



OLLI TIMES

OLLI AT FSU'S MONTHLY NEWSMAGAZINE

www.oli.fsu.edu

December 2021

SENIORS WILL HAVE GREATER ECONOMIC POWER GOING FORWARD

From Brookings 2021

Seniors are now significant players in the economy and their role will get even bigger in the 2020s. Since older people tend to have both high incomes compared to younger cohorts (especially in OECD countries, thanks to old-age pensions) and high needs (if only on account of medical and specialized care), they are major consumers. Seniors are also growing rapidly in number: There are currently 750 million seniors in the world, and that figure will cross the 1 billion mark by 2030.

Because of these two reinforcing trends, their share in the consumer

class—defined as everyone spending at least \$11 per day—is growing rapidly. The consumer class is expected to grow from 3.9 billion in 2020 to 5.6 billion by 2030, with each age group contributing almost uniformly to this increase (by 41 percent on average). The only group whose contribution will grow significantly faster is the senior group (whose representation in the consumer class will surge by 66 percent from 459 million to 760 million).

Seniors are the wealthiest age cohort in the world, together with older professionals (45-64 years). This

shift toward wealthier older people is not because old people are inherently richer but because rich countries are older and poor countries are younger.

Until 2030, the silver economy will gain even more absolute strength because the number of seniors is growing by 3.2 percent every year (compared to 0.8 percent of the whole population).

Many of the world's "new seniors" will be in Asia and less wealthy than the current average.

However, seniors will remain the wealthiest age group, together with "older professionals," as 76 percent of them will be in the consumer class (compared to 66 percent on average). By 2030, they are projected to spend just under \$15 trillion (in 2011/PPP), up from \$8.7 trillion in 2020.

Geographically, the silver economy will shift from the OECD economies to emerging markets, especially to Asia.

Today, the total year spending power of silver consumers is relatively equally distributed across Asia, North America, and Europe (\$2.3 trillion each).

By 2030, Asia's share will have grown significantly as its seniors are expected to spend over \$5 trillion each year. Still, because they are relatively richer and relatively older,

Western economies will remain the top "silver economies" into the next decade. Asia will have only three countries in the top 10, but two of them are growing rapidly.

In China, silver spending will triple from \$750 billion to \$2.1 trillion, overtaking Japan where senior spending has already plateaued at \$900 billion.

India will make a dramatic entrance into the group with an expected surge in silver spending from approximately \$100 billion to almost \$1 trillion (on par with Russia, the U.K., Brazil, and Italy).

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Harriet Waas
President, OLLI Advisory Council



We have come to the end of another year... one to remember and one that tested our resolve and resilience. We look forward to 2022 with the promise of returning to campus at least for a few days each week and with the hope of both international and domestic travel. We plan to return to face-to-face meetings for clubs, activities, and special events. We also plan to continue Zoom classes as we will want to continue seeing some of our favorite instructors from across the country and around the world.

As 2021 draws to a close, we reflect on the special events of this past year. OLLI kept us going, brought us together, and gave us ways to keep our minds and spirits active. Being the eternal optimist, I look forward to

returning to campus, seeing long-time friends and meeting all the new members who have joined during the past two years. I know many of you out there will come back to OLLI with a new spirit of togetherness.

It has been a pleasure and great honor to serve as your president for the past two years. Even though my term does not end until April, I will miss speaking to you through the OLLI Times each month. You can always reach out to me through email and I would love to hear about your new ideas. Volunteers are always welcome, so let me know if you wish to volunteer in some capacity.

Thank you to Debra, Terry, and staff, and all of you who volunteered during

2021 to keep OLLI going, especially during the most difficult of times.

I wish you the happiest of holidays and a very happy, healthy New Year as we begin 2022!

EDITORIAL

DONATE FOR A LASTING LEGACY

By George Waas
Editor

I think it's safe to say that just about all of us are collectors of one kind or another. We like to collect things that are valuable to us just because we like them, even if they may not be of value to anyone else.

When you travel, don't you like to bring something back that reminds you of your journey? I know I do. When going through files, don't you occasionally come across one or more items that you just simply can't part with? Same answer.

Collectors, one and all!

As seniors, we are also mindful of our legacy. Of course, there are our children, grandchildren and perhaps even great-grandchildren. But I'm referring to a different kind of legacy.

What if you could give something of historical value to future generations? Something that you know will be preserved and available to researchers in perpetuity. I think you can, and it's relatively easy to do so. As seniors, we have two things in common. We are

collectors, and we have lived through historic times. Surely, you have items among your possessions that have some historic value. If you haven't already, start looking. Now.

Here is my story. I think it could just as easily be yours.

As I collected item after item over the years, I began to wonder what would become of them after I'm gone. While they are of great intrinsic value to me, they are of little or no value to my children or grandchildren. I realized that these items will be, for the most part, tossed. I didn't want that to happen. So I found places to donate them.

Here are my three personal examples. When I was a young college student, I worked as a campus aide on the then-Dade County Junior College campus in Miami for Claude Pepper during his first campaign for the House of Representatives. I received letters from him thanking me for my efforts. I also worked on John Kennedy's campaign in 1960 and received a

telegram from Robert Kennedy. After graduating from law school here, I received letters from Claude Kirk, Reubin Askew, Tom Adams, and other public officials. I also received additional items relating to politics, and was given a bound set of all editions of the Florida State University Flambeau during my time as editor in the 60s.

These, in addition to other similar types of items, sat on my book shelves for years, until one day, while attending an OLLI class, I sauntered into the Pepper Library and asked if donations are accepted. To make a long story short, if you go online, and type in “George L. Waas Collection,” you will see a list of each donated item that now resides in that library—almost 100 of them.

Years ago, we had a professional hockey team here. We befriended many of the coaches and players, and collected items whenever we traveled for hockey games. Over the years, this collection grew to the point that our family room was a miniature hockey shrine. Again, I wondered what would happen to all of these items, since they are of no value to my family (except Harriet). To make another long story short, we boxed up all these items (14 boxes of hockey memorabilia) and our entire collection now resides in the

Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

My final example involves my late father, who was a vaudeville entertainer during the 40s to early 60s. Recently, I came across a loose-leaf book that contained typewritten comedy scripts that he wrote and performed more than 80 years ago. I went online and found that there is a museum that has a collection of vaudeville memorabilia. That’s where my dad’s work now resides.

I hope the point of these examples is obvious to you. There are libraries and museums for just about any item you might have collected. Please go through your belongings in your attic, garage, closet or wherever you store files and boxes. I have to believe you have stuff that would be of value to a museum or library. Go through them and ask yourself what will happen to these items after you’re gone. Then, go online and search for a museum or library that might be just the right depository for your items.

And one more point, our public library accepts books. I know where dozens of my books will eventually wind up.

Leaving an historical imprint is of great intrinsic value.

The message here is simple: donate. You’ll be glad you did.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE...

After four years, this is my last edition as Editor of the OLLI Times. Simply put, it's time for someone else to take the Times to the next level. I want to thank OLLI Director Debra Herman for giving me the opportunity to create a publication out of thin air; not many people get such a challenging opportunity. When Debra explained her vision to me in December 2018 of a periodic publication that was geared to OLLI, the name OLLI Times came to me almost immediately.

I knew early on that a newsletter that only informed of internal matters (club meetings, activities, etc.) wasn't going to be enough. I envisioned more of a news magazine, with articles of general interest to our senior membership. With this edition, over 400 such articles have appeared; articles on health, graceful aging, finances, travel, family, diet, exercise--just about every subject of interest to seniors.

To be sure, any venture that starts from scratch will have kinks that need to be worked out, and the OLLI Times is no different. For several months, the number of pages per volume was limited by our website provider. But the last 17 editions represent the vision I had for a news magazine for our members.

There is no set formula for what works, however. It is hoped that the next editor will take his or her view of what this publication should be, and make it precisely that. Keeping our members informed is the most important purpose of the Times. I offer my thanks to Debra, and Terry, LaToya and to the readers of the OLLI Times! And, finally, my deepest gratitude to Harriet, my lifelong love, for her love and support as my chief of technology services. This news magazine would look far different if it weren't for her knowledge and guidance. I'm old-school!



OLLI GROUP VISITS PROOF BREWERY IN TALLAHASSEE—A group of 13 hearty OLLI members toured the Proof Brewery in November. Tallahassee’s first craft production brewery features a 20-barrel brew house, refined tasting room and outdoor beer garden. Our guide explained how the four main ingredients in beer (grain, hops, yeast and water) are combined with other ingredients, mixed and processed to the bottle, can or draft for consumption. The group enjoyed dinner and sampled four different types of beer, from light to dark. After the tour, some members remained to enjoy....more beer. (Photos by George Waas)

FROM THE WRITERS' CLUB

The Magic of Believing Christmas 1945 - 6 years old

By Judith Powell

"Jude, are you awake?" My twin brother says nudging me with his foot. "Uh-huh, do you think he's been here?" I reply yawning. "I don't know. What time is it?" "Go look at the clock in the hall and be quite." I command.

Johnny gets out of bed shivering in the cold bedroom and tiptoes to the wall clock at the top of the stairs. I follow him as far as the bedroom door. "It's too dark - I can't see the clock", he whispers. "Get closer and just see what the little hand is on."

Stretching as tall as he can he finally sees the little hand. "It's on 5." "Get back in bed - we have to wait till it's on 6." "I think we should see if he has already been here." Johnny suggests. "How are we going to do that?" I ask.

Johnny lays out the plan. "I'll sneak down the stairs to the landing and look around the corner. If there are more presents under the tree and if the cookies we left him are gone we will know he's been here. Then we will

wait till the little hand is on 6 before we wake up Mimi and Daddy."

"But it's too dark to see," I say. "No it's not; remember Daddy left the porch light on. There will be light shining in the window - I'll be able to see." Johnny states with certainty. "OK, but I'm going with you."

We both slowly tiptoe to the head of the stairs quietly looking at each other with our index fingers pressed to our lips. As we step on the first step we stop, remembering that the second step squeaks when it's stepped on. Holding hands we step to the third step, careful to miss the tell-tale second step. Slowly we move down the fourth, fifth, and sixth step to the landing. Our big brown eyes stare at each other, hearts pounding with excitement, wondering if we should look. We both seem to be thinking the same thing - what if he is still there and sees us; what if he hasn't been here; what if we haven't been good enough and he isn't going to come to our house at all.

Quickly, curiosity takes over and together we bend stretching forward turning our blonde heads to the left like

a mechanical toy as we look down into the living room. In less than a second, we see and with a burst of excitement we race up the stairs rushing into our

parent's bedroom exclaiming, "He's been here, he's been here!"

The little hand is still on 5.

Book Review

MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP DOMINATES RILL'S FINE DEBUT NOVEL

by Donna Meredith

From Fragile Fragments is an unforgettable novel written by long-time Osher Lifelong Learning Institute member Louise Rill. Rill's story grabs your attention with the first perfect scene and doesn't let go until the last word.

The central character, Marjorie, is a 22-year-old college graduate whose mother tries to dictate her every move. This over-protectiveness drove Marjorie into deep depression in the past. Marjorie's mother is an unforgettable character, memorable for her need to control, to protect, to overpower her daughter's desires.

Yet Rill is too fine of a writer to leave her antagonist as a completely flat character. Instead, we learn the mother's backstory and realize her intentions were good. Her motives don't make her likeable, but they do change our understanding of her nature.

Marjorie's new husband Les and his parents are admirable characters,

loving and supportive without being dictatorial. Marjorie also finds allies in Betty, a friend in her apartment complex; and in Mrs. Dowling, her boss in the department store. Making new friends and having a job provide Marjorie with newfound confidence.

Set in the run-up to the United States entering World War II, this is not a war novel, although the impending conflict adds a layer of tension. The novel is surprisingly full of suspense as Marjorie confronts one potential setback and complication after another. You will find yourself cheering Marjorie on with each small step she takes to break free from her mother's suffocating control and discover her own strength.

Achingly raw and beautifully written, **Fragile Fragments** is perfect for book clubs. It offers opportunity to discuss complex family relationships, guilt, depression, and women's life journeys. The novel is available at Midtown Reader, My Favorite Books, and Amazon.

OLLI MONDAY BOOK CLUB TO MEET LIVE IN FEBRUARY; SETS PROGRAMS THROUGH JUNE

In January 2022, the Monday Book Club will meet virtually via Zoom.

In February 2022 the club will meet at the Leroy Collins Leon County Main Public Library downtown where its members will welcome a special guest, Dr. Larry Rivers, Distinguished Professor of History, Florida A&M University, who will speak about his book, Father James Page. All OLLI members are invited as we celebrate Black History Month with Dr. Rivers.

“The location for the remaining meetings of the term, March through June 2022, will be announced after the February meeting as we assess the possibility of meeting in a hybrid setting with both in-person and Zoom options.

We welcome OLLI members who live outside the Tallahassee area to attend virtually,” Club Chair Nancy O’Farrell said.

Registration for **Monday Book Club** will open on registration day, February 4. If you’re not an Annual Member of OLLI but intend to join for the spring semester, you are invited to attend the

January meeting, email nancyofarrell047@gmail.com to be added to the contact list, then plan to register on February 4. New members of OLLI should register through the OLLI registration website, then email Nancy O’Farrell, Chair, at nancyofarrell047@gmail.com, to be added to the contact list.

A Zoom link will be emailed in advance of each meeting, with a reminder of the link emailed the morning of the meeting.

OLLI at FSU Monday Book Club meets on the second Monday of each month from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

Meeting dates and books to be discussed:

January 10 1919 by Eve L. Ewing

February 14 Father James Page by Dr. Larry Rivers

March 14 Behind the Beautiful Forevers by Katherine Boo

April 11 Too Much Happiness by Alice Munro

May 9 The Three Mothers by Anna Malaika Tubbs

June 13 Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe.

WEDNESDAY BOOK CLUB TO MEET VIA ZOOM IN DECEMBER, JANUARY; SETS SCHEDULE THROUGH JUNE

The Wednesday Book Club will hold its book discussions on December 8th and January 12th via Zoom (4:00 – 5:30 PM EST), and will then decide each month whether to continue on Zoom or meet in person (or BOTH!) for the February – June 2022 meetings.

You can join club meetings by registering with OLLI and then registering online for the Wednesday Book Club (free). **Then send an email to Laurie Svec, Chair, at ollibookclub@gmail.com** to get on the list to receive the Zoom links for the book discussion meetings. (These go out the morning of each day we have a meeting.) We hope you'll join us!

Here are the upcoming books/meetings in our 2021-22 reading year. Midtown Reader has the club's book list and offers a discount to OLLI Book Club members wishing to purchase a book on the list.

December 8	<i>News of the World</i> by Paulette Jiles
January 12	<i>Anxious People</i> * by Fredrik Backman
February 9	<i>Celestial Bodies</i> * by Jokha Alharthi
March 9	<i>Buried Seeds</i> by Donna Meredith

	(Author plans to participate)
April 13	<i>The Plague of Doves</i> by Louise Erdrich
May 11	<i>Lost Roses</i> by Martha Hall Kelly
June 8	<i>The Four Winds</i> * by Kristin Hannah

*Traveling Book Club available

REQUEST FOR HELP - The Book Club is sponsoring an ongoing charity book drive – “Books for Bailey” – which distributes new or gently used children’s books to various public schools, libraries, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, and several non-profit organizations (including Second Harvest). Books donated by OLLI members get a printed label (from Laurie) indicating it was donated via OLLI. Any OLLI member can donate to this program at any time, so please consider helping us with this project. **Detailed information is provided in the November *OLLI Times* (pages 15-16),** or you can email Laurie at ollibookclub@gmail.com. In November 2021 we also donated cash and gift cards to the Guardian Ad Litem program to help them purchase holiday books for the foster children they serve. We’ll have a recap on that project soon.

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

6 SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES 2022

2022's 5.9% COLA is the largest since 1982

From Investopedia 2021

Every October, the Social Security Administration (SSA) announces its annual changes to the Social Security program for the coming year. Below is our summary of the Social Security changes that were announced in October 2021 and are set to take effect on Jan. 1, 2022.

SUMMARY

Social Security recipients will get a 5.9% raise for 2022, compared with the 1.3% hike that beneficiaries received in 2021.¹

Maximum earnings subject to the Social Security tax also increased—from \$142,800 a year to \$147,000.

Other changes for 2022 include an increase in how much money working Social Security recipients can earn before their benefits are reduced and a slight rise in disability benefits.

Social Security tax rates remain the same for 2022: 6.2% on employees and 12.4% on the self-employed.

It now takes \$1,510 to earn a single Social Security credit, up just \$40 from 2021.²

1. Beneficiaries to See a 5.9% Increase

The big news for 2022 is that nearly 70 million Social Security recipients will see reflected in their monthly benefits the largest cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) since Ronald Reagan's first term in office in 1982.³¹ The adjustment helped benefits keep pace with inflation and is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) as calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). If the CPI-W increases more than 0.1% year over year between the third quarter of the previous year and the third quarter of the current year, then Social Security will raise benefits by the same amount.

As we've seen, 2022's 5.9% bump is much higher than most years; in 2021 the COLA increase was just 1.3%.¹ The average monthly benefit

for all retired workers will increase by \$92 in 2022, from \$1,565 to \$1,657.²

2. Maximum Taxable Earnings Rose to \$147,000

In 2021, employees were required to pay a 6.2% Social Security tax (with their employer matching that payment) on income of up to \$142,800. Any earnings above that amount were not subject to the tax. In 2022, the tax rate remained the same at 6.2% (12.4% for the self-employed), but the income cap increased to \$147,000.²

The flip side is that as the taxable maximum income increases, so does the maximum amount of earnings used by the SSA to calculate retirement benefits. In 2021, the maximum monthly Social Security benefit for a worker retiring at full retirement age was \$3,148. In 2022, the maximum benefit increases by \$197 per month to \$3,345.²

3. Full Retirement Age Continues to Rise

The absolute earliest that you can start claiming Social Security retirement benefits is age 62. However, claiming before your full (or normal) retirement age will result in a permanently reduced payout.

Under current law, the retirement age for Social Security purposes is set to increase by two months each year until it hits 67. If you turned 62 in 2021, then your full retirement age is 66 and 10

months. Unless the law changes, anyone born in 1960 or later will not reach full retirement age until they are 67.⁴

If you delay collecting Social Security past your full retirement age, then you can collect more than your full, or normal, payout. In fact, if you put off claiming until age 70, then you will receive an annual payout up to 32% higher than if you started receiving benefits at full retirement.⁵

After age 70, there is no further incentive for delaying: Your monthly benefit stops increasing, with or without put-offs.⁶

4. Earnings Limits for Recipients Were Increased

If you work while collecting Social Security benefits, then all or part of your benefits may be temporarily withheld, depending on how much you earn. However, those income limits have increased slightly for 2022.²

Prior to reaching full retirement age, you will be able to earn up to \$19,560 in 2022. After that, \$1 will be deducted from your payment for every \$2 that exceeds the limit. The 2022 annual limit represents a \$600 increase over the 2021 limit of \$18,960.²

If you reach full retirement age in 2022, then you will be able to earn \$51,960, up \$1,440 from the 2021

annual limit of \$50,520. For every \$3 you earn over the limit, your Social Security benefits will be reduced by \$1, but that will only apply to money earned in the months prior to hitting full retirement age. Once you reach full retirement age, no benefits will be withheld if you continue working.²

5. Social Security Disability Benefits Increased

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is an insurance program in which workers can earn coverage for benefits by paying Social Security taxes through their paycheck. The program provides income for those who can no longer work due to a disability, to help replace some of their lost income. Most years payments increase only slightly; however, the 9.6 million Americans who receive Social Security disability benefits will be pleased to learn 2022's 5.9% increase will result in a more noticeable boost in benefits.⁷²

Disabled workers will receive on average \$1,358 per month in 2021, up from \$1,282 in 2020. However, for a disabled worker, spouse and one or more children, they'll be paid on average \$2,383 per month, an increase of \$133 thanks to the 5.9% COLA.²

6. Credit Earning Threshold Went Up

If you were born in 1929 or later, then you must earn at least 40 credits (maximum of four per year) over your working life to qualify for Social Security benefits. The amount it takes to earn a single credit goes up slightly each year. For 2022, it will take \$1,510 in earnings per credit, up \$40 from 2021. The number of credits needed for disability depends on your age when you become disabled.²

Shortfalls Ahead?

According to the most recent (2021) Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees annual report, both trust funds face depletion in the decades ahead. If the predictions hold, it means that, beginning in 2033, retirees who receive money from the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund benefits, will receive about three-quarters (76%) of their scheduled benefit; those who receive payouts from the Disability Insurance (DI) Trust Fund will receive 91% of their benefit, starting in 2057. The report concludes by urging lawmakers to address these financial shortfalls, "taking action sooner rather than later."⁷

COGNITIVE HEALTH AND OLDER ADULTS

National Institute on Aging 2017

Cognitive health—the ability to clearly think, learn, and remember—is an important component of brain health. Others include:

- Motor function—how well you make and control movements
- Emotional function—how well you interpret and respond to emotions
- Sensory function—how well you feel and respond to sensations of touch, including pressure, pain, and temperature

This guide focuses on **cognitive health** and what you can do to help maintain it. The following steps can help you function every day and stay independent—and they have been linked to cognitive health, too.

- Take Care of Your Physical Health
- Eat Healthy Foods
- Be Physically Active
- Keep Your Mind Active
- Stay Connected with Social Activities
- Reduce Risks to Cognitive Health

Take Care of Your Physical Health

Taking care of your physical health may help your cognitive health. You can:

- Get recommended health screenings.
- Manage chronic health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, depression, and high cholesterol.
- Consult with your healthcare provider about the medicines you take and possible side effects on memory, sleep, and brain function.
- Reduce risk for brain injuries due to falls and other accidents.
- Limit use of alcohol (some medicines can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol).
- Quit smoking, if you smoke.
- Get enough sleep, generally 7-8 hours each night.

Eat Healthy Foods

A healthy diet can help reduce the risk of many chronic diseases, such as heart disease or diabetes. It may

also help keep your brain healthy.

In general, a healthy diet consists of fruits and vegetables; whole grains; lean meats, fish, and poultry; and low-fat or non-fat dairy products. You should also limit solid fats, sugar, and salt. Be sure to control portion sizes and drink enough water and other fluids.

Researchers are looking at whether a healthy diet can help preserve cognitive function or reduce the risk of Alzheimer's. For example, there is some evidence that people who eat a "Mediterranean diet" have a lower risk of developing mild cognitive impairment.

Researchers have developed and are testing another diet, called MIND, a combination of the Mediterranean and DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diets. One study suggests that MIND may affect the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

Get more information about healthy eating for older adults.

Be Physically Active

Being physically active—through regular exercise, household chores, or other activities—has many benefits. It can help you:

- Keep and improve your strength
- Have more energy
- Improve your balance

- Prevent or delay heart disease, diabetes, and other diseases
- Perk up your mood and reduce depression

Studies link ongoing physical activity with benefits for the brain, too. In one study, exercise stimulated the human brain's ability to maintain old network connections and make new ones that are vital to cognitive health. Other studies have shown that exercise increased the size of a brain structure important to memory and learning, improving spatial memory.

Aerobic exercise, such as brisk walking, is thought to be more beneficial to cognitive health than non-aerobic stretching and toning exercise. Studies are ongoing.

Federal guidelines recommend that all adults get at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Aim to move about 30 minutes on most days. Walking is a good start. You can also join programs that teach you to move safely and prevent falls, which can lead to brain and other injuries. Check with your healthcare provider if you haven't been active and want to start a vigorous exercise program.

Keep Your Mind Active

Being intellectually engaged may benefit the brain. People who engage in meaningful activities, like volunteering or hobbies, say they feel happier and healthier. Learning new skills may improve your thinking

ability, too. For example, one study found that older adults who learned quilting or digital photography had more memory improvement than those who only socialized or did less cognitively demanding activities.

Lots of activities can keep your mind active. For example, read books and magazines. Play games. Take or teach a class. Learn a new skill or hobby. Work or volunteer. These types of mentally stimulating activities have not been proven to prevent serious cognitive impairment or Alzheimer's disease, but they can be fun!

Scientists think that such activities may protect the brain by establishing "cognitive reserve." They may help the brain become more adaptable in some mental functions, so it can compensate for age-related brain changes and health conditions that affect the brain.

Formal cognitive training also seems to have benefits. In the Advanced Cognitive Training for Independent and Vital Elderly (ACTIVE) trial, healthy adults 65 and older participated in 10 sessions of memory training, reasoning training, or processing-speed training. The sessions improved participants' mental skills in the area in which they were trained. Most of these improvements persisted 10 years after the training was completed.

Be wary of claims that playing certain computer and online games can improve your memory and other types

of thinking. Evidence to back up such claims is evolving. NIA and others are supporting research to determine if different types of cognitive training have lasting effects.

For more information, see [Participating in Activities You Enjoy](#).

Stay Connected with Social Activities

Connecting with other people through social activities and community programs can keep your brain active and help you feel less isolated and more engaged with the world around you. Participating in social activities may lower the risk for some health problems and improve well-being.

So, visit with family and friends. Join programs through your Area Agency on Aging, senior center, or other community organizations.

We don't know for sure yet if any of these actions can prevent or delay Alzheimer's disease and age-related cognitive decline. But some of them have been associated with reduced risk of cognitive impairment and dementia.

Reduce Risks to Cognitive Health

Genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors are all thought to influence cognitive health. Some of these factors may contribute to a decline in thinking skills and the ability to perform

everyday tasks such as driving, paying bills, taking medicine, and cooking.

Genetic factors are passed down (inherited) from a parent to child and cannot be controlled. But environmental and lifestyle factors can be changed, particularly those you can control yourself. These factors include:

- Health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and depression
- Brain injuries
- Some medicines, or improper use of them
- Lack of physical activity
- Poor diet
- Smoking
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Sleep problems
- Little social activity and being alone most of the time

Health Problems

Many health conditions affect the brain and pose risks to cognitive function. These conditions include:

- Heart disease and high blood pressure—can lead to stroke and changes in blood vessels related to dementia
- Diabetes—damages blood vessels throughout the body, including the brain; increases risk for stroke and heart attack; associated with increased risk for Alzheimer's

- Alzheimer's disease—causes a buildup of harmful proteins and other changes in the brain that leads to memory loss and other thinking problems
- Stroke—can damage blood vessels in the brain and increase risk for vascular dementia
- Depression—can lead to confusion or attention problems; has also been linked to dementia
- Delirium—shows up as an acute state of confusion, often during a hospital stay, and is associated with subsequent cognitive decline

It's important to prevent or seek treatment for these health problems. They affect your brain as well as your body!

Brain Injuries

Older adults are at higher risk of falls, car accidents, and other accidents that can cause brain injury. Alcohol and certain medicines can affect a person's ability to drive safely and increase the risk for accidents and brain injury. Learn about and deal with risks for falls, and participate in fall prevention programs. Wear helmets and seat belts to help prevent head injuries as well.

Medicines

Some medicines, and combinations of medicines, can affect a person's thinking and the way the brain works. For example, certain drugs can cause

confusion, memory loss, hallucinations, and delusions in older adults.

Medicines can also interact with food, dietary supplements, alcohol, and other substances. Some of these

interactions can affect how your brain functions. Drugs that can harm older adults' cognition include:

- Antihistamines for allergy relief
- Medicines for anxiety and depression
- Sleep aids
- Antipsychotics
- Muscle relaxants
- Some drugs to treat urinary incontinence
- Medications for relief of cramps in the stomach, intestines, and bladder

Lack of Physical Activity

Lack of exercise and other physical activity may increase your risk of diabetes, heart disease, depression, and stroke—all of which can harm the brain. In some studies, physical activity has been linked to improved cognitive performance and reduced risk for Alzheimer's disease. More research in this area is needed, however.

Poor Diet

A number of studies link eating certain foods with keeping the brain healthy—

and suggest that other foods can increase health risk. For example, high-fat, high-sodium foods can lead to health problems, like heart disease and diabetes, that harm the brain.

Smoking

Smoking is harmful to your body and your brain. It raises the risk of heart attack, stroke, and lung disease. Quitting smoking at any age can improve your health.

Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol affects the brain by slowing or impairing communication among brain cells. This can lead to slurred speech, fuzzy memory, drowsiness, and dizziness. Long-term effects may include changes in balance, memory, emotions, coordination, and body temperature. Staying away from alcohol can reverse some of these changes.

As people age, they may become more sensitive to alcohol's effects. The same amount of alcohol can have a greater effect on an older person than on someone who is younger. Also, some medicines can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

Sleep Problems

At any age, getting a good night's sleep supports brain health. Sleep

problems—not getting enough sleep, sleeping poorly, and sleep disorders—can lead to trouble with memory, concentration, and other cognitive functions.

Sleep apnea is a sleep disorder that causes short pauses in breathing when a person is sleeping. It can lead to high blood pressure, stroke, or memory loss. Treatment for sleep apnea begins with lifestyle changes, such as

avoiding alcohol, losing weight, and quitting smoking. Use of a special device ordered by a doctor may also help.

Social Isolation and Loneliness

Social isolation and feeling lonely may be bad for brain health. Loneliness has been linked to higher risk for dementia, and less social activity to poorer cognitive function.

IT'S NOT YOUR AGE THAT'S SLOWING YOUR METABOLISM, NEW RESEARCH SAYS. HERE'S WHAT TO DO

From CNN News 2021

If you're middle-aged and have been slowly but steadily putting on weight for years, you've probably attributed it to an age-related decrease in metabolism.

Your metabolic rate is the rate at which your body burns calories to keep you alive and functioning. It's a generally accepted belief that as you age, your resting metabolism slows --especially over age 40. And if you are a woman in menopause, your metabolism slows even more.

Not true, says a new paper published in Science. By analyzing data from nearly 6,500 people ranging in age from infancy to elderly, the paper's

authors determined that resting metabolism holds steady from age 20 to 60 before logging a decrease of less than 1% per year thereafter.

Further countering conventional wisdom, the paper cites no real differences between resting metabolic rates of men and women, even for menopausal women, when controlling for other influences.

Now you might be wondering why you feel like your metabolism has slowed down. The answer is less about age and more about lifestyle. Although your baseline resting metabolic rate may not have changed between ages 20 and 60,

the factors involved in boosting other aspects of your metabolism -- when you are not resting -- likely changed, lowering your ability to metabolize fat, maximize the caloric burn from exercise, increase energy-burning muscle mass and get quality rest to enable metabolic processes.

Don't worry -- this isn't bad news. It actually means that you have the power to make changes that will boost your metabolism, regardless of your age.

Read on for four science-backed ways to boost your metabolism.

Important note: Consult your doctor before beginning any new exercise program.

Be active throughout the day

When asking yourself why you feel like your metabolism has slowed down with age, you should also question whether your daily activity level has slowed down. In addition to all the other health risks associated with prolonged sitting, experts point to consistent inactivity as the biggest detriment to your metabolism.

"Being sedentary most of the day markedly reduces fat metabolism," said Edward Coyle, professor of kinesiology and health education at the University of Texas at Austin.

Fat metabolism refers to the type of fuel you are burning during resting metabolism.

Coyle, who is also the director of the school's Human Performance Laboratory, said his research has found it's necessary to take at least 8,500 steps per day -- throughout the day, rather than all at once -- in order to maintain adequate fat metabolism.

Even if you can't regularly do intense workouts, simply getting up and moving a few minutes per hour can make a difference.

Additionally, in his lab, Coyle has found that just five four-second bursts of exercise performed at full effort every hour throughout the day can dramatically increase fat metabolism by as much as 49%.

Although doing 20 seconds of full-out sprints every hour isn't practical for almost anyone, sedentary office workers whose time limitations and responsibilities make it difficult to get to the gym regularly should take heart that simply getting up and moving a few minutes per hour can pay significant dividends.

Do the right kinds of exercise

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) and strength training have both been shown to have statistically significant impacts on your metabolism.

HIIT is a training style that involves periods of exercising intensely with an elevated heart rate alternated with recovery periods. It has been shown to elevate your metabolic rate, specifically for fat burning, long after

your workout ends. One study found that, after 12 weeks of HIIT, overweight men reduced their belly fat by 17% and overall fat mass by 4.4 pounds (2 kilograms), which is comparatively more than other studies on fat burning using alternate forms of exercise. You can learn more about safely performing HIIT [here](#).

With strength training, you increase your body's muscle mass, which increases your overall metabolic rate. Like HIIT, that means more calories burned after exercising. However, unlike HIIT, the muscle you build through strength training will continue to burn caloric energy regardless of how often you work out, as long as you are doing enough to maintain muscle mass.

As such, strength training can also help you avoid muscle loss and metabolic decrease associated with dieting for weight loss. In a study of 48 overweight women on a diet of only 800 calories per day, strength training was shown to enable them to maintain muscle mass and metabolism, while those in the study who did only aerobic exercise or no exercise lost muscle and experienced decreased metabolism.

To maximize your metabolic boost through exercise, you should mix up your weekly workout program to include both strength training sessions and HIIT training sessions. That said, it is important to note that to get the most out of any kind of exercise program, you need to also break up

long periods of sedentary time during the day with short bouts of activity, as mentioned above.

Doing a one-hour workout would normally increase your fat metabolism, Coyle said. But if you've been inactive all day long, it won't be as effective due to what he referred to as "exercise resistance."

Coyle's research has shown that people who are inactive all day long become resistant to some of the beneficial effects of exercise -- fat metabolism in particular.

That's why it's crucial to engage in spurts of activity throughout your day in addition to doing longer workouts.

Fuel your body with protein and water

Digesting food actually increases your metabolism for a few hours, because it takes caloric energy to process the nutrients you eat. This is called the thermic effect of food (TEF).

That doesn't mean you should eat more in order to boost your metabolism, but if you eat more protein, it can lead to bigger boosts in metabolism than other foods. That is because protein causes the largest rise in TEF, increasing your overall metabolic rate by 15% to 30%.

Eating protein is also essential for building and repairing muscle, which - as established above -- boosts your metabolism. Additionally, ingesting protein helps you avoid muscle loss and the resulting decrease in

metabolism that can come with dieting.

Registered dietician and Eleat Sports Nutrition owner Angie Asche, who is the author of the book "Fuel Your Body: How to Cook and Eat for Peak Performance," advised eating 20 to 25 grams of protein within an hour after working out. That's equal to a 3-ounce chicken breast (24 grams of protein), one 7-ounce container of 2% Greek yogurt (20 grams) or one scoop of whey or plant-based protein powder (grams of protein varies depending on brand).

Drinking more water may also briefly raise your metabolism. Research shows that drinking 0.5 liters of water can increase resting metabolism by 24% for about an hour. Additional research points to a possible enhanced metabolism boost if you drink cold water because of the energy expenditure needed to heat it to body temperature.

Get the rest you need

Sleep is crucial for the recovery and restoration of all of the processes of your body.

Sleeping fewer than seven hours on a regular basis is associated with numerous negative health implications, like weight gain, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease

and stroke, depression, impaired immune function, increased pain,

impaired performance, and greater risk of death, according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Sleep Research Society.

When it comes to the harmful effects of lack of sleep on body processes, metabolism is no exception. Sleep deprivation and reduced quality of sleep have been shown in research to have a detrimental impact on metabolism.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 1 in 3 Americans don't get the recommended seven or more hours of sleep per night. To get the sleep you need to maintain a healthy metabolism and overall health and wellness, it's important to create a nightly routine that includes strategies that facilitate rest, such as breathing exercises to help calm your nervous system. You can also practice these four yoga moves to prepare your body for sleep.

Research points to the rate of your metabolism, particularly fat metabolism, being largely in your hands. It's up to you to make lifestyle changes that will boost your metabolism and your overall health and well-being.

BEING DISCIPLINED AND ORGANIZED MAKES YOU 23% LESS LIKELY TO DEVELOP DEMENTIA

By Damaris Aschwanden, Post-Doctoral Researcher, FSU Department of Geriatrics

In the United States, more than 6 million people aged 65+ years have Alzheimer's disease, the most common type of dementia. Although age is the strongest known risk factor for dementia, it is not an inevitable consequence of biological aging. Some people are more likely to develop dementia, while others are less likely to do so. While there are many factors involved, personality is one and shapes how we cognitively age — as our research team and others have shown.

Personality refers to individual differences in general patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. For example, some of us find it hard to keep our negative emotions under control, while others find it easy to be disciplined and organized. These tendencies can be organized in a conceptual framework that consists of five basic personality traits, the so-called Big Five or Five-Factor Model. The five traits are known as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Briefly, people with higher neuroticism tend to worry and ruminate to a great deal. People

with higher extraversion tend to be outgoing and find it easy to make new friends. People with higher openness tend to be eager to learn new things and enjoy new experiences. People with higher agreeableness tend to be trusting and altruistic, while people with higher conscientiousness tend to be disciplined and organized. It seems logical that some dispositions might be more prone to developing cognitive impairment—and indeed, many scientific studies suggest this to be the case.

In a meta-analysis (published in the journal *Ageing Research Reviews*), our research team combined the findings of multiple studies to derive a summary estimate and draw more robust conclusions. We first searched the scientific literature for appropriate studies. For each personality trait, we then conducted a separate meta-analysis including up to 12 studies with over 30,000 participants.

Our findings show that people who tend to worry and ruminate (high neuroticism) have a 24% increased risk of developing dementia. In contrast, those of us who tend to be

disciplined and organized (high conscientiousness) have a 23% reduced risk of developing dementia. These associations accounted for age, gender, race, ethnicity, and levels of education as well as depressive symptoms.

People who tend to be outgoing (high extraversion), enjoy new experiences (high openness), and altruistic (high agreeableness) also have a reduced dementia risk — although to a weaker extent (~10%) — and these associations did not hold when accounting for depressive symptoms (this means, depressive symptoms washed out the effects of extraversion, openness, and agreeableness on dementia risk).

While our study demonstrates that higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness are associated with increased dementia risk, it cannot explain the “how” and “why” of these associations. Put differently, we did not examine any mechanisms that might underlie the observed associations. Many studies show that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline and dementia by being physically active, staying connected with social activities, keeping one’s mind active, eating healthy foods, managing stress, and pursuing a purpose in life. Personality traits, in particular neuroticism and conscientiousness, are associated with all of these behaviors. Thus, it is likely

that personality shapes dementia risk through a cascade of effects on various health behaviors. Moreover, personality predicts the accumulation of dementia neuropathology (that is, the lesions in the brain that tell us about the underlying pathological change).

In another meta-analysis (published in the journal *Biological Psychiatry*), we found more neuropathology (i.e., higher amounts of amyloid and tau deposits) in participants who scored higher in neuroticism and lower in conscientiousness. As such, lower neuroticism and higher conscientiousness might better support metabolic and immunological functions, and ultimately prevent or delay the neurodegenerative process. In sum, maintaining a healthy lifestyle is likely to have benefits, but whether it is a pathway underlying the personality-dementia association remains to be proven.

So, we showed that higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness increase dementia risk by almost 25% — but what now? Well, this number is comparable with other health and behavioral factors related to dementia risk: For example, the risk of dementia is increased by 14% through physical inactivity, by 18% through diabetes, and by 30% through smoking. This underlines the importance of personality and indicates that

personality could be considered when identifying at-risk individuals.

How could we identify people based on their personality? It might be possible to inexpensively screen large numbers of individuals in the community for high neuroticism and low conscientiousness via web-based questionnaires. These individuals might benefit most from inclusion in preventive interventions. However, the development of innovative personality-tailored interventions is necessary to test whether people with higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness respond well to such interventions. Likewise, intentional personality change interventions offer the possibility to decrease neuroticism

and increase conscientiousness for people who are motivated to become less neurotic and more conscientious. If such changes are enduring, interventions that target personality could be incorporated into dementia prevention and eventually into the clinical context.

It is obvious that we have a lot more work ahead of us, not only in terms of finding a cure for dementia but also regarding the development of personality-tailored interventions as well as the research-to-practice-gap, so that suggested implications make their way into the public health sector. But until then, it probably does not harm if we stick to the small steps advice on cognitive health.

CHOOSING HEALTHY MEALS AS YOU GET OLDER

National Institute on Aging 2019

Making healthy food choices is a smart thing to do—no matter how old you are! Your body changes through your 60s, 70s, 80s, and beyond. Food provides nutrients you need as you age. Use these tips to choose foods and beverages for better health at each stage of life.

1. Drink plenty of liquids

With age, you may lose some of your sense of thirst. Drink water often. Low-fat or fat-free milk or 100% juice

also helps you stay hydrated. Limit beverages that have lots of added sugars or salt. Learn which liquids are healthier choices.

Read and share this infographic to get information and tips about living longer and healthier.

2. Make eating a social event

Meals are more enjoyable when you eat with others. Invite a friend to join you or take part in a potluck at least

twice a week. A senior center or place of worship may offer meals that are shared with others. There are many ways to make mealtimes pleasing.

3. Plan healthy meals

Find trusted nutrition information from ChooseMyPlate.gov and the National Institute on Aging. Get advice on what to eat, how much to eat, and which foods to choose, all based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Find sensible, flexible ways to choose and prepare tasty meals so you can eat foods you need.

4. Know how much to eat

Learn to recognize how much to eat so you can control portion size. When eating out, pack part of your meal to eat later. One restaurant dish might be enough for two meals or more.

5. Vary your vegetables

Include a variety of different colored, flavored, and textured vegetables. Most vegetables are a low-calorie source of nutrients. Vegetables are also a good source of fiber.

6. Eat for your teeth and gums

Read and share this infographic to learn more about lifestyle changes you can make today for healthier aging.

Many people find that their teeth and gums change as they age. People with dental problems sometimes find it hard to chew fruits, vegetables, or meats. Don't miss out on needed nutrients! Eating softer foods can help. Try cooked or canned foods like unsweetened fruit, low-sodium soups, or canned tuna.

7. Use herbs and spices

Foods may seem to lose their flavor as you age. If favorite dishes taste different, it may not be the cook! Maybe your sense of smell, sense of taste, or both have changed. Medicines may also change how foods taste. Add flavor to your meals with herbs and spices.

8. Keep food safe

Don't take a chance with your health. A food-related illness can be life threatening for an older person. Throw out food that might not be safe. Avoid certain foods that are always risky for an older person, such as unpasteurized dairy foods. Other foods can be harmful to you when they are raw or undercooked, such as eggs, sprouts, fish, shellfish, meat, or poultry.

9. Read the Nutrition Facts label

Make the right choices when buying

food. Pay attention to important nutrients to know as well as calories, fats, sodium, and the rest of the Nutrition Facts label. Ask your doctor if there are ingredients and nutrients you might need to limit or to increase.

10. Ask your doctor about vitamins or supplements

Food is the best way to get nutrients you need. Should you take vitamins or other pills or powders with herbs and minerals? These are called dietary supplements. Your doctor will know if you need them. More may not be better. Some can interfere with your medicines or affect your medical conditions.

FATIGUE IN OLDER ADULTS

National Institute on Aging 2020

"You better get up soon," Dan called to his wife, Liang. "The grandchildren will be here in an hour for lunch."

"I don't know what's wrong with me," Liang said. "I feel so tired. I'm not even sure I can get out of bed. I just don't seem to have any energy—not even for my family."

Everyone feels tired now and then. But, after a good night's sleep, most people feel refreshed and ready to face a new day. If, like Liang, you continue to feel tired for weeks, it's time to see your doctor. He or she may be able to help you find out what's causing your fatigue. In fact, your doctor may even suggest you become more active, as exercise may reduce fatigue and improve quality of life.

Some Illnesses Cause Fatigue

Sometimes, fatigue can be the first sign

that something is wrong in your body. For example, people with rheumatoid arthritis, a painful condition that affects the joints, often complain of fatigue. People with cancer may feel fatigued from the disease, treatments, or both.

Many medical problems and treatments can add to fatigue. These include:

- Taking certain medications, such as antidepressants, antihistamines, and medicines for nausea and pain
- Having medical treatments, like chemotherapy and radiation, or recovering from major surgery
- Infections
- Chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, thyroid disease, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

- Untreated pain and diseases like fibromyalgia
- Anemia
- Sleep apnea and other sleep disorders

Managing a health problem may make the fatigue go away. Your doctor can help.

Can Emotions Cause Fatigue?

Are you fearful about the future? Do you worry about your health and who will take care of you? Are you afraid you are no longer needed? Emotional stresses like these can take a toll on your energy. Fatigue can be linked to many conditions, including:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Grief from loss of family or friends
- Stress from financial or personal problems
- Feeling that you no longer have control over your life

Not getting enough sleep can also contribute to fatigue. Regular physical activity can improve your sleep. It may also help reduce feelings of depression and stress while improving your mood and overall well-being. Yoga, meditation, or cognitive behavioral therapy could also help you get more rest. Talk with your doctor if your mental well-being is affecting your sleep or making you tired.

What Else Causes Fatigue?

Some lifestyle habits can make you feel tired. Here are some things that may be draining your energy:

- **Staying up too late.** A good night's sleep is important to feeling refreshed and energetic. Try going to bed and waking up at the same time every day.
- **Having too much caffeine.** Drinking caffeinated drinks like soda, tea, or coffee late in the day can keep you from getting a good night's sleep. Limit the amount of caffeine you have during the day and avoid it in the evening.
- **Drinking too much alcohol.** Alcohol changes the way you think and act. It may also interact with your medicines.
- **Eating junk food.** Say "no thanks" to food with empty calories, like fried foods and sweets, which have few nutrients and are high in fat and sugars. Choose nutritious foods to get the energy you need to do the things you enjoy.
- **Getting too little or too much exercise.** Regular exercise can boost your energy levels, but don't overdo it.

Can Boredom Cause Fatigue?

Being bored can make you feel tired. That may sound strange, but it's true. If

you were very busy during your working years, you may feel lost about how to spend your time when you retire. When you wake up in the morning, you may see long days stretching before you with nothing planned. It doesn't have to be that way.

Engaging in social and productive activities that you enjoy, like volunteering in your community, may help maintain your well-being. Think about what interests you and what skills or knowledge you have to offer and look for places to volunteer.

How Can I Feel Less Tired?

Some changes to your lifestyle can make you feel less tired. Here are some suggestions:

- **Keep a fatigue diary** to help you find patterns throughout the day when you feel more or less tired.
- **Exercise regularly.** Almost anyone, at any age, can do some type of physical activity. If you have concerns about starting an exercise program, ask your doctor if there are any activities you should avoid. Moderate exercise may improve your appetite, energy, and outlook. Some people find that exercises combining balance and breathing (for example, tai chi or yoga) improve their energy.
- **Try to avoid long naps** (over 30 minutes) late in the day. Long naps can leave you feeling

groggy and may make it harder to fall asleep at night. Read *A Good Night's Sleep* for tips on getting better rest at night.

- **Stop smoking.** Smoking is linked to many diseases and disorders, such as cancer, heart disease, and breathing problems, which can drain your energy.
- **Ask for help if you feel swamped.** Some people have so much to do that just thinking about their schedules can make them feel tired. Working with others may help a job go faster and be more fun.

When Should I See a Doctor for Fatigue?

If you've been tired for several weeks with no relief, it may be time to call your healthcare provider. He or she will ask questions about your sleep, daily activities, appetite, and exercise and will likely give you a physical exam and order lab tests.

Your treatment will be based on your history and the results of your exam and lab tests. Your doctor may prescribe medications to target underlying health problems, such as anemia or irregular thyroid activity. He or she may suggest that you eat a well-balanced diet and begin an exercise program.

What Is Chronic Fatigue Syndrome? Chronic fatigue syndrome

(CFS), also known as myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) or ME/CFS, is a condition in which fatigue lasts 6 months or longer and is not related to other diseases or conditions.

People with CFS experience

symptoms that make it hard to do daily tasks like dressing or bathing. Along with severe fatigue that doesn't get better with rest, CFS symptoms can include problems with sleep, memory and concentrating, pain, dizziness, sore throat, and tender lymph nodes.

HOW SMELL AND TASTE CHANGE AS YOUR AGE

National Institute on Aging 2016

Sally's Story

Sally looked forward to Thanksgiving dinner at her daughter's house every year. She loved the smell of the turkey and all the fixings. She couldn't wait to dig in. But this year it didn't smell like Thanksgiving and, when Sally ate the holiday food, she felt let down. It wasn't as tasty as she remembered. No one else seemed to notice. Sally wondered what might be wrong—could her senses be the problem?

Did you know that your sense of smell and taste are connected? As you get older, these senses can change, and, like Sally, you may find that certain foods aren't as flavorful as they used to be. Changes in smell or taste can also be a sign of a larger problem.

Your Sense of Smell

Smell is an important sense. Certain smells, like your dad's cologne, can help you recall a memory. Other smells, like smoke from a fire, can alert

you to danger. When you can't smell things you enjoy, like your morning coffee or spring flowers, life may seem dull.

As you get older, your sense of smell may fade. Your sense of smell is closely related to your sense of taste. When you can't smell, food may taste bland. You may even lose interest in eating.

What Causes Loss of Smell?

Many problems cause a loss of smell that lasts for a short time. This temporary loss of smell may be due to:

- A cold or flu that causes a stuffy nose. The ability to smell will come back when you're better.
- Allergies. Try to stay away from things you're allergic to, like pollen and pets. Talk to your doctor about how to manage your allergies.

- A harmless growth (called a polyp) in the nose or sinuses that gives you a runny nose. Having the growth removed may help.
- Some medications like antibiotics or blood pressure medicine. Ask your doctor if there is another medicine you can take.
- Radiation, chemotherapy, and other cancer treatments. Your sense of smell may return when treatment stops.

Some things can cause a long-lasting loss of smell. A head injury, for example, can damage the nerves related to smell.

Sometimes, losing your sense of smell may be a sign of a more serious disorder, such as Parkinson's disease or Alzheimer's disease. Be sure to tell your doctor about any change in your sense of smell.

Smells Can Keep You Safe

It's important to be aware of odors around you. You need to be able to smell:

- Smoke—check your smoke detectors once a year to make sure they work.
- Gas leaks—make sure you have a gas detector in your home.
- Spoiled food—throw out food that's been in the refrigerator too long.

- Household chemicals—make sure there is fresh air where you live and work.

Your Sense of Taste

There are tiny taste buds inside your mouth—on your tongue, in your throat, even on the roof of your mouth. What we call “flavor” is based on five basic tastes: sweet, salty, bitter, sour, and savory. Along with how it tastes, how food smells is also part of what makes up its flavor.

When food tastes bland, many people try to improve the flavor by adding more salt or sugar. This may not be healthy for older people, especially if you have medical problems like high blood pressure or diabetes (high blood sugar).

People who have lost some of their sense of taste may not eat the foods they need to stay healthy. This can lead to other issues such as:

- Weight loss
- Malnutrition (not getting the calories, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals you need from the food)
- Social isolation
- Depression

Eating food that is good for you is important to your health. If you have a problem with how food tastes, be sure to talk with your doctor.

What Causes Loss of Taste?

Many things can cause you to lose your sense of taste. Most of the time there are ways to help with the problem.

Medications, like antibiotics and pills to lower cholesterol and blood pressure, can sometimes change how food tastes. Some medicines can make your mouth dry. Having a dry mouth can cause food to taste funny and also make it hard to swallow. Talk to your doctor if you think a medicine is affecting your sense of taste. There may be different medicines that you can try. Do not stop taking your medicine.

Gum disease, an infection in your mouth, or issues with your dentures can leave a bad taste in your mouth that changes the way food tastes. Brushing your teeth, flossing, and using mouthwash can help prevent these problems. Talk to your dentist if you have a bad taste in your mouth that won't go away.

Alcohol can alter how food tastes. Cutting back or stopping drinking may help. Smoking can also reduce your sense of taste. Quitting may help.

Cancer Treatments and Taste

People who are having cancer treatments might have a problem with taste. Your sense of taste will often return once treatments stop.

Cancer treatments can make food taste bad or “off.” Some say that food tastes metallic. This funny taste may keep some people from eating healthy food. If this happens to you, try to:

- Eat four or five small meals during the day instead of three large meals.
- Eat cold food, including yogurt, pudding, and gelatin dessert. Cold food may taste better than hot food.
- Eat fresh, uncooked vegetables. Cooked vegetables can have strong odors that may not be appealing.
- Drink lots of fluids, including water, weak tea, juice, and ginger ale.
- Test new foods to find ones you like.
- Brush your teeth before and after eating.
- Use plastic forks and spoons if food tastes metallic.

Colors and Spices Can Help

If you're having trouble smelling and tasting your food, try adding color and texture to make your food more interesting. For example, try eating brightly colored vegetables like carrots, sweet potatoes, broccoli, and tomatoes. Also, if your diet allows, flavor your food with a little butter, olive oil, cheese, nuts, or fresh herbs like sage, thyme, or rosemary. To put some zing in your food, add mustard,

hot pepper, onions, garlic, ginger, different spices, or lemon or lime juice. Choose foods that look good to you.

Special Doctor for Smell and Taste, an Otolaryngologist

If the foods you enjoy don't smell or taste the way you think they should, talk to your doctor. He or she might suggest you see a specialist who treats people with smell and taste problems. This kind of doctor is called an otolaryngologist (oh-toh-lar-ing-gol-uh-jist), also known as an ENT (which stands for ear, nose, and throat). An otolaryngologist works on

problems related to the ear, nose, and throat, as well as the larynx (voice box), mouth, and parts of the neck and face. The doctor may ask:

- Can you smell anything at all?
- Can you taste any food?
- When did you first notice the problem?
- Is the problem getting worse?
- Have you been told that you have allergies or chronic sinus problems?
- What medicines do you take?

There are likely ways to help fix the problem. If not, the doctor can help you cope with the changes in smell and taste.

MEMORY, FORGETFULNESS, AND AGING: WHAT'S NORMAL AND WHAT'S NOT?

National Institute on Aging 2019

Many older people worry about their memory and other thinking abilities. For example, they might be concerned about taking longer than before to learn new things, or they might sometimes forget to pay a bill. These changes are usually signs of mild forgetfulness—often a normal part of aging—not serious memory problems.

Talk with your doctor to determine if memory and other thinking

problems are normal or not, and what is causing them.

What's Normal Forgetfulness and What's Not?

Read and share this infographic to learn whether forgetfulness is a normal part of aging.

What's the difference between normal, age-related forgetfulness and a serious memory problem? Serious memory problems make it hard to do everyday

things like driving and shopping. Signs may include:

- Asking the same questions over and over again
- Getting lost in familiar places
- Not being able to follow instructions
- Becoming confused about time, people, and places

Mild Cognitive Impairment

Some older adults have a condition called mild cognitive impairment, or MCI, in which they have more memory or other thinking problems than other people their age. People with MCI can take care of themselves and do their normal activities. MCI may be an early sign of Alzheimer's, but not everyone with MCI will develop Alzheimer's disease.

Signs of MCI include:

- Losing things often
- Forgetting to go to important events or appointments
- Having more trouble coming up with desired words than other people of the same age

If you have MCI, visit your doctor every 6 to 12 months to see if you have any changes in memory and other thinking skills over time. There may be things you can do to maintain your memory and mental skills. No medications have been approved to treat MCI.

Dementia and Aging

Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning—thinking, remembering, learning and reasoning—and behavioral abilities to such an extent that it interferes with daily life and activities.

Memory loss, though common, is not the only sign. A person may also have problems with language skills, visual perception, or paying attention. Some people have personality changes. Dementia is not a normal part of aging.

There are different forms of dementia. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form in people over age 65. The chart below explains some differences between normal signs of aging and Alzheimer's disease.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT HEALTHY AGING?

National Institute on Aging 2018

What factors influence healthy aging? Research has identified action steps we can take to maintain our health and

function as we get older. From improving our diet and levels of physical activity to getting health

screenings and managing risk factors for disease, these actions may influence different areas of health.

Get Moving: Exercise and Physical Activity

Some people love it, some people hate it, but regardless of your personal feelings, exercise and physical activity are good for you—period. In fact, exercise and physical activity are considered a cornerstone of almost every healthy aging program. Scientific evidence suggests that people who exercise regularly not only live longer, they live better. And, being physically active—doing everyday activities that keep your body moving, such as gardening, walking the dog, and taking the stairs instead of the elevator—can help you continue to do the things you enjoy and stay independent as you age.

Specifically, regular exercise and physical activity can reduce your risk of developing some diseases and disabilities that often occur with aging.

For instance, balance exercises help prevent falls, a major cause of disability in older adults. Strength exercises build muscles and reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Flexibility or stretching exercises help keep your body limber and give you the freedom of movement you need to do everyday activities.

Read and share this infographic to get information and tips about living longer and healthier.

Exercise may even be an effective treatment for certain chronic conditions. People with arthritis, high blood pressure, or diabetes can benefit from regular exercise. Heart disease, a problem for many older adults, may also be alleviated by exercise. Scientists have long known that regular exercise causes certain changes in the hearts of younger people. These changes, which include lowering resting heart rate and increasing stroke volume (the amount of blood pumped with each heartbeat), make the heart a better pump.

Evidence now suggests that people who begin exercise training in later life, for instance in their 60s and 70s, can also experience improved heart function. In one study, researchers with the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging (BLSA) observed a decreased risk of a coronary event, like a heart attack, in older male BLSA participants who took part in high-intensity, leisure-time physical activities like lap swimming or running.

In addition to benefits for the heart, studies show that exercise helps breathlessness and fatigue in older people. Endurance exercises—activities that increase your breathing and heart rate, such as dancing, walking, swimming, or bicycling—

increase your stamina and improve the health of your lungs and circulatory system as well as your heart.

There are many ways to be active. You can be active in short spurts throughout the day, or you can set aside specific times of the day or specific days of the week to exercise. Many physical activities, such as brisk walking or raking leaves, are free or low-cost and do not require special equipment.

Pay Attention to Weight and Shape

Weight is a very complex issue. For older people, the health problems associated with obesity may take a back seat to problems associated with body composition (fat-to-muscle ratio) and location of fat (hip or waist) on the body.

Many health problems are connected to being overweight or obese. People who are overweight or obese are at greater risk for type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, some types of cancer, sleep apnea, and osteoarthritis.

But data show that for older adults, thinner is not always healthier, either. In one study, researchers found that older adults who are thin (a body-mass index or BMI of less than 19) have a higher mortality rate compared with those who are obese or of normal weight. In another study, women with low BMI had an increased risk of mortality. Being, or becoming, thin as an older adult can be a symptom of

disease or an indication of developing frailty. Those are possible reasons why some scientists think maintaining a higher BMI may not necessarily be bad as we age.

Body-fat distribution, specifically waist circumference and waist-to-hip ratio, can also be a serious problem for older adults. We know that the "pear" shape, with body fat in peripheral areas such as the hips and thighs, is generally healthier than the "apple" shape, with fat around the waist. Being apple-shaped can increase risk for heart disease and possibly breast cancer. With age, the pattern for body fat can shift from safer peripheral areas to the abdominal area of the body.

BLSA researchers examined 547 men and women over a 5-year period to observe body measurement changes. They found that men predominantly shifted in waist size, while women showed nearly equal changes in waist and hip measurements. The men developed a more dangerous body-fat distribution, even though women carried more total body fat. This may help explain why men generally have a higher incidence of certain diseases and a shorter lifespan.

So, is there a "normal" weight range or pattern for healthy aging? For older adults, one size does not fit all. Although we have learned a lot about patterns of weight and aging, watching your weight as you age is very much an individual matter. Talk with your

doctor about any weight concerns, including decisions to lose weight or any unexplained weight changes.

Healthy Food for Thought: Think About What You Eat

Food has been shown to be an important part of how people age. In one study, scientists investigated how dietary patterns influenced changes in BMI and waist circumference, which are risk factors for many diseases. Scientists grouped participants into clusters based on which foods contributed to the greatest proportion of calories they consumed.

Participants who had a "meat and potatoes" eating pattern had a greater annual increase in BMI, and participants in the "white-bread" pattern had a greater increase in waist circumference compared with those in the "healthy" cluster. "Healthy" eaters had the highest intake of foods like high-fiber cereal, low-fat dairy, fruit, nonwhite bread, whole grains, beans and legumes, and vegetables, and low intake of red and processed meat, fast food, and soda. This same group had the smallest gains in BMI and waist circumference.

Scientists think there are likely many factors that contribute to the relationship between diet and changes in BMI and waist circumference. One factor may involve the glycemic index value (sometimes called glycemic load) of food. Foods with a low glycemic index value (such as most

vegetables and fruits and high-fiber, grainy breads) decrease hunger but have little effect on blood sugar and therefore are healthier. Foods like white bread have a high glycemic index value and tend to cause the highest rise in blood sugar.

Another focus of research is the relationship between physical problems and micronutrient or vitamin deficiency. Low concentrations of micronutrients or vitamins in the blood are often caused by poor nutrition. Not eating enough fruits and vegetables can lead to a low carotenoid concentration, which is associated with a heightened risk of skeletal muscle decline among older adults.

Low concentrations of vitamin E in older adults, especially in older women, is correlated with a decline in physical function. Compared with other older adults, those with low vitamin D levels had poorer results on two physical performance tests. Women with a low vitamin D concentration were more likely to experience back pain. These studies support the takeaway message: the nutrients you get from eating well can help keep muscles, bones, organs, and other parts of the body strong throughout life.

So, eating well is not just about your weight. It can also help protect you from certain health problems that occur more frequently among older adults. And, eating unhealthy foods

can increase your risk for some diseases. If you are concerned about what you eat, talk with your doctor about ways you can make better food choices.

Participate in Activities You Enjoy

Sure, engaging in your favorite activities can be fun or relaxing, but did you know that doing what you like to do may actually be good for your health? It's true. Research studies show that people who are sociable, generous, and goal-oriented report higher levels of happiness and lower levels of depression than other people.

People who are involved in hobbies and social and leisure activities may be at lower risk for some health problems. For example, one study followed

participants for up to 21 years and linked leisure activities like reading, playing board games, playing musical instruments, and dancing with a lower risk for dementia.

In another study, older adults who participated in social activities (for example, played games, belonged to social groups, attended local events, or traveled) or productive activities (for example, had paid or unpaid jobs, cooked, or gardened) lived longer than people who did not report taking part in these types of activities.

Other studies have found that older adults who participate in what they see as meaningful activities, like volunteering in their community, reported feeling healthier and happier.

SO, YOU WENT ON A SUGAR BENDER

From Greatist.com 2019

High blood sugar causes

Sometimes the cause of a blood sugar spike is clear (“Yeah, I’ll have two more shots of tequila! Actually, just put it on my ice cream!”). But other times, the cause is a little more mysterious.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, losing sleep, skipping breakfast, not drinking enough water, or drinking coffee (even without sweetener) can cause blood sugar instability.

Even weirder, sometimes a sunburn can cause a spike! The pain of a burn causes stress, and high levels of stress can mess up your blood sugar. So bust out the sunscreen for the sake of your pancreas!

Other causes include eating high-sugar/high-carb foods, drinking alcohol, getting sick, and changing medication. A diet low in fiber and high in refined carbs or sugars and a sedentary lifestyle also make high blood sugar more likely.

12 ways to get your blood sugar down

So, what can you do when your blood sugar gets too high? Here are some natural (and medical) ways to get your sugar back into a safe zone.

1. Time to go om

Stress causes all kinds of problems (how many times has a bad day caused you to say something you regretted?). Beyond affecting your food choices and leaving you feeling generally run-down or unwell, stress can actually cause your blood sugar to rise.

Since stress is problematic for your blood sugar in a number of ways, it's best to do anything you can to lower your anxiety levels.

A great way to reduce stress is to meditate. A small study found that mindfulness meditation reduced overall anxiety, even after only one session. When you take time to clear your mind, breathe deeply, and get away from the many annoying stimuli of the world, your body relaxes and stress is reduced.

According to a 2014 study, patients who did yoga regularly had a significant decrease in their blood glucose levels, so consider adding a few Sun Salutations to your week.

Regardless of whether you choose a guided audio meditation or an hour in a yoga studio, taking time to clear your mind and reduce stress will help your blood sugar.

2. Make like Popeye

You might not get super strength from spinach like Popeye does, but taking in some high-fiber foods can help bring down your blood sugar. A 1991 study found that fruits, legumes, and other foods rich in water-soluble fiber helped balance blood sugar.

Those fiber-y foods slow digestion, which means the sugar from your meal isn't hastily thrown into your bloodstream. Instead, the fiber helps everything break down more slowly, and there's more time for the sugar to be properly absorbed.

A major review of diabetic studies found that a high-fiber diet (especially including fiber from cereals) may reduce your chances of developing type 2 diabetes in the first place.

Unfortunately, that doesn't mean you can go to town on Lucky Charms. "Cereal fiber" refers to non-sugary, unrefined cereal grains. Bran cereal, oatmeal, or other whole grains will provide the diabetes-busting fiber you're looking for.

Outside of spinach and cereal, adding black beans, sweet potatoes, avocados, nectarines, and other fruits and vegetables high in soluble fiber to your diet will help bring your blood sugar down.

3. Don't dry out

"Drink more water" isn't cutting-edge nutritional advice, but avoiding

dehydration is surprisingly helpful for balancing blood sugar. A 2017 study found that low daily water intake led to high blood sugar.

When your blood sugar gets high, your body tries to flush out that extra sweetness as quickly as possible. That means you might end up peeing a lot more than usual.

And if you don't replenish your body's water supply, you don't have an easy way to get the sugar out of your system. So, low water equals high blood sugar.

While U.S. dietary guidelines don't suggest a daily amount of water to drink, the United Kingdom's National Health Service recommends aiming for about 1.2 liters, or 6 to 8 glasses of water, per day.

Try setting an alarm on your phone to remind yourself to get that H₂O. If you're in the middle of a blood sugar spike, drink water immediately and try to stay hydrated for the rest of the day.

4. Electrolyte it up

In general, elevated blood sugar can wreak havoc on your electrolytes, meaning you can easily get low on magnesium, potassium, and phosphates.

If you're having a blood sugar spike and urinating more than usual, you're losing water *and* electrolytes. And since electrolytes are essential for maintaining adequate hydration, you're going to want to keep them replenished.

For quick relief, reach for a low-carb electrolyte drink like Propel, low-sugar sports drinks, or low-fat milk. Just make sure to check the labels.

You can also up your electrolyte count naturally with small changes to your diet. Foods like bananas, sweet potatoes, nuts, and seeds provide the key minerals your body needs to stay in balance.

Though all electrolytes are important, a study from the University of Palermo found that while many diabetic patients were specifically magnesium deficient, most achieved better glucose tolerance with magnesium supplements.

To restore magnesium balance, you can take over-the-counter supplements. Or, to increase your mineral intake naturally, eat more pumpkin seeds, almonds, cashews, plain yogurt, spinach, and other high-magnesium foods.

5. Take a pass on the bread bowl

It's obvious that sugary stuff leads to an increase in blood sugar, but starchy foods can do the same thing. Your body processes simple carbs quickly and turns them into sugar, and it needs a lot of insulin to absorb them. That means a bag of Doritos is as likely as a candy bar to cause a spike.

If you're in the middle of a blood sugar spike, it's best to curtail your carb intake. Check the glycemic index if you're not sure about a food.

Surprisingly, popcorn and white potatoes are *worse* than ice cream,

according to the index. If you stick to low-carb/low-glycemic-index foods, your blood sugar will return to normal much more quickly.

Ultimately, it's best to limit your carb intake. A 2004 study found that a diet of 20 percent carbs, 30 percent protein, and 50 percent fat lowered fasting blood sugar and kept blood sugar from spiking after meals.

This was a very small study, but the results suggest that lower carb intake can lead to generally lower blood glucose. In general, most people with diabetes eat 40 to 45 percent of their calories in the form of carbohydrates. Choosing nutrient-rich sources of carbs is best.

Another promising study found that after two years on a low-carb diet, many participants with type 2 diabetes were able to manage their condition without medication or resolve it entirely.

While this does suggest you should scale back on carbs, it doesn't mean you need to break up with them entirely. Instead, try to eat lots of whole foods, including vegetables, fruits, grains, and proteins, if you have access to those foods.

The occasional baked potato isn't a problem, but frequent trips to the drive-through are not a good idea. Find a few veggie-and-protein-heavy meals and make them your go-tos.

Then, even if you have a little bread or pasta, your diet is still full of the stuff you need and your blood sugar shouldn't skyrocket.

6. Try glutamine (no, not that kind of glute)

Here's a diabetes fun fact: People with diabetes often have lower levels of glutamine, according to a study from Tianjin Medical University.

Glutamine is an amino acid that helps your immunity and intestinal health, and it's a general building block for the proteins in your body. Since glutamine tends to be low in people with diabetes, taking a supplement may help lower blood sugar.

The TMU study found that glutamine supplements made insulin even more effective, meaning blood sugar went down more easily (though it's important to note that the study used rats).

A small study on humans had similar results. So while more research needs to be done before glutamine has a scientifically supported thumbs-up, we still think it has a promising start.

7. Get trendy with apple cider vinegar

If you do a quick Google search, you'll see that apple cider vinegar (ACV, as the cool kids call it) is good for pretty much everything. You can use it to tone your skin, clean your pipes, and possibly lower your blood sugar!

A clinical review found that taking ACV daily could reduce blood glucose levels. Unfortunately, most of the trials were very small and some had mixed results.

But since you've probably got it in your house anyway, try taking a swig

or two before meals, testing yourself, and seeing if a little ACV shot works for you (for bonus points, add a dash of cinnamon).

8. Go pro(biotic)

Probiotics aren't just for keeping you regular. By reintroducing healthy bacteria in your intestines, probiotics may be able to help with inflammatory and metabolic issues. And there's a chance those tiny bacteria can help bring your blood sugar down.

A clinical review found that daily probiotic use significantly decreased blood sugar. So if you've considered trying probiotics for digestion or inflammation issues, it just might help regulate your blood sugar along the way.

9. Get a little bitter (melon)

Another promising option (though it might not sound too appetizing): bitter melon.

We're not talking about leftover cantaloupe at the salad bar. It's a fruit mostly used as a natural remedy (in other words, you won't find it in many smoothie recipes).

The melon contains a blood sugar-lowering substance called charantin as well as polypeptide-p, which has insulin-like effects.

In preliminary studies, bitter melon supplements helped reduce blood sugar in mice. Just make sure to talk to your doctor about this (or any) supplement before adding it to your diet.

10. Keep it cool

Remember all that stuff about staying hydrated? Well, when you get really hot, that hydration goes out the window, and your blood sugar could rise.

Extreme temperatures and high humidity aren't fun for anyone, but they're even more detrimental to people with diabetes. To avoid overheating and triggering a spike, do your best to stay cool when the temp is high.

You probably already do this during the day — not too many people think, “Oh, hey, let me just walk in the 100-degree sun for hours in my flip-flops and tank top. What fun!” — but it's easy to get overheated at night while you sleep.

Be sure to wear breathable fabrics, get blackout curtains to keep the heat and light out of your room, and turn on the AC (or bust out the fan) to keep the temp comfortably low.

And by low, we mean a Goldilocks zone between 60 and 67 degrees, which will help you stay cool, sleep more soundly, and get more much-needed REM sleep.

11. Catch more Zzz's

Speaking of sleep, not getting enough may directly relate to higher blood sugar. A 2015 study found that patients who got four hours of sleep or less for three nights in a row had higher fatty acid levels in their blood.

Usually, fatty acid levels naturally recede at night. But when people didn't

get enough sleep, the acids remained in their blood. That's bad news since those acids make insulin less effective, which means your blood sugar goes up.

Also, a lack of sleep tends to increase stress and cravings for sugary foods — both of which are bad for blood sugar. So if you've had too much candy or just want to get your blood sugar down, go to bed!

Getting at least seven hours a night will help regulate your hormones, fatty acids, and stress. Try going to bed at the same time every night and putting screens away an hour before snooze time.

12. Dance the high away

Physical activity is one of the best ways to regulate your blood sugar and prevent spikes, but that doesn't mean you have to stick to walking.

A 2013 study found that dancing helped decrease blood glucose levels more effectively than walking or using conditioning machines.

Translation: Boogying down to Lizzo is good for your health. (We knew it!)

To be fair, the study found cycling and running to be slightly more effective than dancing in lowering blood sugar. Though walking was the least effective, it *did* still reduce blood glucose. Just be careful not to do intense exercise midspike, which can be dangerous.

Bottom line: If you're feeling the symptoms of high blood sugar and you

have someone who can go with you, take a short walk. To prevent future spikes, make time in your schedule to shake it to your favorite song or ride your bike. Any kind of movement will help keep your blood sugar in a safe zone, so pick whatever is most enjoyable and get moving.

13. Follow doctor's orders

If you take insulin and you are experiencing a blood sugar spike, you may need additional short-acting insulin. Make sure you're following your doctor's orders.

You don't want to give yourself unnecessary doses, but you also don't want to let your blood sugar get too high when an extra dose could easily put you back in the safety zone.

It's important to check your blood sugar regularly, take your medication regularly, and see your doctor — you guessed it— regularly. Staying on top of your numbers can help you avoid a spike or take care of one before it gets

Only you can prevent blood sugar spikes

It's annoying but true: The best way to lower your blood sugar is to avoid a spike in the first place.

Eating whole foods that are low in sugar and exercising regularly will help keep your blood sugar in check. This can be beneficial for people with type 2 diabetes, but medications may also be necessary to keep blood sugar in a healthy range.

To avoid food-based spikes, try to steer clear of added sugars in your diet. The FDA recommends consuming less than 200 calories a day from added sugars.

That sounds pretty simple, but when you realize that 16 ounces of orange juice has 240 calories (and even though it's natural sugar, that's a whopping 60 grams of sugar), it's easy to see how sugar consumption gets out of hand.

It's best to avoid all sugary drinks and *check the labels*. There are hidden sugars in everything from bread to turkey slices, so double-check your

favorite foods to make sure you aren't getting any unnecessary sweetness.

The takeaway

Diet, exercise, and a good night's sleep are your best friends for blood sugar control. Staying hydrated, eating fiber and whole grains, and getting regular exercise will help lower your blood sugar in the short term and keep your glucose balanced overall.

Remember to always consult your doctor and a registered dietitian/nutritionist before making any major diet changes and to monitor symptoms that may need immediate medical attention.

7 MOOD BOOSTERS THAT DON'T COST A THING

From Healthline 2021

Feeling a little down after receiving some unpleasant news? Trying to beat the Sunday scaries (or Monday blues)? Having a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad (or even just a little blah) day?

Even minor disappointments and frustrations can derail your daily activities and leave you grumpy, miserable, and completely disinterested in the things you need or want to take care of. You know you need a little pick-me-up to make it

through the day smoothly, but you're less sure about exactly what to do to feel better.

That's totally normal — emotional distress doesn't have to be extreme to make spotting solutions difficult. But a bad mood left to simmer often boils over, leaving you feeling worse.

Ignoring the source of your bad mood won't make it disappear, but there's nothing wrong with setting it aside

temporarily to focus on something that makes you feel good instead.

Below, you'll find seven ideas to try when you want to give your mood a little jump start. Bonus: You don't have to pay for any of them.

Take a walk in the park

A short wander through the nearest park, or any other green space, can do a lot to bust a low mood. Walking in nature, as a matter of fact, takes a 3-for-1 approach to boosting the production of “happy hormones,” the chemical messengers that help regulate mood.

If it's the midafternoon slump or a long night leaving you a little gloomy, a

brisk 10-minute walk can increase blood flow to your brain and energize you, easing feelings of fatigue and sluggishness. Walking can also help lower the level of stress hormones in your body and prompt the release of endorphins, hormones that can ease stress, pain, and discomfort.

Of course, sunlight has benefits, too. Spending just 10 or 15 minutes in the sun can trigger the production of serotonin, along with more endorphins, making for a hefty dose of mood-improving chemicals. Plus, natural light may help you feel more energized and alert, especially if you've been sitting in a dim room. And let's not forget about nature.

Research increasingly suggests that people who spend time outside regularly, or look at images or videos of nature when going out isn't possible, often have better moods overall.

Going green

Nature can boost feelings of happiness and reduce stress, but it can also help improve your ability to focus, which could be key to improving your mood when you find it tough to get things done. Spending more time in natural environments could even help lower your risk of mental health symptoms, which can have more long-term effects on mood.

Laugh it off

There's a good reason why so many teachers and other public speakers tend to get things rolling with a joke or witty remark. Laughing in a group can help relieve tension and leave everyone feeling a little more energized — and often, a little more bonded.

Laughter works on an individual level, too. If you're feeling a little anxious or stressed about something — say, a big presentation at work or a heavy discussion with a loved one — humor could help you shake off some of the tension and leave you in a lighter frame of mind.

Forcing a real, deep belly laugh may prove something of a challenge when you aren't feeling very funny. If your go-to sources for humor fail to spark much joy, give these a try:

- **Funny videos.** Not sure what to watch? Head to YouTube to check out dozens of Vine compilations — these short videos are designed to get you laughing quickly.
- **Animal videos.** When it comes to beating a bad mood, pets can pack a double punch. Their antics can be hilarious, but they're pretty darn adorable, too. Seen every cat and dog video out there? Birds can be surprisingly funny, too.
- **Look up comedy writers.** If you prefer the written word to visual content, you might prefer humorous books to funny videos. Get started with NPR's list of 100 funny books.
- **Go online.** You can find some quick laughs online at websites like Reductress, The Onion, or r/funny, Reddit's subreddit dedicated to all things humorous.
- **Share jokes.** At work or with friends? Ask if anyone knows any good jokes, or share a favorite or two of your own.

Try some aromatherapy

Your sense of smell can communicate directly with your amygdala, a part of

the brain that helps regulate emotions. That's why scents that trigger positive or nostalgic memories often help relieve tension and anxiety. The connection between your brain and sense of smell may also help explain why things that smell good can make you feel good.

Aromatherapy generally refers to the use of essential oils to improve mood or mental health, but you don't necessarily have to purchase essential oils to get these benefits. You might already have some mood-boosting fragrances around your home or office:

- Have a favorite scented soap or lotion? Take a moment to mindfully wash your hands or give your arms and shoulders a quick scented rub.
- Feeling low because you miss someone you love? Smell something that reminds you of them.
- Got neighbors with impressive gardens? Take a short walk to (literally) smell the roses. Other fragrant plants you might encounter in the wild include lavender, jasmine, honeysuckle, rosemary, and sage.
- Head to the kitchen to catch a scent of vanilla, cinnamon, or pumpkin pie spice. Alternatively, slice a lemon and inhale the fragrance.
- Make a cup of peppermint or chamomile tea. Earl Grey, which

contains bergamot, is also a good option. You can also pour boiled water over lemon, inhale the steam as it cools, and then enjoy a hydrating, warming drink.

A whiff of lotion or tea isn't quite the same as a concentrated essential oil, of course, but fragrance is still a powerful tool. Any scent you find appealing or soothing could have a positive impact on your mood.
powered by Rubicon Project

Give yourself a hug

It's completely natural to turn to the people in your life for physical and emotional support when dealing with a low mood and other frustrations. You might even know already that hugs and other physical affection can cue your body to release oxytocin and help you feel closer to your loved ones.

But what happens when your mood plummets in circumstances where you can't readily access that comfort? Maybe you suddenly start to feel sad, overwhelmed, or just plain rotten at work, or in a crowd of people you don't know. A supportive embrace seems like exactly what you need to turn your mood around, but there's no one around to do the honors — no one other than you, that is.

While giving yourself a hug might feel a little silly, it could actually do the trick. Touch (yes, your own included) can ease feelings of stress, helping you feel safe and relaxed. It can also

promote self-compassion and self-kindness, both of which can pave the way toward a more positive mood.

Hugging yourself can be as simple as wrapping your arms around yourself and holding for a moment or two, just as you would when hugging someone else. But you can also check out our guide to giving yourself a hug.

Turn up the tunes

Picture this: You're cleaning your house, sorting paperwork, or doing some other task you don't particularly enjoy. Your radio station or music streaming service of choice plays in the background.

When the song changes over, your ears perk up as you recognize the first notes of one of your favorite songs. The cheerful, upbeat melody infuses you with new energy. You tap your foot to the music as you return your attention to your task with new enthusiasm, singing along under your breath.

You didn't imagine that instant leap in your mood. Music can offer plenty of benefits, in fact.

It can help to:

- improve mood and emotion regulation abilities
- ease stress and tension
- reduce anxiety
- promote healthy brain function, including better memory recall

- improve your focus, in some cases

In short, if you're ready to kick your mood to the curb, a playlist of favorite songs offers an all-around excellent tool for the job.

Try a random act of kindness

Maybe you feel trapped or stuck because you can't do anything to change your current situation for the moment. Instead of getting caught up in a downward spiral of worry and stress, try focusing your energy on someone else instead.

Doing something nice for another person could make their day a little better and bring a smile to their face, potentially improving *your* mood, in turn. Simply knowing you've made someone else's day better can leave you in a more positive frame of mind.

A few ideas to consider:

- Ask a co-worker if they need any help.
- Do a chore for your child, roommate, or partner.
- Give your pet a treat — you'll probably earn some cuddles, as a bonus.
- Leave a detailed positive review for one of your favorite shops or restaurants.

Call a loved one

Whether you've just made it through a long and draining day or have a stressful event looming over you, a quick message of love and support can go a long way toward lifting your spirits. Even a 5-minute chat with your romantic partner, BFF, or favorite sibling can raise your spirits and help you shake off a gloomy mood, nervousness or worry, and other emotional tension.

Loved ones can:

- listen as you vent your frustrations
- offer encouraging words
- make you laugh
- remind you that you always have their support

Can't make a phone call right now? Even connecting briefly over text or chat can make a difference in your mood. You *know* they're there for you, of course, but sometimes you just need that emoji chain, funny GIF, or inside joke as a reminder.

The bottom line

If your mood needs a little boost from time to time, don't worry — that's absolutely normal. Most bad moods tend to lift before too long, and there's plenty you can do to send them on their way.

A low mood that persists day in and day out, on the other hand, could suggest something a little more serious. When you notice lingering

changes in your mood and well-being, and strategies like the ones above seem to have little effect, talking to a therapist is always a good next step.

10 WAYS TO CONTROL HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE WITHOUT MEDICATION

By making these 10 lifestyle changes, you can lower your blood pressure and reduce your risk of heart disease.

From The Mayo Clinic 2020

If you've been diagnosed with high blood pressure, you might be worried about taking medication to bring your numbers down. Lifestyle plays an important role in treating your high blood pressure. If you successfully control your blood pressure with a healthy lifestyle, you might avoid, delay or reduce the need for medication.

Here are 10 lifestyle changes you can make to lower your blood pressure and keep it down.

1. Lose extra pounds and watch your waistline

Blood pressure often increases as weight increases. Being overweight also can cause disrupted breathing while you sleep (sleep apnea), which further raises your blood pressure.

Weight loss is one of the most effective lifestyle changes for controlling blood pressure. Losing even a small amount of weight if you're overweight or obese can help reduce your blood pressure. In

general, you may reduce your blood pressure by about 1 millimeter of mercury (mm Hg) with each kilogram (about 2.2 pounds) of weight you lose. Besides shedding pounds, you generally should also keep an eye on your waistline. Carrying too much weight around your waist can put you at greater risk of high blood pressure.

In general:

- Men are at risk if their waist measurement is greater than 40 inches (102 centimeters).
- Women are at risk if their waist measurement is greater than 35 inches (89 centimeters).

These numbers vary among ethnic groups. Ask your doctor about a healthy waist measurement for you.

2. Exercise regularly

Regular physical activity — such as 150 minutes a week, or about 30 minutes most days of the week — can lower your blood pressure by about 5 to 8 mm Hg if you have high blood

pressure. It's important to be consistent because if you stop exercising, your blood pressure can rise again.

If you have elevated blood pressure, exercise can help you avoid developing hypertension. If you already have hypertension, regular physical activity can bring your blood pressure down to safer levels.

Some examples of aerobic exercise you may try to lower blood pressure include walking, jogging, cycling, swimming or dancing. You can also try high-intensity interval training, which involves alternating short bursts of intense activity with subsequent recovery periods of lighter activity. Strength training also can help reduce blood pressure. Aim to include strength training exercises at least two days a week. Talk to your doctor about developing an exercise program.

3. Eat a healthy diet

Eating a diet that is rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products and skimps on saturated fat and cholesterol can lower your blood pressure by up to 11 mm Hg if you have high blood pressure. This eating plan is known as the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet.

It isn't easy to change your eating habits, but with these tips, you can adopt a healthy diet:

- **Keep a food diary.** Writing down what you eat, even for just a week, can shed surprising light on your true

eating habits. Monitor what you eat, how much, when and why.

- **Consider boosting potassium.** Potassium can lessen the effects of sodium on blood pressure. The best source of potassium is food, such as fruits and vegetables, rather than supplements. Talk to your doctor about the potassium level that's best for you.
- **Be a smart shopper.** Read food labels when you shop and stick to your healthy-eating plan when you're dining out, too.

4. Reduce sodium in your diet

Even a small reduction in the sodium in your diet can improve your heart health and reduce blood pressure by about 5 to 6 mm Hg if you have high blood pressure.

The effect of sodium intake on blood pressure varies among groups of people. In general, limit sodium to 2,300 milligrams (mg) a day or less. However, a lower sodium intake — 1,500 mg a day or less — is ideal for most adults.

To decrease sodium in your diet, consider these tips:

- **Read food labels.** If possible, choose low-sodium alternatives of the foods and beverages you normally buy.
- **Eat fewer processed foods.** Only a small amount

of sodium occurs naturally in foods. Most sodium is added during processing.

- **Don't add salt.** Just 1 level teaspoon of salt has 2,300 mg of sodium. Use herbs or spices to add flavor to your food.
- **Ease into it.** If you don't feel you can drastically reduce the sodium in your diet suddenly, cut back gradually. Your palate will adjust over time.

5. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink

Alcohol can be both good and bad for your health. By drinking alcohol only in moderation — generally one drink a day for women, or two a day for men — you can potentially lower your blood pressure by about 4 mm Hg. One drink equals 12 ounces of beer, five ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor.

But that protective effect is lost if you drink too much alcohol.

Drinking more than moderate amounts of alcohol can actually raise blood pressure by several points. It can also reduce the effectiveness of blood pressure medications.

6. Quit smoking

Each cigarette you smoke increases your blood pressure for many minutes after you finish. Stopping smoking helps your blood pressure return to normal. Quitting smoking can reduce

your risk of heart disease and improve your overall health. People who quit smoking may live longer than people who never quit smoking.

7. Cut back on caffeine

The role caffeine plays in blood pressure is still debated. Caffeine can raise blood pressure up to 10 mm Hg in people who rarely consume it. But people who drink coffee regularly may experience little or no effect on their blood pressure.

Although the long-term effects of caffeine on blood pressure aren't clear, it's possible blood pressure may slightly increase.

To see if caffeine raises your blood pressure, check your pressure within 30 minutes of drinking a caffeinated beverage. If your blood pressure increases by 5 to 10 mm Hg, you may be sensitive to the blood pressure raising effects of caffeine. Talk to your doctor about the effects of caffeine on your blood pressure.

8. Reduce your stress

Chronic stress may contribute to high blood pressure. More research is needed to determine the effects of chronic stress on blood pressure. Occasional stress also can contribute to high blood pressure if you react to stress by eating unhealthy food, drinking alcohol or smoking.

Take some time to think about what causes you to feel stressed, such as

work, family, finances or illness. Once you know what's causing your stress, consider how you can eliminate or reduce stress.

If you can't eliminate all of your stressors, you can at least cope with them in a healthier way. Try to:

- **Change your expectations.** For example, plan your day and focus on your priorities. Avoid trying to do too much and learn to say no. Understand there are some things you can't change or control, but you can focus on how you react to them.
- **Focus on issues you can control and make plans to solve them.** If you are having an issue at work, try talking to your manager. If you are having a conflict with your kids or spouse, take steps to resolve it.
- **Avoid stress triggers.** Try to avoid triggers when you can. For example, if rush-hour traffic on the way to work causes stress, try leaving earlier in the morning, or take public transportation. Avoid people who cause you stress if possible.
- **Make time to relax and to do activities you enjoy.** Take time each day to sit quietly and breathe deeply. Make time for enjoyable activities or hobbies in your schedule,

such as taking a walk, cooking or volunteering.

- **Practice gratitude.** Expressing gratitude to others can help reduce your stress.

9. Monitor your blood pressure at home and see your doctor regularly

Home monitoring can help you keep tabs on your blood pressure, make certain your lifestyle changes are working, and alert you and your doctor to potential health complications. Blood pressure monitors are available widely and without a prescription. Talk to your doctor about home monitoring before you get started.

Regular visits with your doctor are also key to controlling your blood pressure. If your blood pressure is well-controlled, check with your doctor about how often you need to check it. Your doctor may suggest checking it daily or less often. If you're making any changes in your medications or other treatments, your doctor may recommend you check your blood pressure starting two weeks after treatment changes and a week before your next appointment.

10. Get support

Supportive family and friends can help improve your health. They may encourage you to take care of yourself, drive you to the doctor's office or embark on an exercise program with you to keep your blood pressure low. If you find you need support beyond your family and friends, consider

joining a support group. This may put you in touch with people who can give you an emotional or morale boost and

who can offer practical tips to cope with your condition.

TOP 15 HOBBY IDEAS FOR OLDER PEOPLE

From Lifeline24 2021

Lots of us find that we have much more time on our hands as we get older. Many of us retire or choose to work part-time, and suddenly we have hours and hours to fill with whatever we want! It's particularly important for older people to stay physically and socially active. This will not only help you avoid boredom and loneliness; it can also reduce your risk of developing several health problems. Picking up a new hobby or two is the answer. We have put together a list of our top 15 hobby ideas to give older people some inspiration.

1. Sports

As we've already mentioned, it's especially important for older people to stay physically active. According to the NHS, most adults aged 65 and older spend an average of 10 hours or more sitting or laying down every day. This puts over-65s at higher risk of obesity and heart disease than the rest of the population. The first of our hobby ideas is a great way to combat these risks!

There are plenty of different sports which will help you stay active, no

matter your current fitness level or experience. Sports can also be a great social activity, bringing you closer to the people you know and helping you meet new friends too.

Not only is sport great for our physical wellbeing, but it is also great for our mental health. Of course, more than anything else, playing a sport is great fun! It gives you something to look forward to each week, whether you're a member of a club or you're just having a social game with friends.

2. Fitness Activities

Sports might not be your cup of tea, but that's alright. There are plenty of other ways to exercise, meet new people and look after your health. Here are some fantastic fitness hobby ideas for people of all fitness levels:

- Hiking.
- Walking.
- Nordic Walking.
- Cycling.
- Going to the gym.
- Chair yoga.
- Fitness classes & groups.

A closer look at Nordic Walking

Nordic Walking is great for your health and your social life. Nordic Walking is a full-body exercise which was originally a summer training regime for cross-country skiers. According to the NHS, Nordic Walking is:

A full-body exercise that's easy on the joints and suitable for all ages and fitness levels. It's based on using specially designed walking poles in a way that harnesses the power of the upper body to propel you forward as you walk."

There are different classes available, including gentle walks for those with health concerns. There are also workout walks for those who are looking to improve their fitness, lose weight, or tone their body. By using Nordic poles, you are taking the weight off your knees and lower body joints. Nordic Walking can reduce the risk of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and asthma. Nordic Walking groups will also introduce you to new people. This can help improve your social life and combat loneliness. If you're interested in Nordic Walking, you can find a local instructor on the Nordic Walking UK website.

If you're considering taking part in a sporting or fitness activity, it's important to know your body's limits. Before starting any new exercise

regime, you should speak to your GP, especially if you have issues with your muscles, joints or bones.

3. Gardening

Gardening has plenty of benefits for older people. Once you get the hang of it, gardening can become rather addictive! It's hard to beat the satisfaction of planting a seed and watching it grow. Keen gardeners will want to fill their gardens (and their windowsills!) with the most beautiful flowers and plants, cut the lawn into a nice, neat design and maybe even grow some fruits and vegetables.

Here are just a few of the mental and physical benefits of getting out into the garden:

- Reducing stress levels.
- Sense of achievement.
- Getting out into the fresh air.
- Helping to keep fit and active.
- Can provide nutritious, healthy food.

Getting up and about and keeping active rather than sitting down all day is great for our health. In fact, a 2015 study found that just two 50-minute sessions of potting plants and watering flowers can dramatically improve stamina, dexterity, and brain function. Furthermore, after seven weeks, the participants of the study all lost weight, particularly around their waists, which is one of the most dangerous parts of

the body to store fat. Overall, it isn't hard to see why gardening is one of the most popular hobby ideas for older people!

4. Gaming

One of the most interesting stories to make the news recently is the rise of the silver gamer. That's right, more over-55s are playing video games now than ever before.

42% of Brits age 55-64 have played video games in the last five years, according to a 2019 survey. For Brits aged 65+ that figure was an impressive 27%. It's not just games consoles either. The Telegraph recently reported that one in four over-65s are now using their smartphones to play video games.

Gaming provides great entertainment and, like most of our hobby ideas, gives you a chance to socialize. Most games give you the option to play against your friends, either online or side-by-side. You can also choose to play against strangers online and chat with people from all around the world. Playing computer games gives the brain a healthy challenge too. A 2015 study suggested that 3D computer games can help prevent memory loss.

Our favorite games include:

- Bejewelled – Players form horizontal or vertical chains of three or more gems of the same color.

You do this by swapping gems around the screen.

- Wii Sports – Available on the Nintendo Wii, this game uses motion-capture technology. Hold the controller and play the sport as you would in real life: swing a golf club, throw a punch in the boxing ring, or bowl a strike!
- Brain Training – These games will challenge the mind and get you thinking. Players will answer questions and solve tricky riddles and puzzles.
- Age of Empires – This is one of the biggest strategy game franchises in the world. Games focus on historical periods like the Stone Age and Iron Age.
- Super Mario – One of the most well-known computer games of all time. This game will provide hours of entertainment and plenty of puzzle-solving.

5. Social Media

Social media has taken the world by storm. It's especially popular among the younger generation, but older people are diving in too. This phenomenon has also become one of the most popular activities on our list of hobby ideas. According to Ofcom,

58% of people aged 55-64 have a social media profile in 2020. For the over-65s, that figure is 39%.

Since the coronavirus pandemic began, millions of us across the UK have depended on social media to stay in touch with loved ones near and far.

Popular social platforms such as Facebook, Zoom, and WhatsApp are great for older people – especially those who live alone or far away from family. Plenty of younger people now choose to move away from their childhood hometown, whether it's to go to university or for work purposes. This means that the older generations can sometimes get left behind, making it difficult for them to see their family regularly. In situations like this, social media steps in and allows people to re-connect with their family and friends, both nearby and around the world.

Best Social Media Platforms for Older People

- **Facebook** – A platform for connecting and reconnecting with friends and pages. It allows people to send instant messages to loved ones, share photographs, videos, post statuses and much more.
- **Zoom** – The top live video-calling platform. It allows people to video chat with their loved ones all around the world. Enjoy

one-on-one calls or catch up with the whole family in a group call.

- **WhatsApp** – Free instant messaging and telephone calls on mobile phones, without using voice minutes or texts.
- **Twitter** – Follow whoever you like and see the things you're interested in. Share thoughts and opinions with the people who care, all in a tweet consisting of 280 characters or less!
- **Instagram** – A place to share photographs. Share pictures of what you care about with your followers, whether they're friends, family or people with similar interests.

Out of all the elderly activities on this list, being a pro on social media is probably the one that will impress the grandchildren the most!

6. Cooking

Cooking a meal from scratch can give you a great sense of achievement, along with a feeling of happiness as your loved-ones tuck into the food that you've made.

Cooked meals can bring friends and family together. After all, everybody likes to boast about their grandma's Sunday dinner! But it's not just the

social benefits of cooking which are important. Cooking homemade food is also great for our health. We all know the importance of a healthy diet, but did you know that home cooking can help your mental health too?

If you're not already a keen cook, there are a few simple ways you can get started. Try creating a simple meal plan, experiment with healthy recipes and learn about new foods from around the world. Rather than eating out, getting a takeaway or buying processed ready meals, whip up your own healthy dishes at home.

If you or somebody you live with is a keen gardener, why not use some home-grown produce in your cooking? This might be one of the most practical hobby ideas on our list – after all, everybody needs to eat! Cooking your own food can save you money, make you healthier, and give you a big self-esteem boost.

Go into the kitchen and create some healthy, tasty masterpieces! For recipe ideas, why not check out the BBC Good Food website?

7. Jigsaw Puzzles

There are plenty of hobby ideas for older people to choose from, but one of the most enjoyable and stimulating is a good old-fashioned jigsaw puzzle. There are so many different types of puzzle to choose from, including actual photographs, cartoons, paintings and other backgrounds.

Puzzles are available in a huge range of sizes and difficulty levels, from 24 pieces to a super-challenging 5000 pieces. The best thing about puzzles is that they don't need to be finished in one go – stop and come back to them whenever it suits you. This can allow for days or even weeks of fun.

Well-known jigsaw puzzle brands include:

- **Ravensburger**
– Ravensburger creates fun puzzles for the children, and serious, challenging puzzles for the adults. 3D puzzles are also available from this brand.
- **Jan Van Haasteren**
– These puzzles are all about the fun, chaotic scenes that have been designed by Jan Van Haasteren. Little hidden features appear throughout the range.
- **Wasgij** – Something a little different. In these puzzles, you must create an alternative scene based on the clue given on the box. Wasjig is also jigsaw spelled backwards!!

3D puzzles provide a whole new challenge to this classic hobby. Rather than piecing together a flat photograph, you'll build three-dimensional structures. Re-create some of the world's most popular

landmarks in puzzle form. Examples include the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben and Tower Bridge. There are 3D puzzles for sports fans too, including iconic football grounds and various F1 cars.

Any kind of puzzle will give your brain a brilliant workout, helping to maintain cognitive function and support healthy ageing. This is particularly important for older people, as studies suggest it can help delay or prevent the onset of dementia.

8. Reading

Who doesn't love a good book? This might be the most traditional entry on our list of hobby ideas for older people. It doesn't matter if you're 65 or 25, a good book can provide days of entertainment.

There are so many different genres to choose from, which means that there will be something for everyone. Fiction fans only need to take a look at the current bestseller list for inspiration. For TV and sports fans, there are plenty of autobiographies. For those who like horror stories, Stephen King is hard to beat.

Of course, nowadays, you don't even need a physical copy of a book. Most titles are also available as E-Books, which you can read on a smartphone, tablet, or e-reader. Although most people like to have a physical book, E-Books can allow you to read easier and faster according to this study. They'll

also take up considerably less space on your shelves!

Reading is one of our favorite hobby ideas because of its wide range of benefits. It can help to enhance memory, sharpen decision-making skills, reduce stress and help people to get to sleep much faster. Reading before bed is a great idea, as it induces shut-eye much better than watching TV late at night.

9. Learn to Play a Musical Instrument

Of all our hobby ideas, this is one that most of us consider at some point in our lives. How many people dreamed of being a famous musician when they were little? While you might not be selling out stadiums any time soon, music is such a wonderful hobby for people of all ages. There are plenty of instruments for you to choose from too, such as the guitar, drums, piano, saxophone or violin.

Teaching yourself a new skill provides a stimulating mental challenge, which is important in the battle against dementia and cognitive decline. You'll also develop your time management and organizational skills during the learning process, as you'll have to give it your time and attention if you're going to progress.

Your hand-eye coordination will also improve, as your brain will be working to convert the musical notes that you're reading on the page into

specific hand movements, breathing techniques and rhythms.

It also goes without saying that playing a musical instrument is plenty of fun! You could end up making new friends by joining a band once you're ready.

10. Model Building

This might be one of the more unconventional hobby ideas on our list. Model building can become quite addictive, especially as you don't even have to leave your home. Putting together some of your favorite cars or planes can help you to develop your dexterity, coordination, and patience. According to Model Space, you could also learn the following skills:

- Researching.
- Planning.
- Cutting.
- Drilling.
- Sculpting.
- Sanding.
- Gluing.
- Painting.
- Detailing.
- Photography.

Model building can be a great stress-reliever. You can escape to your own little assembly area to concentrate solely on building your latest project, clearing your mind of any day-to-day problems or worries.

Model building is also a great hobby to enjoy with your grandchildren. You can build your projects together, strengthening your relationship and

teaching them the rewards of good teamwork.

Finally, the sense of achievement that you'll have once your latest project is complete cannot be beaten. You can take a step back and appreciate the model that you have just built, before adding it to your collection – perhaps a model car shelf?

11. Birdwatching

There are plenty of benefits to taking part in birdwatching. Not only do you get to travel around the country, and potentially the world, but you also get to see some of the most remarkable species on our planet.

Birdwatching combines the benefits of several of the hobby ideas we've shared: physical activity, learning something new, and spending time outdoors. Being outside is great for your mental health, as it improves your mood and provides you with a space to think. Birdwatching is a great opportunity to reflect or to just zone out and think calming thoughts. Not only that, but your body will also soak up vitamin D from the sun and breathe in the fresh air all day.

You'll also benefit from an improvement in your reflexes and mental alertness. As a birdwatcher, you need to be ready to pounce with your binoculars or camera to catch a glimpse of the bird. A bird can appear and be gone in the blink of an eye. Birdwatchers need to stay sharp in

order to pick up on any clues that a bird might be nearby.

Often, you'll be walking for miles, or even climbing and hiking up mountains to find a certain type of bird. This provides a top-notch cardiovascular workout, which is great for your heart and overall health.

12. Pets

Looking after a pet can easily be seen as a hobby idea. Having a pet can provide you with a friendly companion and someone to focus your energy on each day. Having a dog, for example, is great if you're living alone as it will combat any feelings of boredom or loneliness.

Pets provide you with a sense of responsibility. You know that you need to feed them, take them for walks, keep them clean, and protect them from any potential dangers around the home and the outside world. Lots of people, especially older people, find great fulfilment in caring for someone else. When children grow up and leave home, a pet can be a great way to help fill an 'empty nest'.

According to scientific research, stroking a pet can reduce the level of stress-related hormones in the blood. What's more, your furry friend will feel equally comforted too! Currently, there are animal shelters up and down the country full of four-legged friends waiting to find loving homes.

Adopting a pet is a truly good deed which offers so many benefits.

13. Travelling

Why not take some time out from the daily grind to see the world? Going travelling could help you tick off lots of goals on your bucket list.

Maybe you'll head over the States for a road trip along Route 66? Alternatively, go down under and visit the outback in Australia. With the coronavirus vaccination program going well, let's hope it won't be too long before we can jet off on our holidays again!

Before you head anywhere, make sure that you've sorted out any insurance and vaccinations you need, and remember to keep your home secure whilst you're away.

14. Community Groups

Loneliness is one of the biggest problems facing older people. Friends and family may move away and older people could face living alone. It's important to stay in touch with friends and family – after all, loneliness can trigger health problems. However, it's perfectly possible to live by yourself without being lonely.

Fortunately, there are many community groups out there, based on several different hobbies and interests. Some of the most common groups that can be found around the country include:

- Arts & Crafts for beginners.
- Board Game cafes and groups.
- Exercise classes such as yoga.
- Cooking classes for different levels of experience.
- Coffee mornings.
- Choirs.
- Dancing.
- Book groups.
- Sports clubs.

Joining a group like this can introduce you to other people who share your interests and live nearby. You can make new friends and fill your calendars with exciting activities and social events – perfect for maintaining a strong social network. You might even pick up some new hobby ideas from the people you meet. While the pandemic is ongoing, many of these community groups have moved online. Try searching for a Zoom-based book club or exercise class online!

15. Adult Learning

Like the community groups we mentioned above, joining an adult learning course can also have great

social benefits:

- Meeting new people who have the same interests.
- Sharing stories with new people.
- Sharing advice and tips throughout the educational course.

Learning new skills at a college or university keeps the brain healthy. In fact, research by the Alzheimer's Society showed that education could delay the onset of dementia.

You could even kill two birds with one stone and take a class related to one of the hobby ideas we've already shared in this article. Courses in cooking, gardening, computers, and other hobbies are widely available in most towns and cities.

Much like cooking an amazing meal in the kitchen, learning a new skill and passing exams gives you an amazing sense of achievement. Keeping busy and active is vital in the fight against loneliness.

Visit a local college or university website to see what courses are available. Many courses are available online to help you stay safe at home during coronavirus.

HEALTHY EATING FOR SENIORS

From Heathline 2020

A Well-Balanced Diet

Eating a well-balanced diet is an important part of staying healthy as you age. It can help you maintain a healthy weight, stay energized, and get the nutrients you need. It also lowers your risk of developing chronic health conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes.

According to the National Resource Center on Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Aging, 1 in 4 older Americans has poor nutrition. Malnutrition puts you at risk of becoming overweight or underweight. It can weaken your muscles and bones. It also leaves you vulnerable to disease.

To meet your nutritional needs, eat foods that are rich in fiber, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. Limit foods that are high in processed sugars, saturated and trans fats, and salt. You may also have to adjust your diet to manage chronic health conditions.

How Do Your Needs and Habits Change with Age?

As you get older, your nutritional needs, appetite, and food habits can change in several ways.

Calories

You'll probably need fewer calories as you age to maintain a healthy weight. Eating more calories than you burn leads to weight gain.

You may find you have less energy and more muscle or joint problems as you get older. As a result, you may become less mobile and burn fewer calories through physical activity. You may also lose muscle mass. This causes your metabolism to slow down, lowering your caloric needs.

Appetite

Many people experience a loss of appetite with age. It's also common for your sense of taste and smell to diminish. This can lead you to eat less. If you're burning fewer calories through physical activity, eating less may not be a problem. However, you need to get enough calories and nutrients to maintain healthy organs, muscles, and bones. Not getting enough can lead to malnutrition and health problems.

Medical Conditions

As you age, you become more

susceptible to chronic health problems, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and osteoporosis. To help prevent or treat these conditions, your doctor may recommend changes to your diet.

For example, if you've been diagnosed with diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol, you should eat foods that are rich in nutrients, but low in excess calories, processed sugars, and saturated and trans fats. Your doctor may also advise you to eat less sodium. Some older adults become sensitive to foods such as onions, peppers, dairy products, and spicy foods. You may need to cut some of these foods out of your diet.

Medications

You may need to take medications to manage chronic health conditions. Some medications can affect your appetite. Some can also interact with certain foods and nutritional supplements.

For example, if you're taking warfarin (Coumadin), you need to avoid grapefruit. It decreases your body's ability to metabolize the drug. You also need to maintain a steady level of vitamin K in your diet. You can get vitamin K from eating plenty of spinach, kale, or other leafy greens.

If you're taking a medication, be sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist to find out whether you need to make any changes to your diet.

Oral Health

Seniors have their own set of oral health concerns. Some of these can interfere with your ability to eat. For example, dentures that don't fit properly may lead to poor eating habits and malnutrition. Infections in your mouth can also cause problems.

Immune System

Your immune system weakens with age. This raises your risk of food-borne illness, or food poisoning.

Proper food safety techniques are important at every age. However, you may need to take extra precautions as your immune system weakens. For example, your doctor may recommend avoiding foods with raw eggs, such as homemade mayonnaise or Caesar salad dressing.

Home Life

Losing a spouse or other family members can impact your daily habits, including your eating patterns. You may feel depressed, which can lead to lower appetite.

If your family member did most of the cooking, you might not know how to prepare food for yourself. Some people simply choose not to eat, rather than cook a meal for themselves.

If you're finding it difficult to prepare food for yourself, talk to a family member, trusted friend, or your doctor.

Depending on your area, there may be services available to help make sure you're getting the food you need. For example, Meals on Wheels is available across the United States, Canada, Australia, and other countries.

How Can You Maintain a Healthy Diet?

Nutritional needs vary from one person to another. However, some strategies can help everyone maintain a healthy diet.

Focus on Nutrient-Rich Foods

As you age, your caloric needs will probably decrease, while your nutrient needs stay the same or increase. Eating nutrient-rich foods will help you get the vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrates, and fats you need.

Get most of your calories from nutrient-dense foods, such as:

- vegetables and fruits
- beans and lentils
- nuts and seeds
- whole grains
- low-fat dairy
- lean protein

Limit foods that are high in calories, but low in nutrients. For example, save deep-fried foods, desserts, and sweetened beverages for the occasional treat. Your doctor may recommend avoiding junk food altogether.

Eat Enough Fiber

Fiber is essential for a healthy digestive system. To avoid

constipation and other problems, include fiber-rich foods at every meal. Soluble fiber is especially important for maintaining healthy cholesterol levels. Good sources of fiber include:

- fruits and vegetables
- beans and lentils
- nuts and seeds
- oats and oat bran
- whole grains

If you struggle to eat enough fiber, your doctor may recommend a fiber supplement, such as psyllium husk (Metamucil).

Choose Healthier Convenience Foods

If you find yourself relying on convenience foods, choose the healthiest options. For example, these foods can be easy to prepare and nutritious:

- frozen or low-sodium canned vegetables
- frozen unsweetened fruit or low-sugar canned fruit
- precooked grilled turkey or rotisserie chicken
- low-sodium canned soup or stews
- bagged salad or coleslaw mix
- instant oatmeal
- steamer bags of veggies in either the produce or freezer sections of grocery stores

Always check the labels on prepackaged foods. Choose options that contain less added sugar, saturated fat, and salt — and more fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

Consider Supplements

You may find it hard to get some nutrients in your diet, especially if you have to avoid some foods. Ask your doctor if you should take a vitamin or mineral supplement, such as calcium, vitamin D, magnesium, or vitamin B-12. These specific vitamins are often poorly absorbed or not consumed enough by older Americans.

Some supplements can interfere with certain medications. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about potential side effects before starting a new supplement or medication.

Stay Hydrated

As you age, you may not notice when you're thirsty. Make sure you're drinking fluids on a regular basis. Aim for eight 8-ounce glasses of water daily. You can also get some water from juice, tea, soup, or even water-rich fruits and vegetables.

Stay Social

When you can, eat with friends and family members. Social interaction can turn mealtimes into an enjoyable affair, rather than a chore you'd rather skip.

CLINICAL TRIALS: BENEFITS, RISKS, AND SAFETY

From the National Institute on Aging 2021

You may ask yourself, "Why should I try something that researchers are not sure will work?" That is a good question. Being part of a clinical trial may have risks, but it may also have benefits. Past clinical trial history has led many to hesitate to sign up for research. However, today there are strict rules in place to keep your health and privacy safe.

What are the Benefits of a Clinical Trial?

- You may get a new treatment for a disease before it is available to everyone.

- You play a more active role in your own health care.
- Researchers may provide you with medical care and more frequent health check-ups as part of your treatment.
- You may have the chance to help others get a better treatment for their health problems in the future.
- You may be able to get information about support groups and resources.

What are the Potential Risks of a Clinical Trial?

- The new treatment may cause serious side effects or be uncomfortable.
- The new treatment may not work, or it may not be better than the standard treatment.
- You may NOT be part of the treatment group (or experimental group) that gets the new treatment—for example, a new drug or device. Instead, you may be part of the control group, which means you get the standard treatment or a no-treatment placebo.
- The clinical trial could inconvenience you. For example, medical appointments could take a lot of time. You might need to travel to the study site several times or stay in the hospital.

How is the Safety of Clinical Trial Participants Protected?

Read and share this infographic to learn more about how clinical research might be right for you.

This is a very important question. The history of clinical research is not perfect. Based on many years of experience and learning, Congress has passed laws to protect study participants. Today, every clinical investigator is required to monitor and make sure that *every* participant is safe. These safeguards are an essential part of the research. Research abuses like the Tuskegee Syphilis

Experiment, which began in 1932, before safeguards were in place, will NOT happen again.

Researchers are required to follow strict rules to make sure that participants are safe. These rules are enforced by the Federal Government. Each clinical trial also follows a careful study plan or protocol that describes what the researchers will do. The principal investigator, or head researcher, is responsible for making sure that the protocol is followed.

An Institutional Review Board, or IRB, at each study site must approve every clinical trial in the United States. The IRB is made up of doctors, scientists, and lay people, like yourself, who are dedicated to making sure that the study participants are not exposed to unnecessary risks. The people on the IRB regularly review the study and its results. They make sure that risks (or potential harm) to participants are as low as possible.

Along with the IRB, many clinical trials are closely supervised by a Data and Safety Monitoring Committee. The Committee is made up of experts in your condition who periodically look at the results of the study as it is in progress. If they find that the experimental treatment is not working or is harming participants, they will stop the trial right away.

The informed consent process also helps protect participants. Before joining a clinical trial, you will be told

what to expect as a participant and all the things that might happen. For example, someone from the research team will explain possible side effects or other risks of the treatment. As part of the informed consent process, you will have a chance to ask questions about the trial.

After getting all this information, you can think about whether or not you want to participate. If you decide to

join the trial, you will be given an informed consent form to sign. By signing the form, you show that you have been told all the details and want to be part of the study. The informed consent form is NOT a contract. You can leave the trial at any time and for any reason without being judged or put in a difficult position regarding your medical care. Researchers must keep health and personal information private.

THE BENEFITS OF MINDFUL MEDITATION FOR OLDER ADULTS—AND HOW TO GET STARTED

From SeniorsMatter.com 2021

As we age, we may worry more about our physical health, but that doesn't mean we can let our mental health go. Mindful meditation promotes many physical and psychological benefits. It's nothing new though, people have been meditating since 5000 BC. Read on to learn about mindful meditation, its benefits, and how to get started.

What Is Mindful Meditation?

Meditation is all about cultivating presence, awareness, and non-judgment. The mental training practice offers a different way of dealing with stress, by calming the mind and body. You just sit still or lie down, relax, and don't dwell on the thoughts that drift through your head. When you meditate your breath slows down, heart rate slows, blood pressure decreases, stress decreases, and

tension in the body decreases. Mindfulness is simply observing and accepting thoughts as they occur without judgment. Instead of worrying about the future or ruminating on the past, mindfulness meditation focuses on the present, blocking out modern-day distractions.

Mindful meditation is just one of the many meditation techniques. The Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program was developed at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in the 1970s by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, a student of the Buddhist monk and scholar Thich Nhat Hanh. The standardized eight-week program assists people with stress, anxiety, depression, and pain by using a combination of mindfulness meditation, body awareness, yoga, and exploration of

patterns of behavior, thinking, feeling and action. But you don't have to enter a program. You can cultivate a daily mindful meditation practice anytime, anywhere.

How Can Mindful Meditation Benefit Seniors?

Mindful meditation has many potential physical and psychological benefits for older adults, including better focus, enhanced calmness, less stress, and improved sleep. Research shows that mindfulness and meditation can reduce depression and pain, and boost emotional well-being. It can even help adults come to terms with the challenges of aging.

Meditation stimulates the memory centers within the brain. US News reports that meditation is associated with enhanced short- and long-term memory. A recent study showed that it might even slow down the progression of Alzheimer's. Preliminary evidence suggests that meditation can offset the age-related cognitive decline. Not only does it activate the "feel-good" prefrontal cortex, but it can also actually change your brain to improve focus, creativity, and cognitive function.

Mindfulness helps manage moods and emotions, giving you space between a stimulus and your reaction. It even reduces loneliness and helps with inflammation! According to the National Center for

Complementary and Integrative Health, its also associated with reductions in irritable bowel symptoms. Ready to become a happier, healthier, more-focused human? Read on to learn how to practice mindful meditation and experience the transformation of this pill-free miracle-drug.

What Are Some Easy Ways to Begin Practicing Mindful Meditation?

Carve out time and space for you. Start small, while you want to work up to about 20 minutes a day, that might be hard to do at first. Even if you have mobility/agility issues, you can practice mindful meditation anytime, anywhere.

Start by sitting still or lying down in a quiet place. Take deep diaphragmatic breaths. Focus on inhaling and exhaling, and acknowledge any other physical sensations your body is telling you about. Whether lying down or standing, check-in with your posture. Like Adriene from Yoga with Adriene says, "head over heart over pelvis".

Make an effort to completely clear your mind. Random thoughts will attempt to distract you. Acknowledge those thoughts with kindness and invite them to relax and release. Feel the breath in your belly. When you're ready, take a moment to give thanks for your body and mind, pat yourself

on the back for taking time out for you, and notice how you feel. That's it! Sounds way too easy, right?

For more ways to get started with mindful meditation, check out these [Meditation Techniques for Seniors](#), [Six Easy Mindfulness Exercises for Seniors](#), and [How to Practice Mindful Meditation](#).

YouTube has a host of videos on mindful meditation for older adults, while apps like Headspace offer

guided meditation for a monthly fee.

The UCLA Mindful App can help you develop a meditation practice and learn to bring more mindfulness into your daily life. There are even some podcasts that can help. See if there are any mindful meditation classes at local senior centers, hospitals, private studios, or retirement facilities. Mindworks offers easy-to-follow guided meditation modules for people of all levels, from beginners to seasoned meditators.

DO YOU HAVE ARTHRITIS? CONSIDER THESE CHANGES

From Senior Citizen Times 2021

Arthritis is a common health condition in the United States, affecting one in four adults according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Characterized by the inflammation of one or more joints, arthritis can cause joint pain, stiffness and swelling that can limit one's functionality and impact daily activities. May is recognized as National Arthritis Awareness Month to bring attention to the widespread impact that arthritis has on adults, children and families.

These Changes Can Make a Difference for Those Living with Arthritis

Two of the most common types of arthritis are osteoarthritis (OA) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA). For those living with OA or RA, these changes could help improve daily life with arthritis:

- **Do simple exercises:** Exercise a few times a week to keep your joints as functional as possible. Find an activity you enjoy doing, such as taking a walk or swimming in a pool. Be sure to check with your doctor about

what exercises are right and safe for you.

- **Improve your sleep:** According to the patient organization, CreakyJoints, there are many lifestyle changes you can make that may help improve your sleep, even if you suffer from arthritis pain. You may want to try avoiding caffeine in the evening, reducing screen time before bed, eating lighter meals at night and keeping your bedroom cool, dark and quiet.
- **Choose foods that fight inflammation:** The Arthritis Foundation says that, while there is no miracle diet for arthritis, there are foods that can help fight inflammation and improve joint symptoms. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, fish, nuts and beans but low in processed foods and saturated fat is not only great for overall health, but can also help manage disease activity.
- **Lose any amount of extra weight:** According to The Osteoarthritis Action Alliance, extra weight greatly increases joint pain and damages the cartilage

of the joints, especially in the hips and knees. Losing excess weight, even in small amounts, can help reduce joint pain, avoid joint surgery and become more active.

Speak to your Physician about Medicines for Pain Management

In addition to lifestyle adjustments, a range of medicines are available to help relieve arthritis symptoms. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen and naproxen, are frequently used to ease inflammation and pain caused by arthritis.

‘While it is important to have balanced pain management with arthritis, it is crucial to speak to your physician often and openly about your daily lifestyle. That way, your physician can help personalize your treatment which may include NSAIDs or other types of pain management techniques,’ said Hasan Abed, MD, Anesthesiologist and Pain Management Specialist, Advanced Pain Management located in Timonium, Maryland.

If you take NSAIDs, it is important to talk to your healthcare professional because as many as one in four regular NSAID users are at risk to develop stomach ulcers – sores on the lining of the stomach caused by stomach acid.

In addition to taking high doses of NSAIDs, other risk factors include taking NSAIDs with aspirin, or while taking corticosteroids or blood thinners, having had a stomach ulcer in the past and being older than 65 years of age. If you have more than two of these risk factors, you are considered at high risk for stomach ulcers.

Gastroprotection with NSAIDs can help lower the risk of stomach ulcers

Over-the-counter and prescription NSAIDs come in many different

forms. They are available topically, as a lotion or gel and can be taken by mouth.⁶ Some NSAIDs include a gastroprotective medicine to help reduce the risk of getting a stomach ulcer.

‘Because every case of arthritis is different, it is important to talk to your physician about pain management and the potential risk of stomach ulcers if you take NSAIDs,’ said Dr. Abed. ‘If appropriate, your doctor may suggest you take a medicine that can lower the risk of getting a stomach ulcer when taking an NSAID.’

AN OVERVIEW OF FUNDAMENTAL LAWS PROTECTING SENIOR CITIZENS IN FLORIDA

By Lehnlaw

There are several laws, both federal and local, that seek to protect the rights, privileges, and civil liberties of senior citizens in Florida. The most fundamental of these laws include the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Florida Civil Rights Act under the Florida Statutes.

Americans with Disability Act — Also known as the ADA, this act was enacted in 1990 and has provisions that protect individuals with permanent disability from any form of neglect, abuse, or discrimination in public life. The law guarantees civil rights

protection for people with permanent disability in areas such as:

- Employment.
- Transportation.
- School.
- Public accommodation.
- Government services.
- Telecommunication.

The ADA was amended in 2009 to change the definition of disability in the Act. The amendments affected titles of the ADA including:

- *Title I*—This includes employment practices of private employers with over 15

employees, employment agencies, state and local governments, labor unions, agents of the employer, and joint management-labor committees.

- *Title II*—This includes the programs and activities of state and local government bodies.
- *Title III*—This includes private entities that are considered places of public accommodation.

The Florida Civil Rights Act – The Florida Civil Rights Act (FCRA) is a state law that seeks to protect people from discrimination based on race, color, sex, creed, age, nationality, or sexual orientation. The FCRA is an expansion of the provisions contained in the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Florida law, however, has major differences with the 1964 federal law concerning breach of employment statutes. An experienced elder law attorney can explain these laws to you during your consultation.

Laws Against Taking Advantage of The Elderly

There are other laws in place to protect Florida's senior population. More specifically, several laws exist to prevent abuse, exploitation, and neglect toward elderly individuals by

those who hold a position of trust or power over them, including families and staff at nursing homes. Most notable is Florida Statutes, Section 825.103—Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation of Elderly Persons and Disabled Adults.

This section of the Florida Statutes prohibits the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of an elderly person or vulnerable adult by persons who:

- Stands in a position of trust and confidence with the elderly person or elderly adult.
- Has a fiduciary duty or business relationship with an elderly person or disabled adult.

Prohibited Acts Against Vulnerable Adults in Florida

The various acts prohibited under this section include:

Elder abuse—This is any willful act or threatened act by a relative, caregiver, or family member which causes or is likely to cause significant impairment or great bodily harm to a vulnerable adult's physical, mental, or emotional health.

Elder exploitation—This term is used to describe intentionally obtaining, by deception or intimidation, the money, assets, or properties of a vulnerable adult with the intent of temporarily or permanently depriving that person of these money, assets, or properties.

Elder neglect—This means the failure or omission by a caregiver to provide the health care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain the physical and mental health of a vulnerable adult.

Psychological injury—This means an injury to an intellectual functioning or emotional state of a vulnerable adult's ability to function within that person's customary range of performance and that person's behavior.

Elder sexual abuse—This means any sexual act committed in the presence of a vulnerable adult without that person's informed consent.

If accused by law enforcement, people involved in elder abuse under this section will be charged with committing a felony in the first, second, or third degree. The charge will depend on the amount and value of the money, assets, and property involved. Victims of elder abuse may also have the option of filing a personal injury lawsuit against the responsible party if they sustained damages as a result of the abuse — contact us today for more information.

Where to Get Legal Help for Seniors

State laws have made provisions for the adequate protection of seniors and elderly citizens. These laws protect seniors from abuse by strangers and persons acting in a position of trust.

Unfortunately, many senior citizens, vulnerable adults, and their families do

not know how or where to get help for themselves and their loved ones.

The legal problems plaguing senior citizens are not insurmountable. Reputable law firms are teeming with experts in the fields of elder law and estate planning. These experienced attorneys understand the nuances of these issues and possess the expertise to address them.

Disability Abuse Laws

The disability abuse laws in Florida apply to a person who has a physical or developmental disability or mental impairment that affects their ability to carry out every day normal activities. These Florida laws are aimed at helping those with disabilities that affect the person's ability in the following areas:

- Working.
- Walking.
- Eating.
- Seeing.
- Providing one's own care and performing basic activities of daily living.
- Learning.

The following are some significant provisions of the law.

Special Education Law—This statute recognizes the rights of those who require special education. The statute permits a parent and a guardian of a

child with special education needs to invite their specialists to collaborate with public schools in their child's education.

Employment Law – Section 760.01 of the Florida statutes protects the rights of people with permanent disability in employment. The provision forbids employers from discriminating against a person solely based on any handicap. According to Section 112.042, job applicants assessed to be competent to perform any job shall not be denied the opportunity because of any mental or physical disability.

The statute also mandates employers of people with disabilities to provide them with reasonable accommodation physically configured to suit their work routine.

Housing and Accessibility Law – Both the ADA and the Fair Housing Act have adequate provisions for people living with disabilities on any public property. Section 413.08 guarantees the rights of disabled individuals to rent, lease, or purchase properties as other members of the public.

Also, Title II of the ADA makes it mandatory for all public entities to make both old and new housing facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. Breach of these laws will make a person on conviction to be liable to criminal penalties including community service.

Disability Benefits Law – Although there are no state disability laws in

Florida, disabled people can take advantage of federal laws like the Social Security disability programs to get disability benefits. The Social Security programs protect individuals with a disability and less income.

If you suspect that you or someone you love has been taken advantage of in violation of any of these laws, you may have legal options. Reach out to a trusted guardianship & nursing home abuse attorney today to request a free consultation.

New Law Against Exploitation of The Elderly in Florida

The financial exploitation of seniors and elders in the U.S. is almost an epidemic. Each year, millions of vulnerable adults and senior citizens lose their incomes and finances through exploitation and fraud by trusted individuals. Fortunately, in Florida, there are new laws that protect an elderly person or vulnerable adult from this form of exploitation.

Florida Laws Protecting Seniors Against Financial Exploitation

Section 415.1111 of the Florida Statutes gives vulnerable adults the power to begin a civil action for damages, punitive damages, and attorney fees and costs when they have been financially exploited through fraud. Under this section, seniors and elders can sue anyone who uses fraud, intimidation, or undue influence to

deprive them of their funds or real property.

Section 517.34—Protection of Specified Adults, protects vulnerable adult investors from financial exploitation. According to the law, securities dealers and investment advisers can delay a transaction or disbursement for a couple of weeks if he/she believes that fraud or financial exploitation has occurred.

Under **Section 709.2116 (1) of the Florida Power of Attorney Act**, a power of attorney can be reviewed if the court finds that the attorney or agent has breached his/her fiduciary duties.

Section 429.60 of the Adult Family-Care Homes Act—This law intends to encourage the provision of care for disabled adults and frail elders and

seniors. The law provides that personal care be given to adults in family-care homes to delay the placements of residents in a nursing home.

Federal Elder Abuse Laws

In addition to Florida's state elder abuse laws, numerous federal laws have been put in place to protect senior citizens. For instance, the **Elder Justice Act 2010** is a federal statute enacted to prevent, detect, protect, and treat the abuse, exploitation, and neglect of elders and senior citizens. On the other hand, the **Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act 2017** is a federal statute that mandates the authorities to investigate any person for fraudulent activities toward elderly citizens.

HERE ARE GARDENING TIPS FOR DECEMBER FOR TALLAHASSEE

Don't forget gardening when you make out your holiday gift list! Find ideas at Almanac.com/Store.

In some southern areas, you can still plant cool-season vegetables, such as beets, broccoli, cabbage, onions, and carrots. In some areas, you can still plant cool-season herbs such as parsley, thyme, sage, dill, fennel, cilantro, comfrey, and garlic.

Take root cuttings from your cold-sensitive perennials. Plant them in pots

and keep them indoors; you can use these to replace any plants that are killed during the winter. You can still transplant trees and shrubs.

Check the soil moisture of your lawn throughout the winter and water when necessary. Don't prune cold-damaged plants yet.

Continue planting hardy annual seeds to add color to your winter garden: petunia, pansy, snapdragon lobelia, alyssum, and viola.

Remember to clean the rows in your garden to help prevent insects and diseases. Test your soil. Now is a good time to add lime if it is necessary.

Start inspecting houseplants regularly for pests. Start planning next year's garden. Think about which crops did well and which didn't fare well so that you can order better varieties next time. Think about the quantity of each crop and whether it was enough or too much. Assess learning before ordering seeds for next year.

Before sending your seed order, draw a map of the garden area. This way, you'll order the right amounts of seeds. In empty garden beds, spread manure and compost over the garden and plow under to prepare your soil for next year. Add fallen leaves to your compost pile or use for mulch.

Bring a poinsettia into your home. See Almanac.com for tips on how to keep poinsettias going strong. Look around for garden tools and supplies that you're missing—and add them to your holiday gift list! Find gifts for others!

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

WISDOM

“The wise man hath his thoughts in his head; the fool, on his tongue.”

Ivan Panin

For publication in the OLLI times send **your information to George and Harriet Waas** at **waas01@comcast.net**

Do you have an idea for a class?
Please submit any ideas for future OLLI classes and instructors to
Carroll Bewley, OLLI's Curriculum Team Chair at carroll.bewley@gmail.com



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