

Here are some of the most common types of yoga practiced in studios and homes across the country.

- **Hatha yoga** is a classic practice that combines deep breathing with various asanas or physical postures. It's a great choice for beginners.
- **Ashtanga yoga** is a physically challenging practice that involves rapidly advancing through the same set sequence of poses every time.
- **Vinyasa yoga** is similar to ashtanga but doesn't follow the same sequence every time. Props and modifications may be included.
- **Hot yoga** is practiced in a room heated to a temperature of up to 40 °C. The heat is believed to help practitioners move deeper into the poses. However, it's not recommended for people with low fitness levels.
- **Yin yoga** is a slow-paced practice that focuses on holding floor poses for several minutes at a time.
- **Prenatal yoga** is a practice for pregnant women developed to increase pelvic floor strength and prepare the body for labor and delivery.

Detox For Life

Holistic Treatments Are Available to Help Eliminate Toxins From Your Body and Help You Live Your Best Life

by Eric Bichsel

Owner, Maine Street Media, Inc.
www.mainestmedia.com

Every day we are bombarded with toxins. From the air we breathe to the food we eat, we ingest a daily dose of harmful pollutants. But there are ways to mitigate these risks. You can make your own cleaning products, choose alternatives to plastic, and ditch the canned foods, choosing instead fresh fruits and veggies.

When toxins invade your body, what steps do you need to take to eliminate them? I sat down with Andrea Huber of Apocatherapy in Quincy, Ill. She specializes in the restoration of health and well-being, taking a holistic approach to achieve these results.

1) So what is Apocatherapy all about? Apocatherapy is a holistic spa that was designed to assist your body in healing and rejuvenate your mind and body. The treatments have been carefully selected to restore your health and well-being, helping you to relax and replenish your energy. There are hundreds of spas like Apocatherapy all across the country.

2) Are there any special concerns regarding toxins for women considering pregnancy? The beauty industry has the most toxic products on the market. Many chemicals, including those known as endocrine disruptors, have shown adverse effects at even very low doses. Even more concerning are the effects of such chemicals on the most vulnerable populations, like pregnant

women and young children. Americans spend upwards of \$768 million a year on beauty products. All the products I use are either organic or non-toxic. The brands of polishes I offer are either “5 free” or “7 free.” That means these polishes are free from formaldehyde, toluene, DBP, camphor, and formaldehyde resin, including TPHP and XYLENE for the “7 free.” These polishes are also vegan, gluten free, and cruelty free.

3) Who can benefit the most from treatments? Almost everyone can benefit from these types of services. Some of the services out there, such as the infrared sauna, HyperVibe and ionic detox tub, can't be used if someone has a pacemaker, is pregnant, or has any organ transplants.

4) What is the “HyperVibe”? Sounds like a fun ride. When you're on it, it definitely makes you feel like you're on a ride. The HyperVibe is a whole-body vibration machine that can stimulate the body in a variety of unique and beneficial ways not possible with other forms of exercise. Research confirms that these direct effects on the body are possible: stimulation of muscles and other reflexes, an increase in gravitational load, mobilization of joints and muscles, and rapid heating of joints and muscles. The HyperVibe has programs that produce amazing results, some of which include, active aging, weight loss and fitness, women's health and beauty, performance and recovery, and relieve and revive.

5) On the same note, I see something called the AromaDome. Shall I assume that's the location where you pit clients against each other armed with polishes and scented nail files, in an attempt to win a discount? Although that sounds like a pretty cool idea, the AromaDome is a mini tent with an internal essential oil diffuser that I place over the client's upper body while the client lies on a massage table. The AromaDome enables the client to be one with their breath. Each client comes with a different concern and we talk about which oil to use.

6) If my feet constantly hurt, is that a sign I need a foot detox? No not necessarily, although it could help. Ionic foot baths are an effective way to cleanse the body. The ions attach to the negatively charged toxins in the body and are discharged out of the 2,000 pores in the feet. Some benefits to this service include alkalizing the blood, supporting the immune system, supporting liver and kidney functions, assisting in recovery time from injuries and/or surgeries, relieving pain and stiffness, and helping improve sleep.

7) What is the benefit of an infrared sauna? There are so many benefits to the infrared sauna! The sauna can help aid in detoxification, help with relaxation and stress, assist in weight loss, help relieve pain, reduce blood pressure, increase circulation, help in wound healing, purify skin, aid in cell health and muscle recovery, and boost the immune system.

8) What else can I do to keep toxins from entering my body? Oh, wow that's a great

question! I always tell my clients what you eat and the products you put on your body affect every single cell in your body. If you are trying to cut out chemicals and toxins, I tell everyone to refer to EWG.ORG. This is an amazing website that opens your eyes to what really exists in our food and personal care products.

9) What health benefits have you seen since you have been involved in holistic services? I went into this business wanting to help and educate people. The results have been shocking. For example, I have a sauna client who wanted to support his immune system, and we ended up releasing his tight muscles. I have had people lose weight, reduce stress, and most importantly swap out their toxic products.

Before you begin any holistic health care regimen, be sure to discuss it with your doctor.



Andrea Huber is the owner/operator of Apocatherapy in Quincy, Illinois.
www.apocatherapy.com

Modern MAN

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Tattoos and piercings: a beginner's guide

Tattoos and piercings are a great way to express yourself. Here are some things to consider before visiting a studio.

TATTOOS

Once you've chosen a tattoo, you need to decide how visible you want it to be. While they don't carry the same stigma they used to, keep in mind that face, hand and neck tattoos are still frowned upon, especially in professional settings.

It's also a good idea to do some research on the design you've selected and make sure that you're familiar with its meaning. Be careful when considering designs that are significant to members of other cultures or that include script that's in a foreign language.

Another consideration is the many ways tattoos can change and fade over time. Sunlight can prematurely age your tattoo, as can friction from clothing. Fluctuations in weight can also alter your tattoo's appearance.

Finally, if your pain tolerance is low, consider placing your tattoo in an area such as your calf, arm or shoulder. Afterwards, be sure to follow your artist's instructions when it comes to aftercare. Not following their directions can lead to infections.

PIERCINGS

The main things to think about when deciding where you want to get pierced are healing time and aftercare.

An eyebrow piercing will heal slowly because of all the sweat and dirt that accumulates on your brow.

Nipples are extremely sensitive, while tongue and lip piercings are more exposed to bacteria and require additional care.

Genital piercings should only be performed by highly experienced professionals, so do a lot of research before choosing a piercer. A poor piercing technique can result in irreversible damage either due to injury or infection.



5 facts about testosterone

Testosterone is often associated with stereotypically male traits like impulsiveness, competitiveness and a high sex drive. However, this hormone is a lot more complex than you think. Here are five interesting facts about it.

Peak levels. Testosterone levels peak at around 30 years of age. After that, they drop off steadily at a rate of about one percent a year.

Not just a male hormone. Women also produce testosterone. However, they do so at a rate of six to 10 times less than men.

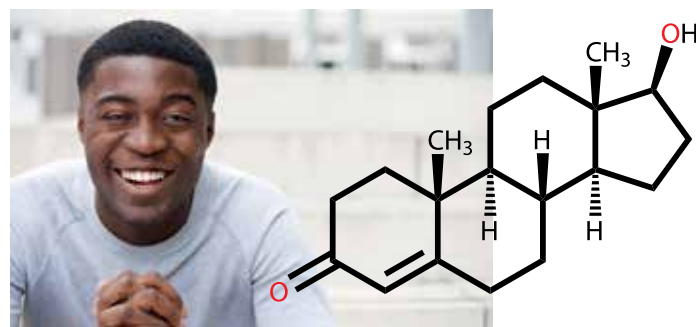
Anabolic steroid. Testosterone is often used in supplement form by athletes looking to increase their muscle mass quickly. These supplements come with a number of serious side effects, many of which are life threatening.

Role in fetal development. Fetuses de-

veloping into baby boys will begin producing testosterone during the seventh week of pregnancy, around the time the testicles begin to form. Before this, there's no difference between a male and female fetus.

Production. Testosterone is chiefly produced by the testicles, with the adrenal glands also producing a small amount. Hormone production itself is regulated by two glands located at the base of the brain: the hypothalamus and the pituitary.

Worries about low testosterone levels are common, especially as men get older. However, keep in mind that it's a complex hormone that performs multiple functions within the human body. Many conditions can affect your testosterone levels, so always consult a doctor if you have concerns and steer clear of herbal remedies and fad diets that purport to boost its production.



3 reasons to visit a barber

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to sit in a barber's chair and get an old-fashioned hair cut? Here are three good reasons to give it a try.

1. SUPERIOR STYLE

A good barber is a true expert and will make sure to trim your hair and beard so that the



style suits your build and features perfectly. By going to a pro, you'll avoid razor burn, nicks and uneven cuts.

2. PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

Visiting a barber also means getting professional advice. Whatever style you opt for, they'll be able to tell you how you should brush, moisturize and maintain your hair. If you're trying to fix a patchy beard, your barber can give you some tips to stimulate growth or better style your facial hair.

3. A RANGE OF SERVICES

Don't underestimate the importance of an eyebrow trim. It can structure your features and complete your look. Some barber shops also offer skin care, massages and other services.

How to choose the right cologne

Are you looking for a new fragrance? Here's a guide to help you navigate the dizzying variety of products available.

TYPES

All perfumed fragrances are made by mixing different ratios of perfume oils (also called essential oils or perfume essence) with alcohol. The more essential oils that there are in a product, the longer the aroma lingers — and the more expensive the bottle is. Here's a breakdown of how much essential oil is in these products:

Eau de cologne:

three to five percent

Eau de toilette:

six to 12 percent

Eau de parfum:

13 to 19 percent

Perfume:

20 to 40 percent

FRAGRANCES

A fragrance's intensity should suit your

personality and style. The smell should bring up fond memories and feelings of confidence, security and calm.

Fruity, aquatic and citrusy notes are great for those who want to project strength, spontaneity and fun. Woody, spicy and earthy fragrances, on the other hand, allow you to adopt an air of confidence, virility and mystery.

SAMPLING

Don't try too many fragrances at once, otherwise you won't be able to tell them apart. Once

you've found something you like, apply some of it to your wrist, if possible, and then wait until the next day to purchase it. The delay will let you discern the complexities of the fragrance and decide whether you like wearing it.

To start your search for a new fragrance, simply visit a nearby pharmacy, department store or cosmetic counter.



Andropause: what is it?

Testosterone levels in men gradually diminish as they age. As a result, many experience an array of changes as they get older. While there's no such thing as a "male menopause," some doctors refer to the collection of symptoms caused by shifting hormone levels in men as andropause.

ANDROPAUSE SYMPTOMS

As testosterone levels decline, men may experience the following:

Sexual changes. This can include reduced libido, erectile dysfunction and infertility. In addition, the testes may become smaller.

Sleep changes. Insomnia, disrupted sleep patterns and increased sleepiness are common.

Physical changes. Increased body fat, decreased bone density and loss of muscle mass may occur. There could also be a loss of body hair and the breasts may become tender and swollen. Though rare, hot

flashes and a decrease in energy are also possible.

Emotional changes. Loss of motivation, decreased confidence, heightened irritability and even depression can occur as a result of declining testosterone levels. Memory and concentration issues can also arise in some cases.

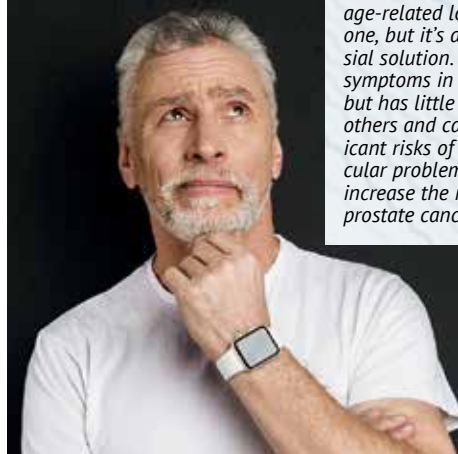
Since these symptoms can be caused by many conditions as well as by poor lifestyle choices, it's important to visit a doctor if you notice them.

SELF CARE AS YOU AGE

In many cases, the symptoms of low testosterone levels can be mitigated by a healthy diet and staying mentally and physically active. In addition, eliminating unhealthy habits (like smoking and drinking) will help improve your overall well-being.

It's also important to consult your doctor if you notice any worrisome symptoms and to follow their recommendations.

Testosterone supplements can be used to treat age-related low testosterone, but it's a controversial solution. It can relieve symptoms in some men but has little effect for others and carries significant risks of cardiovascular problems and could increase the incidence of prostate cancer.



4 ways to contribute to Movember (without growing a moustache)

Since 2003, the Movember Foundation has helped raise funds for research initiatives involving men's health including those pertaining to

prostate and testicular cancer, mental health issues and suicide prevention. Today, over 5 million people take part in the movement, and there are many

ways to do so other than growing a mustache.

1. THE MOVE PROGRAM

Run or walk 60 miles over the month of November. That's

one mile for every man who commits suicide every minute of every hour. Alone or in a group, do it at home, outside or at the gym. Tell friends and family members about it. Some of them might join you or make a donation.

2. HOST A "MO-MENT"

Get together with friends, family members and colleagues and organize a fundraising event for the foundation.

3. PARTICIPATE IN A MOVEMBER CHALLENGE

Visit the Movember website to sign up for one of the many challenges listed. They're separated by industry type and you're very likely to find one that's right for you.

4. MAKE A DONATION

Make a donation to someone involved in the campaign or give to the foundation directly by visiting us.movember.com.

This November, help raise funds and awareness for men's health issues by participating in or contributing to a Movember initiative.



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at Montgomery, the Spa at Ross Bridge in Hoover and the Spa at the Battle House in Mobile are always highly ranked for pampering their guests. All five of these spas are part of the RTJ Resort Collection and feature innovative treatments inspired by Southern Hospitality. Clearly great golf and spas work well together in Alabama. Come experience them for yourself.



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Boosting Longevity After Retirement

The habits you develop now impact life after 60

You've probably heard it said that age 60 is the new 50. I don't know about you, but I am tired of these trite axioms. Every decade you enter is a de-

cade you have earned. No need to pour "charming" affectations on them. late to start. Trim some weight by eating a healthier diet. If you haven't already, kick those nasty cigarettes to the curb, as they not good for any age group.



The truth is, your 60s can be both exciting and scary. Maybe you are planning to retire, and a change like that can bring nervous tension and apprehension. Most people think change is bad, and sometimes with good reason. Here are some ways you can make this change a major positive.

Healthy living
It would behoove everyone to follow a healthy lifestyle, but it is paramount as we age. Your 60s won't be "gloom and doom" if you follow a few simple steps. Doing so will not only increase your longevity, it will also boost your quality of life.

Bottom line is, it's never too

Sex

You are aging. You aren't dead. There is no reason you can't be sexually active well into your 60s (and even longer). Sex not only increases dopamine levels, which betters overall mental health, it also counts as exercise. In addition, it also increases life expectancy.

Brain health

Have you ever walked into a room and forgot why you went in there? While this may not necessarily be a sign of dementia, it is a sign that you may need to boost your mental health program. Your brain loves a challenge. Don't let it down, or it may let you down. Routines are a necessary part of how humans get through the day. Your brain is no different. With nothing new

to challenge it, the brain will go on autopilot. Not a good thing. Throw something new at it every day.

Attitude adjustment

Don't underestimate the power of positive thinking. Don't think of your 60s as a negative. In general, people who think positively live longer, happier lives. It also helps to decrease stress levels and is a stimulant for good behaviors. Engross yourself in activities that reinforce positivity. Some find it through spirituality. Some may find it by discovering a new interest or hobby.

Medical care

Always make sure you understand your medical history. Don't leave it up to your partner or your children. It's not their job; it's yours. Know what your medications are and what they are for. Ask questions of your doctor. Never be afraid to rock the boat. If your current physician doesn't explain things well, find a new one.

Get tested

If you have had good medical care at this stage in your life, you are used to regular screenings. Don't shun this practice as you age into your 60s. All of these tests are important. Maybe that test you don't want to endure this month will catch early stage cancer.

Make a promise to yourself to continue the preventative care and medicine. Bring something with you to read or plan a lunch with some friends for afterwards.

Hormones

Ahh, the hormonal changes. Both men and women have this to look forward to. Women often think they are the sole sufferers here, but men can experience many life-altering changes as well.

Keep your head up. Always get your doctor's opinion before you begin any treatment.

Don't waste your time

If you are planning to retire, don't simply waste your time on the couch watching TV. Chances are, you are increasing your disposable hours by at least 40, so don't let them go to waste.

Social circle

Extend your friend group. Don't be afraid to reach out and meet new people. New people mean new experiences and more chance to continue being active. Plan social gatherings. Many communities have block parties. Meet your neighbors and interact with them.

These interactions keep your mind working and help to balance emotions. Stress levels in social butterflies are markedly lower than wallflowers. Make sure your social calendar is always full.

Aging doesn't have to be a negative. As with most things in life, what you get from it is often what you put into it. Don't see your 60s strictly as a financial marker. Your mind and body need to be in top condition also, and if they are, you'll be looking forward to your 70s being the new 60s.



Swim to stay in shape and slow down aging

According to a recent study, people who swim three to five times a week showed delayed changes in traditional aging indicators such as loss of muscle mass, high blood pressure and reduced lung capacity. If you're a senior who's looking for a way to stay in shape, here's why swimming may be right for you.

1. It's low impact

Swimming is gentle on the body and over time, it can improve your flexibility. The water supports your weight and takes the strain off your limbs and joints, making it a great activity for those who struggle with joint pain or mobility issues.

2. It helps in maintaining a healthy weight

Even a leisurely swim is enough to burn a significant number of calories. Water is nearly 800 times denser than air and provides enough resistance to make even low-impact, gentle swimming a good way to shed a few pounds and help you maintain a healthy weight.

3. It improves cardiovascular and respiratory health

While high intensity swims are great for increasing your fitness level, you don't need to get your heart pounding to reap the benefits. Regular swims, even gentle ones, can help your heart and lungs stay healthier.

4. It improves mental health

Like most physical activities, swimming can help improve your mental health. In addition, since water-based exercise is gentler on your body than other types, you can reap these benefits without risking getting injured.

5. It's affordable

All you need is a bathing suit, a cap, a pair of goggles and access to a pool. No expensive equipment required.

Finally, visiting the pool on a regular basis may lead to you forming new friendships. This lends a social dimension to your swimming sessions that makes them all the more beneficial.

Staying Active

An active lifestyle staves off many potential issues as we age

Retirement. We are all heading there. Personally, I can't wait. No more daily grind. No more boss screaming at me to get things done. Free time to do whatever I please. Sounds great, right? Now all I have left is to approach that time in my life as healthy physically and mentally as possible. That way, I can enjoy it.

If you sit for long periods, you are more likely to develop diabetes or have a heart attack or stroke.

As we age, muscle growth slows, and it takes physical activity to keep us strong. Physical and mental benefits are vastly improved with regular exercise. Chronic health issues plague retirement age individ-

uals that don't stay active.

Many places, like your local YMCA, offer a wide variety of activities for seniors. Badminton, cycling, dancing, aerobics, tai chi, walking, weight training,

Kick those cigarettes out and also maintain a healthy weight. This will help increase longevity and reduce your risk of being disabled.

jogging, and pilates are all up for perusal. You'll have to adjust your routine to meet your needs. Not all of these

will work for you. Don't forget to warm up!

Fractures and other serious injuries can result from falls. Attending weekly exercise classes and doing at-home exercise decrease fall risks by increasing balance through





strengthening core muscles and joints. This way, you are likely to stay independent longer.

Kick those cigarettes out and maintain a healthy weight also. This will help increase longevity and reduce your risk of being disabled.

Don't forget about your brain! It's easy to forget that we need to exercise our brain to ward off diseases like Alzheimer's. In your leisure time, play some brain games. Learn a musical instrument. Read, play some board games, or do puzzles. All of these can help stave off dementia.

Eat a healthy, well balanced diet. You have earned the occasional treat, but don't make those treats standard.

And stay active socially. Your mind stays active while in conversation, so join that book club, film club, choir. Get out and meet new people. Go out with friends and take in a movie. Go to dinner.

Challenge your brain. Shock it with something new every day. Make it work. It loves the challenge. I promise smoke won't come out of your ears.

In that vein, find a new hobby. We all probably have some things we wish we had the time to try. Well, now you do. A local senior center will likely have many activities you can enjoy.

We all want that sense of purpose. We want to belong and have something that keeps us going. We need goals. Create them for yourself and work towards them. Volunteering can help you find a purpose.

Being healthy in retirement is simple in theory. Here are some bullet points:

- If you have a partner, consider how your health affects them.
- Keep your friends and family close. Stay in contact.
- Eat healthy. It fuels you mentally as well as physically.
- Set goals and maintain a sense of purpose.
- Plan activities for yourself. Make a schedule and get out.
- Take a part-time job or do some volunteer work. Stay active socially.
- Keep physically active. It's the best advice you can get.

It's okay if walkers miss the 10,000-step standard

Over the last several years, many people have embraced the notion that 10,000 daily steps are the way to being physically fit. Health experts espouse that notion and trainers endorse it, but is there scientific proof behind the recommendation?

The 10,000-step standard — which equates to roughly five miles, depending on a person's stride length and speed — has some surprising origins that are not necessarily rooted in medical science. I-Min Lee, a professor of epidemiology at the Harvard University T. H. Chan School of Public Health and the lead author of a new study published in May 2019 in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* wanted to explore the origins of the 10,000-step recommendation. She discovered the guideline evolved from a marketing strategy devised by a Japanese company called Yamasa Toki. That firm introduced its new step-counter in 1965, naming it Manpo-Kei, which translated into "10,000 steps meter." They marketed the meter using the Japanese character for "10,000," which resembles a man walking. The character and round number proved memorable and the slogan, "Let's walk 10,000 steps a day" was catchy. As a result, many people adopted the 10,000-step approach, even though its medical benefits might not have been proven. But this isn't to suggest that taking 10,000 steps per day cannot be part of a healthy living plan. In fact, such a goal promotes physical activity, which is a key component of a healthy lifestyle. However, simply taking 10,000 steps per day might not be enough to achieve long-term health. Lee conducted her own research to test if the Japanese were on to something by inadvertently setting the 10,000-step standard. She found that an increase in walking correlated to lower mortality rates among more than 16,000 elderly American women. However, when these women reached about 7,500 steps the mortality rates leveled out, suggesting that those extra 2,500 steps might not be necessary.

Even the manufacturer of one of the most popular fitness trackers, Fitbit, says that users' step goals can vary depending on need, and that goals may even shift over time. People who are looking to lose weight and maintain their existing health will need to modify their step count accordingly. Working with a qualified trainer or using a medically sanctioned training program can help people exercise safely and effectively.

Taking 10,000 steps per day may help people achieve their health-related goals. But 10,000 steps alone likely won't be enough to achieve optimal health.

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