

Senior News Line

By Matilda Charles

New Pill Bottle Labels

Don't be surprised if your next prescription bottle looks different, especially if you pick up your drugs at CVS. The newest thing is to put lots of information on the label, in big letters on a big label. CVS is calling it ScriptPath.

If you take multiple drugs and haven't been given instructions about what can go with what, ask. Don't count on the fancy new label to let you know. Tell the pharmacist all the drugs you're taking and when, and ask when your new drug should be fit into the schedule. Don't just take them all at once in the morning. There's one drug, for example, that can't be taken within an hour of food. Another one works better late at night. You need accurate information. Check the side of the bottle where the label says morning, midday, evening and bedtime,

and see which one is marked. Ask, especially, if your doctor or pharmacist has told you one thing and the pill bottle indicates something else.

One change you'll likely see is the size of the bottle itself. Even if you're only getting a month's supply of small pills, the label needs to go around the bottle. Your best bet, especially if you have a new prescription, is to not leave the counter until you have a chance to read the label and ask questions. Having said all this, I do not like the new label. Perhaps the pharmacy needs a new printer cartridge, or maybe the printer doesn't work well with that type of paper label. I only know that it nearly requires a magnifying glass to read the faint and broken up letters. I'm tempted to make my own label.

New Studies Target Fruits, Eggs, Finances

Here is selection of studies about seniors from around the globe:

Norway: It seems that what we've been told about how many servings of fruits and vegetables to eat each day to stay healthy might not be accurate. All these years we've been told five. The correct number is eight. Finding: For every 200 gram (.84 cup) increase in fruits or vegetables we eat, we decrease our risk of stroke and premature death by 10.8 percent. Finding: Eating canned fruit, however, increases the risk.

Australia: For years we've been told to be wary of the cholesterol in eggs. A new study now claims that eggs aren't linked to heart disease, even eating up to a dozen eggs per week, if you have pre-diabetes and Type 2 diabetes. Finding: The caveat is that you must switch from butter to monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats like olive oil. Finding: The study was

financed by an Australian egg website, but it's claimed they didn't have anything to do with the study itself.

United States: Seniors who have had serious financial shocks experience increased mortality from all causes. A study followed 8,700 seniors (some wealthy and some not) for 20 years after being assessed in 1994. "Negative wealth shock" was considered as losing more than 75 percent of net worth over a two-year period. Finding: Participants were 50 percent more likely to die if they suffered negative wealth shock during a two-year period. Finding: Those who only experienced low income during their lives were at an even greater risk of death.

Before you make changes to your diet based on studies, ask your doctor. After all, fruit contains sugar and eggs have cholesterol. While you're there, if you've had a serious financial setback, let your doctor know.

Here's How to Stay Cool This Summer

Summer isn't officially here, but there is at least one location in the country where the temperature today reached 100 degrees F. Much of the Sunbelt already is seeing highs in the 90s. All of those numbers are going to rise in the coming weeks. It's the time of year for seniors to beware the heat. Here are some tips:

* If you have window air conditioners that someone installs for you each year, schedule it earlier rather than later. Once the interior walls in your house get warm, it's hard to bring those temperatures down.

* Consider sun-blocking drapes for windows on the south and west side of the house. Keep them closed during the heat of the day.

* Join afternoon activities at the library and senior center. That way you'll be in air conditioning when the heat is at its worst. If you can get to the mall, go there. Sit in the food court and read a book, or walk some laps for exercise.

* Plan your errands for early or late in the day.

* Call your doctor's office and ask about your water intake. Be sure to tell them all of your medications; some drugs can make it too easy to become dehydrated, especially if you take diuretics. Remember that sugary drinks don't count as liquid intake.

* Keep an eye on your neighbors if they're out in the yard. If you go out, use a wide-brim woven hat. Check the weather and keep an eye on the heat index. Wear loose cotton clothing.

Remember: We seniors don't always know when we're getting overheated. Heat exhaustion or heatstroke can creep up on us because our circulatory system doesn't work like it used to. Know the symptoms of heat exhaustion: weakness, headaches, dizziness and muscle cramps. The more serious heatstroke can follow only 10-15 minutes later.

Living 50 Plus

How to save for retirement after 50



Whether it's advice from their parents, a response to television ads urging viewers to save for retirement, or their own financial savvy, many of today's young professionals recognize the importance of saving for retirement from the moment they receive their first paychecks. But men and women over 50 may not have been so practical, and many such professionals may feel a need to save more as their retirements draw ever closer.

Saving for retirement might seem like a no-brainer, but the National Institute on Retirement Security notes that, in 2017, almost 40 million households in the United States had no retirement savings at all. In addition, the Employee Benefit Research Institute

found that Americans have a retirement savings deficit of \$4.3 trillion, meaning they have \$4.3 trillion less in retirement savings than they should.

Men and women over 50 who have retirement savings deficits may need to go beyond depositing more money in their retirement accounts in order to live comfortably and pay their bills in retirement. The following are a few simple ways to start saving more for retirement.

- Redirect nonessential expenses into savings. Some retirement accounts, such as IRAs, are governed by deposit limits. But others, such as 401(k) retirement plans, have no such limits. Men and women can examine their spending habits in an effort to find areas where they can cut back on nonessential expenses, such as cable television subscriptions and dining out. Any money saved each month can then be redirected into savings and/or retirement accounts.

- Reconsider your retirement date. Deciding to work past the age of 65 is another way

men and women over 50 can save more for retirement. Many professionals now continue working past the age of 65 for a variety of reasons. Some may suspect they'll grow bored in retirement, while others may keep working out of financial need. Others may simply love their jobs and want to keep going until their passion runs out. Regardless of the reason, working past the age of 65 allows men and women to keep earning and saving for retirement, while also delaying the first withdrawal from their retirement savings accounts.

- Reconsider your current and future living situation. Housing costs are many people's most considerable expense, and that won't necessarily change in retirement. Even men and women who have paid off their mortgages may benefit by moving to a region with lower taxes or staying in the same area but downsizing to a smaller home where their taxes and utility bills will be lower. Adults who decide to move to more affordable areas or into smaller, less expensive homes can then redirect the money they are saving into interest-bearing retirement or savings accounts.

Many people begin saving for retirement the moment they cash their first professional paycheck. But even adults over the age of 50 sometimes feel a need to save more as their retirement dates draw closer, and there are many ways to do just that.

Tips to improve memory

Diet can be the key to improving

Forgetfulness can affect anyone. For example, few, if any, adults can say they have not experienced moments when they could not find their keys. And once the keys are found, people move on without giving much thought to why they did not immediately remember where they left their keys.

Isolated incidents where people cannot recall where they placed their car keys or other minor bouts with forgetfulness do not occur by accident. In fact, the Harvard Medical School notes that they are likely by-products of age-related changes in thinking skills. When people reach their 50s, chemical and

structural changes in the brain may begin to occur, and these changes can affect a person's ability to process memories.

Father Time may be a formidable foe, but people can take steps to give their memories a boost as they get older.

- Embrace recognition instead of trusting recall. Dr. Joel Salinas, a neurologist who specializes in behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital, notes that human beings are better at recognition than recall. That means people are more likely to remember something they read, such as a note or a list, than something they're simply told.

- Recognize the value of repetition. The Harvard Medical School notes that people might be more inclined to remember what they hear if they repeat it out loud. Names and addresses might be more easily remembered after they're repeated out loud because repetition increases the likelihood that the brain will record the information and be capable of retrieving it later. When studying for exams, many students repeat important points to themselves time and again, and that same approach can be applied by adults who are trying to improve their memories.

- Eat a healthy diet. A study published in 2015 in the journal Neurology found that people who eat healthy diets with lots of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and fish and little alcohol and red meat may be less likely to experience declines in their memory and thinking skills. Authored by Andrew Smyth of McMaster University in Ontario and the

National University of Ireland in Galway, the study following more than 27,000 people in 40 countries for an average of roughly five years. All participants were 55 and older and had diabetes or a history of heart disease, stroke or peripheral artery disease. Those who ate the healthiest diets were 24 percent less likely to experience cognitive decline than people with the least healthy diets.

- Break things down. Breaking things down into small chunks also can help improve memory. If tasked with remembering something extensive, such as a speech, focus on a single sentence at a time, only moving on to the next sentence when you're confident you have successfully committed the preceding sentence to memory.

Periodic memory lapses are often nothing to worry about. But men and women concerned about maintaining their memories can employ various strategies to do just that.

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