



GRACEFUL LIVING

LOVE LIFE LIBERTY

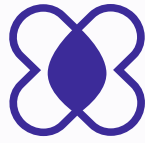
AGE WITH DIGNITY

2023 - Anniversary Issue



Our fourth annual issue comprises articles written by known doctors and specialists who have also been a part of our monthly Newsletters. Graceful Living is, and always will be for the elderly, giving information and entertainment to help them live healthily and happily.





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VIEWPOINT

December 2022, we celebrated the 4th Anniversary of Graceful Living. Looking back, the last four years have been gainfully progressive. The 2023 Anniversary Issue, like the last one, puts together information for the benefit of our seniors. The year 2022 showcased Zoom talks, Webinars and Meetings on a regular basis with experts lending their views.

This issue carries articles by well-known doctors who have explained in detail about their vocations. The Cancer specialist, Dr Deshmane has written at length about how Cancer can be detected (warning signs) and treated, Dr Rishi Nagpal of Chandigarh, a GP and heart specialist describes the dos and don'ts of a 'good' life and how to make your heart your best friend. Other doctors include Dr N N Prem on Coronary Heart Disease, Dr S Jayaram, ex-Dean and Professor of Medicine, Bombay Hospital, on maintaining good health, Dr Jaypal Jain, a radiologist on imaging procedures and Ms Rajashree Parab on retirement plans. There are health care tips, on how travel has been made easier for the elderly and more. No stone has been left unturned to provide our seniors with the adequate information they need. We have listed activities for the elderly and so much more.

Our connection with the elderly seems to have paid off. Needless to add, Graceful Living has been set up merely for their benefit, and the dividends are there to see. We have reached out to people at the far ends of Mumbai – South Mumbai up to Kandivali, Borivali, Sanpada and even Thane district. We have stretched far and are happy for it.

We do regularly bring out monthly Newsletters (in print) which also appear on social media like Facebook and Instagram. We hope for elders to be enriched in their ageing years and live in good health with positive feelings. Years ahead will only take Graceful Living to another level.



Asha Gurnani Vohra

Editor



THE YEAR GONE BY

With this annual issue, we have now completed four years of our Elder Care Program. This past year has been one in which we could begin to see the silver lining on the dark clouds surrounding us.

To a great extent, many of us have withstood the effects of the pandemic (we do hope there is no repeat) and we now look forward to returning to our normal lives as best as possible. Graceful Living has been building on the work done in the past years in reaching out to seniors in whichever way possible.

We have increased the number of Guest Lectures, Webinars and Meetings with senior citizen associations. A close follow-up is done later with participants via social media to actually determine the impact of these meetings.

Our involvement with Echoing Healthy Ageing has fructified and we are now conducting both individual and group sessions with needy adults. We are identifying seniors who may have financial constraints and helping them to get the specialized attention that they need. We hope to increase this activity even further.

Our association with Aaji Care, MMP Shah College and PRAJ-The Rehab Sphere is going well. As far as training the younger generation is concerned, a group of young trained boys and girls is available to help seniors. We started a new activity this year: youth sensitization programs with schools like Guru Nanak, and colleges such as Ruia and Kirti, to make youngsters more sensitive to elders while explaining to them the importance of caring for them.

We now look forward to the future with optimism and confidence that Graceful Living will provide our seniors with the care they need in all spheres of their lives.



Naval Pandole

Advisor, Tulsi Trust

SELF-CARE TIPS

Who says life is over at 60?

You can renew your spirits even as a senior

Self-care is defined as "taking care of oneself". It includes anything you do to keep yourself healthy physically, mentally, and spiritually. Although prioritizing self-care may seem obvious, particularly when considering longevity, it is frequently the first thing we ignore when we face adversity, whether it is due to poor health, a financial crisis, or the Covid-19 pandemic. This is why, especially during difficult times, it is critical to keep it at the forefront of our minds rather than as a secondary consideration. Setting aside time to care for yourself is a critical factor in maintaining your mental health.

According to research, self-care can make a huge difference in our lives, allowing us to function better. In addition, when prioritizing self-care, we must remember that it should be a life-long commitment rather than something we only do during difficult times. It allows people to achieve the most out of their work and relationships because it reduces anxiety, allowing us to feel calm and optimistic. It also has some pretty impressive long-term mental health benefits. People who care for themselves report a reduction in symptoms of mental illness, and doing so on a regular basis means we are less likely to develop conditions like depression or anxiety.

Self-care means different things to different individuals. For example, some people find exercise to be an incredibly effective form of self-care and will be better equipped to deal with the challenges of life after starting a consistent fitness regime. Taking care should be embodied in our day-to-day lives.

Caring for yourself really means physical, spiritual and mental well-being. Practice on an every day basis would help in boosting the sense of the self. Such people are likely to be more positive about their bodies.

Some vital tips that would help in anticipating self-care in the daily lives of the elderly:

Socializing

According to research, it has been proved that socializing helps improve the mood of individuals. It allows elderly adults to participate in club activities, be part of a community, engage in conversation, and be stimulated, all of which can keep a person happy and obliterate depression. Going out for walks in the park or visiting a museum would help as a self-care measure. Socializing helps in boosting brain activity and thus good mental health.

Taking up social activities provides a means for people to exercise a sense of achievement and worthiness in society which promotes self-confidence. Socializing serves as a way to promote physical fitness and health.

Listening to your favourite music

This helps in uplifting the mood and generates a feeling of joy. It brings back happy memories connected to it. Music can reduce the stress levels of individuals and help in sleeping soundly. According to research conducted by Dr Richard Chace, music has a strong relationship with the brain and the individual's feelings and emotions.

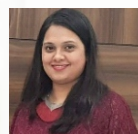
Meditation

Mediation is an extremely beneficial activity to practise as it is known to make people feel good and healthy. It boosts cognition in individuals, helps with concentration, and brings mindfulness into focus. The individual will have higher productivity levels, better concentration, and this will enhance positive feelings. Add meditation and increase of productivity comes into play.

Prioritizing sleep schedules

Sleep is an important mechanism for everyone, regardless of age. It has the ability to restore energy levels and heal both mental and physical damage. Scientific research has found that sleep rejuvenates the human brain by promoting the growth of brain cells and by providing emotional relief from daily stress. Adequate sleep plays an important role in preventing people from suffering the negative effects of mental disorders. Napping for 30 minutes or so during the day helps in improving performance/efficiency in both physical and mental activities.

The practice of self-care activity in elderly people will promote longevity and keep them active and promote a healthy lifestyle.



Amrita Patil Pimpale

Founder, Echoing Heathy Ageing



GATEWAY TO HAPPINESS

Happy Singh says.....Old is Gold, Older is Better and Oldest?....the Wisest!

The best part of my early morning brisk walk at The Gateway of India in Mumbai is meeting Mr Happy Singh. An octogenarian, Mr Harwinder Singh, "only 89 years" - warm, friendly, with twinkling eyes almost mischievous and giving all of us a run for our age! "Ten more to grow and a century I will throw," his words exude happiness, strength, cheer and *joie de vivre*.

Totally intrigued, I once asked him, "Uncle, what's your secret? You seem so happy even at the threshold of 90!" His gregarious laughter said it all. "*Beta*, no secrets! You can't beat life! You sit with life and sip it part-by-part.... It's so easy...to be yet so young!

Rule No 1

No complaints, no grumbling, no envy, no race. Just a warm embrace! Smile and spread joy. You'll stay healthy!

Rule No 2

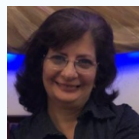
No problems - only solutions to problems. Focus on the now, forget your sickness, aches and pains. Be happy you have a roof, food and some money. Need I ask for anything more?

Rule No 3

No expectations. Very, very important. There's no father, mother, brother... it's only our journey with God. Expect all from Him and you'll be standing tall. He's given us the Sun, the Air, the Waters, the Birds, the Colours and this greatest gift of Life. Have a few friends, only for fun! Spread laughter, happiness and pleasantness around and most of all...(he stopped talking and smiled!)

"What uncle?" I hesitantly asked.

"Travel light! Keep the bag of goodness ready....*kab bulaava aaye...* Just run for your life" and he jogged by. I was flummoxed! If our world had more such Happy Singhs, oops Happy Souls, old age would've been a Gateway to Happiness.



Roxanne Desai

Qualified Aesthetician
(specialising in skin care)



MOVING ON!

However bad things may seem in your senior years, face the challenges and get on with your life

To be called a senior citizen is a term which denotes several privileges, but health is the biggest handicap one has to face. Therefore, when someone offers you help of any kind, just grab it with both hands. For example, when you join a group which has programs for the elderly where they can be entertained: listening to stories or having a musical session or an art/craft class to keep the mind occupied, then you are in the right place. Doing nothing at home and sitting alone brings on depression and loneliness which is the biggest curse of old age, especially if one has lost a spouse. So I feel that the importance of having a project which interests you and you enjoy doing, is what you should do.

My experience in turning 65 was not a very good one as I had many health issues. But with the support of my family, specifically my children and friends, and most of all my husband, who was very encouraging and supportive of my reactions to my illness, I was in a better place. My husband was my rock. He encouraged me to be strong and positive. No one can do that alone so it is essential that you have a group of friends and relatives who can come forward and help you out.

Another advantage of getting old is being able to travel as there are fewer responsibilities at this point of time in life. What we couldn't do (travel) when we were young because of our commitment to work and our children, now as seniors we felt we had the freedom and we looked forward to going on trips to visit friends and tour different countries. Of course the economic factor can be an issue. But my health improved and that made it easier to travel.

My advice to the older generation: focus on your health and look forward to a relaxed life. And do what you want, go where you can and always be cheerful and smiling. Do not let the difficult times get you down. Look on them as challenges to be faced and get on with it, because when misfortune or tragedy hits us unexpectedly, all we should say is "This too shall pass".



Jeroo Pandole

Housewife

ACTIVITIES THE ELDERLY SHOULD INDULGE IN

The elderly do not have to live a life of inactivity. They have to buckle up and make that effort to be active, physical and otherwise. Suggested ways for 'great senior living'

Dancing, Karaoke, and Other Performing Arts

Dancing to music can connect your body to exciting and healing rhythms. Singing popular songs (even out of tune) in front of other people can help you enjoy the humour in your efforts and avoid taking yourself too seriously.

Try things like: Ballroom, salsa, or swing dancing; acting in a play; reading books to groups of young kids; writing and acting out skits and maybe starting a seniors dance troupe.



Parties and Other Social Gatherings

Socializing can be a powerful way to inject more fun into your life. That's particularly true if you get to reminisce about old times or talk about the other things that interest you. So don't shy away from attending other people's parties or joining clubs.

Consider planning some of your own events around themes like: a murder mystery; Filmfare awards; formal tea/coffee dos.

Traditional Games and Puzzles

Board games and card games provide great ways to socialize and benefit from the joyful challenges of friendly competition. Puzzles can help sharpen your mind and give you a sense of progress and accomplishment.

Consider options like: Card games Uno/Open Rummy; Scrabble; Chess; Bingo; Chinese Checkers; Crossword puzzles; Jigsaw puzzles.



Animal Interactions

Just like people, animals want and need to have fun. So playing with them can be mutually beneficial. Many animal shelters welcome seniors who want to give dogs, cats, or other critters some quality attention.

Arts and Crafts

This kind of a creative recreational pursuit is great for people of all ages, and can often make terrific elderly activities.

Ideas that can reignite a person's liveliness: Painting; sketching/drawing; paper craft; crocheting; embroidery; quilt-making.

Active Learning

Learning is always more fun when it's something you choose to do for its own sake. Whole new avenues of possibility reveal themselves. So follow your curiosity and impulses. Learning something new is beneficial at any age.

Consider learning how to: Sing or play a musical instrument; take professional-quality photos; write great stories; cook exotic meals.

Outings and Excursions

Many great options exist, especially when you gather a small group of people to share their experiences. Consider excursions to places or events like: Theme parks; comedy events; concerts; art shows; sporting events.

Courtesy: Great Senior Living... Internet



SCIENCE AND BIOLOGY OF AGEING

The key to a good life is a positive attitude and lifestyle management

Ageing is a continuous process, as certain as night follows day. It can be nurtured healthily to a significant extent by right living. The main thrust of right living is POSITIVITY which has to be the hallmark of each individual. The body undergoes wear and tear and withstands abuses of all kinds inflicted upon it by poor lifestyle, bad habits and wrong thoughts. As age advances (after 45), the body no longer remains as viable and starts to 'crumble' slowly but surely and therefore requires proper care and lifestyle management. If the body is looked after early in life, you can experience good health in old age because of sedulous discipline practised all along. Fact: the energy and buoyancy of youth is replaced with slowness and adjustments in all spheres of activity. But it is important to understand 'the joys of ageing and not its perils'.

Some of the common problems faced by the elderly:

Emotional liability

As age advances, there is a tendency to get isolated and marginalised. Financial insecurity is another cause for worry. It is therefore absolutely essential to plan your finances for old age. Decline in mobility and dexterity becomes a problem. This prevents seniors from participating in social activities. With all the above inadequacies, the elderly can become an emotional wreck and is unable to lead a quality life. But we can help ourselves considerably in old age if we continue to exercise consistently.

Memory loss

Fading memory (not being able to recall names, events or days) becomes a part of every day life. Learning, reasoning, problem solving, decision-making is the need of the hour. The most important aspect of life is to remain focussed on whatever you do and keep the mind occupied in day-to-day activities by keeping abreast with the latest news, reading, music, and more.

9 TIPS TO DEAL WITH MEMORY CHANGE

- 1 Post a daily schedule
- 2 Label cupboards and drawers
- 3 Label photos of family and friends
- 4 Label & store medications in a pill organiser
- 5 Ask for help in organising closets and drawers
- 6 Mark days in a calendar to keep track of time
- 7 Look after a nagging cough or hoarseness
- 8 Post reminders to turn off appliances & lock doors
- 9 Maintain a diary of phone numbers /peoples name next to your phone



Other forms of memory loss

As opposed to this, Dementia is a slow, progressive decline in memory and other cognitive functions. Alzheimer's is a neurological problem which slowly destroys the neurons, resulting in loss of intellectual abilities like memory and reasoning.

Falls – fractures – giddiness

Maintaining a body balance is vital and with age as the equilibrium required becomes slow (in the elderly). You can minimise imbalance/falls by carrying things in both hands. Look into the following: bathrooms should be brightly lit and G-bars should be put wherever required so as to prevent a fall. Falls can also occur due to postural hypo-tension, cardiac arrhythmias and chronic diseases like diabetic neuropathy or with diminished vision.

Osteoarthritis

This is a degenerative condition affecting the soft tissues and bones. Pain and stiffness of joints occur, more in the mornings. This situation can be averted by maintaining the body weight and with regular physical training. Warning to women - avoid high heels.

Incontinence of urine/stools

The bowel movements tend to become sluggish as we age. Reason: Lack of activity, a sedentary lifestyle, poor intake of fibre in the diet like salads, less water intake and inefficient bowel movements. This is coupled with mental anxiety and agitation. A stool softener can be taken in case of constipation. Urine incontinence on the other hand is lack of bladder control. This occurs because of the poor muscle and sphincter control of the bladder. It is therefore essential to do appropriate exercises to strengthen the muscles and sphincter control. One of the methods of minimising incontinence is practising 'double voiding' (after passing urine, one should wait for a few seconds and again empty the bladder).

Urinary infection

This is another common problem and one must maintain hygiene like washing and changing under garments regularly. Careful use of public toilets is essential. physical training. Warning to women: avoid high heels.

Insomnia (lack of adequate sleep).

Several factors may account for sleeplessness: lack of physical activity, inability to enjoy life as we advance in age. Add to this, anxiety, depression, long afternoon naps, and some chronic health hazards. Some people may require medication for sleep. Check with your doctor before taking sleeping pills on a regular basis.

NOTE: It is of paramount importance to practise lifestyle modifications in order to accrue maximum benefits for healthy living. Be active, eat nutritious food. An act of positivity and a disciplined life can offset many of the ills.



Dr S Jayaram

Consulting Physician
Ex-Dean & Professor of Medicine
Bombay Hospital

STRIKE BACK!

The most dreaded disease, the mention of Cancer creates fear in one's mind. We do need to improve our understanding of the disease

Cancer is considered incurable, and associated with long-term pain and suffering resulting in great mental distress. Furthermore, the cost of treatment results in economic hardship. These negative connotations scare us and that is in large part due to the misconceptions ingrained in our minds. We must improve our ability to cope with this dreaded disease should it ever affect us, our loved ones or our friends.

What is Cancer?

We are composed of trillions of cells (a functional unit of our body), organised into different tissues, which have diverse functions. Normal cells have a programmed life cycle. They are born, grow, multiply, carry out their function and then die. When this “internal cellular clock” is affected, the cell turns “rogue”. Cells become abnormal, immortal, and continue to grow. This overgrowth of cells is called cancer.

Thus, cancer is a “soft-ware” problem affecting our “cellular clock”. The normal cycle of growth and death of cells is disturbed and reset making them immortal. During our daily life, our cell which contains DNA that rules the behaviour of the cell, is continuously damaged. But there are mechanisms which repair this damage. There are special genes called “Gatekeeper” genes that first of all, prevent cellular DNA from damage. Next, there are “Caretaker” genes that repair cellular DNA damage if it occurs, and finally there are “Landscaping” genes that keep the micro-environment within the body un conducive to the development of cancer. It is when this repair mechanism is overwhelmed that the cell apparatus goes out of control and sets the cell on the road to immortality. Such a cell is considered a “cancer cell” and it does not heed normal cellular signals.

How many people are affected with Cancer in India. Is the incidence increasing?

There are approximately 14 lakh new cancer cases in India each year and 8.5 lakh die due to cancer. It is true that the total number affected with cancer is increasing, but this is in part due to a rapid increase in population, increased longevity and improved diagnosis. The life-expectancy of Indians has increased rapidly over the last few decades to 75 years. As the probability of developing cancer is known to increase with age, the number of patients affected by cancer has rapidly increased. The life-time risk of a male developing cancer is 1 in 9 and the same for females is 1 in 8.

Causes of Cancer

The majority (90-95%) of cancers are related to environmental influences and only a few (7-10%) are due to inherited genetic abnormalities (hereditary and familial cancers). While there isn't much we can do about inherited genetic abnormalities, environmental influences could be controlled to some extent. Environmental causes include tobacco use (40%), diet and obesity (15%) and certain infections (20%).

Note: H Pylori infections can cause stomach cancers, HPV infections could lead to cervical cancers, Hepatitis B and C could cause liver cancers, chronic infections can cause penile cancer.

Common Cancers in males and females

The most common cancers in males are Oral, Lung, Prostate and Gastro-Intestinal (Stomach and Large bowel); while the most common cancers in females are Breast, Cervical and Uterine.

TEN LEADING SITES OF CANCER IN MALES AND FEMALES IN GREATER MUMBAI IN 2017

♂ Males

Site	AAR
Mouth	11.7
Prostate	10.2
Lung	9.4
Liver	6.6
Tongue	5.2
Lymphoma	5.2
Urinary Bladder	4.3
Colon	4.2
Stomach	4.1
Brain	3.8

♀ Females

Site	AAR
Breast	32.9
Cervix	6.8
Ovary	6.8
Corpus Uteri	5.1
Lung	4.6
Lymphoma	3.8
Leukemia	3.7
Mouth	3.7
Gall Bladder	3.6
Colon	3.2

AAR - annual rate of developing new cancers per 100,000 population

Cancer prevention

Lifestyle-related cancers i.e. 40% of tobacco-related cancers, 15% of diet and obesity-related cancers and those related to infections (20%) could, in theory, be prevented.

So being aware and avoiding/decreasing red meat consumption, high caloric diet, preserved foods and artificial sweeteners, increasing exercise, early treatment of chronic infections, seeking appropriate medical attention when unwell could all help prevent a substantial number of cancers in the community.

Early detection is the key

Cancer is often considered incurable. However, if diagnosed early and treated appropriately, it is possible to have excellent long-term survival despite being diagnosed with cancer. In the West, death rates have been steadily dropping due to early detection of cancer. Detected early, treatments are less aggressive, side effects minimal and lasting effects negligible.

To detect cancer early, one needs to be aware of its warning signs. Symptoms could be generalised such as unexplained weight loss, persistent cough or an unexplained generalised feeling of being unwell that does not improve despite seeking medical attention and needs further evaluation to rule out any sinister cause.

Specific symptoms may suggest and help direct investigations to a particular site. Mouth and oral cancers: sores, ulcers or growth, white patches.

Gastro Intestinal tract: Difficulty in swallowing, abdominal discomfort, acidity which persists, change in bowel habits or dark coloured stools.

Lung Cancer: Cough which does not respond to treatment.

Breast Cancer: A lump in the breast, nipple discharge, changes in skin or 'nipple areola complex'.

Breast cancer may be detected early by performing breast self-examination every month just after the monthly menstrual cycle, and by undergoing mammography at regular intervals as advised by a doctor after the age of 40; Cervical cancers by regular gynaecological check-up, and Oral cancers by regular dental evaluations. Early detection of Gastro Intestinal cancers may be facilitated by endoscopic evaluations as advised by a physician.

Families with a family history of cancer should avail of genetic counselling services to determine the likelihood of the family harbouring a hereditary genetic abnormality and then make an informed decision whether to undergo appropriate genetic testing.



Diagnosis and treatment

Diagnosis is suggested by the symptoms and appropriate radiological investigations: Chest X-ray, CT scan, MRI scans, Mammograms, Ultrasound. However, it can only be confirmed by analysis of tissue under a microscope by a pathologist. Thus, it is important to obtain a piece of the diseased tissue so as to (i) ascertain the presence of cancer and (ii) to sub-type it according to its bio-markers/genetic profile. The sub-type/genetic profile of the cancer cell is used to define appropriate treatment. This is now called “personalised” medicine.

New developments

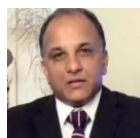
Today, with advances in diagnosis, surgery, the single most important of all the treatments to achieve cure or long-term control of solid tumours, has become less aggressive and less mutilating. Drugs are more “smart”, “target specific” and associated with better outcome and less side effects. Radiation is more “tissue sparing”, better “targeted” with minimal dosage to surrounding areas and the time periods of treatment are decreasing. Each specific treatment has a role to play and this is known as “multi-disciplinary” management.

Life after Cancer

Life can be normal after cancer treatment. During the follow-up period following completion of medical treatment, it is important to note that the mind needs to be treated as much as the body and confidence needs to be nurtured. Following completion of cancer treatment people have climbed Mount Everest, swum across the English Channel without a break and won or taken part in international competitions (Lance Armstrong, Yuvraj Singh).

What does the future hold?

In the future, we are likely to detect cancer early with simple blood tests, administer milder, more specific treatment with less side effects having a far better outcome. We are likely to learn to live with this disease like we live with diabetes, hypertension, asthma or cardiac ailments. In all probability, we will have more fulfilling active lives despite being diagnosed with cancer.



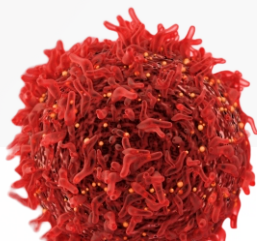
Dr Vinay Deshmane

Breast Surgical Oncologist
MS, DNB, FRCS (Glasg), MD (London), FICS

7 WARNING SIGNS OF CANCER



- 1 Change in bowel or bladder habit
- 2 Sore that does not heal
- 3 Unexplained weight loss, bleeding, discharge
- 4 Thickening or a lump in the breast or elsewhere
- 5 Indigestion or difficulty in swallowing
- 6 Obvious change in a wart or a mole
- 7 Nagging cough or hoarseness



SUNRISE AT SUNSET

It is important to have a unique plan to suit your financial needs

Sunrise at sunset is a dream come true for everyone who realizes early on in life that 'RETIREMENT' is the most certain event. It is as inevitable as death and for the ignorant, even more frightening than death. Unfortunately, no one knows how long they will live.

A stress-free second innings is possible if you have the right combination of money and advice. How much is enough is not a guessing game but a mathematical calculation. The typical concerns associated with retirement are:

- ① **Longevity** how long will I live, do I have enough?
- ② **Liquidity** have I provided for emergency?
- ③ **Safety** how safe is my money, is it growing?
- ④ **Trust** who can I trust to guide and help me?
- ⑤ **Legacy** is it possible to leave a legacy?



To address these concerns, let me share some insights on retirement planning. There are two phases in an investor's life: 'Accumulation and Distribution'. A smooth transition from one phase to another is possible only when the first stage has been planned well. Statistics show there are fewer than five per cent people in India who actually start planning for their retirement from the day they start earning. Nevertheless, even if you have failed to do that, it always makes sense to get the right advice at the

distribution phase to maximize the lifespan of your money so as to match that of your age. If it supersedes you, 'BINGO!' That's your jackpot. But how do you know if you have hit the jackpot? It is possible if you have the numbers at hand and the right strategy to consolidate. It is extremely important, especially for parents whose children are settled abroad, to think of consolidating assets as they have to manage the hassles of diversification by themselves.

Some simple recommended strategies:

Protecting the amount required for monthly withdrawals for a minimum of seven years by investing them in fixed/corporate deposits; debt and conservative balanced funds; and postal plans.

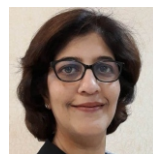
If diverted to equity related instruments (the best being mutual funds), the balance money will fetch the required growth. This will again help in creating the ladder after seven years.

Disposing off unutilized property is a major contributor to a comfortable retirement.

Creation of a health corpus fund is a very important aspect which can be utilized in case of medical/old age requirements which are not covered through Medisave policies, for example a caretaker's salary, physiotherapy requirements and so on.

The most important lesson would be to not take the same medicine as your neighbours. Remember, even though your sorrows may be similar, the same pill may not suit you. So each one of us has to have a unique plan to suit our needs and finances.

To summarize - ensuring your money interprets your dreams exactly as you meant them to be is the challenge.



Rajashree Parab

Financial Coach

Specialising in Retirement Plans



*At my age,
the only pole dancing I do
is to hold on to the safety bar
in the bathtub.*



*You know you're getting older
when you have a party and
the neighbours don't
even realize it.*

SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE FUTURE

Children today will grow up to be tomorrow's adults and as a result, their attitudes they have grown up with towards senior citizens, will set the stage for their future psychological health and self-esteem

Since I was a little child, I have had a valuable relationship with my family. I was really close to my maternal grandmother. After the passing away of my grandma, I became aware of how crucial it is to respect and care for our elderly, physically, emotionally, and intellectually. As a result, and because of the love and respect I had for her, I now have a special spot in my heart for the elderly. Whenever I learn how unfairly they are treated in society, particularly by their own children, it enrages me. They are treated as burdens; often as outsiders. So unfair!

My grandmother, with whom I spent much time, especially over the weekends and during extended school breaks, is responsible for shaping my values and the person I am today. As a child with no understanding of this, I witnessed my grandma being ill-treated by her own son but lacked the courage to speak up at the time. While growing up, I realised how crucial it is to oppose injustice and speak out against domestic violence or external abuse.

I notice that, nowadays, children (now adults) force their parents to stay at home, maybe look after their children or for some other reasons. In my opinion, this is in fact the perfect time for the elderly to socialise, to connect with organisations that will enable them to learn new arts, engage in hobbies, travel and discover the world, as well

as do many other things they were unable to do because of their responsibilities, often towards their own offspring.

I currently work for an NGO that promotes the welfare of senior citizens, and I would encourage everyone to join any organisation that will enable them to better understand themselves, channelize their emotions in a way that will help them know their purpose, and discover more about who they are and move towards living a full life.



Sakshi Kadam

Social Media Manager



MEDITATION IS THE BEST MEDICATION

Is that so? That's RIGHT!

Meditation/yoga is the best medication for everything that causes agitation. It will truly calm the mind, fill the heart with joy and bring peace to the soul. The serenity and joy that comes lasts throughout the day and throughout your life if practised often enough, preferably daily. Remember that meditation is not a simple diversion that works only as long as you are actively engaged in it.

Rather, meditation brings you in touch with God, it changes the very nature of your being. As you sit in meditation you will realise the insignificance of that which causes anxiety, and the transient nature of all your troubles. Plus, you will understand the infinite joy and boundless peace that comes from God.

You will learn or perhaps you have already learnt meditation techniques. Do not worry if you can't do it

perfectly or if it is difficult or if you don't remember everything. The point is to do it. Make a time that is meditation time no matter what. Try to commit five minutes in meditation each morning, and you will begin to see the magic it holds.

Make this meditation your life. However, even when it is not meditation time or even if you are away from home, away from your 'meditation place', do not think that you cannot meditate. Take five minutes at work to simply close your eyes, watch your breath, focus on the oneness of us all, and connect with the Divine, regardless of what your religion is. Let your life become meditation and you will be able to cope with life and all its challenges!!



Serena Franklin

Journalist



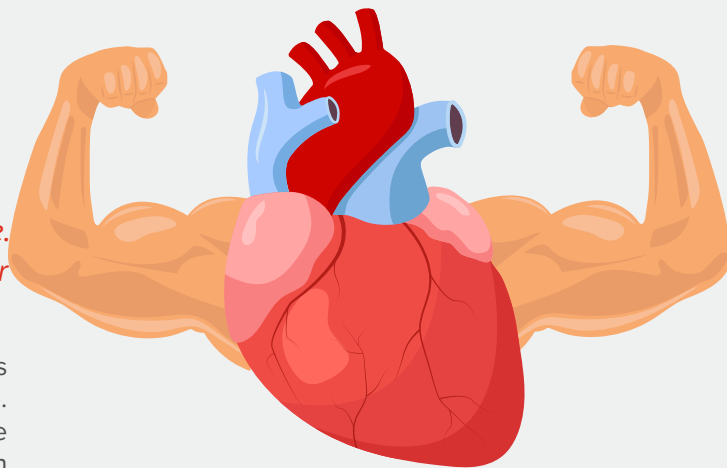
KEEP THAT HEART TICKING

Exercise you must, be it at the gym or otherwise. Maintain a decent lifestyle. Eat and think healthy. Your heart will become your best friend!

When it comes to the matter of the heart, it makes the human mind anxious and apprehensive. While there is no real life “Guru” to guide the people in general on matters of love, as doctors we can help prevent and cure the diseases related to the heart as an organ. Apart from congenital heart diseases, Valvular heart diseases, problems of heart rhythm (arrhythmias), the most preventable of the lot and the most common, the one that puts fear in our minds when we feel the slightest discomfort in the chest, is the coronary artery disease which the layman may describe as “*blockage nikli hai*”!

It is very important to understand that the process of atherosclerosis starts from a young age in the human body and may progress to a coronary artery disease later on. If understood appropriately, there are measures which can be adhered to in order to prevent coronary artery disease or heart attack.

We all know that for the heart to keep ticking and for the physical well-being of the human body, the most important aspect of life is to keep your body active. This means that other than regular movements, exercising of the body is mandatory. Many cardiologists have even gone to the length of saying that a sedentary lifestyle is the new smoking and we all know the worst anyone can do to his/her body is to fill it with smoke (first-hand or otherwise). So a big NO to tobacco in any form.



Many people nowadays follow the “fad” of smart watches and keep count of 10,000 steps per day, but the majority of the population of India is 'on the run' for livelihood and this goes on all their lives (India is the diabetic capital of the world and a leader in coronary heart diseases). A point to ponder! The solution: a routine to include exercise (at the gym or otherwise), walking, running, whatever works for you. At this point it is important to include that during this time of exercise the mind has to be free of thoughts concerning the world. This fact stands, where the mind is at peace and the heart is miles away from the fear of daily nuances of life. It works!

Physical activity is a must for a minimum of 40-45 minutes daily.

Another important issue for the elderly to heed: to keep their BP, sugar and cholesterol levels under control. Many people are confused about the figures so a clarification is necessary. As far as BP goes, many people have different versions and some are known to say, “*Meri umar itni haiji, mera BP is se neeche ata hi nahi hai*” and so on. As a doctor, my take is under 140/90 (whatever the age) but if you suffer from any co-morbidity like diabetes or have a previous history of heart disease or stroke, try to keep it at 130/80.



**NO
TOBACCO**



**REGULAR
EXERCISE**



**LESS SALT
INTAKE**



DE-STRESS



**CONTROL
HEALTH PARAMETERS**



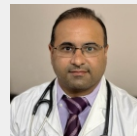


Regarding sugar levels, at all times the HbA1C for diabetes patients should be under 7.0 and fasting sugar can be below 100. For a normal non-diabetic individual, HbA1C of 5.8 to 6.5% will put you in range of pre-diabetes for which again lifestyle modification is vital.

Cholesterol has been related to heart disease since time immemorial. It is very important to understand that one of the most dangerous readings is that of your LDL. Try and keep your LDL levels below 100 and people who are at risk or already have a coronary heart disease, the figure should be below 70.

The heart condition is also related to your salt intake, but how much is 'right' is a moot question. For an average healthy individual, the intake should be five gm/day which can be specified as less than two-thirds of a tablespoon per day.

An important factor in today's life is low or zero stress levels. You will naturally add, not possible. So let us bring stress levels to as low a level as possible by letting positive thoughts run through our minds. This is possible if we make the effort. Doctors have supported this fact that high stress levels are directly proportionate to high blood pressure levels, high sugars and thus... heart diseases! In short, *"Svabhav shaant rakhen, duniya daari ka bojh kam lein aur swasth rahen!"*



Dr Rishi Nagpal

Consultant Physician &
Clinical/Preventive Cardiologist



“

Never be a prisoner
of your past.

It was just a lesson,
Not a life sentence.

– Lord Buddha

”

TRAVEL AT ITS BOOM

Are senior citizens weary and would rather stay at home and not travel, did you say! Of course not!

The pandemic has gone and now Travel is at its Boom!!! All the 'children' (45-65 - they will always be little children) with senior citizen parents living in India are busy travelling and how!

Wheelchairs are so easily available and the Pranaam Service at the Mumbai Airport is always on the go. It seems regularly booked mostly for our senior travellers. They even have special seats allocated on flights for them.

Most importantly, almost after two years, the US Consulate has opened with Drop Box Applications for those who have had previous visas expired in the past 48 months and can apply now. But in the case of senior citizens any person above the AGE OF 80 can apply for a USA Drop Box, provided he/she has never been refused a visa.

Most domestic flights offer a special 10-50% discount on basic fares for all senior citizen travel. Even bank credit cards offer such rates while booking against Cards.

Travel Insurance should especially be a perquisite when travelling overseas. In case of medical emergencies, going abroad minus Insurance would be cumbersome and very expensive,

Useful tips for seniors

1: Always ask for help

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Airline cabin crew and airport ground staff will be at hand to help you carry baggage and other requirements that you may have.

2: Take care of the medication you need when flying

Don't pack medication in your check-in luggage and make sure you have extra in case a flight is delayed for unforeseen reasons.

3: Reserve special services

When reserving a ticket, ask for a seat with extra leg room. Also, ask for early boarding so you can get settled in before the plane becomes full. For longer flights with meals, check the guide on special airline meals which will meet your dietary requirements.

4: If you plan to borrow a wheelchair at the airport rather than bring your own, **ask in advance** for one when booking your ticket as some airlines run out of wheelchairs at busy times.

It is now a pleasure for the senior traveller to take flights alone. He/she has nothing to fear. No need for anyone to accompany them and they can/will feel so comfortable and independent. There are plenty of people to look after them.

'Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.'



Tina Kanuga

Director: Bathija Travels Pvt Ltd



UNDERSTANDING OLD AGE

An excerpt from Zhou Daxin's latest novel, "The Sky Gets Dark Slowly". It is a sensitive exploration of old age and the complex, hidden emotional world of the elderly in a rapidly ageing population

The author writes, "...Many elderly speak as though they know everything, but of old age they are in fact as ignorant as children. Many elderly are in fact, completely unprepared for what they are to face when it comes to getting old and the road that lies ahead of them. In the time between a person turning 60 years old, as they begin to age, right until all the lights go out and the sky gets dark, there are some situations to keep in mind so that you will be prepared for what is to come, and you will not panic.

1 The people by your side will only continue to grow smaller in number. People in your parents' and grandmothers' generation have largely all left, whilst many of your peers will increasingly find it harder to look after themselves, and the younger generations will all be busy with their own lives. Even your wife or



husband may depart earlier than you... and what might then come are days of emptiness. You will have to learn how to live alone, and to enjoy and embrace solitude.

2 Society will care less and less for you. No matter how glorious your previous career was or how famous you were, ageing will always transform you into a regular old man/old lady. The spotlight no longer shines on you, and you have to learn to contend with standing quietly in one corner.

WAYWARD WANDERERS

"A person does not grow like a vine or a tree, on a plot of land. Mankind has legs so it can wander".

-Roman Payne

The book, *Wayward Wanderers*, mentions not the usual countries on the tourist map, but the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. They only achieved nationhood after the collapse of the USSR in 1991-92. Till then they were duchies under the German, Polish, Russian or Swedish yoke. After they became independent, their identity emerged and Christianity flourished. All three demonstrate a fine balance between nature and the urban environment. A sense of peace and quiet prevails. This aspect comes through in the book.

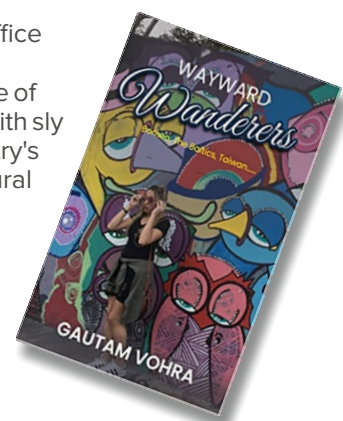
Borneo and Phuket are completely different. People visit Phuket to relax and see the much extolled night life. Borneo is a wild life paradise. The strange Proboscis monkey with its long hanging nose – the longer the nose the handsomer he is considered; the Rafflesia flower, the world's biggest flower that blooms once a year; the orang-utans, the only apes living in the trees; giant ferns, orchids.

The other countries figuring in *Wayward Wanderers* are South Africa and Namibia. South Africa is known for its association with M K Gandhi, where he first manifested his political tactics that eventually shook the very foundations of the British Empire. South Africa also boasts of fine dining, wines and, of course, the ostrich. Namibia has stretches of open land and salt pans and if one is lucky one can see the big five : the lion, the cheetah, the elephant,

the buffalo and the rhino. An extremely fascinating sight is the social beaver's nesting habit. A giant nest is built on the branches of a keekar tree, five hundred birds live in one huge nest, each family in a separate area with a separate entrance.

Taiwan is a very prosperous country. Its main activities are chemicals, electronics and shipbuilding. It has 116 shipyards (we are told) and its service sector is the most dynamic and fastest growing. Yet Taiwan has preserved its environment and has a dense forest cover over the entire island. Economic prosperity notwithstanding, temples with intricate ceramic decorations adorn the roofs. Entire scenes and myths are depicted along the length of the roof, one overlapping the other, rather like waves in an ocean, never ending.

There is so much more in the book. Suffice to say, it is well written with interesting anecdotes. The author describes some of the places visited and enlivens them with sly humour. In addition, he gives the country's historical, political, economic and cultural backgrounds. Travel writing is a hybrid genre, fusing the various observations effortlessly with literary skills.



Anmol Desai

Travel Agent

3 The road ahead will be rocky... Fractures, cardiovascular blockages, brain atrophy, cancer...these are all possible guests that could pay you a visit any time, and you would not be able to turn them away. You will have to live with illness and ailments, to view them as friends.

4 Prepare for bed-bound life, a return to the infant state. Our mothers brought us into this world on a bed, and after a journey of twists and turns and a life of struggle, we return to our starting point – the state of having to be looked after by others... you will more likely than not, be cared for by nursing staff who bear zero relation to you... Lay still and don't be difficult; remember to be grateful.

5 There will be many swindlers and scammers along the way. Many of them know that the elderly have lots of savings, and will endlessly be thinking of ways to cheat them of their money...

The last stretches of life's journey will gradually get dimmer and dimmer, naturally it will be harder to see the path ahead that you are treading towards, and it will be harder to keep going forward.

In these latter days of your lives, you have to understand what it means, to let go of your attachments, to mentally prepare yourself. The way of nature is the way of life; go with its flow, and live with equanimity.

Let's try to eliminate the 'after' ...

So... leave nothing for 'later'...

The day is today...The moment is now...

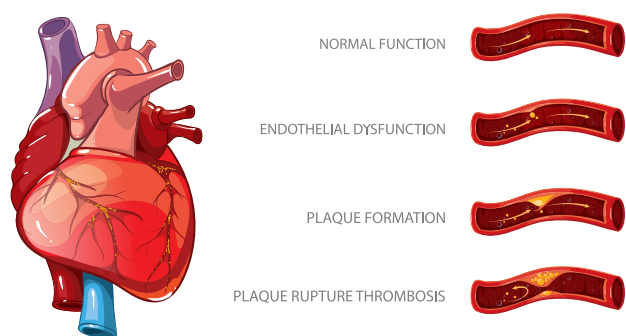
We are no longer at the age where we can afford to postpone until tomorrow what needs to be done right away.

CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE AND OLDER ADULTS

Find your way to a healthy heart, a healthy you

The risk of Coronary Artery Disease increases with age. People aged 60-plus are much more likely than younger people to suffer a heart attack or a stroke. Heart disease is a very common cause of disability and limits activity and decline in the quality of life.

There are changes in the heart in older adults due to ageing. There could be increased stiffness in large blood vessels of the body. This can cause increase in blood pressure, and the heart muscles can become weak in the ageing process. Also, there are changes in the electrical system (there is an electrical system in the heart too). The heart has four chambers which can increase in size with age; the heart wall can also get thick. Leading a healthy lifestyle always helps in delaying the onset of the above.



Heart Disease – What is it?

There occurs a build-up of fatty deposits in the blood vessels of the heart over the years. When these increase in the blood vessels, adequate blood does not reach the heart. When the heart muscle does not get enough oxygen and blood nutrients, the heart muscle cells die (heart attack) and weaken the heart, diminishing its ability to pump blood to the rest of the body.

Talk to your doctor about the type of activities that would be best for you. If possible, aim to get at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Every day is best. It doesn't have to be done all at once. Start by doing activities you enjoy - brisk walking, dancing, cycling or gardening, for example. Avoid spending hours just sitting.



Smoking

The earlier you quit smoking, the better it is for your health. Smoking is a preventable risk factor. It's never too late to get some benefit from quitting this habit. Quitting it, even in later life, can lower your risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer over time.



Healthy diet

Low in saturated foods, sugar and salt. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and foods high in fibre, like those made from whole grains

Keep a healthy weight balance

You can eat and drink, but your calories being burned with physical activity helps maintain healthy weight. Some ways you can maintain this is by limiting the food portion and keeping physically active.



Control co-morbid conditions

Keep your diabetes, high blood pressure, and/or cholesterol under control.

Limit alcohol intake

Manage stress

Learn how to manage stress, relax, and cope with problems to improve physical and emotional health. Consider activities such as a stress management program, meditation, physical activity, and talking things over with friends or family.

NOTE: Maintain a regular schedule for a health check-up. Keep in touch with your Geriatrician and Cardiologist.



Dr N N Prem

MD, Geriatric Medicine
Consultant - Jaslok Hospital,
Graceful Living

RADIOLOGY: IMAGING PROCEDURES

Radiology, the real-time electronic imaging, helps doctors arrive at correct diagnosis

Radiology is a territory of diagnostic and therapeutic science that includes the findings and assessment of conditions in the body using the method of electronic imaging so as to see what is going on inside the body. Through this technology, doctors and surgeons can access real-time pictures of the 'inside' body. For better treatment, doctors do require the correct diagnosis. Thus, they largely depend on the results of radiology.

Radiologists who specialize in medical imaging, are highly trained in keeping people safe from harmful effects of radiation. They help clinicians interpret different images and other test results to make a diagnosis or monitor whether the current treatment is working. Interventional (Invasive) radiologists are more actively involved in the treatment process. Some radiologists rarely work with patients and instead work inside labs doing research.

The radiologist analyses images which include an X-RAY, an MRI, a CT SCAN, a PET-CT SCAN, ULTRASONOGRAPHY and X-RAY FLUOROSCOPY. All these help diagnose, monitor and treat various diseases and injuries. Most of these techniques involve the use of radiation.

1. X-RAY

Wilhelm Roentgen was a German mechanical engineer and physicist who discovered the 'X-ray' in December 1895. The first person to receive an X-ray for medical purpose was young Eddie McCarthy of Hanover who fell while skating on the Connecticut river in 1896 and fractured his left wrist.

Note: Everyone on the planet is exposed to a certain amount of radiation as they go about their daily lives. Radioactive material is found naturally in the air, soil, water, rock and vegetation.

Radiography – An X-ray used to view bones, teeth (OPG/lateral cephalogram), chest - these use less radiation.

Fluorocscopy - The radiologist or radiographer can watch the X-ray of the patient moving in real-time and take photo shots.

2. CT Scan

Here the patient lays on the table and enters a ring-shaped scanner. A fan-like beam of the X-ray passes through the patient on to an array of detectors. The patient is moved slowly into the machine so that a series of slides can be taken. This procedure uses 'a higher dose' of X-ray radiation. (Please note: an overdose of X-ray can cause mutation in the DNA).

3. MRI - Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Raymond Damadian created the first MRI full body scanner which he nicknamed INDO MI TABLE. An MRI scan differs from a CT- scan and an X-ray as it does not use potentially harmful ionizing radiation but uses strong magnetic fields and radio waves to create detailed images of the organs and tissues inside the body. Since its invention, doctors and researchers continue to improve upon MRI techniques to facilitate medical professionals/researchers. The development of the MRI has revolutionized medicine as it is non-invasive and painless.

Uses of the MRI:

- Anomalies of the brain, spinal cord and uterus
- Breast cancer screening for women who face a high risk
- Certain type of heart problems
- Diseases of the liver
- The list is by no means exhaustive. The use of MRI technology is always expanding in scope and use.

4. USG – Ultrasonography

USG uses high frequency sound waves to create images of the internal (inside) body. They are safe because they are sound waves or echoes to make an image and are used instead of radiation. They can be used in pregnancy tests to access the well-being of the foetus. They are commonly used for diagnosis of treatment and for guidance during procedures such as biopsies. They can help to diagnose problems with soft tissue muscles, blood vessels, tendons and joints, circulatory problems (they access the flow of blood in a vessel and can determine the speed of the blood flow or any obstruction).

A Doppler Ultrasound:

It can access the function and state of cardiac valves and cardiac pumping.
Used for varicose veins, deep vein thrombosis, renal-artery stenosis, plaque clots in vessels in the neck and legs.

RADIOLOGY AT HOME

Doing sonography and X-ray at home for bed-ridden patients is possible but due to legal issues in India this is not allowed.



Dr Jaypal Jain

Consultant Radiologist



LOGOTHERAPY - A DISCUSSION

Logotherapy is a philosophy as well as a therapy to deal with mental and emotional issues

This therapy was developed by Dr Viktor Frankl, an Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist. Dr Frankl developed Logotherapy after surviving the Nazi concentration camps in the 1940s. His experiences and theories are detailed in his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, which is one of the most influential books of the last century.

Logotherapy is a therapeutic approach that helps people find meaning in life. This theory focusses on the future and our ability to endure hardship and suffering through a search for purpose. What is novel about it is that this therapy grew out of Dr Frankl's personal experiences of extreme torture and intense suffering in four concentration camps during the Second World War.

How did Dr Frankl help people find meaning? Two incidents illustrate this point. Three prisoners who had become desperate to end their lives in the concentration camp were heading towards a barbed wire which was a sure shot way to die. Dr Frankl spoke to them and brought two facts to the surface: a responsibility towards life and a reminder of people at home who were waiting for them (their unfinished tasks).

Another incident: An old man depressed after the death of his wife went to see Dr Frankl. He was obsessed with the

thought as to why his wife had died before him. Dr Frankl asked him what would have happened if he had died before his wife. The man said his wife would have suffered unbearable pain and agony. Dr Frankl explained to him that he had saved his wife from this suffering.

With regard to what our seniors have said when they came to know of Logotherapy, none of them had heard of Dr Frankl nor read his book and they said that it was unimaginable and horrifying to think of Dr Frankl's concentration camp circumstances. They said understanding and knowing about this theory helped them in igniting hope. One senior said he had received a valuable gift because of this new perspective towards life. Another senior added that Logotherapy and Dr Frankl had given a new vision. Yet another felt this was not mere bookish knowledge but something that he could apply to in his daily life.

This opened a Pandora's box of serious reappraisal of one's value systems. Some women felt that hearing about Dr Frankl's experiences made them emotional. He was truly a man who lived to share experiences which could motivate others.



Amruta Lovekar

Gerontologist & Project Co-ordinator
Graceful Living

“
Hurt not,
for your heart too
will be hurt.”
- Rumi

DIABETES DAMAGES THE EYES

Manage your sugar levels and prevent eye damage

Some serious concerns occur when the blood sugar is not within the normal range. The eyes/kidneys can get damaged. Good management of blood sugar levels helps in preventing complications.

When mild eyelid infections like styes, meibomian cysts and conjunctival inflammation occur, they need to be treated with appropriate antibiotic drops/ointment. Stricter sugar controls are advised.

Occasionally, the spectacles number changes/fluctuates indicating that blood sugar is not stable and may be outside normal. Don't change your glasses but wait for the sugar levels to stabilize and then get them rechecked. The lens in the eye is affected and may precipitate cataractous changes which would require surgery at a later stage.

Poorly controlled diabetes can lead to infections in the body, and these occur concomitantly in the eye causing Iritis (inflammation in the front part of the eye) and rarely Endophthalmitis (involves the back of the eye) with disastrous results.

When diabetes is poorly controlled, the eye and the kidney develop complications. Diabetic retinopathy occurs when the blood, fatty tissue, fluids leak out from the blood vessels into the retinal tissues causing damage (if not controlled leads to loss of vision). Hence, regular eye and retinal check-ups are required. Colour photos of the retina, angiography and OCT are the main imaging studies done to diagnose and treat the condition. Lasers and intravitreal injections are the mainstay; surgery at a later stage if medical therapy does not help. Healthy diet, exercise, intermittent fasting and a doctor's guidance, all help in preventing complications.

Rarely do the eye muscles get paralysed due to the main nerves in the brain getting affected - double vision is the outcome along with a squint. Medical treatment by the diabetic doctor/neurologist may be required. Recovery is slow.

Diabetes is a lifestyle disease; if one pays attention to personal habits, many of the above situations can be avoided. I will share some personal guidelines that I give to my patients. Eye surgeries, especially cataract surgery is very common. Control your sugar levels before you get operated. The fasting and post-prandial should be in a normal range ...Remember the test HbA1c should be below 7.5; then you are safe. Poorly controlled sugars lead to several general conditions like repeated infections in the body, heart conditions, various organ failures, especially the kidney which histologically is similar to the eye and when the retina is involved, we know for sure that the kidney is involved too.

In the last decade, intermittent fasting has played a major role in reversing many of the above conditions. There is a lot of information on social media which can be investigated and followed – it is not rocket science and all of us can use it for a better life. Often, it's a very good adjunct to the treatment given by the specialist. If discipline is exercised, the need for medication is reduced. Result: better health.



Dr Phiroze Patel

Consultant, Ophthalmic Surgeon



SECOND INNINGS

Who says life is over at 60?

You can renew your spirits even as a senior

A vast number of people do not plan their retirement. Many believe they have worked long enough and deserve to spend the rest of their lives in an armchair. It's important for seniors to realize that to remain fit physically and mentally they have to be ready to start a 'second innings' in life, even after they turn 60.

In our younger days, it was all about working and making ends meet, be it financially or fulfilling responsibilities. But during this phase we gained Knowledge, Experience and Wisdom. It's a process of self-actualization whereby you realize your full potential after having fulfilled others' needs. As a senior, it is time to give back to society.

According to a recent survey, 27% seniors expressed a desire to work till the age of 70-75, and 37 % till their last breath. There are NGOs in the social sector looking for people to help underprivileged children, differently abled, and self-help groups. This is the time to re-engage in life. **A second innings!** The Central Government has developed a portal to provide a platform for senior citizens called 'Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity' (SACRED).

During an early morning walk, a friend made a suggestion to visit his NGO and learn how a senior citizen could be productively engaged. I was deeply impressed with what I saw and I made up my mind to start my 'Second Innings' in life. I learned new skills to deal with social handicaps. This also included travel within the country.

Benefits of a renewed life:

- ➔ A boost to your self-confidence
- ➔ A sense of accomplishment
- ➔ Keeping physically and mentally fit
- ➔ Understanding another's way of life
- ➔ Increasing your brain functioning
- ➔ Connecting with new people
- ➔ A feeling of independence

When I lost my spouse, life was difficult. But I realised that I had to move on, find love again and fix the part of my life that was broken. So this is what I did. I got remarried three years back, at 72. We had no unique challenges facing us. Our children were supportive and accepted our relationship. We discovered a lot of common interests, encouraging villagers to become entrepreneurs and in the process becoming job creators. We enjoy bringing cheer to seniors in the 'Elder Home'. Companionship is what we got.

"You do not know what it is like to be lonely until you spend time alone wishing for companionship."

- Ratan Tata



Chaitanya Kalyanpur

Life Skills Coach



WHAT IS OSTEOPOROSIS?

This disease can appear without any symptoms, so keep in touch with your doctor

The word 'osteoporosis' means 'porous bone.' It is a disease that weakens bones, and if you have it, you are at a greater risk for sudden and unexpected bone fractures. Osteoporosis means that you have less bone mass and strength. The disease often develops without any symptoms or pain, and it is usually not discovered until the weakened bones cause painful fractures. Most of these are fractures of the hip, wrist and spine.

SYMPTOMS AND CAUSES

What are the symptoms of osteoporosis?

Usually, there are no symptoms of osteoporosis. However, you should watch out for the following:

- Loss of height (getting shorter by an inch or more).
- Change in posture (stooping or bending forward).
- Shortness of breath (smaller lung capacity due to compressed disks).
- Bone fractures.
- Pain in the lower back.

Who is at risk for developing osteoporosis?

There are many risk factors that increase your chance of developing osteoporosis, with two of the most significant being gender and age.

Everyone's risk for osteoporosis fractures increases with age. However, women over the age of 50 or post-menopausal women have the greatest risk of developing osteoporosis. Women undergo rapid bone loss in the first 10 years after entering menopause, because menopause slows the production of estrogen, a hormone that protects against excessive bone loss.

Age and osteoporosis affect men also. You might be surprised to know that men over the age of 50 are more likely to have an osteoporosis-induced bone break than to get prostate cancer. About 80,000 men per year are expected to break a hip, and men are more likely than women to die in the year after a hip fracture.

Your risk of developing osteoporosis is also linked to ethnicity. Caucasian and Asian women are more likely to develop osteoporosis. However, African-American and

Hispanic women are still at risk. In fact, African-American women are more likely than white women to die after a hip fracture.

Bone Structure. Another factor is bone structure and body weight. Petite and thin people have a greater risk of developing osteoporosis because they have less bone to lose than people with more body weight and larger frames.

Family history also plays a part in osteoporosis risk. If your parents or grandparents have had any signs of osteoporosis, such as a fractured hip after a minor fall, you may have a greater risk of developing the disease.

How is osteoporosis diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider can order a test to give you information about your bone health before problems begin. Bone mineral density (BMD) tests are also known as dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA or DXA) scans. These X-rays use very small amounts of radiation to determine how solid are the bones of the spine, hip or wrist. Regular X-rays will only show osteoporosis when the disease is very far along.

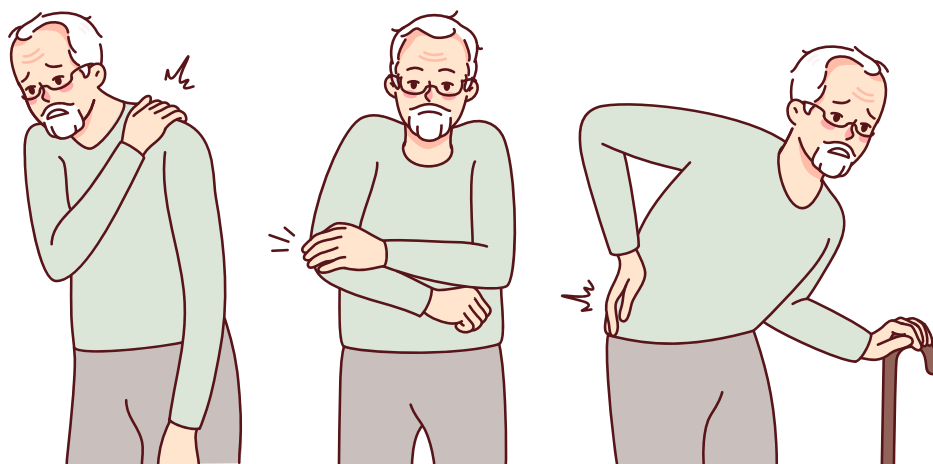
All women over the age of 65 should have a bone density test. The DEXA scan may be done earlier for women who have risk factors for osteoporosis. Men over age 70, or younger men with risk factors, should also consider getting a bone density test.

How is osteoporosis treated?

Treatment for established osteoporosis may include exercise, vitamin and mineral supplements, and medications. Exercise and supplementation are often suggested to help you prevent osteoporosis. Weight-bearing, resistance and balance exercises are all important.

Vitamin D is also important because it enables the body to absorb calcium. Vitamin D can be obtained from sunlight exposure few times a week or by drinking fortified milk

Excerpted from an article which was last reviewed by a Cleveland Clinic medical professional on 04/27/2020. Courtesy: Cleveland Clinic - Internet



HAS THE PANDEMIC MADE SENIORS LESS ACTIVE?

Health experts are concerned that the pandemic, in upending daily routines, has reduced mobility and physical conditioning in older adults

In normal times, Cindy Myers, an executive at a non-profit organization, is “not a real physical person,” she said. “I work at desk jobs. I’m not a big exerciser.” Still, before the pandemic, Dr Myers, who is 64 and has a doctorate in organization development, commuted from her home in Petaluma, California, to an office in San Francisco. She met friends for lunch or coffee, and she went to restaurants, theatres and lectures. “There was so much more variety in my life, more locations, more people,” she said. “You’re not cognizant of all the moves you’re making.”

Like many employees, Dr Myers had been working remotely for two years, curtailing social and cultural events and forgoing travel. That shift, perhaps exacerbated by a bout of depression in 2020, has taken a physical toll, she said. Her limbs feel weak, her balance rocky; she has fallen several times. “Basic kinds of movement you take for granted, like walking from one end of the house to the other, are exhausting,” she said. “I’m worried about it.”

Many health experts are worried about worsening physical conditioning and mobility among older adults since Covid-19 upended the daily routine. Recent research indicates that many of those who had mild to moderate infections, even some who have managed to avoid the virus altogether, may be suffering functional declines. Researchers have reported that, unsurprisingly, older adults whose Covid symptoms became serious enough to require hospitalization often contended with persistent physical and mental health problems.

“When you’re hospitalized and you’re older, it takes a long time to get back on your feet,” said Marla Beauchamp, who researches mobility, ageing and chronic disease at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. “Covid is still impacting them in a significant way months and months later.”

But less severe diseases can also affect their physical ability. Dr Beauchamp led a recent study of Canadians over 50 who had confirmed, probable or suspected Covid in 2020, when testing was not widely available. The study revealed worsened mobility among those with mild to moderate illness — 93 percent of whom were never hospitalized — compared with those without Covid.

“It’s a cascade of effects,” said Geoffrey Hoffman, a health-services researcher at the university’s School of Nursing and the lead author of the study. “You start with changes in activity levels. That results in worsened function. That in turn is associated with both falls and fear of falling.” Dr Beauchamp added: “It’s really concerning to see this decrease in mobility. This is telling us that the pandemic alone has had a significant impact on older adults.” Neither of these observational studies, in Canada or in the United States, explored reasons for the self-reported increase in physical decline. But their authors suggested that pandemic-related restrictions could have caused deconditioning, even in people who were not ill.

Paula Span

Source: Internet



AN AWAKENING

We must learn to let go and make adjustments and not stay stubborn

How often have we overheard the words, 'mind your own business'. Even when we want to get back at someone or be a bit too straightforward we say it rudely. This is spreading our attention elsewhere, not on ourselves. We are really neglecting ourselves. We must MIND OUR BUSINESS.

This is because we complicate our lives with 'could've, would've, should've'. This is again minding another's business: regretting what he/she could have done, should have done. But the past is over, kaput. Let's get rid of our negativity.

Another point. Why is it important to be always right? Why are we complicating our lives by wanting our views to be accepted? Isn't every individual unique with his/her exclusive thoughts? We are agitating ourselves, not the listener. An exchange of harsh words can only increase our tensions. WE must 'back down' so to say. We must let go. Easy does it.

Actually, the main source of our unhappiness is that we don't know what we want. We just feel dissatisfied within ourselves, about ourselves. We only look at our desires, and do not count our blessings. If we root out our discontent and understand the reason for this, then, with a sincere mind and heart, we can appreciate what we have.

Therefore, we must acknowledge our real reasons for this discontentment. We must develop a sense of gratitude. And humility. There is no progress without humility. This is not about surrendering to any and every one. It does not mean surrendering to an ugly way of life. It is about surrendering to God's will. If we give ourselves to the will of God, and most of all understand it, we will and cannot be disheartened. Acceptance and humility can grace us with self-dignity.

As we grow in age, as seniors, we tend to be fixated with our ideas. We are not willing to budge. But we do develop a deeper understanding of life. This should enable us to surrender and accept and move to a happier mental state.

"I will make this day a happy one, for I alone can determine what kind of a day it will be."

— Anon



Asha Gurnani Vohra
Editor



AGEING WITH DIGNITY AND GRACE

Tulsi Trust was established by the Chanrai family in 1975 with an aim to fulfil basic needs of the poor and needy. At a deeper level, it's more than indulging in physical activities. Health care, skills development and education are top priorities. It envisages a fair world for all, working with partners to improve health care and opportunities for livelihood, and education. Add to this, the capacity to understand another's needs and do this with utmost integrity.

Graceful Living (GL) is an arm of Tulsi Trust which came out of a realization of a social need for elderly care. After four active years, GL is now a recognized organization for those in their twilight years and has created an awareness through its activities and talks for senior citizens. GL has a social presence viz. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

In Partnership...

Intellectual companionship and special care programs – includes companionship, counselling and care-giving for Dementia, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's when required.

These services are provided through our partners:

Echoing Healthy Ageing Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorder Society (PDMDS)

- Physiotherapy sessions which help the elderly to improve their mobility and become more independent:
PRAJ - The Rehab Sphere with Dr Pratha Mehta and Dr Rajshri Lad
- Training candidates in 'elder care' in order to have professionals for the same:
MMP Shah College – elder companionship course for Sociology students
Aaji Care – Geriatric counselling course for post-graduate Psychology students
- Activities for the elderly :
My Safe Place: online activity programs
Mrs Manasi Golwalkar: technology training
- Sensitization programs for school/college students to create an awareness of the needs and issues of the elderly.

Direct Intervention by GL...

- Support Group Meetings with senior citizens' associations and other groups
- Monthly Webinars (Moderator - Mr Manoj Gursahani)
- Guest Lectures by professionals/experts – mainly on Zoom
- Graceful Living Monthly Newsletter carrying important information for the elderly plus articles by known doctors and other professionals
- Online interviews with senior achievers called 'Sitare'
- Co-ordination by GL to create platforms for senior citizen organizations in the city.
- Special events for senior citizens

An initiative of



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