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Fitness classes older adults can consider

They're a good option to add activity in a shorter amount of time

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

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

In such instances, fitness classes can take the place of more traditional exercise regimens. Various classes provide a challenging workout, and many can do so in an hour or less.

Pilates

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

Pilates and the exercising phenomenon he created ultimately made their way to the United States, where the routine was embraced by dancers looking for a way to aid their injury recovery.

This popular exercise is now part of millions of individuals' workout regimens.

This low-impact exercise is designed to strengthen muscles and improve alignment and flexibility.

Achieving greater balance after 50 pays untold dividends for older adults, who can decrease their risk for falls and fall-related



injuries by increasing their steadiness.

When older adults make time to break a sweat, they might find that traditional workouts are too time-consuming and a bit too challenging. In such instances, fitness classes are worth consideration. In addition to being a safe way to exercise, there is a social aspect as well.

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Spin cycle

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

Cardiovascular exercise is beneficial for a number of reasons, including its connection to heart health and even cognitive health. But many people lament daily sessions on a treadmill or elliptical that they find boring.

Spin classes involve the use of stationary bikes, but instructors typically guide class members through conditions

that mimic outdoor cycling sessions.

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

Kickboxing

Sometimes referred to as Krav Maga, kickboxing is another unique and challenging class offered at many fitness facilities. Martial arts like kickboxing assist with weight loss and can help people improve their muscle tone, flexibility and stamina.

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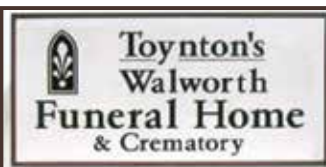
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The impact of reading on cognitive decline

It's among the activities that can help memory, attention and processing

Aging and change go hand in hand. Although some may bemoan the gray hairs that start to arrive or stiffness in the knees that seems to sneak up on a person in middle age, such concerns are not necessarily enough to lose sleep over.

However, many people 50 or older are nervous about the potential for cognitive issues like dementia as they grow older.

The Alzheimer's Association estimates that more than 6.5 million people have Alzheimer's disease in the United States. The Alzheimer Society of Canada estimates that there were 733,040 people living with dementia in the country as of early 2024.

Alzheimer's disease and other dementias can rob people of their memories, personalities and abilities to live satisfying, independent lives.

While it may not be impossible to prevent all cognitive issues completely, there is reason to believe that reading could be an ally in cognitive care.

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

The powers of reading were noticed more than 10 years ago when a 2013 study from researchers at Emory University measured readers' MRI scans as they read books.

They found the deeper readers went into a story, the more areas of their brains were activated. This activity



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

FILE PHOTO Living Senior

remained elevated for several days after participants finished their books. The more a person reads, the stronger complex networks in the brain become.

Additional evidence that reading can help the brain was noted by researchers at the Texas A&M School of Public Health.

A recent study suggests that older people with mild cognitive impairment who engage in high levels of activities like reading, hobbies and word games have better memory, working memory, attention, and processing speed than

those who do not take part in such endeavors.

Furthermore, a study published in Neurology found that high levels of cognitive activity, like reading and writing letters, can delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease by five years among those age 80 and over.

The bottom line is that reading can keep brains functioning optimally and potentially delay age-related cognitive decline.

(STATEPOINT)

FITNESS CLASSES • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Adults over 50 who are not accustomed to physical activity may find their energy levels are low, but a few kickboxing sessions may produce noticeable differences in stamina.

The balance benefits of kickboxing are similar to those provided by Pilates, so this activity may be particularly beneficial for adults over 50 looking to reduce their vulnerability to falls as they grow older.

Dance

Dancing is widely seen as a

fun activity, and rightfully so, as few things can be as enjoyable as cutting a rug. But dancing also provides a great cardiovascular workout.

Local community centers and even some fitness facilities offer age-specific dancing classes, which the AARP notes are great for individuals who want to build core strength, improve bone health and protect their heart.

Adults over 50 who want to be more physically active can look to any number of fitness classes to break a sweat, build strength and have fun all at once.

(METRO CREATIVE)



Make baking fun for the entire family



It's a great way to spend time with the young children in your life

Family fun can entail many things, but producing delicious food in the kitchen is a popular way for grandparents or uncles and aunts and the children in their lives to get together and let loose.

Teaching kids how to follow a recipe and produce a finished meal imparts important lessons in everything from measuring to math to science.

Cooking also shows kids that follow-through can lead to delicious results.

Any recipe will do when cooking with kids. However, baking desserts may be particularly enticing to youngsters who won't want to wait to dig into a sweet treat.

Plenty of things can enhance the enjoyment factor of baking for children. Families can explore these ideas to make baking more fun.

Accept the mess

Expecting baking to be a tidy process is setting yourself up for failure. Kids, particularly younger children, may not have the dexterity needed to keep everything neat and clean but that's OK if you go into it with the right mindset.

Prepare for spills, flour trails on counters, poorly cracked eggs, and sticky situations.

Keep a damp cloth nearby and go with the flow. Dress baking participants in clothes that can get soiled or invest in matching aprons.

Assign age-appropriate tasks

Young kids will want to get in on the action, so figure out which tasks they can safely handle.

These include measuring ingredients, mixing with a spoon, scooping batter into pans or tins, and adding chips or sprinkles to items.

Adults should man electrical equipment and knives and handle tasks that involve a stove.

Let kids choose flavors and colors

Cater the recipe to the kids' likes and tastes. They will be more likely to participate fully if the end result features flavors they enjoy.

Explore the sensory experience

Enable kids to feel the different textures of the ingredients, from the coarse sugar to the silky flour.

Talk about how ingredients change in texture when they are blended together and baked. Let the grandkids watch baking soda bubble when an acidic ingredient is added to it.

Try smaller tools

Invest in a set of kid-sized baking tools,

such as spoons and spatulas, to make them easier to maneuver with small hands.

Encourage creativity

Another fun addition to the time together is to let the kids come up with funny names for their creations, and don't cringe if they combine food colors or shapes that might not turn out so pretty.

Be encouraging of the process and the results so kids want to continue baking in the future.

Listen to upbeat music

Music can help set the tone of the baking experience. Have your grandchildren pick some of their favorite songs and let that playlist run in the background while you're working together in the kitchen. Add to the memories being made by bouncing and dancing along while ingredients are being combined.

Baking is an activity that family members of all ages can take part in, including grandparents, aunts and uncles, and grandchildren or nieces and nephews. The process will be more fun for the young children in your life with some planning.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Any recipe will do when cooking with the young people in your life. However, baking desserts may be particularly enticing to youngsters who won't want to dig into a sweet treat.

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Tips on staying active and engaged

There are many activities that offer physical and mental health benefits

Staying active and engaged during retirement may take some creative effort, especially for those who were used to the regimented schedule of work.

According to a recent study commissioned by The Oddfellows, nearly 40 percent of retirees have experienced feelings such as loneliness, boredom and a reduced sense of identity and purpose shortly after the retirement glow wears off.

It's no secret that nature beckons billions of people to get outside every day. Natural settings are not called "the great outdoors" for nothing, and nature enthusiasts of any age will likely insist there's nothing better than a day in the elements.

Additionally, there are a variety of ways to maintain your active engagement with the world after calling it a career, and one way is by spending more time outdoors.

Here are some suggestions to consider.

Plan a trip

According to AARP, travel is one of the most popular things to do during retirement. Odds are there are places retirees have always wanted to visit, and the world is just waiting.

Taking a tour or being part of a travel group can simplify travel planning by leaving the organizing to someone else. Travelers just enjoy the ride.

Keep, or get, moving

The National Council on Aging says regularly engaging in physical activity a person enjoys can help prevent bone loss, boost immunity, improve mood, and even prevent chronic illnesses.

Team sport participation is a top choice for seniors looking to stay active because



According to a recent study, nearly 40 percent of retirees have experienced feelings such as loneliness, boredom and a reduced sense of identity and purpose shortly after the retirement glow wears off. There are ways to maintain your active engagement with the world after calling it a career, including spending more time outdoors.

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sports provide physical exercise and also an opportunity to socialize with friends or teammates.

Take up a new language

Learning a new language is a beneficial tool for seniors who are looking to maintain cognitive abilities.

The National Institutes of Health says bilingualism has been linked to higher cognitive reserve, delay in dementia onset and better performance in executive control.

Stay on schedule

Some people thrive when they know what is coming next. If you need a routine in order to be happy, establish a consistent schedule that works. For example, people can wake up at the same time each morning and eat lunch during at the same time they did while working.

Upon retiring, incorporate a daily plan for exercise if physical activity is not part of your traditional routine.

Learn something new

It is never too late to try a new activity, class, sport, or hobby. Challenging yourself can stimulate the mind and provide a pathway to new relationships. Individuals can even consider going back to college.

In many states, senior residents can take regularly scheduled courses tuition-free at the state's public colleges and universities, provided classroom space permits.

Benefits of outdoors

A study published in the journal *Current Directions in Psychological Science* found that exposure to natural environments improves working memory, cognitive flexibility and attentional control.

On the flip side, the study found that exposure to urban environments can be linked to attention deficits.

Some findings suggest time spent in nature also can lead to increases in happiness.

A study published in the journal *Science Advances* found that contact with nature is associated with increases in happiness and subjective well-being. The researchers also found that contact with nature is associated with an increased sense of meaning and purpose in life.

Long-term benefits

Even when we're older, the benefits of learning new things, staying engaged in life and social events, and spending more time outdoors can have a lasting impact on mental and physical health.

Taking advantage of access to nature can pay some surprising dividends. Risk for depression, mood disorders and more are often reduced while another important factor, sleep, could very well improve.

There are many ways for seniors to keep their brains and bodies active in an effort to overcome boredom and improve overall well-being.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Common financial scams that target seniors



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Initiative aims to combat fraud against older adults

Financial scams are as old as the concept of currency. But consumers' vulnerability to scams has seemingly increased in the twenty-first century, when the Internet and devices like smartphones have enabled scammers to gain access to potential victims' financial information and even gain virtual entry into their homes.

Seniors are targeted by financial scammers with such frequency that the term "elder fraud" has entered the English lexicon and is now widely recognized as a notable threat to those 60 and older.

In recognition of that threat, the Elder Justice Initiative aims to support and coordinate U.S. Department of Justice efforts to combat such fraud.

Those efforts are ongoing and include a number of initiatives to educate older adults about elder fraud, including warning seniors about some notable scams that criminals use to target older adults.

Social Security

When perpetrating this scam, criminals typically contact prospective victims via

telephone and falsely claim that suspicious activity has prompted the suspension of their Social Security number.

Scammers may also indicate money must be withdrawn from a potential victim's bank and stored on gift cards for security's sake. It's important to note caller ID spoofing is often utilized when perpetrating this scam so an incoming call appears to be coming from the Social Security Administration.

Tech support

This scam involves criminals claiming to be representatives from widely recognized companies calling to inform say viruses or malware have been detected on their devices or their computer has been hacked.

The Federal Trade Commission notes perpetrators of this scam pretend to be tech support and request victims enable them to remotely access their devices or computer. Granting such access provides an avenue to view sensitive information, but scammers also may diagnose nonexistent problems and charge a fee.

But the scam does not always stop there. Some call back later and offer a refund to account for services that can no longer be rendered or to correct an overcharge. The scammers then request victims' specific banking details under the guise of "correcting" these alleged oversights.

Lottery

The lottery scam involves scammers calling potential victims and informing them they have won a foreign lottery or sweepstakes. Perpetrators of this scam typically identify themselves as lawyers, customs officials or lottery representatives.

The telemarketers behind this scam may be based in Jamaica, but the U.S. Embassy in Jamaica warns that those behind the scam will ask winners to pay various fees, including shipping and customs duties, until victims' funds are exhausted.

Romance

The FTC warns that wildly popular dating sites, social networking platforms and chat rooms provide opportunities for scammers to identify and exploit potential victims.

The aim of these scams, which many victims are too ashamed to report even after they realize they've been victimized, is to convince targets to send money in the name of love. But the EJI warns that online love interests who ask for money are almost certainly scam artists.

These are just a handful of the many ways that modern scammers target seniors. For more about these and other scams, visit [justice.gov/elderjustice](https://www.justice.gov/elderjustice).

(METRO CREATIVE)



How to plan a memorable retirement party

These considerations can help ensure it adequately suits the occasion

Professionals spend years saving for retirement. Many enroll in an employer-sponsored retirement plan the moment they begin their careers in their early twenties and continue to build their nest egg until the day they officially call it quits.

The effort people put into retirement planning makes the moment individuals call it a career worthy of an extraordinary celebration.

The following retirement planning party tips can ensure a celebration that suits an occasion as significant as the day professionals call it a career.

Pick a unique venue

Whether the party will be a sizable affair with a guest list that includes long-time colleagues and friends or a smaller gathering with a retiree's close knit inner circle, a unique venue underscores how significant a moment and achievement retirement is.

For larger affairs, shop around for venues in much the same way you might when celebrating other milestones, such as a child's graduation from college or a wedding.

If the guest list includes just a handful of friends and family members, consider planning a trip to a resort locale or renting an impressive home through a site like Airbnb or Vrbo.

Take a stroll down Memory Lane

In the months leading up to the celebration, work with the retiree to identify key moments and people in his or her career.

A photo montage of those notable moments and individuals can be a great way to commemorate a lengthy career and simultaneously thank and honor the people who helped along the way. Play the montage for guests at a key moment during the party.

Ask colleagues to share well wishes

Brief messages from colleagues, whether they're delivered via handwritten letters or videos each individual films, can be a great way to show the guest of honor how much he or she meant to others throughout their careers.

Messages can be incorporated into a montage video or shared privately with the guest of honor.

Kick the curfew to the curb

It might have been a while since a newly minted retiree had a late night, but a retirement party can stretch into the wee hours. After all, the guest of honor won't need to wake up for work the next day (or any other day), so let invitees know that the party will keep going well into the night.

If booking a venue for the party, plan an after party at your home for a handful of guests who are particularly close with the guest of honor.

Keep the focus on fun

While reaching retirement is a celebratory moment that merits a good party, many retirees also feel a degree of sorrow because they're leaving behind rewarding careers they worked so hard to build.

Such sentiments may not be entirely avoidable, but party planners can emphasize fun and a festive atmosphere to ensure the night is celebratory and not sorrowful. Book a band and submit a play list of the retiree's favorite songs, and encourage guests to dance the night away.

The day professionals reach retirement merits a celebration that's worthy of the years of hard work and dedication individuals put in over the course of their careers.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Various components can come together to ensure newly minted retirees are toasted in a way that honors their hard work over the years. Considerations should include picking a unique venue, keeping the focus on fun and of course, taking a stroll down memory lane.

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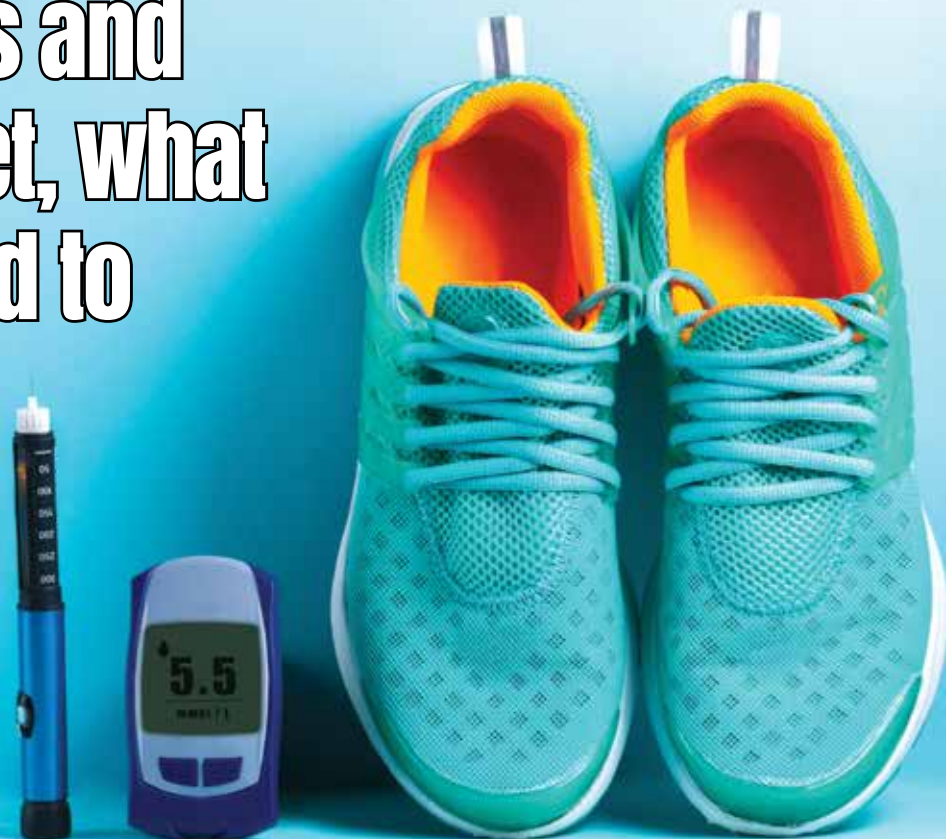


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Diabetes and your feet, what you need to know

The surgeon members of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons are sharing some important in-sights into preventing foot ulcers associated with diabetes and treating them if they do occur.

SIARHEI KHALETSKI/ISTOCK Living Senior



Foot ulcers develop in about 15% of the 25 million Americans living with diabetes and are a top cause of hospitalization. These ulcers can lead to serious complications, such as infection and amputation.

According to foot and ankle surgeons, there are steps you can take to prevent complications and keep your feet healthy, as well as breakthrough treatments that are saving limbs, restoring mobility and improving lives.

“The majority of lower-extremity amputations are preceded by a reoccurring foot sore or an ulcer that won’t heal,” says John S. Steinberg, a board-certified foot and ankle surgeon and a Fellow Member and Past President of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons.

“Patients do best when they take charge of their foot health with the help of a foot and ankle surgeon,” Steinberg added.

The surgeon members of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons are sharing some important insights into preventing foot ulcers associated with diabetes and treating them if they do occur.

Make these precautions part of your foot care routine:

- Inspect feet daily using a flashlight and mirror to see the bottoms of your feet.
- Moisturize dry, cracking feet to prevent sores. Use powder to control

moisture that can result in blisters.

- To prevent injury, wear protective, well-fitting shoes and socks at all times, even in the house. Change socks daily and more often if your feet get wet or sweaty. Avoid socks with holes or seams. Sometimes diabetic shoes are prescribed to avoid pressure and rubbing on the feet.

- Get regular foot exams from a foot and ankle surgeon, which can reduce amputation risk by 45-85%. The surgeon can also screen feet for loss of protective sensation.

- Manage your diabetes. Out-of-control blood sugar levels can lead to nerve cell damage, making it harder to detect foot problems.

Look for telltale signs that an ulcer may be developing:

- Swelling. The foot or ankle may look puffy or engorged and larger than the other.

- Temperature. Cold feet might mean a circulatory issue, whereas hot feet might mean infection.

- Color changes. Redness and even other colors might appear before an ulcer forms.

- Calluses. If a callus changes colors or develops dark, “dried blood” colored spots, it may be time to see a specialist.

Ask your foot and ankle surgeon about innovative treatments.

If you experience a non-healing ulcer, talk to your foot and ankle surgeon about innovative ways to stimulate healing.

Groundbreaking approaches include stem cell therapy, the use of bioengineered skin substitutes to accelerate growth of healthy skin, and negative pressure wound therapy to promote healing and enable healthy, new tissue to grow.

Today, foot and ankle surgeons rarely do a skin graft without negative pressure wound therapy. Skin grafting for foot ulcers has also advanced.

Surgeons now use advanced reconstructive surgery and grafting techniques to promote wound healing and decrease wound recurrence.

The success rate of these advanced therapies is high, providing substantial improvement over treatments of the past, when doctors would clean and bandage the wound and hope for the best.

“Thanks to the many advances in diabetic foot care, patients today are having simpler surgeries, avoiding amputations, and getting back to everyday life sooner than ever,” Steinberg said.

For more information or to find a foot and ankle surgeon near you, visit FootHealthFacts.org, the patient education website of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons.

(STATEPOINT) 11

Tips for the gardening beginner

A hobby anyone can do that's good for the mind and body

Gardening is a popular hobby all over the world. A recent survey by Ruby Home Real Estate estimates there are 71.5 million gardening households in the United States alone.

That translates to around 185.9 million people engaged in some form of gardening, which places the U.S. among other countries where gardening is wildly popular, including Australia and China.

A greater number of people are showing interest in gardening, which is a rewarding hobby that's good for the mind and the body.

Sometimes once life slows down and we hit retirement, we decide to pick up a new hobby such as seeing if we have a green thumb.

Those who are new to gardening may need a crash course to get started. These pointers can help anyone foster a newfound passion for gardening.

Choose the best location

Spend time in the yard and decide where to house a garden.

A far-off corner may get the most sun, but will you forget about the garden if it is too far away? Ideally, the garden should be located where it will get at least six to eight hours of sun each day.

There should be a water source nearby. The spot also should be convenient so that it is easy to go and pick vegetables or prune flowers.

Start small

If you're new to gardening, begin with a small garden footprint so that you can get your feet wet.

A raised garden bed can be a good starting point because it is contained and easy to maintain.

As your experience (and garden) grows, you can add to the garden size the next time around.

Amend the soil

It's possible but unlikely that the soil in the backyard is the perfect mix to grow



healthy plants. It's more likely that the garden will need some soil modification.

You can test the soil makeup with do-it-yourself kits or work with a garden center. A garden typically requires a mix of compost to add nutrients to the dirt; peat moss or coconut coir to help with water retention and to make the soil lighter; and vermiculite that helps to retain water.

A compost bin set up at the same time as the garden allows gardeners to continually produce nutrient-rich food to add to the garden.

Start seeds inside

If you'll be starting a garden early in the season from seeds, it's best to start indoors before your region's frost-free date.

This way the delicate plants will get the needed care and can establish before they go outdoors in the ground. Keep them humid by covering the seedlings in plastic wrap.

You can start the seeds in different containers, even empty egg cartons. Transplant to larger containers after the

seedlings grow a second set of leaves.

Once you're free from overnight frost, you can place the established, strong seedlings in the ground.

Plant starter guide

It's best to keep a few things in mind when planning the garden. Think about what will grow well in your climate.

Consider how big the garden will be and the size of mature plants. A small garden will not be able to accommodate corn, for example.

Also, how would you like the space to look and what will be its function? Is this a purely aesthetic garden or one that will be food-bearing?

An automatic watering system, such as a timer hooked up to the sprinkler, can keep the garden well-watered, which increases the chances of success. Then it will only be a matter of weeks before the garden can be enjoyed throughout the season.

(METRO CREATIVE)

A greater number of people are showing interest in gardening including those who have retired or are working fewer hours. It's a rewarding hobby that's good for the mind and the body however, those who are new to gardening may need a crash course to get started.

Activities for seniors with limited mobility



There are many ways to get exercise, even for those who struggle

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

Children, adolescents, young adults, and even men and women in middle age may not face too many physical hurdles when they try to exercise, but seniors are not always so lucky.

Aging men and women with mobility issues may wonder if they can reap the rewards of physical activity, and thankfully there are many ways to exercise even if getting up and going isn't as easy as it might have been in years past.

Sometimes referred to as "aerobic exercise" or simply "cardio," cardiovascular exercise is an umbrella

Aging men and women with mobility issues may wonder if they can reap the rewards of physical activity. Thankfully, there are many different ways to exercise even if getting up and going isn't as easy as it might have been in years past.

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term that encompasses a wide range of physical activities that raise the heart rate and improve endurance.

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

Take up swimming

Swimming might be tailor-made for seniors with mobility issues because it's a great workout and exercising in water tends to be less taxing on muscles and joints.

The Cleveland Clinic notes that swimming promotes heart health, strengthens the lungs, helps to burn calories, and builds muscle, among other benefits.

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

Use an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser

Cycling is a wonderful exercise but one that seniors with mobility issues may feel is no longer possible. If doctors advise against riding a traditional bike, an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser can provide many of the benefits of cycling without as great a risk for accident or injury.

A portable pedal exerciser can be carried to a park, where seniors can still spend time in the great outdoors, which is one of the most appealing reasons to get on a bike and go.

Walk your way to a healthier you

Walking is a form of cardiovascular exercise that is ideal for older adults with mobility issues because it need not be physically demanding and it's safe to walk just about anywhere.

Walking in a place such as a local park can be particularly good for older adults because they can take periodic breaks on benches if aches, pains or stiffness is affecting their ability to keep moving.

Take beginner yoga or tai chi

HelpGuide.org notes that gentle yoga or tai chi can help to improve flexibility and reduce stress and anxiety.

Though yoga and tai chi can provide as much demanding physical activity as individuals allow, beginner classes in each discipline don't require much movement but do provide enough for seniors hoping to be less sedentary.

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



The link between sleep & healthy aging

Reasons that make sleeping a challenge can often be treated

A good night's rest can be just what the body needs to feel revitalized and ready to tackle a new day. Indeed, rest is important for people of all ages, including seniors.

The National Council on Aging notes the brain needs sleep to regulate the body, restore energy and repair damage. Recognition of that is vital for aging men and women, some of whom may be more vulnerable to sleeping problems than they realize.

In addition to being more vulnerable to age-related health problems that can interrupt their sleep, thus affecting its quality, aging men and women may find their sleep routines change over time.

For example, a recent study published in the journal BMC Geriatrics found that active elderly people reported it took them longer to fall asleep as they got older.

The National Council on Aging says it's a misconception that older adults need more sleep than younger people, noting adults of all ages require the same amount of nightly rest.

However, things may change for seniors in regard to how much time they need to spend in bed. According to the National Council on Aging, this is because adults may be more likely to experience poor sleep quality and continuity.

When that occurs, adults still need the recommended minimum of seven hours of nightly sleep, but they may need to spend more time in bed since it's taking them longer to fall asleep.

It's important that aging adults recognize that they can spend too much time sleeping as well. A recent study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society found that too much sleep

is linked to the same health problems as too little sleep.

Those issues include an elevated risk for heart disease and falls.

Sleep issues affecting older adults also may be a byproduct of various contributing factors.

The National Council on Aging notes that frequent contributors to sleep concerns include:

- Pain that affects the back, neck, or joints
 - Mental health issues, including anxiety and depression
 - Neurodegenerative disorders that are more frequent among aging populations, such as dementia and Alzheimer's
 - Sleep apnea or disordered breathing at night
 - Restless leg syndrome, a condition that tends to worsen with age and is characterized by an urge to move limbs often
 - Nocturia, a condition marked by a need to urinate at night
 - Stimulating medications or medication interactions
 - Decreased exposure to sunlight
 - Sedentary lifestyle
- Aging men and women who are experiencing difficulty sleeping should know that such issues are treatable and not something that needs to be accepted as a normal part of growing older.

For example, individuals whose sleep is routinely interrupted by a need to urinate can avoid certain beverages, including alcohol and caffeinated drinks.

Sleep and healthy aging go hand in hand. Aging adults experiencing difficulty sleeping can consult their physicians and visit the National Council on Aging website, ncoa.org to learn more about overcoming sleep-related issues.

Aging men and women who are experiencing difficulty sleeping should know that such issues are often treatable and not something that needs to be accepted as a normal part of growing older.

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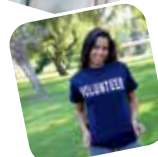
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