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Five common identity theft scams

BY METRO CREATIVE

Consumers can never let their guard down when it comes to identity theft. Personal information is much more accessible in an increasingly digital world. Consequently, instances of identity theft and consumer fraud continue to grow.

- The Identity Theft Research Center (ITRC) reported a record number of data compromises in the United States in 2021, amounting to a 68 percent increase over 2020.

- The Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel Network received more than 5.7 million reports of fraud and identity theft in 2021.

- In Canada, there are 12 victims of identity theft per every 100,000 residents and 52 victims of ID fraud.

- Many North Americans have been victims of COVID-19-related fraud, including scams involving fake testing, vaccines and treatments, and charities.

The FTC says identity theft is when someone uses your personal or financial information without your consent. Commonly stolen data includes addresses, credit card numbers, bank account information, Social Security numbers, or medi-

cal insurance numbers.

Though thieves can gather information by intercepting it through digital channels or simply by stealing mail or going through trash, many times people inadvertently share personal information with scammers themselves. Here's a look at five common scams.

1. Phone scams

Phone scams may involve telemarketers trying to sell you something in exchange for personal information given over the phone, as well as people impersonating government agencies or credit card companies. "Please confirm account information" or "We'll need your financial information to process" are some of the phrases these scams utilize. Never give out personal information over the phone unless you've confirmed the individual you're speaking to is legitimate.

2. Text links

The Pew Research Center says 81 percent of adult mobile phone users use text messages regularly. Scammers utilize text messages to try to gain information.



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See **SCAMS**, Page 5

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The text includes a link to a site that will request personal information. Do not respond to such texts and avoid clicking on the links.

3. Phishing emails

Phishing emails look like they are coming from legitimate sources, but they often contain malware that can infiltrate computers and other devices to steal identity data. Phishing increased during the COVID-19 lockdowns as more people were working from home, according to the ITRC.

4. Medicare card verification

Older individuals long have been targets of criminals. Seniors are now being called, emailed or even visited in person by scammers claiming to represent Medicare. Perpetrators of this scam offer new services or new chipped Medicare cards in exchange for verification of Medicare identification numbers. Medicare numbers should be carefully guarded, and seniors should keep in mind it's highly unlikely Medicare representatives will contact them in this way.

5. Data breaches

It's not just a home computer or phone breach you need to worry about. According to ARAG Legal, security experts indicate many major companies are being breached. By the time it's discovered that data was stolen, your personal information, which usually includes credit card numbers, email addresses and home addresses, has been circulating for some time. While it's impossible for private citizens to prevent this type of data breach, a credit monitoring service can alert consumers if their information shows up where it seemingly doesn't belong.

Identity theft is an ever-present threat and consumers must exercise due diligence to protect their personal information.



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Considerations for seniors looking to go back to school

BY METRO CREATIVE

The picture of a traditional college student is one in his or her late teens or early 20s. However, a deeper look may reveal that college student demographics are more diverse than one might imagine. In fact, senior citizens can rest assured that if they plan to return to the classroom, they're likely to find students around their age.

According to the senior citizen resource Elder Guru, just over 0.3 percent of university students are over 65. Even though that is a low number in the grand scheme of things, it is an indication that seniors have a presence on college campuses. And that number is expected to rise. Universities are increasing efforts to include seniors as important parts of their student bodies. Here are some things seniors considering going back to school may want to know.

- Incentives are available. Many schools are looking to expand their elder student body populations by making it easier for them to go to school. That means seniors may be able to attend for little to no cost through tuition waivers and discounts. Speak with an admissions officer about your options.

- Lay the foundation for a new career. A survey from the Rand Corporation found

that 39 percent of workers age 65 and older who were currently employed had previously retired at some point. Going back to school may provide a foundation for new skills that can make it easier to advance in a second career. Heading back to classes also can help people stay competitive in a current job.

- Engage and socialize. Going back to school provides seniors with an opportunity to engage with their peers and younger students. Returning to school may expose older adults to new experiences, technologies and customs they may otherwise never have enjoyed.

- Embrace the excitement of a new environment and its challenges. Heading back to college can be challenging, which is something seniors looking for mental stimulation may enjoy. Senior Finance Advisor reports that heading back to school and lifelong learning has been linked to better health, improved financial situations and even a reduced risk of dementia.

- Staying informed. Going back to school can enable seniors to stay technologically informed and learn about movements and other factors that are helping to shape the modern world.

Seniors have many reasons to return to the college classroom, and such a pursuit can pay numerous dividends.

Why it pays for seniors to maintain good credit rating

BY METRO CREATIVE

The benefits of maintaining good credit include looking more reliable in the eyes of prospective employers and securing lower mortgage interest rates when buying a home. Those rewards can benefit anyone, but they're especially enticing to young people. But what about seniors? Do individuals stand to benefit significantly from maintaining good credit into their golden years?

According to the credit reporting agency Experian, senior citizens tend to have the best credit scores of any consumer demographic. That could be a by-product of years of financial discipline, and there are many benefits to maintaining that discipline into retirement.

- Home buying and borrowing: Buying a home is often considered a big financial step forward for young people, but that doesn't mean aging men and women are completely out of the real estate market. In its 2020 "State of the Nation's Housing" report, the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University reported that the share of homeowners age 65 and over with housing debt doubled to 42 percent between 1989 and 2019. In addition, 27 percent of homeowners age 80 and over were carrying mortgage debt in 2019. Maintain-

ing strong credit after retirement can help homeowners who still have mortgage debt get better terms if they choose to refinance their mortgages. Even seniors who have paid off their mortgages can benefit from maintaining good credit if they decide to downsize to a smaller home but cannot afford to simply buy the new home outright.

- Rewards: Retirement is often associated with travel, recreation and leisure. Such pursuits can be more affordable when seniors utilize rewards-based credit cards that help them finance vacations, weekend getaways and other expenses associated with traveling. Seniors who maintain strong credit ratings into their golden years may have more access to the best travel-based rewards cards than those whose credit scores dip in retirement.

- Unforeseen expenses: No one knows what's around the corner, but savvy seniors recognize the importance of planning for the unknown. The COVID-19 pandemic seemingly came out of nowhere, and among its many ripple effects was the sudden job loss experienced by seniors. The JCHS report found that 21 percent of homeowners age 65 and over had reported loss of employment income related to the pandemic. Unforeseen medical expenses also can compromise seniors' financial freedom.



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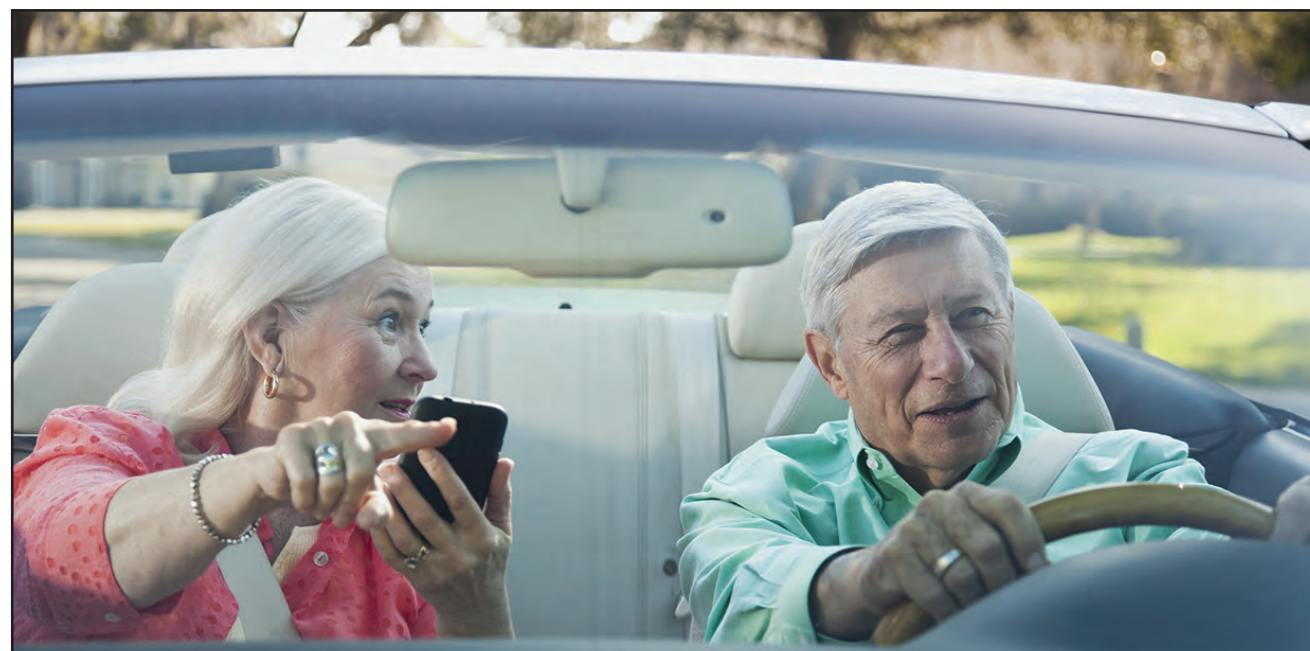
Signs of unsafe driving in older adults

BY METRO CREATIVE

A license to drive has long been symbolic of independence. Teenage drivers long for the day they earn their licenses and can take to the road without mom or dad riding shotgun, while aging drivers want to keep driving as long as possible so they can come and go as they please in their golden years.

There's no formula drivers and their families can employ to determine when it's time to take the car keys away from senior citizens. Thankfully, fatal collisions involving older drivers have declined considerably in recent decades. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, collision-related fatalities among drivers ages 70 and older declined by 15 percent between 1997 and 2018. A host of factors have no doubt contributed to that decline, including lane-assist technology and forward collision warning systems that have become standard offerings on many modern vehicles.

As much as technology has helped make driving safer for everyone, aging drivers should still keep an eye out for certain signs that may indicate their skills behind the wheel are diminishing and poten-



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tially compromising their ability to drive safely. According to AARP, the following are warning signs of unsafe driving.

- Delayed response to unexpected situations: Frequent close calls and narrowly

avoiding collisions when other drivers stop suddenly indicate reduced response time that can put aging drivers at an elevated risk of being involved in an accident.

- Becoming easily distracted while driving: Distracted driving has become a significant concern in recent decades, but it's often associated with young drivers. However, aging drivers who are easily distracted also pose a safety risk to themselves and other motorists.

- Decrease in confidence while driving: Only drivers will know if they feel confident enough to drive safely, and it's vital that aging drivers be honest with themselves when assessing how they feel when driving.

- Having difficulty moving into or maintaining the correct lane of traffic: Lane-assist technology can help drivers recognize how often they're driving in the correct lane of traffic. When the warning bell goes off frequently, it might be time

for older drivers to reconsider if it's safe for them to be behind the wheel.

- Hitting curbs when making right turns or backing up: Hitting curbs when turning or backing up indicates drivers may be having difficulty controlling their vehicles and/or seeing the road, both of which indicate it's no longer safe for drivers to get behind the wheel.

- Getting scrapes or dents on car, garage or mailbox: These signs also indicate drivers are having trouble controlling their vehicles.

- Driving too fast or too slow for road conditions: This indicates drivers are not as alert to their surroundings as they need to be to stay safe on the road.

It's not easy for aging drivers to relinquish their drivers' licenses. Learning to recognize potential warning signs of unsafe driving can help aging drivers make the safest decisions for themselves, their passengers and their fellow motorists.

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5 ways to show seniors they're appreciated

BY METRO CREATIVE

Senior citizens account for a significant percentage of the overall population. Estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau released in 2020 indicate the nation's 65-and-older population had grown by more than one-third over the preceding decade. By 2050, the number of senior citizens is expected to be close to 90 million. As of 2021, Statistics Canada reported there were roughly 7.1 million persons age 65 and older living in Canada.

People are living longer than ever, and as individuals age, the demand for senior services continues to grow — as does the need to be patient and respect the elderly. There are many ways to show seniors just how much they're appreciated.

1. Help with chores. Lead

a hand with chores around the house that may have grown difficult for seniors. This can include mowing the lawn, weeding garden beds, shoveling snow, raking leaves, or even taking the garbage pails in and out on collection days.

2. Visit more often. Frequent visits are one of the simplest ways to show seniors you care. Whether seniors live in a private home or managed care facility, visitors brighten their days, especially if they no longer get out and about as frequently as they once did. Spending time together and sharing stories can bring smiles to the faces of older adults.

3. Plan activities with seniors in mind. When organizing parties and special events, consider the needs of seniors on the guest list. Add music from their era to playlists

or DJ requests. Seat seniors with mobility issues near exits and restrooms. Make sure to arrange for photos with the guest of honor to keep family history alive.

4. Thank seniors. Find any reason to thank a senior. Perhaps someone served in the military or volunteered their time with children. Celebrate accomplishments big and small with a simple "thank you."

5. Prepare a meal. Invite a special senior over for a home-cooked meal with the family. Make it a regular occurrence on the calendar. If he or she cannot get out easily, bring a hot meal over to his or her place, instead.

Simple gestures of gratitude and appreciation can brighten a senior's day and let that person know he or she has not been forgotten.

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What to know about exercise and dementia

BY METRO CREATIVE

Three seconds go by in a flash, but that's enough time for another person to join the masses already diagnosed with dementia. According to Alzheimer's Disease International, every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia, a condition that more than 55 million people were living with in 2020.

The World Health Organization notes that various diseases and injuries that affect the brain can contribute to dementia. As menacing a threat as dementia presents, individuals are not helpless against it. In fact, exercise, which can help lower risk for heart disease, stroke and various other conditions, can be a valuable ally against dementia as well.

What is the link between exercise and dementia?

Dementia remains something of a mystery, but the Alzheimer's Society notes that evidence is now strong enough to support the assertion that lack of physical exercise increases a person's risk of developing dementia. The Alz-

heimer's Society also notes that researchers have discovered improvements in thinking and memory and reduced rates of dementia among middle-aged and older adults who exercised compared to those that did not.

Is cardio the most effective exercise at lowering dementia risk?

Speaking with CNBC, Silky Singh Pahlajani, a clinical professor of behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine, noted that cardiovascular exercise, often referred to as cardio, can provide the biggest benefit for brain health of any form of exercise. Cardiovascular exercise can increase heart rate, which helps deliver oxygen cells to the brain. The National Institutes of Health notes that oxygen shortages prevent the brain from working as well as it should, and a 2023 study published in the journal *Redox Biology* found that oxygen abnormality plays a crucial role in the occurrence and progression of Alzheimer's disease.

How should aging adults approach exercise if they have been largely sedentary?

Middle-aged and older adults who have not been

physically active throughout their adult life but want to begin incorporating exercise into their daily routines are urged to speak with their physicians prior to beginning a fitness regimen. Preexisting conditions may make it difficult, if not impossible, to engage in certain forms of exercise. A personal physician can consider a patient's unique medical history and then recommend certain exercises that won't put him or her in jeopardy of suffering an injury or illness. A gradual approach to exercising is typically best for individuals who have lived a sedentary lifestyle. Starting off slowly with a short walk or light physical activity like gardening can help the body acclimate to physical activity at a safe pace. As adults' bodies become more accustomed to exercise, men and women can then gradually increase the intensity of their workouts, switching from walking to jogging on a treadmill when possible.

There is no cure for dementia, but adults are not helpless against the various forms of the condition. Researchers have discovered that preventive measures like routine exercise can be an effective way to reduce dementia risk.

Cardiovascular fitness and Alzheimer's disease

BY METRO CREATIVE

Dementia is a general term for various brain disorders that can affect behavior, thinking and memory. Among the condition that qualify as dementia, Alzheimer's disease (AD) is the most common.

According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, AD is an irreversible condition that destroys memory, thinking and the ability to carry out daily activities. Although initial AD symptoms may be mild, the disease worsens over time and eventually people with AD will need full-time care. Many people are interested in any ways they can reduce the severity of AD or stave off its progression. Cardiovascular fitness could be an important tool in that fight.

Cardiovascular activity may help lessen the impact of dementia and AD in particular. According to a 2018 study published in the journal *Neurology*, a population-based sample of 1,462 Swedish women between the ages of 38 and 60 was examined in 1968, and then followed up with in various intervals until 2009. Researchers found that women who partook in high fitness regimens saw their age of dementia onset delayed by 9.5 years. Time to dementia onset was delayed by five years compared to medium fitness participants.

Another study from 2020 published in the journal *Frontiers in Neuroscience* looked at exercise for those who already have AD as a method of slowing the decline in activities of daily living (ADL). The study found that ADL decline was slower among individuals who engaged in an hour of aerobic exercise training twice a week compared to

those in the non-active group. However, there was no effect on behavioral symptoms, depression or nutritional scores.

Aerobic exercise programs aimed at improving cardiovascular fitness seem to have moderate effects on cognitive function among healthy older persons. But data from current randomized control trials are insufficient to show that these improvements are due exclusively to improved cardiovascular fitness. Still, incorporating cardiovascular exercise in all stages of life is important. Here are a few notable ways exercise could affect AD outcomes.

- **Improved blood flow:** Regular cardiovascular exercise facilitates blood circulation to the brain. Better blood flow delivers adequate oxygen and nutrients to the brain, which is important for maintaining cognitive function.

- **Risk factor reduction:** Cardio helps manage several risk factors associated with AD, such as diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure. By lowering these risk factors, individuals may reduce their likelihood of developing forms of dementia.

- **Reduced inflammation and oxidative stress:** Physical activity can reduce inflammation and oxidative stress in the body, each of which are linked to neurodegenerative diseases. The American Brain Foundation says high levels of inflammation of the brain may accelerate brain aging and contribute to the progression of neurodegenerative diseases like AD, Parkinson's disease and Lewy body dementia.

- **Improved sleep:** Regular exercise can help promote more regular sleep patterns, which improves mood and cognitive health.

Although cardiovascular exercise cannot prevent dementia, it may help delay its onset.



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FAQ ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

BY METRO CREATIVE

The National Institutes of Health reports that incidences of Alzheimer's disease and other dementia increased by roughly 148 percent between 1990 and 2019. By 2020, more than 55 million people across the globe were living with dementia, according to Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI). ADI adds that Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for as many as 75 percent of all cases worldwide.

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is perhaps the most widely recognized form of dementia. But even those who are familiar with AD may not know the answers to common questions about it.

Are Alzheimer's and dementia one and the same?

No. Dementia is an umbrella term that refers to a various conditions that the National Institute on Aging notes affect a person's ability to think, reason and remember. AD is merely one type of dementia, and additional forms of the condition include Lewy body dementia and vascular dementia.

What distinguishes Alzheimer's disease from other forms of dementia?

The David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Ange-



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les reports that Alzheimer's is characterized by progressive memory loss and cognitive decline. In addition, the Alzheimer's Association® notes AD affects the part of the brain associated with learning first, so individuals with the condition often exhibit difficulty remembering in the early stages of the disease.

Are there other early signs of AD?

The NIA notes there are some addi-

tional early signs of AD, but also points out that different people exhibit different early signs of the disease. Some early signs may include:

- Decline in ability to find the right words
- Vision/spatial issues
- Mild cognitive impairment (MCI):

The NIA notes that signs of MCI include losing things often, forgetting to go to ap-

pointments or other events, and struggling to come up with words compared to people in the same age group. The presence of MCI does not necessarily mean a person will develop Alzheimer's, and certain conditions, including stroke, can increase risk for MCI.

What causes Alzheimer's disease?

The causes of Alzheimer's remain a mystery, though research is ongoing and medical professionals have connected some dots. For example, the NIA notes that the presence of the genetic condition Down syndrome increases a person's risk of developing AD. That supports the notion that some cases of AD are caused by a genetic component, which scientists believe may also explain cases of early-onset dementia. The NIA notes that research also indicates late-onset Alzheimer's, which is typically diagnosed in individuals in their mid-60s, is linked to age-related changes in the brain that occur over several decades.

Is there a cure for Alzheimer's disease?

No. There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, and the NIA notes that no scientific evidence exists to support claims that various supplements or products like coconut oil can cure or delay the onset of AD.

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The link between sleep and healthy aging

BY METRO CREATIVE

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 2019 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 NCOA 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. The NCOA notes this is because adults may be more likely to experience poor sleep quality and continuity. When that occurs, adults still need the rec-

ommended 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 2019 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, issues that include an elevated risk for heart disease and falls.

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



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- 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 ncoa.org to learn more about overcoming sleep-related issues.



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SENIOR-FRIENDLY INTERIOR RENOVATIONS

BY METRO CREATIVE

Home is where the heart is. That sentiment may be especially true for seniors who have spent decades living in their homes. A lot of hard work goes into home ownership, and seniors who have lived in the same space for a while undoubtedly have countless memories within the walls of their homes.

A lifetime of experiences in a home can make it hard to leave, but many seniors experience diminished mobility as they age. Mobility issues can make it hard for seniors to traverse their homes, but aging homeowners can make various renovations to make a home more accessible.

- Revamp entryways and staircases. A 2020 study of 1,000 adults in the United Kingdom found that 28 percent of individuals age 65 and older who don't exercise regularly struggle with activities like walking up stairs. The study, commissioned by Total Fitness, also found that 14 percent of men and women over 65 who regularly engage in moderate exercise still find it challenging to climb up and down a flight of stairs. Seniors facing similar challenges can install a ramp at their home's entryway so they can comfortably go in and out. Inside, a chair lift can ensure seniors are not struggling to



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move from one floor to another.

- Raise the outlets throughout the home. They're easily overlooked, but outlets, particularly those outside the kitchen, tend to be close to the floor. AARP notes that's no accident, as outlets are generally placed at a height equal to the length of a hammer to save time with measuring when buildings are being constructed. Outlets close to the floor can be difficult for seniors with mobility issues to reach.

Relocating the outlets a little higher off the floor is not an expensive renovation, but it can make a home more accessible for seniors who have difficulty bending down or getting down on one knee.

- Install door knob extensions. Verywell Health notes that nearly half of all people age 65 and older have arthritis or another rheumatic condition. Arthritis can make it difficult for seniors to grip and turn door knobs. Door knob extensions can

make it easier for seniors with arthritis to open the doors in their homes. Such extensions are roughly five-inch levers that can be installed over an existing door knob, making it easier to grab and pull down. Extensions save seniors the hassle of turning the knob, which some may find painful and almost impossible.

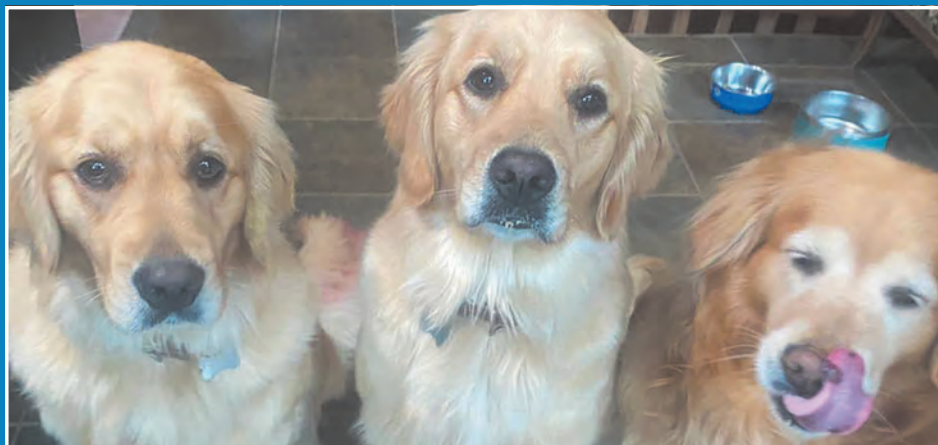
- Renovate the bathroom. Bathroom renovation projects can be costly, but seniors with mobility issues should know that bathrooms can pose a particularly dangerous threat. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that roughly three million older adults are treated for fall injuries in emergency departments each year. A 2019 analysis published in *The Journals of Gerontology* noted that 22 percent of in-home falls resulted in a change in the person's walking ability. Replacing a step-over shower with a zero-step alternative can make it easier for seniors with mobility issues to get in and out of the shower, thus reducing their risk for falls. Grab bars along shower walls and a chair inside the shower can make it easier to bathe and towel off safely.

Seniors with mobility issues can make their homes more accommodating through an assortment of simple, yet effective renovations.

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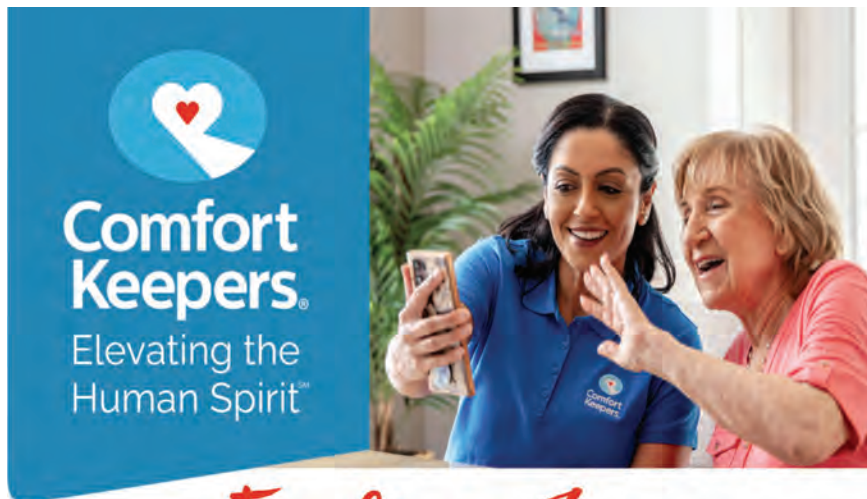


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TIPS TO PREVENT PICKLEBALL INJURIES

BY METRO CREATIVE

Pickleball has inspired millions of devotees. According to the Association of Pickleball Professionals, roughly 36.5 million individuals played pickleball in 2022, and 45 percent of players who participated in a YouGov study conducted between August 2021 and August 2022 indicated they planned to play more pickleball in the coming six months than they had in the previous six months.

Pickleball is thriving, and that's great news for those who love the game. Unfortunately, pickleball also has proven beneficial to orthopedic practices. A 2023 analysis from UBS estimated pickleball injuries could cost Americans nearly \$400 million in 2023. Seniors are especially vulnerable to pickleball injuries, as a 2021 study published in the journal Injury Epidemiology found that 86 percent of emergency room visits related to pickleball injuries affected individuals 60 and older.

Injuries are a part of any sport, and pickleball is no different. Though there's no foolproof method to guarantee pickleball players don't get hurt playing the game they love, the following are some tips that can reduce injury risk.

- **Gear up.** Pickleball is a competitive sport, but there's a tendency among some players, particularly novices, to take a casual approach to the game. Veteran players may know better, but anyone new to the game should be sure to wear the appropriate gear when playing. Athletic shoes with ample traction can reduce the likelihood that players will slip or fall. The right racket also can reduce risk for elbow injuries. The sporting goods experts at Dick's Sporting Goods note that paddles should

feature a light to medium weight, comfortable grip and a large sweet spot. The right paddle will be different for everyone, so novices are urged to speak to veteran players for advice on which paddle might be best for them.

- **Embrace physical activity.** Pickleball can be a great workout, and players can reduce their injury risk by embracing physical activity even when they are not playing. Leg exercises can help build lower body strength, but strength exercises that focus on the upper body also can reduce injury risk.

- **Loosen up before playing.** Taking the court right after getting out of the car is a recipe for injury. Arrive five to 10 minutes before a game and use that time to loosen up. A short walk and some subsequent stretches can help players make sure their bodies are not too tight to play. Some brief warm-up exercises and stretching can reduce muscle tension and make the body less vulnerable to injury.

- **Hydrate before, during and after a game.** The experts at Johns Hopkins Medicine note that water cushions the joints, which helps athletes maintain their flexibility. Flexibility can reduce injury risk, particularly in a sport like pickleball. The 2021 study published in Injury Epidemiology noted that 60 percent of pickleball injuries are sprains, strains or fractures. Remaining flexible can reduce athletes' risk for sprains and strains. Johns Hopkins recommends adults consume between six and 12 ounces of water for every 20 minutes of sports play and to drink between 16 and 24 ounces afterward.

Pickleball is wildly popular, even though pickleball injuries are common. Players can embrace various strategies to reduce their injury risk.

How nutritional needs change with age

BY METRO CREATIVE

Healthy eating is important at any age and can set the course for a life of vitality and wellness. Sufficient nutrition can help prevent chronic illnesses and make sure that growing bodies develop properly. As one ages, various changes take place in the body, making healthy eating even more essential.

According to Healthline, nutritional deficiencies can effect aging individuals, which can decrease quality of life and lead to poor health outcomes. Individuals should pay attention to their vitamin and mineral intake at various ages so they do not miss out on important nutrients. As a person ages, here are some approaches to consider.

- **Consume fewer calories:** According to Connie Bales, PhD, RD, associate director of the Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center at Durham VA Medical Center, people need fewer calories every decade. That's because individuals are moving around less and have less muscle. This causes a decline in metabolic rate.

- **Include more nutrient-dense foods:** Even though caloric needs go down with age, it's important to pack as much nutrition into the calories a person does consume.



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sume. That means finding nutrient-rich foods like whole grains, fruits, nuts, beans, vegetables, fish, and lean cuts of meat.

- **Consume more lean protein:** Muscle

loss and loss of strength can develop as a person ages. Healthline says the average adult loses 3 to 8 percent of their muscle mass each decade after age 30. Eat-

ing more protein could help aging bodies maintain muscle.

- **Eat fortified cereals and grains:** The ability to absorb vitamin B12 can decrease as one gets older and with the use of certain medicines. Many health professionals recommend patients get more vitamin B12 by consuming foods enriched with this vitamin. Vitamin supplements may be needed in addition to food.

- **Drink more fluids:** Health.com says sensation of thirst declines with age. Drinking water and other fluids becomes a priority to stay hydrated. It also helps with digestion.

- **Prioritize bone health:** Osteoporosis is a concern for older adults, particularly women who have reached menopause. Osteoporosis occurs when bones become brittle and can break from only the slightest bump or fall, says the Mayo Clinic. Vitamin D and calcium help strengthen bones, and older adults may need more of these nutrients.

Individuals should speak with their health care providers and nutritionists for further insight into their changing nutritional needs. Such professionals can help customize diets to address specific health concerns.

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Notable senior health concerns

BY METRO CREATIVE

The human body changes as it ages. While certain conditions are commonly associated with aging, some individuals may be surprised to learn of the more common health conditions that can affect seniors. The World Health Organization says one in six people will be 60 or older by 2030. With such a large portion of the population on the cusp of turning 60, it makes sense for individuals to familiarize themselves with the more notable issues affecting seniors.

COGNITIVE DECLINE

A certain degree of memory loss is a natural component of aging. Forgetting where you left your keys or experiencing difficulty putting a name to a face can be a random and frustrating occurrence. However, dementias, like Alzheimer’s disease, are not a side effect of aging. As many as one in five seniors experiences mental health issues that are not associated with aging, and it helps to learn the early warning signs of dementia. Such recognition may compel individuals to seek treatment that can slow the progression of the disease.

OSTEOARTHRITIS

Aches and pains may come with aging, and often can be attributed to osteoarthritis, which is the most common form of arthritis, according to the Mayo Clinic. Osteoarthritis occurs when the protective cartilage that cushions the ends of bones wears away over time. It is progressive and cannot be reversed, but maintaining a healthy weight and staying active can help alleviate pain and improve joint function.

CATARACTS AND REFRACTIVE ERRORS

It should come as no surprise to most that the eyes change as the body ages. Refractive errors like nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and presby-



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opia can make objects look blurry when viewed, says the National Eye Institute. Cataracts, which are a clouding of the eye’s natural lenses, affect about 20 percent of people age 65 and older, according to the American Geriatrics Society, while the National Eye Institute says half of all people over age 80 will get them. Cataract removal surgery and prescription eyeglasses can help.

TYPE 2 DIABETES

American Senior Communities reports that it’s estimated 25 percent of adults age 65

and older have type 2 diabetes. Unchecked diabetes can lead to a host of ailments, including vision problems, mobility issues, kidney damage, and increased risk for heart disease or stroke. Many people can manage type 2 diabetes with diet and exercise.

HEART DISEASE

The National Institute on Aging says adults age 65 and older are more likely than younger people to suffer from cardiovascular disease that affects the heart, blood vessels or both. Conditions like high blood pressure and high cholesterol need

to be properly managed, and diet and exercise is important throughout life to avoid developing heart disease in later years.

BALANCE ISSUES

Balance issues that can lead to falls are a major concern for seniors. According to HealthinAging.org, many things can adversely affect balance. These include nerve and brain problems, vision troubles, diabetes, arthritis, inner ear problems, and even dehydration. Dizziness or balance problems should be addressed, as there are serious health risks associated with falls.



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TIPS TO PREVENT PICKLEBALL INJURIES

BY METRO CREATIVE

Arthritis isn't a single disease, but a term that refers to more than 100 conditions characterized by joint pain or joint disease, says the Arthritis Foundation. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States, and affects women at a proportionally higher rate than men.

Arthritis looks and feels different to the various people who experience it, and symptoms can vary from day to day depending on variables such as the weather and individuals' level of physical activity. When arthritis flares up, it can make performance of daily activities challenging. Therefore, people experiencing arthritis can take steps to make living with the condition somewhat easier.

WORK WITH AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

An occupational therapist can assess work and home situations and make recommendations on potential modifications to these spaces that might be right for your situation. The bathroom and kitchen typically are two spaces where people spend a lot of time and can be areas of focus. Having items at counter height; purchasing smaller sizes of products that are easier to hold; avoiding bending down by using



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a grabber tool; and having a chair or stool nearby so that you can sit while doing an activity can help.

USE SMART DEVICES

The bevy of smart devices now available can work to your advantage. With the push of a button on a phone app or through voice control, you can turn on lights, switch the thermostat or perform any other tasks programmed around the house. This can help when mobility is compromised.

FOCUS ON KITCHEN TASKS

Meal preparation can be a chore when arthritis makes it painful. Rather than eating out all of the time, some tips can help. Utilize frozen fruit or vegetables that already are chopped and prepared to cut down on these tasks. Invest in lightweight cookware and dishes to simplify moving items around. Electric jar openers, kitchen scissors and even vegetable steamers that require less water are additional kitchen tools that can make life with arthritis a little easier.

MOVE YOUR BEDROOM

If climbing stairs repeatedly is problematic, move clothing or even your bedroom downstairs to reduce trips up and down. Additional relocation techniques can include putting a mini fridge in your bedroom or relocating the washer and dryer upstairs to make laundry easier.

GET A ROLLATOR

A rollator is a wheeled walker that doubles as a seat. It provides support when walking, but also can be a comfortable place to stop and take a seated break.

GET THE RIGHT PAIN RELIEF

Pain relief can make it easier to cope. Strategies include anti-inflammatory medications, physical therapy and massages, stretching and exercising, and even prescription therapies that target the immune system in people with autoimmune arthritis. Work with health professionals to get the right combination of what is needed to alleviate pain and stiffness.

Arthritis affects millions of individuals around the world. By making some changes, people living with the condition can find life a little bit easier.



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