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# Healthy

Living



Focus:

  
Get Well/Stay Well  
Program  
*Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center*



[www.BuffaloHealthyLiving.com](http://www.BuffaloHealthyLiving.com)

# letter

from the publisher

This special issue of Buffalo Healthy Living is about the challenges that sometimes accompany getting older, and an innovative new program called Get Well/Stay Well.

So much of our adult lives are spent busily giving to others, it's a wonder we know how to take care of ourselves by the time we reach the age of 55. We often hear people say getting older is better than the alternative. But getting older has physical and mental challenges that don't always feel that great.

According to Psychiatry.org depression is the most common mental disorder for people 65 and older. Depression in this age group often mimics dementia because when people are depressed, they often withdraw, feel ashamed and become frightened by feelings they've never had before. Some experts say as many as 10 percent of those diagnosed with dementia are actually suffering from depression. Some dementias can be caused by chronic high blood pressure, blood vessel disease, strokes, side effects of prescription drugs, alcohol, and even poor eating habits, and heart disease.

It's important for people ages 55 and older to get needed help during this stage of life. Imagine seeing your physician, speaking to a nurse and having an appointment with a counselor during the same visit! Conveniently located at the Summit Healthplex at 6934 Williams Road in Wheatfield, Get Well/Stay Well (716-297-4906) makes that possible.

Get Well/Stay Well practitioners want people to know their doors are open, they are welcome, and there is help for their symptoms. They want people to know they can get the care and guidance needed to continue living a productive and happy life, and that where there is help, there is hope for a lot of healthy living.

Sincerely,



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# get well/stay well keeping seniors healthy in niagara county

Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center is transforming the way older adults receive health care with its innovative new Get Well/Stay Well program, the only program of its kind in Western New York.

"Too many seniors unfortunately go without the services they need to get well and stay well," Memorial Vice President & Chief Operating Officer Sheila K. Kee said. "This program, funded through a \$150,000 grant from the Health Foundation for Central and Western New York, will remove obstacles to caring for the physical, behavioral health, and social needs of older adults in a single location in the Summit Healthplex."

Aside from being housed in one location, Get Well/Stay Well looks at the patient as a whole – mind, body and spirit. That means physical health, mental and behavioral health. A registered nurse coordinator will help ensure that patients are connected to the resources they need in the community through ongoing communication, education, and follow-up.

"Older people frequently suffer from isolation and depression, and fall through the cracks," said Ann F. Monroe, President of the Health Foundation. "Get Well/Stay Well will help attend to the multiple issues confronted by older adults living in our community and get them the care they need in order to stay physically and mentally healthy."

"Healthcare research shows that making it possible to provide health care through one location that is easily accessible produces many positive benefits for older adults," Memorial President & CEO Joseph A. Ruffolo said.

According to a study published by researchers from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the number of older adults with major psychiatric illnesses in 2030 will be more than double that seen in 2000. Mental illnesses among older adults are associated with functional disability, cognitive impairment, compromised quality of life, increased health care utilization and costs, barriers to preventive care and poor health outcomes. However, mental illnesses among older adults are often unrecognized, untreated, or undertreated.

Nonetheless, few seniors connect to mental health services to address those issues.

Judi Nolan Powell, a member of the medical center's board of directors and the chair of Memorial's Cardiac Stroke

Campaign, said Get Well/Stay Well also addresses another critical community need.

"Get Well/Stay Well not only epitomizes Memorial's transformation toward health care management for the underserved in our community, but it is the best route for reaching our large elderly population who are most at risk for cardiac disease and stroke," she said.



Funding for the Get Well/Stay Well program includes a previously announced \$500,000 grant from the New York State Office of Mental Health. Initial staff training for Get Well/Stay Well was provided by nationally recognized University of Washington AIMS Center. Housed within the Division of Integrated Care and Public Health, the AIMS Center is an interdisciplinary group of clinicians and scientists dedicated to improving the health of populations by advancing effective, integrated behavioral health care.

"AIMS Center experts instruct Memorial's physicians, residents and staff on best practices for delivering integrated care," Ms. Kee said. "This is a tremendous opportunity for us to improve and refocus the way we deliver health care to the older people in our community, and we are grateful to the Health Foundation for its support."

The Health Foundation for Western and Central New York is an independent private foundation whose mission is to improve the health and health care of the people of western and central New York.

Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center is a full-service, 171-bed regional medical center with extensive inpatient and outpatient services including The Heart Center of Niagara, Diabetes & Endocrinology Center of Niagara, Wound Center of Niagara, Niagara Wellness Connection Center and UBMD Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine.

It is also the first hospital in Niagara County to be designated a stroke center by the New York State Department of Health. The hospital operates several satellite facilities including the Summit Healthplex, Tuscarora Health Center, four primary care sites and the Schoellkopf Health Center, a 120-bed skilled nursing facility that specializes in short-term rehabilitation and elder care while providing 100-percent private room accommodations. Learn more at <http://NFMMC.org>.

If you are age 55 or older, and looking for more from your primary care provider, and would like to learn more about becoming a part of Get Well/Stay Well, call 716-297-4906.

# best exercises for baby boomers

certain exercises are better than others and can help reduce the risk of injury



The human body needs exercise to operate at full capacity. Exercise is important at any age, but can be particularly beneficial for individuals over 50. The key is finding exercises that are both safe and effective.

## Benefits of Exercise

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that 28 to 44 percent of seniors ages 65 to 75 are inactive, meaning they don't get enough daily exercise for optimal health. Studies indicate that there are many reasons to engage in regular exercise. Some of these are:

- Delaying or preventing chronic illness
- Promoting better sleep
- Facilitating weight loss
- Relieving stress
- And many more!

## Engaging In the Right Exercises

While it may have been the norm to do multiple, rigorous repetitions of exercises during one's youth, as a person ages, it's a good idea to employ different strategies. Certain exercises are better than others and can help reduce the risk of injury.

Before starting any type of exercise regimen, talk with a physician about the pros and cons of certain activities. The doctor may be able to provide guidance as to which activities are better for specific health conditions. For example, an individual with arthritis may want to seek low-impact workouts, such as water aerobics.

**Once a doctor gives the go-ahead, here are some great exercises:**

**Walking:** Walking remains one of the best exercises for people of any age. The pace and resistance can be set by each individual by walking faster or slower, uphill or downhill. Adding light weights can make the workout even more effective. Walking is also easier on the legs and knees than jogging, but can be just as effective as a cardiovascular workout.

**Leg extensions:** Repetitions of leg extensions stretch the muscles of the legs and flex the knee joint. This can promote longevity of the knees and keep knee replacements at bay.

**Swimming:** Enrolling in a local gym that has a pool can be a boon to those over 50. Swimming is a low-impact workout that targets most areas of the body while providing a cardiovascular workout. Swimming can also be relaxing and enjoyable, so it's an exercise that many people don't mind doing. Many local gyms offer the Silver Sneakers program for those over 65, Flexorcize water classes conducted by the Arthritis Foundation, and Osteo-Fit, an osteoporosis prevention and control program.

**Strength training:** Moderate weight lifting can keep muscles strong and promote a healthy metabolism, considering muscle burns more calories than fat.

**Endurance exercise:** Just about any activity that gets the heart rate up for an extended period of time is good for the body. This can be raking leaves, mowing the lawn, walking, bicycling, playing a game of catch, etc. Be sure the doctor clears any such activities beforehand.

One in five people 65 or older are eligible for SilverSneakers. The SilverSneakers benefit allows its members access to more than 11,000 fitness centers, generally at no additional cost.

Here in Niagara Falls, Silver Sneakers is available at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center Cardio Pulmonary and Wellness. To learn more, call (716) 278-4019 or visit [www.silversneakers.com](http://www.silversneakers.com) (TF113607)

# get well/stay well finding early success

Integrating primary care, behavioral health and community services under one roof is proving to be a life changing experience for patients in Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center's innovative Get Well/Stay Well program.

"I have been waiting for something like this for a long time," said one patient. "It's just so convenient. I can see my doctor, my counselor and have a discussion with the nurse – all on the same day during the same visit."

Located at the Summit Healthplex, 6934 Williams Road in Wheatfield, the Get Well/Say Well program employs a collaborative approach to promoting health and wellness for patients age 55 and older. Patients of the program establish a primary care relationship with a doctor at the Summit Family Health Center. That gives them access to a range of services and specialists including a registered nurse care coordinator to help educate patients about physical wellness; a senior advocate to link patients to important community resources such as housing, nutrition and financial assistance; and a behavioral healthcare manager to help patients navigate some of life's more difficult circumstances.

Keeping patients healthy involves more than just a physical assessment, said Karrie Nachreiner, LCSW. Treating the whole person makes a big difference, which is why Get Well/Stay Well focuses on body, mind, and spirit.

Nachreiner said she can see the benefits as they occur.

"Many of the patients I've seen never knew where to go to get help or how to get it," she said. "When we are discussing this program with patients for the first time, I can often see the relief on their face. It's a great feeling."

The Get Well/Stay Well program is the first of its kind in Western New York. Program Manager David Spagnolo said a program like this has been desperately needed in the region.

"At a traditional primary care practice you get your physical health monitored and if there is a need for a



referral to a behavioral health specialist, the patient must go off-site. That means your primary physician and specialist will come up with a care plan by fax machine or by e-mail," Spagnolo said. "In the Get Well/Stay Well program, you get to see the specialist right here on site. That allows our team to coordinate your care face-to-face for better results."

For more information on the Get Well/Stay Well program or to schedule an appointment, please call (716) 297-4906.

*Mind ... Body ... Spirit*

## Make your next years your best years

Get Well/Stay Well offers both counseling and primary care for older adults. Today's physicians use tomorrow's methods to promote wellness in all areas of your life.



**Accepting new patients**  
**To learn more, call 297-4906**

**Get Well/Stay Well  
Program**  
Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center

**Summit Family Health Center**  
**6934 Williams Road, Ste. 200**  
**Niagara Falls, NY 14304**

# share your health history

start a new tradition at your family reunion



Family reunions are a great opportunity to reconnect and turn relationships into strong, eternal ties. This year, try starting a new tradition — share your health history with your family.

Passing down family health history can be as important as sharing that heirloom recipe your great grandmother shared with your grandmother. Many health conditions run in the family, so knowing the health history can help you or your loved ones take the right steps to stay well and get tested if you or they are at risk. Sharing a health history means having a conversation about your health conditions or those experienced by another family member. These conversations can transform a simple update about a loved one's wellbeing into a piece of prevention.

## Why is sharing a health history important?

Though marked with stories and laughter, family reunions are also a perfect time to talk about important matters that affect the health of your family members. As the number of those with common ailments such as obesity, heart disease and cancer continues to rise, other major conditions should not be overlooked, especially kidney disease.

According to the U.S. Renal Data System, nearly one in six African American adults (or 6.2 million) has signs of kidney disease. There are usually no symptoms for early kidney disease, which is why it is sometimes called a "silent disease." The two primary causes of kidney disease are diabetes and high blood pressure.

The National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) is encouraging relatives at family reunions to talk about the connection between diabetes, high blood pressure and kidney disease. The Program's Family Reunion Health Guide can help you plan large group or one-on-one conversations about kidney disease. You do not need to be a healthcare professional or expert to start these important conversations — the guide has everything you need. To download or order a free copy, visit <http://nkdep.nih.gov/get-involved/talk-with-family.shtml?ref=MAT>.

## Five tips for starting the conversation

Talking about health history at family reunions can be challenging. Having a strategy for difficult conversations can help guide the discussion and make it a meaningful and productive experience. Here are some tips for getting a one-on-one conversation started at your next family reunion:

1. Ask permission to have the conversation and try to choose a convenient time and comfortable environment. Look for a quiet, private place that is free from distractions.
2. Acknowledge that it is not always easy to face personal health problems. Try to be supportive and listen to their concerns.
3. Include personal stories in your health discussion. Try sharing your story on how you manage diabetes or high blood pressure to help put them at ease.
4. Offer to go with family members to their health care provider and encourage them to bring information about kidney disease, diabetes and high blood pressure to appointments.
5. Follow up with family members in ways that work for them. Some relatives may prefer a phone call to an email or text message.

Make the kidney connection with a loved one and start a new, healthy tradition at your next family reunion. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/MaketheKidneyConnection>.

Article Source: NKDEP #12194

# exploring the link between tobacco, cancer and other diseases

## why quitting at any age makes a difference

Tobacco and cancer have long been intertwined. The U.S. Surgeon General says tobacco is the major cause of cancer death in the United States. And according to the American Cancer Society (ACS), tobacco use is responsible for nearly 20 percent of all deaths in the U.S. This is troubling, but it's important to note that smoking tobacco is an acquired behavior, meaning roughly one in five deaths are preventable.

Smoking cigarettes is prevalent throughout society, and no ethnic group or race has proven capable of avoiding cigarettes. In 2011 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that roughly 44 million U.S. adults were smokers, representing every race and ethnicity.

While figures can go a long way toward shedding light on the link between smoking and cancer, they have yet to strike a chord among the millions of people who continue to light up. Perhaps a closer look at tobacco and its relation to cancer and other deadly diseases is just what smokers need to put their cigarettes down once and for all.

### How many people will die because of their smoking habit?

About half of all Americans who keep smoking will die because of their habit. About 443,000 people in the U.S. die from tobacco-related illnesses yearly. These include cancers of the lungs, larynx, oral cavity (mouth, tongue and lips), stomach, pancreas, cervix, kidney, and bladder.

### Is tobacco use linked solely to cancer?

Cancer isn't the only disease smokers can get because of their habit. Smoking causes heart disease, aneurysms, emphysema and stroke. Women who use tobacco have a higher risk of miscarriage, early delivery and stillbirth. Tobacco is also linked to low birth-weight in infants, higher risk of birth defects, and sudden infant death syndrome.

Smokers with preexisting conditions like asthma and peripheral vascular disease or PVD are also at risk. PVD is characterized by poor blood flow in the arms and legs. Nonsmokers with PVD can have surgery to improve their blood flow, but the surgery is ineffective for patients who continue to smoke, and many vascular surgeons refuse to operate on PVD patients unless they have quit smoking.

Smoking also increases the risk of macular degeneration, one of the most common causes of blindness in older people. It promotes cataracts, which cloud the lens of the eye, causes premature skin wrinkling, bad breath, gum disease, tooth loss, bad-smelling clothes and hair, and yellow teeth and fingernails.

Is there a benefit to quitting after years of smoking?

The CDC estimates that adult male smokers lose an average of 13.2 years of life, and female smokers 14.5 years. Annually 480,000 people in the US die from smoking. The diseases smoking can cause can steal your quality of life long before you die by limiting your activities, making it harder to breathe, get around, work or play. According to the surgeon general, no matter how old you are or how long you've smoked, quitting can help you live longer and be healthier. People who stop smoking before age 50 cut their risk of dying in the next 15 years in half compared with those who keep smoking.

### Consider these facts about what happens to your body after quitting:

- **After 20 minutes** your blood pressure drops.
- **After two weeks** to three months your circulation improves and lung function increases.
- **After one to nine months** coughing and shortness of breath decrease and lungs start regaining normal function.
- **After one year** your risk of coronary disease is half that of a continuing smoker.
- **After five years** the risk of mouth, throat, esophagus and bladder cancer are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker.
- **After 10 years** the risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person still smoking, and cancer of the larynx (voice box) and pancreas decreases.
- **After 15 years** the risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker's.

These are just a few of the benefits of quitting smoking for good. Quitting while you are younger will reduce your health risks more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center offers smoking cessation classes and support sessions facilitated by Community Health Worker Cassandra Jackson. For information, call 278-4763.



# yoga not just for youngsters

yoga is an ideal activity to promote healthy bones

Yoga is big business, attracting more and more people each year. Designed to promote physical and mental health, yoga has helped millions of people across the globe control their stress and improve their flexibility, and studies have shown that yoga is only growing in popularity. According to a study conducted by the Harris Interactive Service Bureau, roughly 20 million Americans practiced yoga in 2012, marking a 29 percent increase from just four years earlier. While some men and women over 50 may feel their time to take up yoga has passed, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, yoga can pay numerous dividends for the over 50 crowd.

## Yoga can help alleviate hypertension.

Also known as high blood pressure, hypertension is a potentially dangerous condition that makes the heart work harder to pump blood to the body. Hypertension contributes to a hardening of the arteries known as atherosclerosis, and can even contribute to the development of heart failure. A person's risk of developing hypertension increases as he or she ages, so it's important that men and women over 50 take steps to reduce their risk of hypertension, and yoga can help them do just that. A normal blood pressure is 120 over 80, but people with hypertension often have blood pressure readings of 140 and above over 90 and above. Studies have shown that yoga can reduce the top number, which is referred to as the systolic blood pressure. In a study published in the Journal of Clinical Hypertension, researchers found that men and women who practiced yoga for six hours a week for 11 weeks reduced their systolic blood pressure by 33 points. The study's authors feel that the slow, controlled breathing that's essential to practicing yoga decreases nervous system activity, helping the body manage its blood pressure levels.

## Yoga helps practitioners maintain healthy weights.

While yoga may not help men and women shed weight as effectively as more vigorous activities, it can help them maintain healthy weights. Many men and women over 50 find vigorous or strenuous physical activity too

demanding, and might not be able to perform such activities with the frequency necessary to prevent weight gain. But while yoga is physically demanding, those who practice yoga often find it takes a smaller toll on their bodies than more traditional strength training. Another way yoga can help to maintain a healthy weight is through its relation to stress. Yoga can help to relieve stress, and lower stress levels reduce the likelihood that men and women will overeat, which is a common response to elevated stress levels.

## Yoga promotes strong bones.

Osteoporosis is a medical condition in which tissue loss leads to brittle and fragile bones. Aging is a significant risk factor for osteoporosis, and women are at even greater risk than men. The National Osteoporosis Foundation notes that women can lose up to 20 percent of their bone mass in the five to seven years after menopause, so it's important that women (and men) take steps to strengthen their bones. The nature of yoga makes it an ideal activity to promote healthy bones. Because it is a weight-bearing exercise, yoga forces practitioners to hold the weight of their bodies up against gravity. This resistance to gravity puts mild stress on the bones, which respond by laying down new bone growth. But unlike other weight-bearing activities, such as jogging or walking, yoga does not damage cartilage or put stress on the joints. The AARP notes that studies have indicated the weight-bearing activity of yoga can be especially effective at reducing the risk of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women.

Though yoga might not have been popular when today's men and women over 50 were in their 20s and 30s, that does not mean such men and women cannot take advantage of the numerous physical and mental benefits yoga has to offer. LP143965





# what to look for in an elder care facility

pay attention to facility ratings

As men and women enter their golden years, many decide they can no longer maintain their homes and choose to downgrade to something smaller, be it an apartment or a condominium. For millions of others, health plays a significant role when deciding where to move when it's time to sell their homes.

According to the AARP, slightly more than five percent of people 65 years and older reside in nursing homes, congregate care, assisted living, and board-and-care homes. Statistics Canada notes that by 2004-05, the most recent year for which statistics are available, one in 30 Canadians over the age of 65 were living in homes for the aged. Though no one plans to live in a nursing home, seniors and their families should at least know what to look for just in case.

## Determine Individual Needs

Men and women researching potential living facilities might find it difficult to determine their specific needs. Unforeseen health conditions, for instance, might dictate which option is the best fit. Men and women who have a medical condition that requires routine monitoring will almost certainly want a skilled nursing facility. But those without medical conditions who need help with simpler tasks of everyday life are likely to have those needs met by an intermediate facility. Some facilities provide both types of care, which can make transitioning from one to another much easier if or when that need arises. Facilities typically have intake planners on staff who evaluate each individual and determine which level of care is the best fit.

## Research Policies and Procedures

Each facility should be ready and willing to share and discuss its policies and procedures with regards to residents. What is the procedure when a resident has a medical emergency? What if a resident finds a living situation unpleasant? What is the facility's philosophy regarding staff and resident interaction? What are the facility's hiring practices, including certification requirements, for its personnel? What is the ratio of

staff to residents? Each facility should be able to answer these questions promptly and adequately. Those who can't should be checked off the list of residences to consider.

## Facility Ratings

According to the AARP, recent research has shown that nonprofit nursing homes such as the Schoellkopf Health Center in Niagara Falls (716-278-4578) – which recently received a five-star quality rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services – offer higher-quality care, better staff-resident ratios, and have fewer health violations than facilities managed by for-profit companies.

Men and women researching facilities can visit Caring.com, an online resource for men and women caring for aging relatives. The Web site enables adults to compare nursing homes in their areas, including if a home is for profit or nonprofit, and the home's capacity. U.S. residents can even learn each facility's Medicare ratings, which are determined by examining the safety of the facility and its overall quality of care and a host of other factors.

## Get a Firsthand Account of the Facility

Before choosing a facility for one's self or an elderly relative, individuals should spend some time at the facilities they're considering to get a firsthand account of what life at that facility is like. Observe the staff interactions with residents, including if they address residents with respect and patience. How do the current residents look? Are they unkempt and left to their own devices, or do they appear well groomed and are they encouraged to interact with other residents? Does the facility seem warm and welcoming, or is it antiseptic? The move to an elderly care facility is often difficult and sometimes depressing, so each of the above conditions can carry significant weight when choosing a facility.

Finding a nursing home or a similar facility for yourself or an aging relative is not necessarily easy. Men and women facing such a difficult decision should begin the process as early as possible to ensure they find the facility that is the best fit. TF11A402



# get on the road to recovery by identifying depression

depression is a treatable condition  
affecting millions of people

Nearly everyone feels down at one point or another. But when feelings of sadness stretch on and are accompanied by other symptoms, normal sadness might have given way to depression.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate depression affects one in 10 American adults at different levels, while Statistics Canada says around 5 percent of Canadians report symptoms that meet the criteria for a mood disorder, including depression.

Many sufferers of depression believe it is a personal weakness and something they should be able to control, but mood disorders are recognized mental illnesses that say nothing about a person's strength of character. Often brought on unexpectedly, mood disorders like depression cannot be traced to a single root cause. Many within the medical community believe depression is genetic, and oftentimes doctors treating patients for depression discover a history of depression among their patients' immediate family members.

Many different genes may act in combination to cause a mood disorder. In 2011, a British team isolated a gene that appears to be prevalent in families in which multiple members suffer from depression. The chromosome, 3p25-26, was found in more than 800 families with recurrent depression. External factors also can play a role in the onset of depression.

According to the CDC, certain groups are more likely to meet criteria for depression than others. These include women, people ages 45-64, African-Americans, Hispanics, and people with less than a high school education.

There are unique symptoms associated with depression. Not every person with this mood disorder will exhibit each and every symptom.

**The following symptoms appearing together often indicates depression:**

- feelings of sadness and loss
- feelings of irritability
- loss of pleasure in usually enjoyed activities
- changes in sleeping patterns, such as insomnia or sleeping too much

- difficulty concentrating
- frequent headaches
- noticeable lack of motivation
- anxiety and panic attacks
- withdrawal from friends and family
- inability to make decisions
- recurring thoughts of suicide or self-harm



People exhibiting symptoms of depression should first reach out to their primary care physician, who can begin a preliminary diagnosis. A doctor can also perform blood work to rule out other conditions that may contribute to mood problems, such as hormonal changes or illnesses.

Some doctors may refer patients to a mental health professional who is much more qualified to treat mood disorders.

Adults age 55 and older may benefit from an integrated care program such as Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center's Get Well/Stay Well program. Get Well/Stay Well (716-297-4906) views the patient as a whole. That means physical health, mental and behavioral health.

Assistance also is available from The Niagara Wellness Connection Center at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center (716-278-4541), which provides convenient access to primary care, behavioral health treatment, addiction screening, health and wellness education, fitness activities, community support services and financial and health insurance counseling all under one roof.

A mental health professional will likely conduct an interview and pay considerable attention to the patient's medical history. Gaining a stronger grasp of a patient's symptoms enables doctors to prescribe the most effective courses of treatment.

Treatments range from medication to talk therapy to cognitive-behavioral therapy. Those who do not respond to more conventional treatments can discuss further options with their doctors. Patients who are prescribed an antidepressant medication should expect several weeks to pass before the medication is fully effective. Antidepressants are not universally effective, and people being treated for depression or another mood disorder should not grow discouraged if one course of treatment is ineffective. Many treatment options are available to people with mood disorders.

Those who think they may be suffering from depression should first remember that they are not alone. Millions of people have depression at points in their lives or may experience recurrences of the condition. Visiting a doctor promptly can help sufferers of mood disorders address their conditions more quickly. (HM141830)

# baby boomers: three crucial times to review your medicare options for retirement

(BPT) - Baby boomers facing the big decision of when to take Social Security retirement shouldn't overlook the importance of signing up for Medicare at age 65. Although Social Security offers an age range, generally 62 to 70, for starting retirement benefits - you don't have this type of flexibility with Medicare health insurance.

"Turning 65 is the trigger for your Medicare enrollment, so it's important to study this decision as your birthday approaches," says Paula Muschler, operations manager of the Allsup Medicare Advisor. This is a Medicare plan selection service offering personalized help that includes customized research, a tailor-made report and enrollment assistance. "You have three months before, the month of and three months after your birthday to enroll properly in Medicare when you turn 65."

One important caution: You may decide to delay Medicare enrollment. "But if you make a mistake with this decision, you could end up with lifetime penalties that add to your Medicare costs," Muschler says. Anyone turning 65 should examine their Medicare choices carefully. Muschler outlines three situations that require close study.

## 1. You are reaching age 65, but you plan to continue working a few more years.

"You need to examine your Medicare enrollment because it interacts with your employer's group health plan," Muschler says. "Depending on your employer benefits and the size of your employer, you may need to enroll in Medicare Parts A and B." Original Medicare is made up of Part A, which is hospital insurance, and Part B, which is medical insurance.

## 2. You are reaching age 65 and retiring from work at the same time.

If you combine retirement with turning 65, it's important to coordinate the dates of actual retirement and your 65th birthday, Muschler says. "You should take steps to ensure that you don't have a gap in health care coverage, and you'll need to choose Medicare plans. This is especially true if you leave work a few months before you turn 65."

## 3. You retired from work before age 65 and have used other health insurance.

"You need to closely examine your health care options as

you get ready to turn 65 and move into Medicare," Muschler says. "There may be special considerations with ending COBRA, health insurance exchange or retiree coverage, depending on your situation. Once you determine that, yes, you do need to get ready for Medicare - carefully review all available Medicare plans."



Generally, people enrolling in Medicare choose from two paths. One option is to choose Original Medicare and a prescription drug plan, known as Medicare Part D. Many people also buy supplemental coverage, called Medigap, for added benefits. A second option is to shop among the Medicare Advantage plans available in WNY.

### Other factors to consider:

**Relocation.** Are you planning to move after retiring?

**Frequent travel.** Do you plan to split your year between two states or travel the country?

**Health.** What needs do you have? Do you have any chronic health issues?

**Cost.** What's your retirement income? Have you considered saving money with your Medicare plan?

**Medication.** It's critical to examine how your Part D plan covers the drugs you take when you first enroll and during each annual enrollment period.

"We frequently get calls from Medicare beneficiaries who didn't realize they could save so much money with their choices," Muschler says. "Sometimes they choose a plan because a friend recommended it, but they end up paying much more than they need to."

After first-time enrollment, participants can use Medicare annual open enrollment from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 each year to make changes. "Your Medicare plan can be one of the best things about your retirement if you find the plan that truly matches your needs, lifestyle and budget," Muschler says.

Experienced Allsup Medicare specialists can help you and your family members review Medicare plans and decisions. For a Medicare evaluation, call an Allsup Medicare Advisor specialist at (866) 521-7655 or go to [Medicare.Allsup.com](http://Medicare.Allsup.com).

If you are not yet eligible for Medicare but have questions about health insurance or the Affordable Care Act, contact Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center's Insurance Navigators at 278-4264. They can help.

## wound center of niagara earns RestorixHealth center of excellence award

RestorixHealth, a management company that develops and operates wound care centers of excellence nationwide, is pleased to announce that The Wound Center of Niagara is a recipient of their newly launched Wound Center of Excellence award. The award is presented to those centers that meet or exceed national wound care quality benchmarks in areas including healing outcomes and safety, along with a patient satisfaction rate of 95 percent or higher.

"We are proud to be a recipient of this award that recognizes the hard work, dedication and quality of care the staff at The Wound Center of Niagara provides to our patients every day," said Michael Mitchell, M.D., the center's medical director.

The Wound Center of Niagara is a specialized, outpatient wound care treatment center dedicated to the care of patients with chronic, non-healing wounds such as those resulting from diabetes, circulatory problems, or injury resulting from radiation. The center is staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of physicians and nurses and offers the most advanced therapies available, including hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

The Wound Center is especially proud to welcome Wound Care Nurse Melissa Molnar, RN, WCC, to the patient care team at The Wound Center. A graduate of Roberts Wesleyan University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science-Registered Nursing degree, Molnar holds an advanced certification in wound management from the Wound Care Education Institute. She has extensive experience in wound care, the successful treatment of chronic vascular and diabetic wounds, and diabetes, hospice and stroke patient care.

Molnar formerly served as clinical manager at the Center for Advanced Wound Care at Erie County Medical Center and as clinical advisor for wound and ostomy care at the Catholic Health System. She previously worked as a registered nurse at Millard Fillmore Hospital, Buffalo.

The Wound Center of Niagara is a service of Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, a full-service, 171-bed regional medical center with extensive inpatient and outpatient services including The Heart Center of Niagara, The Wound Center of Niagara, Niagara Wellness Connection Center, Diabetes & Endocrinology Center of Niagara and UBMD Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine.

RestorixHealth, a leading wound care management company, develops and manages comprehensive wound care centers of excellence. By forging strong relationships with their partners, RestorixHealth provides high quality, cost efficient solutions to wound care that offer advanced treatment therapies along with hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

Founded by physicians in 1997 to treat the growing incidence of chronic, non-healing wounds, RestorixHealth utilizes a quality and data driven approach to consistently achieve high treatment success rates, resulting in a dramatic improvement in patient quality of life. The company currently manages comprehensive centers throughout the United States in partnership with hospitals and health care facilities. For more information, visit [www.restorixhealth.com](http://www.restorixhealth.com).



The Wound Center of Niagara is located at 620 10th Street, across the street from the hospital, and is open Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, please call 716-278-4424.

- Our center's heal rate: 98%
- Our average days to heal: 31
- Our patient satisfaction rating: 98%

The  
Wound Center  
of  
Niagara

*Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center*

620 10th St., Suite 700, Niagara Falls  
Call (716) 278-4424



Comprehensive care for  
chronic, non-healing wounds

Nationally recognized for  
quality care, safety and  
patient satisfaction

# these dog breeds are especially compatible with seniors

the loyalty and intelligence of schnauzers makes them ideal companions



Pets often make ideal companions. They are around when a person needs support, they can provide protection for those living alone, they're always willing to lend an ear to problems, and many tend to offer unconditional love. Seniors facing an empty nest or the loss of a spouse may find pets can buoy their spirits. Studies have shown that seniors can benefit both mentally and physically from having a pet around. Pets can alleviate anxiety, depression and boredom.

While pets can provide comfort and companionship, they remain a significant responsibility. Seniors should find an animal that will fit in with their lifestyles. This is an important consideration for those seniors who travel frequently or have mobility issues. In addition, men and women living in senior communities or assisted living facilities should determine if there are any pet restrictions in place.

Those seniors who decide a dog will be the best fit can choose among several breeds that may be a good match for their needs. When selecting a dog, consider both size and temperament.

Smaller dogs tend to be easier to handle and will need less maintenance. They are easily carried and won't take as long to bathe and groom. Smaller dogs also consume less food than larger breeds, reducing the expense of dog food and the hassle of wrangling large, heavy bags of chow.

Temperament is also important, as some breeds tend to be more easygoing than others. Larger breeds may be preferable to smaller breeds, which tend to be hyperactive. However, always remember there are pros and cons to each breed, and each dog will demonstrate his or her own personality traits.

**The following are some dogs that can be especially compatible with seniors:**

**Pug:** Equally playful and willing to be a lap dog, the pug requires little exercise and grooming. The breed is typically nonaggressive and submissive. Pugs are

good-natured and playful; they don't often bark and are easy to train.

**Shih Tzu:** The Shih Tzu lives for attention, but this breed can be dominant and difficult to train. The Shih Tzu will be alert to its surroundings and, despite its small stature, can be a good watchdog.

**Pomeranian:** Pomeranians look like big balls of fur and can bring a smile to an owner's face. The breed tends to be perky, can display dominance and can be difficult to train. Because Pomeranians can be dog-aggressive, they may be best as the only pet in the house.

**Yorkshire terrier:** The Yorkie is a diminutive breed in size only, as they tend to have exuberant personalities that dwarf their stature. The ideal lap dog, Yorkies want to lie around and lounge, though some do like to bark. If the fur is kept short in a "puppy cut," the dog can be easy to maintain.

**Pembroke Welsh Corgi:** This medium-sized dog hails from Wales and typically requires only moderate exercise and little grooming. They are easy to train and moderately dominant. They don't bark excessively, and they often get along with other dogs.

**Schnauzer:** Available in three sizes, Schnauzers are good companions and protectors. This is an intelligent and loyal breed and will need to be kept amused to stave off boredom.

**Brussels Griffon:** These dogs do not shed, but they will require professional grooming at least once every 3 months. If socialized early, the Griffon can be a good companion but will likely remain wary of strangers. They are good watchdogs and devoted to their owners. (PE144042)

# did you know?

## heart healthy oven fried zucchini sticks

Cirrhosis is scarring of the liver that occurs when hard scar tissue replaces soft, healthy tissue in the liver. As cirrhosis worsens, the liver has less healthy tissue, and, when left untreated, cirrhosis can cause liver failure. Cirrhosis can be fatal, and is caused by chronic liver diseases, which damages the liver over a long period of time, often several years.



According to the American Liver Foundation, chronic alcoholism is the leading cause of cirrhosis in the United States. Overconsumption of alcohol can cause the liver to swell, eventually leading to cirrhosis.

Chronic hepatitis C is the second leading cause of cirrhosis in the United States, and about one in four people with chronic hepatitis C will develop cirrhosis, which also can be caused by chronic hepatitis B and hepatitis D.

Fat buildup in the liver not caused by alcohol consumption also can cause cirrhosis. Known as nonalcoholic steatohepatitis, or NASH, this often is accompanied by other health conditions, including diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, and coronary artery disease.

Treatments for cirrhosis depend on the extent of the damage done to the liver at the time of diagnosis, but medication or lifestyle changes may be recommended. If cirrhosis has advanced to the point where treatment will prove ineffective, then a liver transplant may be necessary. TF13A647

Although zucchini is treated as a vegetable, and is usually cooked it is really a fruit that originates from Italy. It is also very low in calories and contains useful amounts of folate, potassium and vitamin A.



### Heart Healthy Oven Fried Zucchini Sticks Makes 4 Servings

- Canola or olive oil cooking spray
- 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons cornmeal
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 3 medium zucchini (cut into 1/2-by-3-inch sticks)
- 2 large egg whites (lightly beaten)

Preheat oven to 475°F. Coat a large baking sheet with cooking spray.

Combine flours, cornmeal, salt and pepper in a large sealable plastic bag.

Dip zucchini in egg white, shake in the bag to coat, and arrange, not touching, on the baking sheet. Coat all exposed sides with cooking spray.

Bake on the center rack for 10 minutes. Turn the zucchini and coat any floury spots with cooking spray. Continue to bake until golden and just tender, about 8 to 10 minutes more. Serve hot.

#### Nutrient Facts Per Serving:

127 Calories, 3g fat (0g Saturated fat), 0mg Cholesterol, 23g Carbohydrates, 7g Protein, 4g Fiber, 427mg Sodium.

Source: EatingWell for a Healthy Heart Cookbook (2008)

# light and luscious crispy chicken cutlets with pears, shallots and wilted spinach

pears are a perfect pick for  
weeknight dinner



(FF) Pairing the unique sweetness of healthy, fresh pears with savory proteins like pork or chicken makes for a satisfying supper that can be made in a snap. "Pears are a perfect pick for weeknight dinners," says Ellie Krieger, author of "Weeknight Wonders: Delicious Healthy Dinners in 30 Minutes or Less." Krieger says, "The distinctive flavor of pears goes well in savory main dishes that are simple to make and that will be enjoyed by the whole family."

## Crispy Chicken Cutlets with Pears, Shallots and Wilted Spinach

Makes 4 servings

- 4 small boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 large USA Pears, peeled, cored and cut in 1/2-inch dice
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 3/4 cup chicken or vegetable stock
- 4 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme (about 4 sprigs)
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped flat leaf parsley
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 1/4 pounds fresh spinach, trimmed, washed and dried

Place each chicken breast between 2 sheets of plastic wrap. Using heavy skillet or mallet, pound breasts to 1/4-inch thickness. Season both sides with salt and freshly ground black pepper and lightly coat with dusting of flour.

Place 1 tablespoon each of olive oil and butter in large skillet over medium high heat. When butter begins to foam, add two chicken breasts and sauté one side until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Turn chicken breasts over and sauté other side until cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer chicken to plate, raise heat to medium high and repeat with another tablespoon each of olive oil and butter and other 2 chicken breasts.

Add shallots and pears to pan and cook over medium-high heat until lightly translucent and golden, about 3 minutes. Add lemon juice, mustard, chicken stock and any juices on plate and deglaze pan, scraping to loosen any brown bits on bottom with wooden spoon. Simmer until sauce reduces by half, about 4 minutes. Add chopped thyme and parsley, and gradually stir in remaining butter until just melted.

For spinach, add remaining olive oil and sliced garlic to large sauté pan. Warm the oil over high heat. When very hot, and before garlic has color, add spinach and cook, stirring constantly for about 2 minutes or until spinach is bright green and slightly wilted. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

To serve, divide spinach between four plates, placing a mound on each. Top spinach with cutlet and spoon shallot and pear sauce over top.



### Did you know?

According to Pear Bureau Northwest about 3000 known varieties of pears are grown worldwide! For more great recipe ideas, visit [www.usapears.org](http://www.usapears.org).



“I’m back on the tractor  
and out in the orchards.

**Thanks to the new Memorial.”**

**OSCAR VIZCARRA, OWNER, BECKER FARMS – GASPORT, NY**  
*Minimally invasive spine surgery patient*

Oscar Vizcarra’s leg pain was so excruciating he couldn’t even sit on his tractor or push in the clutch. That was until his brother-in-law, a radiologist, guided him to Dr. Michael Stoffman at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center. Thanks to a minimally invasive spine surgery technique, Dr. Stoffman gave Oscar immediate relief from his pain. “It was amazing,” said Oscar. “You can’t even tell where the surgery took place. I went to work the next day to share the miracle...and I haven’t slowed down since.”



**Memorial Medical Center**

*[nfmmc.org](http://nfmmc.org)*