

Living 50 Plus



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Exercise Can Reduce Risk of Alzheimer's

Can we do this? Exercise twice a week for 10 minutes each time to prevent Alzheimer's disease? Of course we can.

Researchers examined the records and followed the progress of 250,000 patients who had mild cognitive impairment. They concluded that moderate physical activity more than once a week reduced the risk of Alzheimer's disease by 18%.

We need to do more for our brain health than work the daily crossword puzzle or brush up on our chess skills. Physical exercise protects the brain, too, per the study. The key is that it should be moderate to vigorous exercise.

According to the Harvard School of Public Health, examples of moderate exercise include walking 3-4 mph (a brisk walk while you're still able to hold a conversation), vacuuming and washing windows, mowing the lawn and doubles tennis. Other sources are more specific: water aerobics for 30 minutes and raking leaves for 30 minutes.

For comparison, examples of light exercise include washing dishes and using a computer. Vigorous exercises are things like shoveling, singles tennis and playing basketball or soccer.

Having said that, there are more parts of our bodies that need exercise than just our brains. That's where more time in an activity comes into play. Instead of a mere 10 minutes per day, we're told to shoot for 150 minutes of exercise per week, or 30 minutes on five days.

One place to start developing an exercise plan is MayoClinic.org. Type "moderate exercise" in the search box and scroll down the results until you find something interesting. Among the 600 choices are frequency of workout, using weighted hula hoops, Zumba, secrets to a healthy heart and so much more.

The earlier in life we start exercising for our brains and bodies, the longer we'll stay healthy as we age.

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More and More Scams Aimed at Seniors

Most scams keep repeating year after year. After all, the scammers are making big money doing those Nigerian grandson/auto-warranty scams, so why would they drop them?

However, new ones keep popping up.

If you shop online, beware of accidentally typing in the wrong name. Scammers have created websites with actual information from real store websites, but with a slightly different name. If you shop at a fake store and put in your credit card, the scammers will have immediate access to it.

If you learned how to do Zoom or other online conferences to talk to your family, beware any emails or messages you get about your Zoom. Scammers have set up thousands of Zoom-related internet links for the sole purpose of getting you to click on one they send you. The instant you do, malware (malicious software) is loaded into your computer. From that point all your personal data is at risk. Ignore those emails or messages. If there's a problem with your Zoom, go straight to the Zoom site and check it from there.

In a sign of the times, there are fake COVID contact tracers that ask for personal information and Social Security numbers. Hang up if they call you.

A big problem is that often we don't report the scams. We're embarrassed, or we're afraid the scammers will retaliate, or we just don't know where to report it. If nothing else, you can call the police. If the scam happened on the Internet, contact the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (www.ic3.gov). The center has logged over 6 million complaint calls -- a big portion from those over age 60.

Scammers are everywhere, and it's up to us to stop them in their tracks by being wary of phone calls, emails and the internet.

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Save Money With Phone Plans, Price Matching

With the price of everything going up, we need to save our dollars every place we can. Here are two ideas:

PHONE PLANS -- If you want to save money on your cellphone plan or the cost of a new phone, there are a dozen or so providers that offer reduced-rate plans for seniors. Some offer a new phone, some will let you use your existing phone and many will let you keep your current phone number.

Most offer unlimited talk and text, but prices will vary based on download speeds and data caps. Most also don't require a contract, but if part of the deal is to buy a new phone from them, you might run into a penalty if you cancel before the phone is paid for.

Call around to the phone service providers in your area and ask about senior plans. Be sure to look at their websites to check out the phones. You might need larger buttons or other special features. Better yet, if they have a store near you, go look at the phones in person. Don't let yourself be talked into a long contract that you don't want.

PRICE MATCHING -- This is a good way to get deals on things you want if you hunt for bargains. Some stores make it their policy to match lower prices found elsewhere. You'll need to have proof, however, meaning they'll need to see the current price on the competitor's website. Your best bet is to call and ask whether they'll look online right from their store, or if it's enough for you to print out the competitor's online ad. It's mostly the bigger chains that have these policies, but even a local store might be willing to price match just to get your business.

Remember to ask for your senior discount everywhere you go!

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