

SENIOR LIVING



Move around and live longer

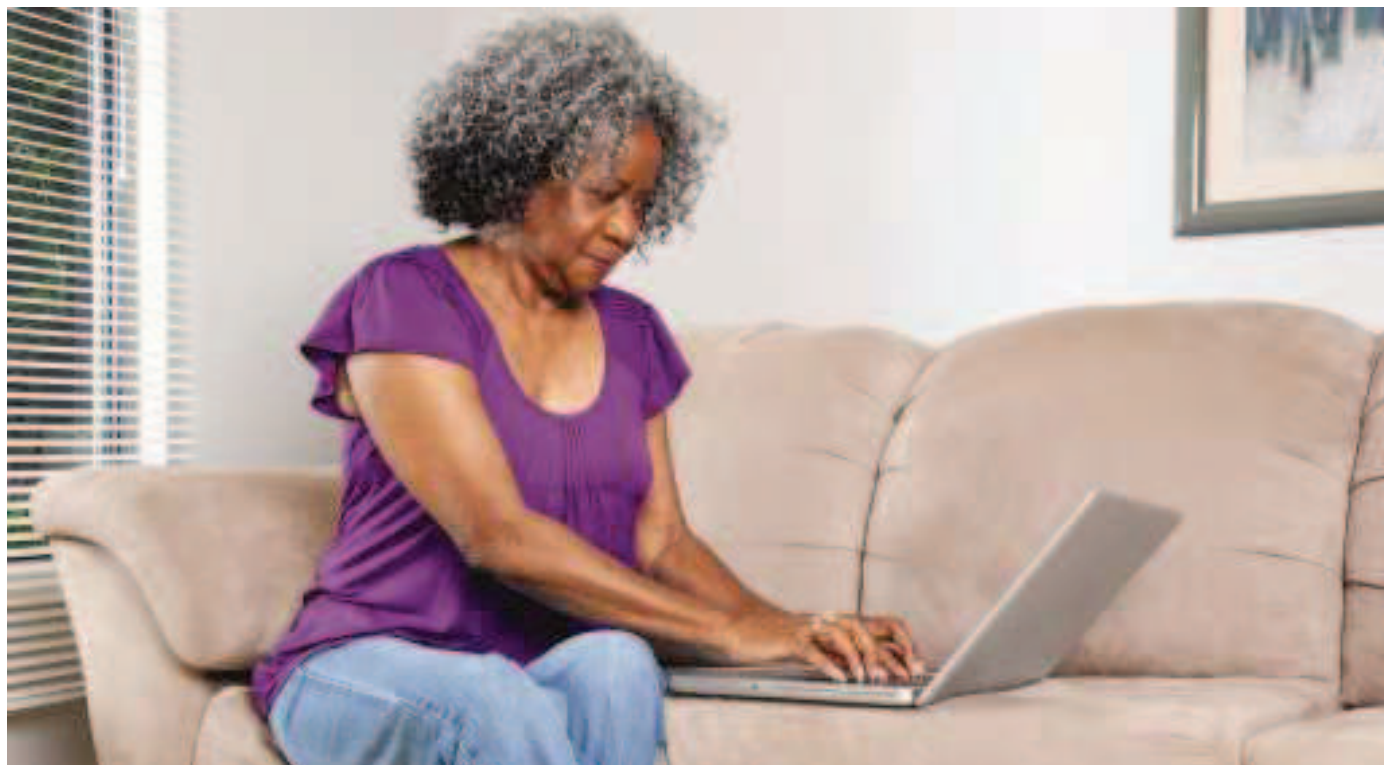
BY MATILDA CHARLES

Another study of seniors ages 50-79 has concluded that we can live longer if we're more active. This one comes with some fancy credentials: It was run by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The difference between this study and previous ones that showed that

activity makes us live longer is that this study was monitored. Other studies used self-reported information about the level of activity. This time researchers used activity monitors worn on the body, so the information was certain to be correct. They then tracked those people for eight years. They learned that moving doesn't have to involve weights and sweating at the gym. Easy activity — even making the bed, mopping the floor and walking around the

neighborhood — all count as activity that can help us live longer. Here's the bottom line: If we're fairly active, if we get up and move around for 30 minutes, we'll live longer. This can be either light or moderate physical activity. Sweaty workouts are not required, but moderate-to-vigorous activity is especially beneficial. If we get an average amount of activity and only move around for 10 minutes a day, we can improve our risk of mortality by one-third. (But, once we're up and moving, why stop at 10 minutes? Wash one more window or walk one more wing of the mall during senior walking mornings, and we've just lowered our mortality risk.)

If we're not at all active, if we let ourselves be extremely sedentary, we're five times more likely to die.



Different ways scammers steal money

BY MATILDA CHARLES

The U.S. Senate Aging Committee has made a list of the top 10 frauds targeting seniors based on calls to the Fraud Hotline. Some of these have been around for many years, and the number of victims keeps growing: In one year alone, seniors lost \$2.9 billion due to scams.

1. IRS Impersonation Scams
2. Sweepstakes Scams
3. Robocalls/Unwanted Phone Calls
4. Computer Tech Support Schemes

BY MATILDA CHARLES

Seniors have long been the victims of scams: identity theft, lotteries, fake computer tech support, IRS impersonation, fake charities, home repair, utility sign-ups and more. Now there's one that's beyond comprehension — seniors are being conned into being drug mules in foreign countries. These drug-

5. Identity Theft
6. Grandparent Scams
7. Elder Financial Abuse
8. Grant Scams
9. Romance Scams/Confidence Fraud
10. Home Improvement Scams

There are ways to avoid becoming a victim: Step 1 is to use Caller ID and an answering machine. If you don't recognize the number that's calling, don't answer. However, scammers now know how to "spoof" phone numbers and can make it appear that the number is com-

ing from anywhere. Answering a scammer call does two things: It lets scammers know that someone is at that number, and it puts you in the position of being a potential victim.

Which makes Step 2 even more important if you get a scam call: Hang up, quickly. You're under no obligation to talk to anyone you don't know on the phone, especially if they ask you for information or make you uncomfortable in any way. Step 3 is to get details about how each type of fraud is perpetuated. The

committee has put together a 48-page guide that describes each one in detail. Go online to www.aging.senate.gov and search for "Fighting Fraud Guide." If you've been a victim of fraud, or

even if you were contacted but didn't fall for the scam, call the fraud hotline at 1-855-303-9470.

If you're a caregiver or have a senior parent, get the guide and go over it together to make sure your senior understands how to handle potential scams.

Scam: Seniors used as drug mules

mule scams usually start online with seniors being enticed by romantic relationships. Once trust is built up, the senior is asked to travel internationally, with the scammers making the arrangements that go through multiple countries. On one leg of the journey, the senior is asked to carry a package or extra piece of luggage. One such senior, age 77, is a former pas-

tor who never even had a traffic ticket. He'd been involved in an online romance, which was a scam. For years he'd been sending the woman money, to the detriment of his own financial situation. Eventually he was convinced to transport "real estate documents" from South America to London for his online friend. Unbeknownst to him, the weighty packages

contained cocaine. He was arrested and sits in a European prison.

According to testimony at a U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging hearing, 145 seniors have been arrested by foreign governments for trying to smuggle drugs, and 44 of them are still in prison.

Bridal Open House & Tasting Event

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