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CODE STROKE

A Stroke Response You Can Trust

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When every second counts, Northern Regional Hospital is ready. As a nationally recognized Primary Stroke Center, our expert team and advanced protocols are here to deliver life-saving care when it matters most.

Know the Signs. Act FAST.

Strokes don't wait—and neither should you. Quick action can save a life, reduce disability, and ensure a stronger recovery. The signs of stroke can be remembered with the acronym **BE FAST**:

- B – Balance: Sudden loss of balance or coordination
- E – Eyes: Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- F – Face: Facial drooping or uneven smile
- A – Arms: Arm weakness or numbness
- S – Speech: Slurred speech or difficulty speaking
- T – Time: Time to call 911 immediately

Northern Regional Hospital's stroke team is trained to recognize these signs and launch a rapid response known as "Code Stroke," a streamlined process designed to assess and treat stroke patients as quickly as possible.

PATIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Lee Mills, Owner of Lee Mills Construction

One Sunday night, local contractor Lee Mills began to feel dizzy and disoriented. Recognizing that something wasn't right, his wife quickly called EMS. Lee was transported to Northern Regional Hospital, where the stroke team was ready and waiting.

"The team was prepared and quick to act," Lee recalls. He expressed heartfelt appreciation for Dr. Edsall in the Emergency Department and the ICU staff, whose attentive care guided him through stroke treatment and recovery.

After receiving overnight monitoring, advanced imaging, and comprehensive treatment, Lee was educated on stroke prevention and recovery by our Quality and Accreditation Manager. Continued care with his neurologist, cardiologist, and primary care provider ensured a smooth path forward.

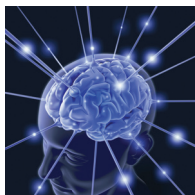
Today, Lee is back to doing what he loves—and he has a message for the community:

"If you feel any signs of stroke, don't wait."

Our Commitment to Excellence

Northern Regional Hospital is proud to be a certified Primary Stroke Center, recognized for delivering evidence-based care that improves outcomes for stroke patients. This achievement is made possible by a dedicated team, advanced imaging technology, and rapid-response protocols like Code Stroke.

At the heart of our program is Debbie Moser, RN, BSN, SCRNP, our Stroke Coordinator and tireless advocate for excellence in stroke care. Her vision and leadership have transformed how stroke is treated in our community. In



honor of her unwavering dedication, a plaque has been placed near the Emergency Department—a reminder of her lasting impact on countless lives.

When a stroke strikes, you need a team you can trust.

Know the signs. Act BE FAST. Choose Northern.

About Northern Regional Hospital:

Northern Regional Hospital (NRH) is a 133-bed hospital in Mount Airy, North Carolina, serving the northwest Piedmont region of NC and neighboring counties in southwestern Virginia. Founded in 1957, NRH is an independently operated, national award-winning healthcare facility. Northern Medical Group is the Hospital's physician network of primary and specialty care providers, delivering a wide range of services to meet the community's needs. NRH offers an array of outpatient services, including laboratory testing, X-ray services, CT, MRI, ultrasound, 3D mammography, and physical rehabilitation services. NRH also has a state-of-the-art Surgery Center providing a wide range of inpatient and outpatient procedures, including orthopedics, gynecology, gastroenterology, urological, eye surgeries, and other general surgeries to meet our community's and region's surgical needs.



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SUPERCARGED STROKE CARE

How Forsyth Medical Center got so fast

One minute this patient faced permanent disability, the next ... she was safe.

CAROLE TANZER MILLER

When it comes to treating strokes, doctors put it this way: Time is brain. And the clock started ticking on Amanda Sparks' brain at 2:45 p.m., March 1, 2024.

At home that afternoon, she grabbed her phone, and twice, it slid out of her palm. "There was no grip," the teaching assistant from Hamptonville recalled. "I hollered for my husband, and I could feel it as I was talking to him — the right side of my face was pulling or sagging."

Scotty Sparks thought his wife, who was recovering from the flu, might be dehydrated, so he gave her something to drink. When it dribbled down her chin, they knew what was wrong. At 47, Amanda Sparks was having her second stroke in 10 years.

That emergency kickstarted a race against the clock that put 21st century telemedicine to the test. It began at a small hospital near the Sparks' home and culminated less than five hours later with successful removal of a dangerous blood clot from her brain at Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center in Winston-Salem.

Physicians agree: She was at risk of losing the most important part of her brain. But Sparks emerged with no disability and returned to work within a few days.

How did this happen? By harnessing technology that sends information to doctors at warp speed and constantly fine-tuning the choreography of medical teams who work to shave seconds off treatment times as they fight for every brain cell.

"The reason we were so fast in this case is because we had information starting from the moment she entered the first hospital," said neurologist Dr. Colin McDonald, medical director of the Comprehensive Stroke Program at Forsyth and a telemedicine pioneer.

This is a tale of how technology and teamwork speed delivery of lifesaving medical care in under 30 minutes to

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

BE

BALANCE



Loss of Balance, Headache, or Dizziness

EYES



Blurred Vision

FAST

FACE



Drooping or Uneven

ARMS



Weakness in Arm or Leg

SPEECH



Speech Difficulty

TIME



Time to call 911

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make Forsyth Medical Center one of the top performing stroke hospitals in the country.

Here's how Sparks' emergency unfolded in real time:

A QUICK ASSESSMENT

Scotty Sparks rushes his wife to Hugh Chatham Hospital in Elkin, their trusted local hospital 15 minutes from their home. As a community medical center, Hugh Chatham offers everything from emergency care to neurological treatment for stroke. When appropriate, the care team also works collaboratively with the stroke team at Forsyth Medical Center.

Shortly before 3:25 p.m., the emergency room doctor at Chatham calls a stroke alert and sends Sparks straight to the CT scanner.

He wants to see what kind of stroke she's having — one caused by a blood vessel that ruptures and bleeds into the brain (hemorrhagic), or one caused by a clot (ischemic). If Sparks has a clot, she's a candidate for a medication that can dissolve it and stop the stroke.

But doctors must move fast: The clot-busting drug must be administered within four and a half hours of a patient's first symptoms.

The radiologist uploads images of Sparks' brain to a secure online platform called Viz.ai that uses artificial intelligence to synchronize stroke care. Every Novant Health stroke specialist has access to Viz.ai on their smartphone. This cuts down on the time it once took to log into networks and platforms to access scans and other

By the time Sparks returns to the examining room, a Forsyth-affiliated neurologist who works remotely is at the ready. This telestroke doctor greets Sparks from a video screen. He recognizes that a stroke is evolving. The online images confirm that her symptoms owe to a clot.

Via video, he obtains Sparks' permission for the Hugh Chatham team to administer tenecteplase, a drug that can dissolve a clot and stop the stroke before circulation fails and brain cells begin to die by the millions. Sparks gets the intravenous injection at 3:47 p.m.

The telestroke doctor quickly orders a scan called a CT angiogram to get a better look at blood vessels supplying oxygen to her brain. These show a clot blocking circulation to 30% of Sparks' brain. He tells Sparks she's headed to Forsyth Medical Center, which is nationally certified to care for patients with complex stroke issues. It's a 43-mile ambulance trip to Winston-Salem.

PREVENTING A 'DEVASTATING OUTCOME'

Meanwhile, at Forsyth, McDonald gets the call: A patient having an ischemic stroke is on the way. McDonald uses Viz.ai to review the brain images and calls neuro-interventionalist Dr. Don Heck, who does the same. Heck tells the team to strap in.

"She was having a stroke that was going to lead to a devastating outcome if not intervened," McDonald said later.

He prepares to do a quick examination as soon as Sparks rolls through the ER doors. If her symptoms are no better, they'll head straight to the operating room to literally vacuum out the clot. At 6:57, as a registrar checks her in, McDonald evaluates Sparks. Still on an ambulance stretcher, she's having trouble speaking.

"The reason you've come here," he tells her, "is because we believe that a blood clot has formed in one of the major blood vessels of the brain, and we need to remove that clot using a very minimally invasive operation to get oxygen to where it's supposed to go — and that's going to happen right away."

He points, and his team knows their patient is on the way. At 7:13 p.m., Sparks enters the operating room and is given anesthesia. She's still in street clothes as Heck begins a procedure called a thrombectomy. He threads a catheter through an artery in her groin up into her brain and then advances a wire retriever through the catheter.

His target is the clot — 8-by-5 mm, roughly the size of three pencil points — in an area of Sparks' brain just above the left ear called the insula. This part of the brain is a control center for language, comprehension, movement on the right side of the body, and even breathing — and it needs oxygen from the blood to do the job.

All function on the right side of Sparks' body is at risk. There's no time to waste. Every minute a stroke continues, a patient loses 1.9 million nerve cells in the brain. Lasting brain damage, long-term disability and even death may result. That's why doctors say time is brain.

Using the wire retriever, Heck pulls Sparks' clot out through the catheter within minutes. At 7:28, blood flow to her brain is restored. Eight minutes later, the thrombectomy concludes, at 7:36 p.m.

At Forsyth Medical Center, the comprehensive stroke team performs these life-saving interventions all the time.

"How did we get so fast? Every team member knows what their role is," McDonald said. "And that's why we have these things that seem miraculous happening every single day at Forsyth." (And in fact, vast swaths of the world still don't have access to care like this.)

Sparks spent four days at Forsyth Medical Center as they tested her to learn more about her stroke and how best to move ahead. And, the team is still trying to figure out why it happened. Only about 1 in 7 strokes occur in Americans between 15 and 49 years of age.

Physical and occupational therapists who initially told Sparks to plan for several weeks of rehabilitation were incredulous to find she needed none at all. She left with instructions to take a baby aspirin and a cholesterol-lowering drug every day to help prevent another stroke.

By day 11, Amanda Sparks was back on the job at Moravian Falls Elementary School, shepherding a room full of busy first-graders.



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ACTIVITIES FOR SENIORS with limited mobility

Seniors with mobility issues can look to various forms of cardio for inspiration as they seek to be more physically active without compromising their overall health.

Physical activity is a valuable tool in the fight against chronic disease and other conditions. In fact, the Cleveland Clinic highlights physical activity among its nine ways to prevent disease in an effort to live a long and rewarding life.

Children, adolescents, young adults, and even men and women in middle age may not face too many physical hurdles when they try to exercise, but seniors are not always so lucky. Aging men and women with mobility issues may wonder if they can reap the rewards of physical activity, and thankfully there are many ways to exercise even if getting up and going isn't as easy as it might have been in years past. Sometimes referred to as "aerobic exercise" or simply "cardio," cardiovascular exercise is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of physical activities that raise the heart rate and improve endurance. Seniors with mobility issues can look to various forms of cardio for inspiration as they seek to be more physically active without compromising their overall health.

- **WALK YOUR WAY TO A HEALTHIER YOU.** Walking is a form of cardiovascular exercise that is ideal for older adults with mobility issues because it need not be physically demanding and it's safe to walk just about anywhere. Walking in a place such as a local park can be particularly good for older adults because they can take periodic breaks on benches if aches, pains or stiffness is affecting their ability to keep moving.

- **TAKE UP SWIMMING.** Swimming might be tailor-made for seniors with mobility issues because it's a great workout and exercising in water tends to be less taxing on muscles and joints. The Cleveland Clinic notes that swimming promotes heart health, strengthens the lungs, helps to burn calories, and builds muscle, among other



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benefits. And many seniors find swimming is just as fun in their golden years as it was in their youth, which means aging adults might not face problems with motivation when the time comes to get in the pool.

- **USE AN EXERCISE BIKE OR PORTABLE PEDAL EXERCISER.** Cycling is a wonderful exercise but one that seniors with mobility issues may feel is no longer possible. If doctors advise against riding a traditional bike, an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser can provide many of the benefits of cycling without as great a risk for accident or injury. A portable pedal exerciser can be carried to a park, where seniors can still spend time in the great outdoors, which is one of the most appealing reasons to get on a bike and go.

- **TAKE BEGINNER YOGA OR TAI CHI.** HelpGuide.org notes that gentle yoga or tai chi can help to improve flexibility and reduce stress and anxiety. Though yoga and tai chi can provide as much demanding physical activity as individuals allow, beginner classes in each discipline don't require much movement but do provide enough for seniors hoping to be less sedentary.

Even seniors with mobility issues can find safe and effective ways to be more physically active. Prior to beginning a new exercise regimen, seniors with mobility issues are urged to discuss activities with their physicians.

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OVER 60?

How to maintain a healthy weight as you age

These tips can help people maintain a healthy weight.

Age often brings wisdom, experience, and for many people, some body weight changes that might affect their health over time.

Maintaining a healthy weight is important throughout life, but as a person gets older, it can be harder to keep extra pounds off. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says obesity prevalence was 44.3 percent among adults between the ages of 40 and 59 in May 2024. Obesity prevalence was 51.5 percent for people age 60 and older. According to a report from the Government of Canada, 40.1 percent of seniors are overweight, and 28.1 percent are obese. Yet some older adults also are underweight and struggle to keep weight on.

It's important to note that a healthy weight for one age group may not be the same for another. Verywell Health says a healthy weight and BMI range for adults over age 65 could translate into carrying extra pounds. The National Institutes of Health says a BMI of 25 to 27, which normally is considered overweight, may offer benefits to adults over the age of 65 by way of bone health side effects that protect against osteoporosis. Some studies also indicate that being underweight can increase risk of disability, dementia and even cancer or heart failure.

Before one binges at the all-you-can-eat buffet, it is important to discuss weight with a doctor and develop a customized plan that takes individual variables, including age, into consideration. In addition, these tips can help people maintain a healthy weight.

- **SPREAD OUT SMALLER MEALS.** Eat five to six small meals per day to help with digestion and circumvent slower metabolism. Eating smaller meals also may help seniors who find they don't have appetites and push away food.

- **VARY THE FOODS YOU EAT.** Eat more vegetables, whole grains, fish, beans, and low-fat or fat-free dairy. Try to keep meat and poultry lean, only splurging on fattier cuts once in a while.

- **WATCH EMPTY CALORIES.** Empty calories come from sugars, sugary beverages and processed foods with little or no nutritional value, indicates WebMD. Instead, when choosing calories, look for whole, nutritional foods.

- **EAT MORE PROTEIN.** Older adults are at risk of losing muscle mass, so protein is essential. Protein also helps a person feel fuller longer, which can help with avoiding eating empty calories or overeating in general.



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- **CONSUME EXTRA FIBER.** As a person gets older, fiber can help prevent constipation, colorectal cancer and hemorrhoids. Whole-grain fiber also reduces the risk of heart disease. In addition, whole grain fiber is filling, which can help with weight control.

- **EXERCISE DAILY.** Weight loss involves a formula in which more calories are burned than consumed. For those who need to shed some pounds, increasing physical activity through low-impact exercise can help. Bike riding, swimming, pickleball, yoga, and other activities can be beneficial.

A registered dietician can help people develop eating and exercise plans that will help them achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

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7 BENEFITS of socialization for seniors

The following is a look at seven ways socialization benefits seniors.

One of the primary lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic was how challenging social isolation can be. Social isolation often goes overlooked, but it's a key contributor to poor mental health.

Experts state that it is increasingly important for adults to maintain an active social life as they age. There are many benefits that come from staying engaged and socializing with others. The following is a look at seven ways socialization benefits seniors.

1 . Regular social interactions can help older adults avoid depression, anxiety and feelings of isolation, according to Integracare, a senior living company.

2 . Social engagement can help reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia because socializing helps to keep the mind sharp through new experiences.

3 . Socialization often revolves around an activity that gets seniors up and moving. While being sedentary is alright

on occasion, consistently sitting or laying around can lead to high cholesterol, weight gain and high blood pressure. A 2019 study published in The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences determined that older adults who interacted with people beyond their usual social circle of family and close friends were more likely to have higher levels of physical activity, greater positive moods and fewer negative feelings.

4 . Regular social interaction may compel seniors to embrace healthier eating habits. Social events expose seniors to different types of food, which can help them get the nutrients they need to live healthy.

5 . Regular socialization can help seniors feel they are needed and have a sense of purpose, which can boost self-esteem. Engaging with others often means contributing to a community, and that can be satisfying.

6 . Getting out and interacting with others can serve as an informal wellness check, potentially alerting family and friends to issues that may need attention.

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7. Getting outside and interacting with others can open seniors up to new hobbies. Whether that is participating in a new sport or joining a club, there are mental and physical advantages to engaging socially.

Socialization is an important factor in seniors' overall wellness, and one that should be discussed along with diet, exercise and illness management.

DID YOU **KNOW?**

In a 2020 article written for the Hearing Health Foundation, Pauline Dinnauer, Au.D., noted the threat of ear damage is much greater for people who use earbuds as opposed to over-the-ear headphones. According to Dinnauer, earbuds deliver sound directly into the ear canal, where the risk for damage is great if the volume becomes too loud. Earbuds also can push earwax deeper into the ears, which causes blockages that affect the hearing. When hearing is affected by those blockages, users tend to raise the volume on the earbuds even higher. Dinnauer concluded that over-the-ear headphones were a healthier

option than earbuds because sound is not funneled directly into the eardrums. In addition, many over-the-ear headphones have noise-canceling functionality, which reduces users' need to increase the volume.



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Sports that can compel seniors to **GET UP AND MOVE**

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Seniors who decide to dust off their athletic gear and play the following sports can reap all the rewards that getting up and moving has to offer.

Discussions about the benefits of sports participation are often rooted in how much young people can gain from playing a team sport. Older adults have much to gain from playing sports as well, and that's something retirees can keep in mind as they look for activities to fill their time.

A 2018 study published in the journal *Biochemistry Research International* found that physical activity can be a protective factor for noncommunicable diseases, including heart disease and diabetes, and can even help to delay the onset of dementia. The study also linked physical activity to improved quality of life and mental health. Sports require players to be physically active, so seniors who decide to dust off their athletic gear and play the following sports can reap all the rewards that getting up and moving has to offer.

- **PICKLEBALL:** The popularity of pickleball has skyrocketed in recent years, with the Sports & Fitness Industry Association estimating there are now roughly nine million pickleball players in the United States. The organization Pickleball Canada reports that nearly 1.4 million Canadians played pickleball at least once per month in 2023, proving that this popular sport transcends borders and offers a great way to socialize with fellow seniors.

- **WALKING:** Accessibility is one of the major benefits of walking. Even seniors with limited mobility can look to walking as a less demanding physical activity that compels them to get out of the house. And the benefits of walking

may be more profound than people realize. Preliminary research presented at an American Heart Association gathering in 2023 estimated that walking an additional 500 steps per day, which is equivalent to roughly a quarter of a mile, was associated with a 14 percent lower risk for heart disease, stroke or heart failure.

- **SOFTBALL:** Baseball was the first love of many a sports fan over the years, and senior softball provides a way to maintain or even reignite that passion, all the while reaping the health benefits of sports play. Softball can help seniors maintain their hand-eye coordination and improve their flexibility. But perhaps the most notable benefit of playing senior softball involves socialization. Senior softball requires being on a team, and the benefits of socialization for seniors are numerous, particularly when they play in leagues featuring players from outside their immediate social circle. A 2019 study published in *The Journals of Gerontology* found that older adults who socialize with people outside their typical social circle were more likely to have higher levels of physical activity and a more positive mood. Such individuals also had fewer negative feelings.

- **GOLF:** Golf provides a range of health benefits that committed players are well aware of. Seniors who play golf, particularly those who walk the course instead of using a cart to get around, can reap the rewards of walking, including improved cardiovascular health, and even the benefits of strength-training, as carrying a golf bag around nine or 18 holes can build strength that protects bones and reduces the risk of fractures. Traversing a course also helps to burn calories, which can help seniors maintain a healthy weight.

The benefits of sports participation apply to people of all ages, including seniors.

DID YOU KNOW?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that pollen season is getting longer and increasing in intensity. Shifts in precipitation patterns, more frost-free days, warmer seasonal air temperatures, and greater amounts of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, each of which are side effects of climate change, have led to higher concentrations of pollen in the air and longer pollen seasons. Data from the USA National Phenology Network, which provides data on the timing of seasonal events in plants and animals to ensure the well-being of humans, ecosystems and natural resources, indicates total pollen counts increased by as much as 21 percent between 1990 and 2018. Such data may come as no surprise to people with asthma and seasonal allergies who have noticed the side effects of such conditions tend to start earlier than in the past and extend for longer periods of time than in previous years.



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Common warning signs for **CATARACTS**

Surgery might not even be considered if people are not first aware of the symptoms of cataracts, which can manifest in various ways.

No one wants to imagine a day when their vision might abandon them, but diminished eyesight is a common occurrence that affects people of all ages and from all walks of life. A 2022 report from the World Health Organization indicated that at least 826 million people have distance- or near-vision impairment that could be addressed with an appropriate pair of eyeglasses. Those people are among the estimated 2.2 billion people who currently have issues that affect their ability to see.

Cataracts are a common and treatable vision problem. Access to cataract treatment is limited in various countries. In fact, a 2021 study published in the journal *Lancet Global Health* found that 94 million people ages 50 and over have vision impairment or blindness that could be corrected through access to cataract surgery. Surgery might not even be considered if people are not first aware of the symptoms of cataracts, which can manifest in various ways.

- **BLURRY VISION:** The American Academy of Ophthalmology notes that blurriness may be associated with an assortment of vision problems, including cataracts. Blurry vision makes it difficult to see clearly or sharply,

and cataracts are characterized by cloudiness that affects the natural lens of the eye. The blurriness associated with cataracts is the result of a breakdown of proteins in the lens of the affected eye, according to the AAO.

- **SEEING DOUBLE:** Double vision also is symptomatic of various vision issues, including cataracts. The AAO notes that when a person is seeing double, he or she may be seeing two, often overlapping, images of a single object.

- **SENSITIVITY TO LIGHT:** The AAO notes a need to shield eyes from light to prevent eye pain could indicate a sensitivity to light that is characteristic of cataracts. This sensitivity may be especially noticeable when confronted by oncoming headlights at night.

- **DIFFICULTY SEEING AT NIGHT:** The AAO reports that this symptom is often characterized by difficulty seeing in dark conditions that can make it harder to adjust to seeing when going from a well-lit space into darkness. That adjustment also may take longer in people experiencing cataracts. Some people may not be able to see at all in dimly lit conditions.

- **SEEING FADED COLORS:** Bright colors that appear faded or yellow is another symptom of cataracts.

Cataracts compromise vision, but it's important that people recognize there are effective treatments for this condition. More information is available at aao.org.



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DO SLEEP NEEDS CHANGE as adults grow older?

Health experts note that sleep requirements generally remain the same throughout adulthood.

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.

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What seniors can do to maintain a **HEALTHY WEIGHT**

There is much aging adults can do to maintain a healthy weight throughout their golden years.

Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is a lifelong process. Children tend to be so physically active and grow at such a consistent pace that it's easier for them to consume a high-calorie diet without becoming overweight. That's generally not the case after adolescence, and it might be particularly difficult for seniors to avoid gaining weight.

In a 2020 interview with Tufts Medicine, Jillian Reece, a bariatric dietitian at Tufts Medical Center, noted that a person's basal metabolic rate slows down with aging. The basal metabolic rate indicates the rate at which the body uses energy while at rest. As that rate slows down, body weight can increase. But seniors should know they aren't helpless against nature and Father Time. In fact, there is much aging adults can do to maintain a healthy weight throughout their golden years.

- Limit portion sizes when eating. Controlling portion sizes is easier said than done, particularly for seniors who dine out with frequency. When dining out, seniors can order off the appetizer menu instead of ordering an entrée, especially when visiting an establishment known for its hefty portions. At home, pay attention to serving size data on product labeling. If necessary, measure portions when eating foods such as cereal so the portion you eat reflects the serving size noted on the box.

- Eat breakfast each morning. Seniors who skip breakfast, which may be more likely upon retiring, could be doing their waistlines a notable disservice. A 2017 statement from

the American Heart Association noted that several large, long-term, prospective, observational studies have found an association between breakfast consumption and lower risk of obesity. The less structured pattern of retirement living may compel some seniors to skip breakfast, but committing to a morning meal can help keep off extra pounds.

- Commit to routine exercise. Diet can go a long way toward helping seniors maintain a healthy weight. However, diet is not the only area where seniors can help their waistlines. Routine physical activity can help seniors maintain muscle mass and make it easier to be more mobile. Staying mobile can help keep pounds off, as a sedentary lifestyle is one of the more notable risk factors for overweight and obesity. The National Institute on Aging recommends seniors aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. Moderate-intensity aerobic activities are those that raise the heart rate and help seniors break a sweat, such as walking, jogging, swimming, and cycling.

- Make a concerted effort to remain hydrated throughout the day. The Cleveland Clinic notes that age-related body composition changes make seniors particularly vulnerable to dehydration. An aging body does not demand water like it once did, so it's easy for seniors to forget to hydrate because they don't feel thirsty. But remaining hydrated is important for seniors looking to maintain a healthy weight because dehydration can mimic symptoms of hunger. Seniors may reach for snacks feeling they're hungry when all they might need is a glass of water to hydrate.

A healthy weight can allow seniors to live life to the fullest. Various strategies can help seniors achieve a healthy weight.



STROKE STATISTICS

tell a deadly story

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Stroke is one of the leading causes of death across the globe.

Stroke is one of the leading causes of death across the globe. In a recent examination of death statistics, the World Health Organization found that stroke was responsible for the third most deaths in 2021. Notably, the WHO analysis found that stroke was the leading cause of death in upper-middle-income countries. In that same year, stroke was the second leading cause of death in low-income countries and the third leading cause of death in low-middle-income countries. Stroke was the third-leading cause of death in high-income countries, which includes the United States and Canada. The threat posed by stroke is indeed significant, and McLaren Health Care cites the following statistics in an effort to raise awareness of this potentially deadly but often preventable disease.

- 15 million people have a stroke across the globe each year
- Three in five, or 60 percent, of strokes occur in people under age 70
- 16 percent, or roughly one in six, of strokes occur in people under age 50
- Five million people die from stroke each year
- Four in five strokes are preventable
- 38 percent of people are aware of all major stroke symptoms

Raising awareness of stroke and its symptoms can spur immediate action that can greatly reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes, which can include death, paralysis and brain damage. Adults are urged to contact their physician

to identify their risk factor for stroke and to learn how to spot its symptoms and what should be done should any signs appear

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