

MATURE living



Tips for improving your sleep

Do you regularly have trouble sleeping? You're not alone, in fact, this is a common problem among seniors. Fortunately, there are a number of things you can do to catch more Z's.

HABITS TO ADOPT

- **Creating a bedtime routine.** A sensible going-to-bed routine is essential for getting a good night's rest. A period of relaxation allows your body to prepare for sleep.
- **Reserving your bedroom exclusively for sleeping.** Only head to your bedroom when you feel tired.
- **Implementing a healthy lifestyle.** Be sure to eat a healthy diet, get plenty of

exercise and engage in mentally stimulating activities.

- **Journaling before you go to bed.** If your thoughts tend to run amok as you lay in bed at night, try jotting them down on paper. This helps to clear your mind and ward off anxiety.

HABITS TO AVOID

- **Excessive napping.** Don't extend your daytime naps past 20 minutes, and don't take naps after three o'clock.
- **Consuming too much caffeine.** Particularly in the evening, avoid foods and drinks that over-stimulate the senses such as coffee, cola and chocolate.
- **Oversleeping.** If you wake up early, don't remain in bed too long. It's natural to assume that more sleep equals more rest but in reality, sleeping in tends to increase fatigue.

Still short on Z's despite adopting these habits? Then consult with a medical professional. In particular, you may want to ask your pharmacist if the medication you're taking could be affecting your sleep.



How foreign-born seniors can combat social isolation

Foreign born seniors face a number of distinct challenges when it comes to social isolation. These include cultural, language and economic barriers as well as discrimination and limited access to services. Fortunately, there's a large network of resources available to older immigrants and refugees.

SERVICES FOR FOREIGN-BORN SENIORS

At the core of this network of services for elderly immigrants in Canada are agencies providing settlement services. These agencies are community based (and often free to access) and label themselves in several ways:

- Settlement services
- Immigrant services
- Newcomer services
- Immigrant- or refugee-serving agencies or organizations

These agencies provide immigrants and refugees with the following:

- Help with filling out forms and applications
- Services for translating and interpreting documents
- Help finding a job or educational training
- Information on housing and healthcare

Such agencies and organizations also serve as a gateway to various resources available

to Canadian immigrants. The following tends to be particularly helpful to foreign-born seniors struggling with social isolation:

- **English language training programs.** They incorporate speaking, listening, reading and writing in English. Libraries often host these programs.
- **Computer classes.** They teach individuals to use a computer, access the internet, send an email, navigate a search engine and more. Libraries often offer this resource.
- **Volunteer activities.** Volunteering provides opportunities for engaging with the community and making meaningful social connections. Local volunteer centres can be found online at volunteer.ca.
- **Wellness activities.** This includes exercise classes, cultural activities, dancing and cooking classes.

To find an agency providing settlement services in your region, visit the following website: cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/services.



How to communicate with someone who has dementia

Conversations tend to be challenging for people with dementia, especially as the condition progresses. This doesn't mean, however, that discussions aren't energizing and enjoyable for them. In fact, people with dementia derive joy, comfort and stimulation from conversations with friends and family members. If someone close to you has dementia, here are some tips for effectively communicating with them.

- **Get their attention.** Address the person by their first name and maintain eye contact.

- **State your message clearly.** Speak slowly, use simple words and short sentences and be direct. If initially the person doesn't understand what you say, repeat the message using the same wording. If he or she is still unable to understand, wait a couple minutes then try again, simplifying your phrasing if possible.
- **Show warmth and positivity.** Encourage the person, show your affection for them and take care not to reveal frustration or impatience.
- **Rely on nonverbal cues.** Use facial expressions and touch (when appropriate) to convey your emotions and your message. When speaking, pay extra attention to your tone of voice. Such considerations are especially important when the person is having difficulty or is unable to comprehend what you say. The affection and respect you show will be understood regardless.
- **Use names, not pronouns.** Avoid pronouns like "he," "she" and "they," and instead repeat the names of the people you're talking about. Doing this helps those with dementia better follow the thread of the conversation.

Finally, know that your affection is reciprocated. Although people with dementia sometimes forget names and even faces, they recognize when they're speaking with someone who cares about them.



Online dating tips for seniors looking for love

If you think online dating is reserved for young people seeking casual encounters, then think again. The internet is a great resource for people of all ages to find love. In fact, more seniors than ever are successfully finding companionship online.

If you'd like to give online dating a try, here are some tips to get you started.

- **Use the right site.** Sign up for one of the big sites with lots of regular users to increase your chances of meeting someone. Alternatively, use a specialized site to find a person who shares your interests or beliefs.
- **Be honest.** It can be tempting to fib about your age, body type or education to attract other people. Don't do it. You're looking for someone who likes you, not a made up version of you.
- **Stay safe.** Most people you'll meet online are normal individuals looking for love.

However, there are a few bad eggs. Protect yourself online by creating a separate email address that doesn't use your full name. If you decide to meet someone in person, make sure your first encounter's somewhere public, that you tell a friend where you'll be and that you stay sober.

Online dating requires patience. Your perfect match is bound to be out there looking for you too; it just may take some time to find him or her.



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Banana cinnamon muffins

Paired with a steaming cup of tea or a tall glass of milk, these light and fluffy muffins topped with crispy cinnamon flakes are sure to delight your taste buds!

INGREDIENTS
(Makes 12 muffins)

TOPPING:

- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon

MUFFINS:

- 3 very ripe bananas, puréed
- 1/3 cup melted butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- A pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 cups flour

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F and line a muffin tray with 12 cups.
2. In a small bowl, mix the sugar and cinnamon to make the topping.
3. In a bigger bowl, mix the bananas, butter, sugar, egg, baking soda, salt and vanilla extract. Next, add the flour and delicately mix with a spatula.
4. Pour half of the batter into the muffin moulds, taking care not to overfill, and sprinkle half of the cinnamon topping onto the batter. Once done, add the rest of the batter and topping to the moulds.
5. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes. To make sure the muffins are cooked through, insert a toothpick in the middle. Continue baking until the toothpick comes out clean.

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