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Stress and Seniors

Stress is the body's natural danger alarm. When your body sense danger, your brain sends stress signals to you muscles and your adrenaline starts to pump.

Once your body sense the danger has passed, your body goes back to normal. Chronic stress can be harmful to your body and even more hazardous to the elderly.

EFFECTS OF STRESS

Stress changes your body in many ways. First, chronic stress can lower the power of your immune system, leaving you vulnerable to infections and disease. Adults are already more susceptible to illness due to age-related problems in the immune system. This, combined with chronic stress, can leave your body even more vulnerable to illness and disease.

Stress also cause heart problems. Stress raises your adrenaline, which in turn, makes your blood pressure and heart rate rise. Stress can cause seniors and adults to find relief in other activities such as drinking, smoking or eating, which can cause even more harm over time.



In all, stress can make your body and health change quicker than you can anticipate, so it's important to know how to regulate and cope with stress.

COPING WITH STRESS

An increase of stress over time can result in seniors losing loved ones, their independence and their health more quickly than they want to. It's important to know how to cope and deal with stress in

healthy ways. Here are some tips to help you manage your stress in a healthy way.

Working out has been shown to relieve stress in a healthy way as well as making you more healthy.

Picking up a new hobby, such as painting or walking in your local park with your dog, can be a healthy way to get you out of the house and away from work life or what ever is stressing you out.

Getting involved in causes you care about and volunteering your time can help manage your stress while also making you feel good and making an impact in your town or society.

Focus on things you can control and not on things about life or your day that you cannot change. Learning to manage stress can be as simple and as difficult as learning to manage your mind.







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Get Active

There are a lot of preventative measures you can take to stay healthy as you get older. One of those is staying active as you get older.

Here are some tips from health.gov to keep you moving and active.

BEFORE YOU START

Physical activity is great for people of all ages. But, before you start, there are some things you should know. If you have a health problem such as diabetes, heart disease or obesity, talk to your doctor before getting out and getting active. Your doctor should help you determine what exercises and activities would be a good starting point.

START SLOW

If you have never been very physically active and are looking to begin, there are some steps you should take to ease yourself into being active. Begin by aiming for two and a half hours of moderate activity a week. See how working out fits into your weekly schedule and what you can take. You can always add more time of exercise a day as your body adjust to the workouts.

Choose aerobic activities

such as walking fast, dancing, swimming or raking leaves outside. What matters is doing activities that will make your heart beat faster. Talk to your doctor if you have shortness of breath, chest pain or unplanned weight loss.

ANYTHING IS A WORKOUT

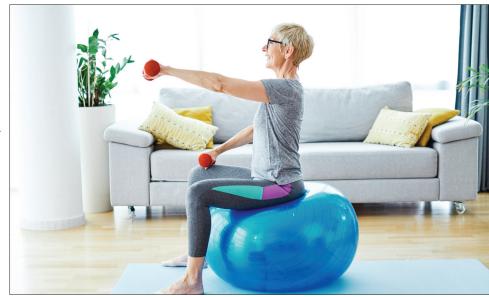
Working out doesn't necessarily have to be running or lifting weights. Household chores can be a good workout for you. Raking leaves, cleaning the house or even doing some simple balance exercises can be good workout for you. As long as it gets your body moving and active.

A good workout can be as simple as tossing the ball around with grandchildren or swimming in a pool.

Health.gov does recommend doing muscle-strengthening activities at least two days a week.

These kinds of workouts can be anything such as using bands or hand weights. If you don't have bands or weights available you can also use bottles of water or food as weights.

You can find some inexpensive weights at local outdoor stores or even your local grocery store.



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A young body can fight off most infections pretty easily but, just like everything else as you get older, it becomes harder for your body to keep up and fight off illnesses.

Luckily, there are some things you can do to prevent the spread.

EAT IMMUNE-BOOSTING FOODS

Your diet directly effects your immune health and the foods you eat can increase its efficiency. Eating a low-fat, plant-based diet may help give the immune system a boost.

Your immune system relies on white blood cells to combat bac-

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teria, viruses and other invaders. People who eat more plants have been shown to have more effective white blood cells when compared to non-vegetarians.

Foods high in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants boost immune health. Studies have shown fruits and vegetables provide nutrients that can boost immune function.

It's because they are rich in antioxidants and nutrients such as beta-carotene, vitamin C and vitamin E.

SEE YOUR DOCTOR REGULARLY

As you get older, there are more reasons for you to get out

and go see your doctor. It's important to get regular scheduled check ups with your doctors to make sure you monitor your health. Your body changes day by day and anything can happen overnight. You may be wondering how often "regular" is exactly. There are a few things to consider when asking yourself this:

- On your last visit, did your doctor advise a return date for you?
- Did you go back on the return date?
- Have you noticed any health change since the last time you visited?

SLEEP AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Your body needs sleep to function and sleep is especially important for your immune system. Sleeping issues are linked to health problems such as heart disease, Alzheimer's disease and obesity.

Lack of sleep can harm immune system by weakening it's defenses and making it easier for your body to catch sickness or colds. Add more fruits, vegetables, grains and beans to your diet to help yourself get better, deeper sleep.





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