

SENIOR SUCCESS

NOVEMBER 2021

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE WARREN COUNTY RECORD AND MONTGOMERY STANDARD

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Staying Flexible

We're not talking about your schedule when you're retired. We mean your joints and muscles, which can get more stiff as we get older.

A more flexible body can help with your golf swing, your tennis game and just with getting around in general. If you spend a lot of time sitting or looking at a screen, it can be easy to get too stiff. Here are some simple exercises from Silver Sneakers to keep you moving.

OVERHEAD SIDE STRETCH

Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart and raise your arms overhead. Interlace your fingers. Keeping your torso long, lean gently to the left and hold for 10-30 seconds. Return to center, then repeat on the other side.

If that's too hard: Sit tall in a chair, keeping your hips, knees and toes forward. Rest your arms on your hips or keep them down by your sides, then bend.

SHOULDER STRETCH

Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart and reach your right arm across your body. Place your left hand on your upper right arm and gently draw your right arm closer. Hold for 10-30 seconds, release and switch arms. Repeat.

If that's too hard: Sit tall in a chair, keeping your hips, knees and toes forward, then do the arm exercise.

TRICEPS STRETCH

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and raise your arms overhead. Bend your right arm so it's behind your head and place your left hand above your right elbow. Gently draw your right arm in and hold for 10-30 seconds. Release, switch arms and repeat.

If that's too hard: Sit tall in a chair, keeping your hips, knees and toes forward. For a more shallow stretch, don't reach your bottom hand as far and do the exercise as instructed above.

HAMSTRING STRETCH

Place your right heel on a bench with your leg straight and your toes pointing up. Without rounding your back, gently hinge forward from your hips until you feel a comfortable stretch. Hold for 10-30 seconds, release, switch legs and repeat.

If that's too hard: Do this stretch while seated in a chair and resting your heel on the floor in front of you.

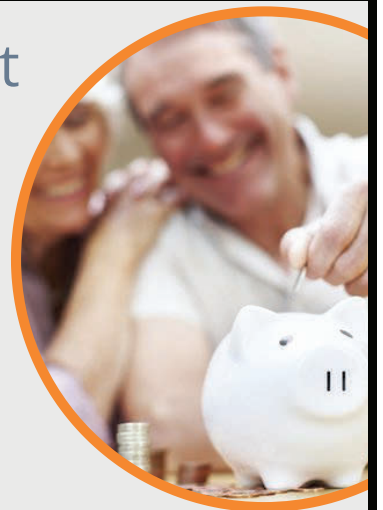


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Driving Over 65

We know things change as we get older, and that includes our ability to drive a car. But driving is a major part of maintaining independence.

With proper planning, it can be possible to drive well into your senior years. And, when you do give up the keys, it doesn't have to mean the end of your independence.

WHY DRIVING IS HARDER

Older adults are more likely to receive traffic citations and get into accidents than younger drivers, HelpGuide.org says. This is driven by things like decreased vision, impaired hearing, slower reflexes and other health conditions. Aging can also impact your strength, coordination and flexibility, which can affect your ability to drive safely.

SAFETY TIPS FOR OLDER DRIVERS

Get regular check-ups to maintain your health and your ability to drive. Get your eyes checked every year and make sure that your corrective lenses are current. Keep your car's windshield, mirrors and headlights clean, and turn up the brightness on your instrument panel to make sure you can see.

Have your hearing checked annually and, if you need hearing aids, make sure you wear them while driving. Be careful when opening your car's windows, though, because drafts can affect a hearing aid's effectiveness.

You should also exercise regularly because that will keep you stron-



ger and more flexible longer, which will, in turn, improve your reflexes and range of motion, meaning you can stay behind the wheel longer.

GIVING UP THE KEYS

When it's time to stop driving — if your friends and family members have concerns, for instance — it's normal to feel frustrated or angry. You may even feel ashamed, HelpGuide.org says, but remember that it takes a lot of courage to stop driving and put the safety of yourself and others first.

Some benefits to living without a car are the savings on the cost of car ownership. Even if you drive very little, you still have to pay for things like maintenance and insurance. Accepting rides from friends and family can expand your social circle and live your life at a slower pace without the stress of driving. Explore public transportation, ride sharing, community shuttles and mobile app services.

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Keeping Your Senior Warm

Cold weather is upon us and it is time to prepare your family for the chilly winds the fall and winter bring.

Here are some tips for keeping yourself or a loved one warm this winter.

WARM YOUR HOME

The first line of defense from the harsh cold weather outside is your home. Keep your home moderately warm this fall and winter seasons by keeping your thermostat anywhere between 68 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

If you have curtains or blinds, make sure to keep them closed throughout the seasons to keep the warm air from escaping.

Check the door and window seals around your home to make sure you don't feel warm air escaping.

You may have to caulk the windows to make sure there is an airtight seal. Every little measure you take with your doors and windows can save you work and money in the long run.



KEEP WARM CLOTHES

Make sure the senior in your life has plenty of warm clothes to wear throughout the cold weather.

It's be a good idea to have a basket full of light blankets around the home to protect from drafts. The more warm clothes available, the better and safer it will be when the weather gets cold.

Stock up on fuzzy socks, shirts and pants to help keep you or the senior in your life as warm as possible.

EXTRA PRECAUTIONS

If you or the senior in your life stay in a specific room throughout the day and need extra warmth, consider investing in

an electric space heater. This space heater is one you can plug into the wall and place close to a bed, desk or chair to keep warm.

Some space heaters can emit carbon monoxide, so do your research to be sure you are getting a safe unit.

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Sleep for Immune Health

Sleep is not only good for brain health but is also good for immune health.

Good sleeping habits and techniques will help you or a loved one get the best sleep. Here are some tips.

SLEEP AND VACCINES

SleepFoundation.org says studies have shown that sleep improves the effects of vaccines, demonstrating sleep's benefits for adaptive immunity.

Getting good sleep at night helps keep your immune system balanced and performing well. It's important your immune system is able to fight potential threats to the body and your health.

It's especially important in this time as we are still facing COVID-19. Your immune system has to be better than it has ever been to fight the flu, COVID-19 and the common cold.

Your immune system becomes very active while you are asleep because when you sleep, your muscles and breathing are slowed down.

During sleep, your immune system is working hard to learn how to attack and defend your body against any viruses introduced to your body.

IMMUNE SYSTEM AND SLEEP

SleepFoundation.org says people who are sick often spend more time in bed because infections can trigger responses from your immune system such as less energy and sleepiness.

Your body enters different stages of sleep when you are sick, specifically, stage three non-rapid eye movement or NREM sleep. In this stage, your body is in a deep sleep where you see the most slowing of bodily processes, such as muscle movement and breathing.

In this stage your immune system has more energy to fight infection.

HOW TO IMPROVE SLEEP

There are various methods and medicines you can take to help you sleep better, but SleepFoundation.org says the best way to begin your path to better sleep is by your habits and routines.

Look at the time you or your senior lay your head down to rest for the night and think about how consistent you are going to bed at that time. Think about how well you sleep when you go to bed at that time. Also consider the amount of time you are sleeping a night. These are all factors to consider to improve your sleep hygiene.

You should be getting at least six to eight hours of good sleep a night. If you are not getting this amount of sleep, try to change your routine and habits during the day to meet these sleep goals.

Go to bed earlier or get some exercise a few hours before bed to make you feel more tired.

These are all habits you can begin to get your health and sleep hygiene on track.



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Living in a Senior Development

Don't think of it as a rest home; these days, senior living developments are anything but restful.

You can find a variety of living arrangements, from single homes to apartments and individual rooms, all in an environment with lots to do and tailored to the unique needs of an older community.

Here are tips to finding the right senior living community for you from Caring.com.

A SPECTRUM OF CARE

There are many kinds of senior care, from independent living communities to assisted living communities to memory care facilities. Talk with your family to decide what kind of care you'll need and try to plan accordingly. Some facilities will work with you over the full spectrum of care.

PRICING

Compare several communities and establish a realistic price point for your lifestyle. Caring.com says you can get help from veterans benefits, long-term care insurance, Social Security, pensions or annuities, real estate assets, life insurance, Medicare and Medicaid and other programs. Ask the experts at your senior services department or local senior communities to help you identify ways to pay for your senior living both now and if more involved care is needed.

TAKE THE TOUR

Always visit your prospective senior communities before making the big move. Experience the atmosphere, try the food, meet the staff and residents and try out all the amenities. Some questions you may want to ask include:

- Is the neighborhood quiet and pleasant?
- How easy is it to park?
- Are the buildings clean and attractive? How about the grounds?
- Is there a safe area for outdoor activities?
- Do you feel pressured in any way?
- Does it feel like the staff is listening to your needs and questions?
- Are you able to talk to staff other than the tour guide?
- Are any shared facilities clean and easy to navigate?
- Are there posted schedules of activities and are there any you'd like to participate in?
- Is there any scheduled interaction with the outside community?
- Look for social and entertainment options in and around the community.
- Can you cook in your apartment or is there a dining room? If there's a dining room, how's the food?
- Can you have a pet? What are the rules for owning an animal?

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