





## Your guide for better choices and healthy living

Use these fourteen topics to work with your healthcare team to ask questions and make a plan to keep you living well. Thank you to Aladraine Sands, MD for her work on this Senior Adult Guide. Scan the QR code below to get more topics on diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, and more!

Guide was created through Serving Tennessee's Seniors -- administered by The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee at the request of the Chancery Court.

In this guide you will find:

- Where to go for healthcare
- Sleep suggestions
- Self-care hints
- Questions to ask your doctor
- Questions to ask your pharmacist
- Exercises for seniors
- Nutrition guide for seniors
- Preventing falls
- Vaccinations to consider
- Prevention screening tests
- Over-the-counter medicine
- Mental health signs
- Limiting salt in your meals
- Organizing Medicines Placemat



[nashgenfoundation.org](http://nashgenfoundation.org)



[nashvillegeneral.org](http://nashvillegeneral.org)



SCAN HERE!





# Know where to go when you need health care



Use this guide to help you decide where to go for care based on your health problem.



If you think you have symptoms of COVID-19, call your doctor or use the [CDC's Self-Checker](#) to help decide to get tested and seek care. Go to [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) and scroll down until you see "Symptoms". Click on "Self-check symptoms".

## Type of care

### Your doctor



also called a Primary Care Doctor

### When should I use it?

Use for routine care, or when you have a non-emergency health problem that you can wait a short time for a visit.

It's important to have a primary care doctor for your routine care. They know your health history the best.

### Examples

- Yearly checkup
- Yearly health screenings, such as cholesterol
- Flu shot and other vaccines (shots)

### Retail (walk-in) clinic



often at a store or pharmacy

Use when you need same-day care for a minor problem.

- Cough or sore throat
- Rash or hives
- Ear pain

### Urgent care center



often in larger towns or cities, open longer hours than doctor's offices

Use when you have a health problem that's not quite an emergency, but you can't wait for a doctor's visit.

- Sprain or muscle pain
- Minor cut, burn, or other small injury
- Stomach pain or throwing up
- Long-lasting diarrhea

### Emergency Department (ED)



also called an Emergency Room (ER)

Use when you need emergency care for an immediate or life-threatening problem.

- Trouble breathing
- Severe cut, burn, or injury
- Heavy bleeding
- Injury to the head, neck, or spine

### Call 9-1-1



Use if you have an emergency or a life is in danger.

- Symptoms of a heart attack, including chest pain
- Signs of stroke, such as slurred speech or weakness on one side of the body

To schedule a visit for a health care service at Nashville Healthcare Center, call 615-341-4YOU (4968)





# Sleep 101 for older adults



Older adults need **7 to 9 hours of sleep a night**. Poor sleep raises your chances of infections and serious illness. Learn ways to improve your quality of sleep and when to talk to your doctor if you think you may have a sleep disorder.

## Common sleep problems



Many older adults have trouble falling or staying asleep.

Poor sleep can affect you in many ways:

- Trouble getting up in the morning
- Feeling sleepy or trouble focusing during the day
- Taking frequent naps during the day
- Feeling depressed, irritable, or anxious
- Poor memory
- Frequent accidents or falls


## How can I improve my sleep?

During the day

 Things to do:	 Things to avoid:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Go to bed and wake up at the same time</b> every day</li> <li>• <b>Be active every day</b> for at least 20 minutes, such as a short walk or stretching. Being active can make it easier to sleep at night.</li> <li>• <b>Get at least 30 minutes of sunlight</b> early in the day – raise the blinds to let light inside or take a few breaks outside, even on cloudy days! Natural light affects your sleep-wake patterns and supports more consistent and restful sleep.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Avoid or limit caffeine</b> late in the afternoon and at night. Caffeine stays in your system for hours, so it can affect you at bedtime.</li> <li>• <b>Avoid large meals</b> within 2 hours before bed</li> <li>• <b>Avoid naps</b> after 3 p.m.</li> </ul>



## Bedtime

✓ Things to do:	✗ Things to avoid:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Do something relaxing</b> before bed such as a bath, read, or listen to calming music</li><li>• <b>Use relaxation breathing</b> to calm your thoughts – for example, breathe in for 3 seconds and breathe out for 6 - 9 seconds</li><li>• Use your bedroom <b>only for sleeping</b></li><li>• Keep your room at a <b>comfortable temperature</b></li><li>• <b>Remove distractions from your bedroom</b> such as bright lights and noises – consider window covers and a sound machine</li></ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Avoid alcohol</b> – alcohol can make you feel sleepy, but it disrupts your sleep cycle. If you really enjoy a nightcap, try to limit to 1 drink at least 1 hour before bed.</li><li>• <b>Avoid nicotine</b> – nicotine is a stimulant. Smoking near bedtime has been linked to trouble falling asleep, awakenings, and less restful sleep.</li><li>• <b>Avoid looking at your phone or tablet</b> while in bed and within 1 hour before bed. Electronics stimulate your mind, which makes it harder to fall asleep. They also emit blue light that can throw off your body's system for inducing sleep.</li><li>• <b>Avoid lying in bed awake</b> for more than 20 - 30 minutes – if you can't fall asleep during this time, do something relaxing such as read until you feel tired again</li></ul>

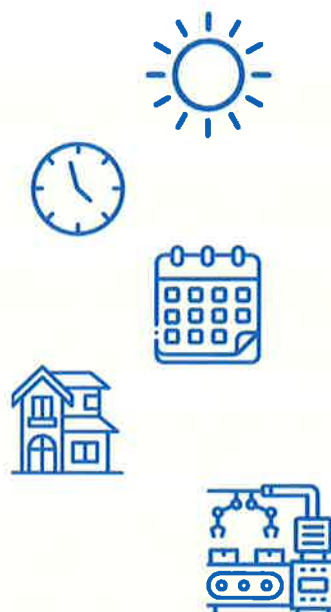
### When should I talk to my doctor about sleep?

Many older adults don't discuss sleep problems with their doctor. If you have any of these problems, you may have a sleep disorder, such as insomnia (being unable to fall asleep and stay asleep) or sleep apnea (breathing stops and starts while asleep).



## Talk to your doctor if:

- It's affecting your ability to function during the day
- You often can't fall asleep within 20 - 30 minutes
- You wake up in the middle of sleep and have trouble going back to sleep more than 1 to 2 times a week
- It is causing problems for others in your household
- The type of work you do raises your chance of an accident if you're sleepy, such as working with dangerous machinery

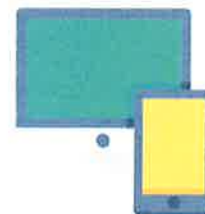


Ask if over-the-counter or prescription sleep medicine is right for you. If medicines don't help, your doctor may suggest a sleep study to help diagnose the problem.

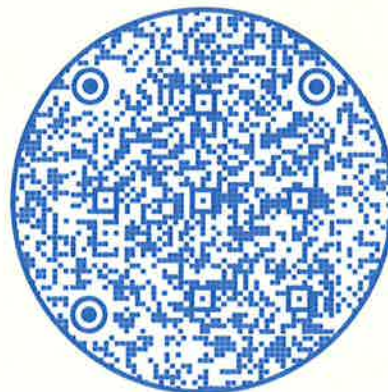
## Learn more ways to improve your sleep

National Sleep Foundation, an independent nonprofit organization:

- Call: **(877) 672-8966**
- Visit: **<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/>**



To see more health topics for older adults, use your smart phone and scan here:



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# 8 things doctors wish patients knew about self care

**Self-care is the way you take care of yourself between doctor visits.** Taking care of your health can lower your chance for chronic (long-lasting) conditions, hospital stays, and unnecessary healthcare costs.

That's why more doctors and other healthcare providers are encouraging patients to create a **personalized self-care plan** as part of their overall treatment plan.



A good plan starts with understanding the 8 parts of self-care and the reasons they're important. Simply guessing about your health or relying on Google searches isn't enough.

## 8 parts to consider when creating your self-care plan

- S** Self-awareness
- E** Emotional well-being
- L** Lifestyle changes
- F** Future risk management
- C** Contributing factors
- A** Attributes and skills to defend yourself
- R** Resource management
- E** Empowerment

# S

## Self-awareness

**Knowing yourself and paying attention to your health.**

You know yourself better than anyone else, including changes in your body, conditions, or symptoms.

**Keep track of your symptoms and body changes as they happen.** Consider using a paper health diary or a mobile health tracking app to show your doctor at visits.

# E

## Emotional well-being

**Taking care of your emotional and mental health.**

Include ways to maintain your emotional well-being.

You can do this by keeping:

- A list of things that bring you happiness and joy
- A list of negative things that cause stress



If you have a hard time thinking of what to list, **talk with your doctor to see if a behavioral health specialist is right for you.** A behavioral health specialist gives counseling and direction to people dealing with everyday problems and those with challenges like addiction, physical limitations, and mental illness.

# L

## Lifestyle changes

**Making small changes to your daily habits to help you live a healthier life.** Include habit changes in your self-care plan, especially if you have a chronic condition.



Habit changes can include things like eating healthier meals and being more active, like **taking a daily walk.**



## F

### Future risk management

Finding out about possible health problems (risk factors) that can raise your chance of developing certain chronic conditions in the future.

Some factors may have been passed down to you from your parents.



**Talk with your doctor about what your future risk factors may be.** Your doctor should recommend steps you can take to lower any risks you can control, such as stopping smoking.

## C

### Contributing factors

Looking at things that prevent you from making healthier choices.

These factors can include things such as:

- Habits and routines
- Things around you that cause stress, like crime or pollution in your neighborhood
- Cultural influences, like drinking sweet tea with every meal in the South
- Reasons you may make unhealthy choices

Once you recognize things that keep you from making healthy choices, you can **talk with your doctor about finding ways to replace them** with things that will motivate you to make healthier choices.

For example, if you have a friend who encourages you to make unhealthy choices, your doctor may recommend ways to meet new friends who share similar, healthy values.

## A

### Attributes and skills to defend yourself

Reflecting on your personal skills and strengths to maintain and stick to your self-care and treatment plans.

Keeping up with your self-care plan may seem hard at times, especially when you first start making habit changes. It's important to remind yourself of the skills you've learned and strengths you've developed.

Consider **writing a few of your best strengths** in a health diary to keep you motivated on days that feel harder.



# R Resource management

**Knowing what resources to use at the right time for the right need.**  
After you create your self-care plan, talk with your doctor about what other resources are available to help you start your self-care plan and stay on track.

For example, if you have pain in your back they may send you to a physical therapist to avoid unneeded emergency room visits. A physical therapist is a health specialist who may use stretching and exercises to treat pain.

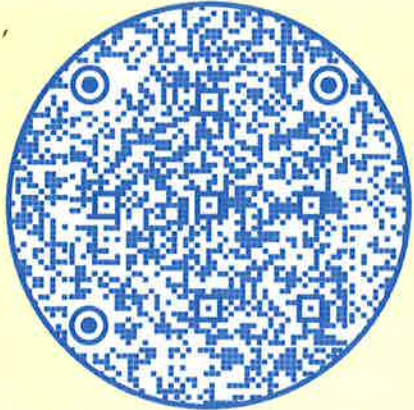

# E Empowerment

**Using the skills and information you learn from your doctor to create a self-care plan that helps you take action.**

Empowerment comes from knowledge and the chance to put your knowledge to action. It will help you feel more hopeful and stay motivated and engaged in managing your own healthcare.



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# Get the most out of your doctor's visits



Doctor's visits can be short. These tips can help you be an active member in your health care:



Before your visit:  
**Prepare**

**Make a list of questions to ask your doctor.** Here are some to start:

- What are my main health problems?
- What tests will I need?
- What are my treatment options, and how will they help?
- How do I take my medicine – how often, how much, and when?

**Write down a list of the medicines you take.**

**Ask a family member or friend to go with you** to help remember what the doctor says. Check to make sure your doctor's COVID-19 rules allow you to bring someone.



During your visit:  
**Give and get health information**

**Describe your symptoms to the doctor.** Tell them:

- **How your symptoms feel.** For example, if you have pain, you could use words like sharp, dull, stabbing, or throbbing.
- **Where you feel the symptoms** in your body
- **When** the symptoms started
- **How often** they happen

**Be honest with your doctor** so they can give you the right care.

**Ask your questions** – start with the ones that are most important to you

**Check you understand what the doctor said by repeating the information back to them in your own words.** You can say:

- "I think what you are saying is [repeat info] ... is that right?"
- "I want to make sure I understand [repeat info] ... did I get that right?"

**Take notes** to help you remember what the doctor said.



After your visit:  
**Follow your doctor's instructions**

**For example, you may need to:**

- Fill a prescription at the pharmacy
- Make another appointment for tests, lab work, or a follow-up visit

**There may be times you should call your doctor,** for example if you:

- Have side effects after taking a medicine
- Have symptoms that get worse
- Don't understand the results of any tests you've gotten back





# How your pharmacist can help you take care of your health



Your pharmacist is a medicine expert. They can work with you and your doctor to help you take care of your health. **Here's what they can help you with:**



## Get answers to your questions about your prescription medicines

If you have questions about medicines your doctor prescribed, ask your pharmacist.

### Here's some questions to get started:

- What is this medicine supposed to do?
- How and when should I take this medicine?
- What should I do if I forget to take it?
- What side effects can happen? When should I call my doctor if side effects happen?
- Should I avoid any activities while taking this medicine, such as driving?
- Should I avoid certain foods while taking this medicine?
- Can I take this if I'm pregnant or breastfeeding?



## Choose the right over-the-counter (OTC) medicines for you

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are medicines you can buy without a prescription. Your pharmacist can help you find the right OTC medicine to help with your symptoms or health problem. **You can ask:**

- What medicine should I get to treat my symptoms?
- How and when should I take this medicine?
- Can I take this with my prescription medicines?
- What side effects can happen?



## Meet with you to review your medicines

Ask your pharmacist if you can meet to review your medicines. Your pharmacist will go over all of your medicines with you, including prescription and OTC medicines.

### This can help you:

- Understand how your medicines help you manage your health problems, such as diabetes or high blood pressure
- Deal with any side effects
- Organize your medicines and take them correctly
- Save money on your medicines

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# 3 simple exercises you can do from your home or office

By Tiffani Kelly, Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher (E-RYT),  
Nashville General Hospital Employee Wellness Specialist



Wanting to exercise more? It can be hard to find time or even know where to start. Here are 3 simple exercises you can do at your home or office. All you need is a chair and maybe a hand towel.

## Exercise 1:

### Chest expansion

1. Stand up
2. Place your hands together behind your back (you can use a hand towel if your hands do not touch)
3. Exhale (breathe out) as you slightly lift your hands away from your back
4. Inhale (breathe in) as you move your hands back to the starting position
5. Repeat for 5 breaths in and out



### How does this benefit me?

Helps improve your posture from slouching when driving and looking at screens.



If any exercise causes pain or discomfort, stop to avoid injury. Talk to your provider about small, gentle movements that your body may better adjust to over time.

## Exercise 2:

### Downward facing dog

1. Stand behind a sturdy chair with your hands on top of the chair back
2. Carefully step your feet backward to extend your spine
3. Take a deep breath in while holding on to the top of the chair
4. As you exhale, imagine that someone is pulling your hips away from your arms. Keep your feet flat on the floor.
5. Hold this position for 5 breaths in and out



### How does this benefit me?

Stretches your shoulders and hamstrings (the muscles on the back of your upper legs).

## Exercise 3:

### Seated twist

1. Sit in the chair with both feet flat on the floor about hip distance apart
2. Sit up tall with a straight spine, not hunched or rounded
3. Inhale as you move the crown (top) of your head towards the ceiling to lengthen your spine
4. Move your shoulders down and back away from your ears, and exhale as you twist
5. Hold this twist position for 5 breaths
6. Come back to the center and repeat on the other side



### How does this benefit me?

Boosts your energy, helps with digestion, and keeps your spine flexible.

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## Eating well as you age



The best way to get the nutrients your body needs is to eat a variety of healthy foods. Nutrients are the parts of food that our bodies need such as vitamins, proteins, fats, carbohydrates, and more.

In this fact sheet, you'll learn how eating healthy foods can help you stay healthy as you age.

### Why is eating well important for older adults?

Eating well is important for all stages of life, but your nutrition needs change as you age. As you grow older, your body starts to need fewer calories, but just as many nutrients. Paying attention to the nutritional value of your food can help you stay healthy and prevent diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic (long-lasting) health conditions.

### What kinds of foods and drinks do I need as I age?



#### Foods with lots of nutrients

Eat foods that gives you lots of nutrients without a lot of extra calories, such as:

- **Fruits and vegetables** – eat the rainbow such as orange, red, green, and purple fruits and veggies
- **Lean protein** – try skinless chicken, turkey, 90% or more lean ground beef, seafood, and eggs
- **Whole grains** – such as oatmeal and brown rice
- **Beans, peas, unsalted nuts, and seeds**



Talk with your health care provider about which healthy foods are right for you. They can help you make sure you are getting all the nutrients you need.

## Drink water and stay hydrated

As you age, you may lose some of your sense of thirst. Certain medicines may also make you need to drink more fluids. To make sure you have enough fluid in your body:

- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water each day
- You can also drink:
  - Low-fat or skim milk, or lactose-free milk that is easier to digest
  - Soy, rice, or almond milk with added vitamin D and calcium
  - 100% juice - but juice has sugar, so ask your health care provider if you are at risk for diabetes



## Eat less salty foods

People age 51 and older should lower the amount of salt (sodium) they eat each day. Eating a lot of salt over time can lead to high blood pressure. Aim for less than 3/4 teaspoon, or 1,500 milligrams (mg), of salt per day.

## Vitamins

As you age, you may need more of certain vitamins than when you were younger. For example, it may be harder for your body to absorb vitamin B12.

Talk with your health care provider to make sure you are getting enough:

- Calcium, such as from milk and cheese
- Vitamin D, such as from salmon, mushrooms, egg yolks, or fortified milk and cereals
- Vitamin B6, such as from fish and potatoes
- Vitamin B12, such as from eggs and fortified cereals



## What kinds of food and drinks should I avoid as I age?

You want to avoid foods and drinks that have lots of calories but few vitamins and minerals. Try to limit:

- Foods high in added salt, such as chips and processed meats
- Foods high in saturated and trans fats, such as baked snacks and margarine
- Foods and drinks with lots of added sugars, such as candy, soda, sports drinks, and alcohol



## How to overcome barriers to eating healthy

Eating healthy can be hard, even when you know which choices to make. Here are some tips to help you deal with common problems when trying to eat healthy.

### Are you having trouble paying for healthy foods?

Healthy, nutritious meals can sometime cost more. There are a lot of resources that can help you eat healthy on a budget:

- Email [food@nashvilleha.org](mailto:food@nashvilleha.org) to get no-cost nutrient rich stable food to prepare delivered to you within Davidson County. Please include your name, phone, address, and the number of people in your home
- Visit [myplate.gov/eat-healthy/healthy-eating-budget](http://myplate.gov/eat-healthy/healthy-eating-budget) for tips on planning meals, shopping smart, and preparing healthy meals
- Visit [spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](http://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu) for low cost, healthy recipes
- Apply for governmental assistance programs, such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

Explore other benefits and resources in your area at [benefitscheckup.org](http://benefitscheckup.org)



### Do you have trouble cooking or eating because of physical limits?

Certain health conditions such as Parkinson's disease, stroke, or arthritis can cause stiff or shaking hands that make it harder to cook or feed yourself. Talk to your health care provider about seeing an occupational therapist. They may suggest exercises to strengthen your hands or give you special spoons or other utensils to make cooking and eating easier.



### Do you avoid some foods because they are hard to chew?

If you have problems with your teeth or dentures, you may find it hard to eat meat, fruit, or vegetables. Visit your dentist to check for problems with your teeth, jaw, or dentures. You can also try these tips to make meals easier to chew:

- Cook or steam vegetables instead of eating them raw
- Use a food processor or blender to cut up meat and vegetables
- Slow-roast chicken or beef to make the meat more tender





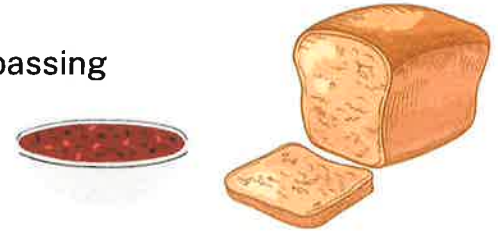
## Are you losing your appetite because foods taste different?

Your sense of smell, taste, or both may have changed due to age or certain medicines. Try adding fresh herbs, spices, or lemon juice to help your food taste better.

## Do you have trouble with regular bowel movements (passing stool)?

Too little fiber in your diet can cause constipation (trouble passing stool). Try foods high in fiber, such as:

- Beans, especially chickpeas and black beans
- Oatmeal and bran cereal
- Whole grain bread



## Talk to your health care provider about eating healthy foods and drinking enough fluids.

- Go to your yearly wellness checkup
- Talk with your health care provider about any health concerns
- Your health care provider may refer you to a nutrition specialist (nutritionist) to help you create a healthy meal plan



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# How to prevent falls in older adults



You might think that falls are a normal part of getting older – but they are not. There are ways you can try to prevent falls in older adults.

## What causes falls?

- Weakness in your lower body, such as your legs
- Not enough vitamin D in your body (vitamin D deficiency)
- Walking and balance problems
- Problems with your eye sight
- Foot pain or footwear without good support
- Certain medicines, such as for anxiety, depression, or sleep, or even some over-the-counter medicines that can affect your balance
- Dangers in your home, such as:
  - Broken or uneven steps
  - Rugs or clutter that you can trip over

## How to lower your chances of falling

### Talk to your doctor about your chances of falling:

- Ask your doctor to review your medicines with you because as you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. For example, some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and cause you to fall.
- Have your doctor check your feet once a year, talk about proper footwear, and ask if you should see a foot specialist.

**Do exercises** to strengthen your legs and improve your balance – for example, Tai Chi, practice standing on one leg, or do simple yoga poses.

**Have your eyes checked.** See your eye doctor once a year and update your eyeglasses, if needed.

### Try movement supports:

- Use a cane or walker if needed
- Wear supportive shoes with non-skid soles

Tell your doctor right away if you fall or are worried about falling.



## Use this checklist to improve areas of your home

After you fall once, you are more likely to fall again, so consider these tips.

### All areas

- Put away anything you can trip over, such as rugs, shoes, or laundry
- Keep a few flashlights within easy reach around the house
- Install nightlights

### Bedroom

- Have a lamp or light switch within easy reach of where you sleep and rest

### Bathroom

- Install handrails or grab bars
- Use non-skid floor mats or rugs
- Install non-slip stickers or mats in your shower or tub

### Stairs and hallways

- Install handrails on both sides of your stairs
- Install lights and light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs

### Kitchen

- Keep the items you use the most within easy reach, such as spices and utensils
- Clean up any spills right when they happen
- Do not stand on chairs or stools
- If you must use a step-stool, choose one with a bar for you to hold

### Outdoors

- Repair any holes or loose bricks or stones on your steps, driveway, or walkway

## Need help?

Contact your local community or senior center for information on:

- Exercise programs
- Fall prevention programs
- Options for improving your home's safety

To find help near you, go to <https://eldercare.acl.gov/> or call **1-800-677-1116**

Learn about other topics for older adults by scanning your smartphone here:



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# Vaccines for older adults



As you get older, **your immune system gets weaker**, which gives you a higher chance of getting very sick from certain diseases. Vaccines help protect you from getting very sick from these diseases and help prevent spreading them to your friends and family.




Use these charts to talk with your doctor about which vaccines you need.

If you've had a vaccine, write the date on the right. 

Vaccine	Why you need it	How often you should get it	Date of your last vaccine
Flu	The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older, especially people ages 65 and older and people with health conditions like heart disease.	Every year	
Shingles	Shingles is caused by the same virus as chicken pox. If you've had chicken pox, the virus stays in your body and can come back as shingles, which can be very painful and make you very sick.	Once, 2 shots within 2 to 6 months after age 50	

Continued on next page

# Vaccines for older adults

Vaccine	Why you need it	How often you should get it	Date of your last vaccine
<p><b>Pneumonia (Pneumococcal)</b></p>	<p>Pneumonia is a lung infection that can be very serious for older adults. There are 2 types of the pneumonia vaccine, ask your doctor which one is right for you.</p>	<p>Once, 2 shots within 2 to 6 months after age 50</p>	
<p><b>COVID-19</b></p>	<p>Older adults (especially people ages 50 and older) are more likely than younger people to get very sick from COVID-19.</p>	<p>2 vaccines and an updated booster</p>	
<p><b>Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) or Td (Tetanus/ Diphtheria)</b></p>	<p>The Tdap vaccine protects from whooping cough, and also can also help protect against tetanus and diphtheria – which are less common but serious diseases.</p>	<p>Once, with a booster every 10 years. This is especially important if there are newborns in your family. Most people have been vaccinated for tetanus at some point.</p>	

## Worried about vaccine side effects?

Most vaccine side effects are minor and go away within a few days. For example, a sore arm, redness or pain where you get the shot, feeling tired, or a low-grade fever.

## Are preventive screenings covered by my insurance?

Other vaccines to ask your doctor about:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- MMR (Measles-Mumps-Rubella)
- Polio
- Chickenpox (Varicella)

If you didn't get these vaccines when you were younger, your doctor may recommend getting them now.



## Where can I learn more?

Visit the CDC website at [cdc.gov/vaccines/adults](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults)

To see more health topics for older adults, use your smart phone and scan here:



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## Preventive screenings for older adults



Learn about tests and exams (called screenings) that catch health concerns **before** they become a problem.

### What are preventive screenings?

Preventive screenings are tests and exams that look for health conditions **before** you have symptoms. They help find problems early, when they are easier to treat.

Preventive screenings are available for many conditions, such as:

- **Cancers**, such as breast or prostate cancer
- **Chronic diseases**, (long-lasting conditions) such as diabetes and high blood pressure
- **Heart problems**, such high cholesterol
- **Behavioral health**, such as depression

### What preventive screenings do I need?

Talk with your doctor at your next visit about what preventive screenings they recommend.

**Your doctor may recommend different screenings or to get screened sooner based on:**



Your and your family's health history



Your daily habits, such as what you eat, how much you exercise, or if you smoke



## 15 common preventive screening tests to discuss with your doctor

These tables show **general screening recommendations** for 11 health areas.

### Cancer screenings

Type of cancer	Screening process	Who should get this screening?
<b>Cervical cancer</b>	A Pap smear, also called a Pap test	Women or people with a cervix ages 21 to 65 should be screened every 3 years.
<b>Breast cancer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Mammogram</b> (a special low-dose x-ray to see inside the breasts)</li><li>• <b>The BRCA gene test</b> (a blood test to see if you have changes in your DNA that raise your chance of developing breast cancer)</li></ul>	People with breasts ages 40 to 75.
<b>Colorectal cancer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Colonoscopy</b> every 10 years</li><li>• <b>Sigmoidoscopy</b> every 5 years</li><li>• <b>CT Colonography</b> every 5 years</li><li>• <b>Stool</b> (poop) tests every 3 years</li></ul>	People ages 45 to 75.
<b>Lung cancer</b>	<b>CAT scan</b> , also called a CT scan (a test that takes detailed pictures inside the lungs)	People between ages 50 and 80 who currently smoke or quit within the past 15 years. If you smoke or smoked in the past, ask your doctor to help you figure out your pack-years, which is a way to measure the amount you have smoked over time.
<b>Prostate cancer</b>	A blood test	Men or people with a prostate ages 55 to 69. African American men should talk to their doctor about getting screened at age 45.

## Disease screenings

Type of disease	Screening process	Who should get this screening?
<b>Diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma</b>	An eye exam	People with diabetes ages 18 to 75.
<b>Kidney disease</b>	Blood and urine (pee) test	People with diabetes or high blood pressure ages 18 to 85 at least once a year.

## Heart health screenings

Condition	Screening process	Who should get this screening?
<b>High blood pressure (hypertension)</b>	Have your doctor measure your blood pressure with office device, in-store blood pressure devices are not always reliable	Adults ages 40 or older should be screened yearly.
<b>High cholesterol</b>	A blood test	Every 1 to 2 years for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men ages 45 to 65</li> <li>• Women ages 55 to 65</li> </ul> People over 65 should be screened yearly.



## Behavioral health screenings

Condition	Screening process	Who should get this screening?
<b>Alcohol use disorder</b>	Complete a survey	Men who drink more than 2 drinks a day and women who drink more than 1 drink a day.
<b>Depression</b>	Complete an evidence-based survey	People of all ages, including pregnant and postpartum people.

### Are preventive screenings covered by my insurance?

Most insurance plans cover preventive screenings if they are done by a doctor in your network. If your doctor may recommends screenings that aren't covered, ask for help to pay any out-of-pocket costs.

**To learn more about these and other preventive screenings, make an appointment to talk with your doctor.**

To see more health topics for older adults, use your smart phone and scan here:



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# How to correctly take over-the-counter medicines



Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are medicines you can buy without a prescription, such as cough medicines and pain relievers. They are safe and work well when you use them as instructed. Here's how:



## Read and follow the label

OTC medicines have labels that tell you what the medicine does, who can and can't take it, and how to use it. **Each label has these sections:**

**Active ingredient** What makes the medicine work. There may be more than 1 active ingredient.

**Uses** Symptoms or illnesses the medicine can treat. Only take it if it's meant to treat your symptoms.

**Warnings** Safety information, such as possible side effects, when to avoid taking it, and when to ask your doctor before you take it.

**Directions** How much of it to take (the dose) and how often, which differs for adults and children. Follow this exactly.

**For liquid medicines**, always use the measuring cup or syringe included in the package. Do not use a kitchen teaspoon or measuring device because it will not give the right amount.

**Other information** Other things to know about the medicine, such as how to store it.

**Inactive ingredients** What else is in the medicine that isn't meant to treat a symptom, such as food coloring. This can be important if you have allergies.

<b>Drug facts</b>	
<b>Active ingredient (in each tablet)</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Chlorpheniramine maleate 2 mg	Antihistamine
<b>Uses</b> temporarily relieve these symptoms due to hay fever or other upper respiratory allergies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ sneezing</li> <li>■ runny nose</li> <li>■ itchy, watery eyes</li> <li>■ itchy throat</li> </ul>	
<b>Warnings</b>	
<b>Ask a doctor before use if you have</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ glaucoma</li> <li>■ a breathing problem such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis</li> <li>■ trouble urinating due to an enlarged prostate gland</li> </ul>	
<b>Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use if you are taking tranquilizers or sedatives</b>	
<b>When using this product</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ You may get drowsy</li> <li>■ avoid alcoholic drinks</li> <li>■ alcohol, sedatives, and tranquilizers may increase drowsiness</li> <li>■ be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery</li> <li>■ excitability may occur, especially in children</li> </ul>	
<b>If pregnant or breast-feeding</b> , ask a health professional before use.	
<b>Keep out of reach of children.</b> In case of overdose, get medical help or contact a Poison Control Center right away.	
<b>Directions</b>	
adults and children 12 years and over	take 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 12 tablets in 24 hours
children 6 years to under 12 years	Take 1 tablet every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 6 tablets in 24 hours
children under six years	ask a doctor
<b>Other information</b> store at 20-25°C (68-77°F) ■ protect from excessive moisture	
<b>Inactive ingredients</b> D&C yellow no. 10, lactose, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, pregelatinized starch	



## Check the expiration date

The expiration date is printed on the package, bottle, or label. Do not take expired medicines because they might not work as well as they should or could make you sick. Ask your pharmacist how to safely throw away expired medicines.



If you have questions after reading the OTC label, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

To schedule a visit for a health care service at Nashville Healthcare Center, call 615-341-4YOU (4968)





## How to take care of your mental health



Your mental health includes your feelings, thoughts, and the way you relate to others. Taking care of your mental health can help you:

- Deal with stress
- Have good relationships
- Stay healthy — your feelings and thoughts affect your physical well-being



### What are signs I may need to get help for my mental health?

It's normal to feel sad or stressed sometimes. However, you may need to see a mental health care provider if you:

- Don't have enough energy to carry out your daily activities
- Feel angry or sad most of the time
- Avoid friends or family
- Have trouble sleeping or sleep too much
- Have no appetite or overeat

If you notice any of these signs, talk with your doctor. They can refer you to a mental health provider, such as a counselor or therapist. Most insurance plans cover treatment for mental health.



### Tips for taking care of your mental health

**Do 1 thing you enjoy every day.** That could be watching your favorite TV show, working in the garden, or reading a book.

**Find ways to relax.** Try doing yoga, taking a bath, or enjoying nature.

**Build relationships with others.** Spend time with friends and family or join activities in your community.

**Get enough sleep.** 7 hours a night is best.

**Move your body.** Be active for 30 minutes, 5 days a week. This helps lower stress and has many other health benefits, such as to help you sleep better and stay at a healthy weight.



### Mental health resources in your area

To find mental health care your area, call your doctor or visit:

[tn.gov/behavioral-health/mental-health-services](https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/mental-health-services)



## Ways to limit your fluid and salt intake when you have heart failure



If you have heart failure, your heart muscle has become weaker than normal. This means your heart can't pump blood through your body as well.

This causes extra fluid to build up in your body, which can lead to **trouble breathing, swelling in your feet and hands**, and other health problems.



### Why is limiting salt and fluids important when you have heart failure?

Limiting how much fluid you drink and how much salt (sodium) you take in can help prevent fluid buildup.

**Your doctor or dietitian can help you plan how much fluid and salt you should have each day.**



### Tips to limit fluid

A fluid is anything that turns to liquid at room temperature. Some foods, such as soups, puddings, Jell-o, or ice cream, also contain fluids. **To limit fluid:**

- When you eat chunky soups, use a fork and leave the broth behind.
- Use a small cup for your drink with meals and drink just 1 cup (8 ounces)
- When you feel thirsty, try one of these instead of drinking fluid:
  - Chew sugar-free gum
  - Suck on hard candy or a lemon slice
  - Use ice chips or rinse your mouth when it feels dry



### Tips to limit salt

Too much salt causes your body to keep extra water to "balance" the salt.

**To cut down on salt:**

- Use herbs and spices, instead of salt, to add flavor to your food
- Choose fresh foods instead of canned or packaged foods
- Read food labels and choose foods with phrases "low sodium" or "no added sodium"

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