

FACES NEWSLETTER

Family and Consumer Science



APRIL 2012

Making the Most of Life

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Active Aging?

Isn't aging something that "just happens?" A downhill slide that we can't control?

The answer is a strong "no." Hundreds of scientific studies in the last 20 years have shown conclusively that there are many ways in which people can take an active role in making their later years healthier and happier.

Studies have shown that older nutrition, regular exercise, and social activities are more effective at avoiding or dealing with problems and crises in later life than people without those habits. And studies have also shown that it is almost never too late to make positive changes in lifestyle to help maintain health and functioning. This brief publication is intended to give you research-based information about positive possibilities for the later years and to motivate you to take an active approach to your own aging.

Active Attitudes

Active aging begins with having a positive attitude toward aging and toward life in general. Some people would say that it is hard to look forward to aging when so many things can go wrong. Television programs, magazines, and birthday cards show older people as forgetful, frail, and out of step with the times. In everyday conversations, some of us call older people "little old ladies" or "grumpy old men" and try not to show or tell our age. According to professionals, these attitudes toward aging have brought about "gerontophobia" or fear of aging and "ageism" or prejudice, and discrimination against older people simply because of chronological age or superficial physical characteristics, such as wrinkled skin and gray hair. Sometimes these ideas can lower our own expectations and make us approach aging passively.

But there are other, more constructive and healthy ways to approach aging. Think about people you know or have heard about who are making the most of their later years. Although many of those people are blessed with good health, they are probably taking active steps to keep that good health.

And we all know people who live active, meaningful lives, despite problems, because of a positive attitude and strength of will.

Active aging means being aware of the importance of thinking and planning in our daily lives. This includes taking stock of one's strengths and shortcomings, resources and needs, and fears and desires and then looking ahead and setting goals for the future. It also means planning for future health, financial, and housing needs. Some people fear the future and avoid thinking about it or making plans. While time is moving on, they are just, "holding on." Some believe older people can't change, that "you can't teach an old dog new tricks," or that "older people are set in their ways." These ideas are simply not true for most older adults. Numerous studies show that it is possible for people to grow and develop in new ways into their 90s and beyond, to expand their mental abilities, to learn new things, to change old habits, to reach new levels of accomplishment, and to contribute to their families and communities. In fact, researchers at the University of Southern California tracked several generations of adults over a 20-year period and found that in each age group self-esteem tended to increase, even among the 359 oldest respondents who began the study in their mid-60s and were re-interviewed in their 80s.

As you try to visualize yourself reaching your goals in later life, it may be helpful to have a mental picture of role models for active aging. Although not everyone can be like Grandma Moses who took up painting at age 76 and continued until she was 101, or Eubie Blake who continued his career as a pianist and composer until age 99, there are thousands of examples of people in all

walks of life who began or continued to be active and productive in later life.

The list of recommended readings in the back of this publication includes several books that feature stories of older people who made the most of their later years or are continuing to do so, including many who could be described as "late bloomers," reaching their highest levels of accomplishments in their 70s, 80s, and 90s.

BEGINNING A FITNESS WALKING PROGRAM

Spring has sprung and many of you want to begin a fitness program, but don't know where to start. It's easy! Start Walking!!!! Walking is one of the easiest and most profitable forms of exercise. All you need is a good pair of shoes, comfortable clothing, and desire.

How to start: First of all, start out slow and easy. Just walk out the door. For most people this means head out the door, walk for 10 minutes, and walk back. That's it? Yes, that's it. Do this every day for a week. If this was easy for you, add five minutes to your walks next week (total walking time 25 minutes). Keep adding 5 minutes until you are walking as long as desired.



WATCH your posture. Walk tall. Think of elongating your body. Hold your head

up and eyes forward. Your shoulders should be down, back and relaxed. Tighten your abdominal muscles and buttocks and fall into a natural stride.

Be sure to drink plenty of water before, during, and after walking. Incorporate a warm up, cool down and [stretches](#) into your routine. Start your walk at a slow warm up pace, stop and do a few warm up / flexibility drills. Then walk for the desired length of time. End your walk with the slower cool down pace and stretch well after your walk. Stretching will make you feel great and assist in injury prevention.

The toughest thing about starting a fitness program is developing a habit. Walking daily will help (a minimum of 5 days a week is a good goal). You should walk fast enough to reach your [target heart rate](#), but you should not be gasping for air.

After you have formed the habit you will want to evaluate your program and your goals. Here are some general guidelines:

If you are walking for the general health benefits try to walk 30 minutes a day, most days of the week, at a "talking" pace. (Talking pace means you have elevated breathing, but you can still carry a conversation.)

To improve cardiovascular fitness you should walk 3 to 4 days a week, 20 to 30 minutes at a very fast pace. At this pace you are breathing hard but not gasping for air.

If you are walking for weight loss you should walk a minimum of five days a week, 45 to 60 minutes at a brisk pace.

Here's a Plan to Get You from Zero to Sixty (Minutes) in Twelve Weeks

Week	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	15 min	15 min	20 min	15 min	20 min	15 min	20 min
2	15 min	20 min	20 min	15 min	20 min	15 min	25 min
3	15 min	25 min	20 min	15 min	25 min	20 min	25 min
4	20 min	30 min	20 min	20 min	25 min	20 min	30 min
5	20 min	30 min	30 min	20 min	30 min	20 min	35 min
6	25 min	30 min	30 min	25 min	30 min	25 min	40 min
7	25 min	30 min	40 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	40 min
8	25 min	30 min	40 min	30 min	40 min	30 min	50 min
9	30 min	40 min	40 min	30 min	40 min	40 min	50 min
10	30 min	40 min	50 min	30 min	50 min	40 min	50 min
11	40 min	40 min	50 min	40 min	50 min	40 min	50 min
12	40 min	40 min	60 min	40 min	60 min	50 min	60 min

May Learn Hour Brain Blitz

Do you ever worry about memory loss? Did you know that you can do activities to enhance and maintain mental functioning?

The adult brain contains 100 billion neurons and 100 trillion synapses. Its complexity and capabilities surpass the most sophisticated computer. Studies show that humans begin to lose brain cells a few at a time starting in their twenties. At the same time the body begins to slow production of the chemicals brain cells need. With age, these changes have an increasingly greater effect on memory. The good news is that those same studies show that people who engage in intellectually stimulating activities can sharpen mental acuity and maintain it well into old age.

Join us May 3rd at noon for our May Lunch Hour Learn Hour event “Brain Blitz”, you will learn mind-stimulating exercises, ideas to help improve memory as well as some things you can do to lift your heart and spirit.



Celebrating Earth Day ... in the Laundry Room

From cars to schools, today's world is all about going green. Even the products and appliances we use in the laundry room have become more environmentally friendly. Though you may have bought an energy-efficient washing machine, are using a concentrated laundry detergent, and are recycling your empty laundry-product packages, there still might be more you can do while cleaning your clothes to lessen your environmental impact. (Lessening the actual loads of laundry each week is still a mystery we'd like to solve!)

How can you make laundry day (*every* laundry day) Earth Day? It's easy. And even the slightest change in routine can have a positive impact on the environment, not to mention your family's finances.

Wash with the Coldest Water

Possible. You'll save energy by not heating up the water. Fortunately, many detergents are now formulated to perform well in cold water. Read and follow product package and garment label directions for the most effective water temperature to use. Switching your temperature setting from hot to warm can cut energy use in half, and using the cold cycle reduces energy use even more. (www.EnergyStar.gov) Besides, wouldn't you rather save the hot water for your shower?

Select the Right Amount of Water for Each Load. Avoid overfilling your washing machine, and save water and energy.

Spin Your Clothes at the Highest Recommended Speed. Ever seen dogs come out of a pool or lake? They don't just stand there and drip dry; they shake all over the place. This helps them get rid of the excess water on their fur and dry faster. Same goes for your washing machine. The spin cycle “shakes” (removes) the water from your clothes. The faster it spins, the more water gets removed. The faster it spins, the more water gets removed. The less time your clothes have to spend in the dryer, the more energy (read: money) you save.

Use the Right Amount of Detergent for the Washer and the Load. Read the instruction for your washer and on the detergent package.

Speaking of Detergent ... If you haven't already switched to a concentrated detergent, you might want to consider doing so. Why? A concentrated product comes in a much smaller package. You'll get the same number of laundry loads out of a smaller

bottle, but use much less plastic. And these smaller bottles take up less space on a delivery truck, which reduces the energy costs to transport them from the manufacturer to the store. (And not for nothing, it's easier to carry a small jug from the store into the house. Unless of course you prefer the upper-body workout).

Twofers, Anyone? Instead of buying a separate bottle of bleach or fabric softener, consider looking for a two-in-one-product – such as a detergent with a built-in stain remover. Again, less packaging (which takes energy to produce) and lower shipping costs.

The Best Time for Laundry. As we head into warmer weather, deciding when do your laundry can determine the amount of energy you use. Running appliances creates heat, so use the washing machine and dryer at night when it's cooler outside. This way, you won't have to use more energy to cool your house during the day.

Don't Forget to Recycle! Nothing like squeezing out the last drop of detergent to make it go farther (store nearly empty jugs upside down and you may find enough for a whole other load!). But when you've really gotten to the end of a bottle, please dispose of it properly. Rinse and re-cap the empty container to protect pets and young children, and put it in the recycling bin.

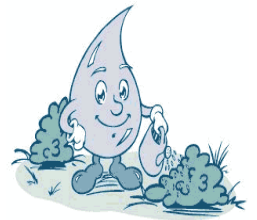
Do you have any tips for how to be more environmentally friendly? (Aside from wearing your clothes so often between cleanings that they walk them selves to the washing machine, of course.) Visit our Facebook page and share your ways of turning laundry day into Earth Day.

Spotlight for April

Rain barrels & cisterns: two old ideas taking on new life!

The droughts of the past several years have helped focus public attention on water quantity issues. What is your drinking water source? Surface water? Ground water? Are you on a public supply? Have fees been increasing? Do you really need to use drinking water (also known as “potable” water) to wash your car or water your lawn and garden? In North Carolina, water conservation is important because...

- Conserving water means more water is available to serve additional water needs, as well as for wildlife and recreation.
- Conserving water reduces the amount of money you spend each month for household water use.
- Your community saves the money spent pumping and treating water before and after use, plus conservation can delay expenditures for additional water sources and treatment facilities.
- Water conservation can positively affect the reliability of your water supplies during periods of high demand and during droughts.



To save on potable water usage AND help reduce stormwater runoff, consider adding a cistern or rain barrel to your yard. These are easily adapted to homes with gutters and downspouts. The water can also be used to replenish decorative ponds.

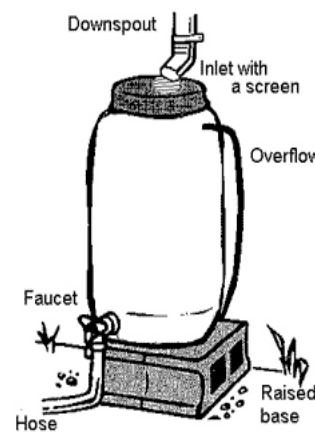
The use of a rain barrel or cistern to collect water, which is also called “rain water harvesting”, has been used for centuries. In some areas of the world, they are still the primary source of water. The size of the rain barrel or cistern is based on how much roof area is available and the amount of water you wish to collect. A roof will collect 0.62 gallons of water per square foot during a 1-inch rain; therefore, a 100 square foot roof area would yield 62 gallons of water. For this section of North Carolina, nearly 90 percent of the rain events are 1-inch or less. You can measure the length and width of your roof to determine the amount of water that could be collected at your site.

What is the difference between a rain barrel and a cistern? In general, cisterns are larger in volume (1000+ gallons), and can be installed either at-grade or below-grade. Rain barrels have a smaller volume (roughly 30 to 500 gallons) and are installed above-grade. The collected water is naturally soft and contains no minerals or chemicals, which makes it very beneficial for plants. The water can also be used to wash cars, fill birdbaths, and clean garden tools. Do NOT use the water for drinking or cooking. Besides helping to reduce your use of potable water, rain barrels and cisterns help reduce storm water runoff.

When installing a rain barrel, be sure to place it on a firm level surface. A 50-gallon barrel will weigh more than 400 pounds when full. It is generally recommended that the barrel be placed on concrete blocks, and perhaps even attached to a structure with a strap. Individual barrels can be placed at each downspout, or for larger volumes, multiple barrels can be linked together.

If the area of roof provides a lot more water than your barrel can hold, make sure that there is an overflow pipe. Be sure to direct the overflow to an area that can accept the water without causing erosion problems. A rain garden is a great destination for the overflow water.

Pre-made rain barrels and cisterns can be purchased from numerous sources; however, you can also make your own. The key ingredients are a food-grade barrel; a screened inlet; an overflow pipe; a faucet; and a firm, raised, level base. To re-cap:



- Use water wisely by watering your garden with free water collected from your roof.

- Be sure to use a food-grade quality recycled barrel (55-gallons is a common

size). Most recycled barrels need to be cleaned before first use.

- Connect a soaker hose to your barrel. This is a convenient way to make use of the collected water.
- Install an overflow at the top. This is an important feature. A full barrel has the potential to spill additional water over the top and may cause localized erosion. Direct the overflow line to an area where the water will be beneficial.
- Do not use collected water for drinking, cooking or bathing.
- Keep the lid secure so children or animals cannot fall into the barrel.
- Elevate the rain barrel slightly to make access to the spigot easier.

- The screened louver vent will prevent mosquitoes from breeding in your barrel.

Source:

http://www.cityofbremerton.com/content/sw_makeyourownrainbarrel.html

Planters and foliage placed around the rain barrels will help them blend in with the rest of the landscape. Painting the barrels is a great option. It also helps protect the barrel from sunlight. Barrels structurally designed to be buried can be placed in the ground; however, a pump would be needed to access the water, and a high watertable could cause the barrels to pop out of the ground.

The Onslow County Extension Center will be offering rain barrels for sale on April 14th. For the first time, we will also be offering two painting sessions. The barrel shown is one of the design choices. If you are interested in purchasing a barrel, please contact our office at 910-455-5873. If you have questions about rain barrels and cisterns, or want to learn how to make them, contact Dr. Diana Rashash (also at 910-455-5873). Your local NC Cooperative Extension office has a variety of publications to help you save money - and water - in your home.



Keep Your Car In Shape

Keep Your Engine Properly Tuned.

Fixing a car that is noticeably out of tune or has failed an emissions test can improve its gas mileage by an average of 4 percent, though results vary based on the kind of repair and how well it is done.

Fixing a serious maintenance problem, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve your mileage by as much as 40 percent.

Fuel Economy Benefit: 4%

Equivalent Gasoline Savings: \$0.15 / gallon

Keep Tires properly Inflated. You can improve your gas mileage by up to 3.3 percent by keeping your tires inflated to the proper pressure. Under-inflated tires can lower gas mileage by 0.3 percent for every 1psi drop in pressure of all four tires. Properly inflated tires are safer and last longer.

The proper tire pressure for your vehicle is usually found on a sticker in the driver's side door jamb or the glove box and in your owner's manual. Do not use the maximum pressure printed on the tire's sidewall.

Fuel Economy Benefit: up to 3%

Equivalent Gasoline Savings: Up to \$0.12 / gallon

Use the recommended Grade of motor Oil. You can improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent by using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil. For example, using 10W-30 motor oil in an engine designed to use 5W-30 can lower your gas mileage by 1-

2 percent. Using 5W-30 in an engine designed for 5W-20 can lower your gas mileage by 1-1.5 percent. Also, look for motor oil that says “Energy Conserving” on the API performance symbol to be sure it contains friction-reducing additives.

Fuel Economy Benefit: 1-2%
Equivalent Gasoline Savings: \$0.04-
\$0.08 / gallon

New Information: *Replacing a Clogged Air Filter on Modern Cars Improves Performance but Not MPG*

A new study shows that replacing a clogged air filter on cars with fuel-injected, computer controlled gasoline engines does not improve fuel economy, but it can improve acceleration time by around 6 to 11 percent. This kind of engine is prevalent on most gasoline cars manufactured from the early 1980s onward.

Tests suggest that replacing a clogged air filter on older car with a carbureted engine may improve fuel economy 2 to 6 percent under normal replacement conditions or up to 14 percent if the filter is so clogged that it significantly affects drivability.

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