

Raffles HealthNews

A PUBLICATION BY **RafflesMedicalGroup**

Age Is Just A Number

Live it up regardless of your age

Improve Appetite In The Elderly



Secrets To Ageing Gracefully

Cheers to the Golden Years!

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Hello Readers!



Home Improvement

Make your home a safer place by removing these falls risks.

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Cataracts – The Treatable Blindness

Cataracts can be easily treated. Don't let it affect your vision.

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4Ds You Don't Want to Strike

Maintain your mental vitality even in your old age.

Page 20

I had a look in the mirror the other day and was a little depressed to find a smattering of white hairs on my black mop of hair. I let out a sigh and admitted silently to myself that, yes, I am indeed getting older. And so are you!

Singapore is a population that is ageing. With this, we see a corresponding rise in the prevalence of chronic non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. You also have to be aware that declining cognitive function in a proportion of our elderly population is becoming a substantial burden on our healthcare and support systems in the coming years. Dementia & Alzheimer's Disease is currently afflicting 50,000 people in Singapore, and its prevalence will reach 187,000 by 2050. What can we do to buck this seemingly inevitable trend? By trying our best to live a healthy and active lifestyle.

In this issue, we study the different conditions that affect seniors and share treatments so that you may continue to live it up (see pages 10 to 13). Learn how to manage menopause and andropause before they affect your way of life (pages 14 and 15).

Food and nutrition are of particular importance when one ages as your body's function and your appetite decreases. Our medical experts share ways to help seniors eat better (pages 24 and 25), what their appetite (page 26) as well as what vitamins and supplements to take for better health (pages 28 and 29).

Don't you wish to age gracefully? With the help of modern medicine, you now can. Look younger than your actual age with great skin (see pages 30 and 31), bright teeth (page 32) and healthy nails (page 33).

It might come as a surprise to some of you readers, but Raffles Medical has always had a passion for looking after the interest of the elderly. Our charity, the Asian Medical Foundation sponsors programs that directly benefit People with Dementia. Our staff regularly volunteer their time to visit day care centres and elderly homes around Singapore. You can read about some of the nonprofit work we do in this issue of the Health News.

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* Also, don't forget to subscribe to our monthly e-Healthnews at
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Dr Melvyn Wong
Family Physician, Consultant
Raffles Medical



New Docs on the Block

We warmly welcome the following doctors to the Raffles family!
With their addition, we hope to better serve your healthcare needs.

Dr Lynette Low Meiyin
Specialist in Dermatology
Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics Centre



Dr Lynette Low is accredited as a Dermatologist by the Ministry of Health. A graduate from Queen Mary's, University of London (2005), she is registered with the General Medical Council (UK) and was also the Junior Doctor Representative for her Deanery to the Department of Health in the UK where she completed her Internal Medical Training. She is a member of the

Dermatological Society of Singapore and the American Academy of Aesthetic Medicine.

In 2013, she was awarded best case report presentation at the Dermatology Update Conference in Singapore by Dr Jean Bolognia. She has also been a Faculty Lecturer, Examiner and Clinical Tutor for the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (National University of Singapore) and Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine. Prior to joining Raffles Hospital, she practiced as a Dermatologist at the National Skin Centre and at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital.

Dr Changa Kurukularatne
Specialist in Infectious Diseases
Consultant, Raffles Internal Medicine Centre



Dr Changa obtained his Doctorate of Medicine from St. George's University, Grenada, in 2001 and completed his post graduate residency training in Internal Medicine at Danbury Hospital in Connecticut, USA, an affiliate hospital of the Yale University. He went on to complete his sub-specialty training at the Ochsner Clinic Foundation in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA in 2007

with the Fellow of the Year award.

Dr Changa has worked in the United Kingdom during his training, followed by professional work experience in the United States, New Zealand and Singapore. He has collaborated with regional and global institutions such as the World Health Organization, the United States Centres for Disease Prevention and Control and the European Centres for Disease Control. He has also collaborated with countries in the region on public health interventions. He is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases.

Collaboration with Alzheimer's Disease Association - The Memory Café

In support of the Alzheimer's Disease Association (ADA), Asian Medical Foundation teams up with Raffles Hospital and Fun Toast to sponsor the Memories Café on a monthly basis.

Memories Café provides a fresh change of environment for caregivers who have long been attending support groups held in more formal settings such as dementia day care centres. For Persons with Dementia (PWD), the event gives them the opportunity to meet others with dementia and have fun in an environment that accepts them.

Throughout the two-hour session, PWD will engage in performing arts activities with their caregivers such as singing, puppetry, story-telling, dance movement and drama activities.



Opening of Our Tampines Hub

Our Tampines Hub clinic is now open. The clinic offers a mix of medical and dental services.

Address

51 Tampines Ave 4
#B1-04/05
Our Tampines Hub
Singapore 529684

Telephone

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6386 7191 (Dental)



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6.30pm to 9.30pm

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2.00pm to 5.30pm

Sat
8.30am - 1.00pm

Dental

Mon
8.30am to 1.00pm
2.00pm to 5.30pm
6.30pm to 9.30pm

Tues to Sun
8.30am to 1.00pm
2.00pm to 5.30pm



HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards 2016

The HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards recognise exceptional vendor organisations and showcase the very best Corporate Service Providers in Singapore. We are proud and excited to announce that Raffles Medical Group has been awarded the Best Corporate Healthcare Group for the second time. Mr Yong Yih Ming, General Manager, Raffles Medical, went on stage to receive the award on behalf of the Group.

Continuing to Serve Your Healthcare Needs at Rivervale Mall

Our former clinic at Rivermale Mall has been relocated to a new and larger clinic on Level 2.

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Operating Hours

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6.30pm to 9.30pm

Sat, Sun & PH
8.30am - 1.00pm



Joining the Fight Against Diabetes

Diabetes is a growing problem in Singapore and everyone has a part to play in the fight against it. According to a report by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), Singapore has the second-highest proportion of diabetics among developed nations. The results are not surprising because Singaporeans are becoming less active and eating more high-calorie diets, both of which increase the risk of diabetes.

By taking ownership and getting informed about diabetes, we can get screened for the disease early and prevent diabetes. In conjunction with World Diabetes Day, Raffles Hospital joined the fight against diabetes by conducting free health assessments for the members of the public on 10 and 11 November 2016.

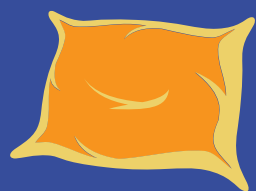
The free health assessments included measuring a person's Body Mass Index (BMI) and random blood sugar count.

Family Walk Cum Corporate Social Responsibility Day

On Sunday, 9 October 2016, 250 participants comprising of employees from Raffles Medical Group (RMG) and their families walked more than 600 kilometres, raising more than 6,000 bowls of rice for needy families in the South East district. As part of the Group's 40th Anniversary celebrations, RMG partnered South East Community Development Council (CDC) and NTUC FairPrice for the first time in the "NTUC FairPrice Walk for Rice Campaign".

The walk began at Singapore Land Tower, Raffles Place, where the Group's started its first clinic and ended at Raffles Hospital. The participants then enjoyed a mini carnival and refreshments. 94 senior citizens aged 52 to 86 years old from South East CDC were invited for free health and dental screenings at Raffles Hospital for this event.

Guest-of-Honour Mr Seah Kian Peng, Vice Chairman of South East Community Development Council and Chief Executive Officer of NTUC FairPrice Co-operative, said during his speech: "It is heartening that corporate organisations, like Raffles Medical Group extend their resources to give back to the community by providing health screening for our seniors."



sleep Well, Live Well

A health seminar on sleep apnoea and its effects on your body

Sleep apnoea is a highly prevalent condition that often goes undiagnosed. On 19 November 2016, a health seminar was held by Raffles Hospital on sleep apnoea and its effects on the body.

Channel NewsAsia presenter Teresa Tang hosted the event and the speakers for that day included specialists from Raffles Internal Medicine Centre, Raffles Neuroscience Centre, Raffles Counselling Centre and Raffles ENT Centre. They are Dr Steve

Yang, Dr Alvin Seah, Dr Joshua Kua, Dr Stephen Lee and Dr K. Puvanendran.

More than 500 participants attended the seminar and they felt that it was insightful because the doctors shared professional insights and advice on the causes of sleep apnoea, how to overcome it and how to treat this condition effectively. We would also like to thank Philips, Tempur, True Fitness, TAY, MegRhythm and Flexi-Patch for sponsoring this event.

Grand Opening of Raffles Holland V Mall & Raffles Medical Centre - Holland V

On 21 October 2016, we celebrated the official opening of Raffles Holland V mall and were honoured to have Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister in Prime Minister's Office, to officiate the event. It was also the opening ceremony for our medical centre in Holland Village.

The new mall comprises of five above-ground levels, one roof terrace level, one basement level and two levels of basement car parks. Ahead of its opening, the mall has achieved about 95% committed occupancy. The diverse mix of tenants from Basement 1 to Level 5 will feature a wide and unique range of food and beverage, beauty, fitness, and lifestyle offerings.

Level 5

Raffles Medical Centre

Level 4

Virgin Active (opening in early 2017)

Level 3

Sushi Tei

The Nailist (opening soon)

Virgin Active (opening in early 2017)

Level 2

DBS Bank / DBS Treasures Centre

Hoshino Coffee

Otto's Deli Fresh

Raffles Pharmacy (opening soon)

Level 1

Café O

DBS ATM Lobby

Face Bistro

Haakon Superfoods and Juice

Pâtisserie

Provence

Soup Restaurant

Basement 1

Laundry Club

Taste (opening soon)

To celebrate the opening of Raffles Holland V and Raffles Medical Centre - Holland V, we collaborated with Mediacorp Radio 938LIVE to host an outdoor event at the mall on 29 October 2016. The event attendees learnt a lot of useful health tips from our medical experts.



Live it up!

Age is just a number

By Noel Lee

Ageing is a natural and inevitable process that happens to everyone. In this issue's cover story, we discuss about the common problems ageing brings, its signs and symptoms and how they can be managed so that you can live it up regardless of your age!

According to Dr Nur Farhan Bte Mohammad Alami, Specialist in Geriatrics & Consultant, Raffles Internal Medicine Centre, with longevity, seniors have the opportunity to remain as active members in the community. Many ageing conditions, if detected early, can be treated effectively to enhance quality of life and prevent health complications in older people.





HYPERTENSION

Blood pressure is the force of which blood pushing against the walls of the arteries as the heart pumps blood. If your pressure is too high, you may have high blood pressure or hypertension. High blood pressure is a risk factor of heart failure, stroke, chronic kidney disease and damage to arteries.

Signs & Symptoms

- Usually considered a “silent killer” it is usually not associated with any symptoms

Treatment

Treatment of high blood pressure begins with changes in your lifestyle. Switching to a healthy diet, exercising regularly, quitting smoking and maintaining a healthy weight will help lower your blood pressure. In addition to this, your doctor may recommend medication to manage your high blood pressure.



TYPE II DIABETES

Diabetes (or hyperglycaemia) occurs when a person's blood glucose is higher than the normal range. As Dr Stanley Liew, Specialist in Endocrinology & Consultant, Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre, explains, “As we get older, we tend to exercise lesser, more prone to gaining weight and losing muscle mass. This increases the chances of getting Type 2 Diabetes as our bodies become more resistant to insulin when more fatty tissue is present.”

Signs & Symptoms

- Dryness of the mouth
- Excessive thirst (polydipsia) and dehydration
- Increased frequency of urination (polyuria) and glucose in urine
- Increased frequency of feeling hungry (polyphagia)
- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Fatigue and drowsiness
- Weight loss
- Seizures and coma (in severe hyperglycaemia)

Treatment

Diabetes can be put under control through healthy diet, regular exercise and medications. Weight loss and sugar elimination from our diets are just some examples. Other ways it can be controlled are with various medications that would either increase the production or sensitivity of insulin, and excretion of glucose in the urine.



CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that is found in your body. Even though cholesterol is used by your body for daily functions, too much of it can cause problems. Dr Nur Farhan warns that people with high blood cholesterol may have a higher chance of getting heart disease. This is due to cholesterol build up on the walls of the arteries, causing the narrowing of the arteries. When they get narrowed or blocked, it cuts the supply of oxygen to the heart, thus resulting in a heart attack. This can cause sudden death in its most severe form, or damage to the heart muscles which may result in heart failure.

Signs & Symptoms

- Similar to high blood pressure, high cholesterol has no obvious signs.

Treatment

Treatment of high cholesterol starts with lifestyle changes such as exercising and eating a healthy diet. Should your cholesterol levels remain high despite all these changes, your doctor may then recommend medication. The type of medication will depend on your risk factors and your health at that point of time.



URINARY INCONTINENCE

Urinary incontinence refers to the involuntary leakage of urine. It is both a symptom and a sign. More than one in ten elderly in Singapore suffer from urinary incontinence; women tend to be more commonly affected than men. According to Dr Siow Woei Yun, Specialist in Urology & Consultant, Raffles Urology Centre, urinary incontinence may occur due to various reasons, including age, bladder over-activity, urinary tract infection, prostate problems (for men), other urinary conditions such as bladder stones and tumours. It may even be a sign of underlying neurological problems.

Signs & Symptoms

- An urgency to urinate even when bladder is not full
- Urinating more than once in a two hour period or more than seven times in a day
- Constantly waking up in the night to urinate
- Pain during urination
- Bed-wetting

Treatment

The first step in the management of urinary incontinence is to admit that you have a problem. Most people find it hard to admit that they leak urine, and turn to self-management with the aid of absorbent pads or undergarments. However, urinary incontinence should be evaluated by a medical professional to determine the underlying cause to rule out diseases.



OSTEOARTHRITIS

Osteoarthritis is a common joint disease that affects usually people from 50 years old and above. Usually considered as a “wear-and-tear” within the joints, osteoarthritis causes pain, stiffness, deformities and the loss of function within the joint. According to Dr Lee Eu Jin, Specialist in Orthopaedics & Consultant, Raffles Orthopaedic Centre, this happens as the cartilage in your joints break down due to degeneration, which might be accelerated by injuries. Osteoarthritis is more prevalent to the knee and the hip but can occur on nearly every joint in the body.

Signs & Symptoms

- Joint pain and stiffness
- Knobby swelling and deformity at the joint
- Crepitus or grinding noise with joint movement
- Decreased movement of the joint

Treatment

Treatment of osteoarthritis differs depending on the nature of the injury. The focus of treatment is targeted towards pain management and joint mobility. Using a series of medication and physical therapy, treatment aims to reduce joint pain and stiffness as well as increase mobility and function. If these do not work, your doctor might recommend surgical procedures to treat the affected joint.



HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss is also unsurprisingly associated with the elderly. According to Dr Stephen Lee, Specialist in Otorhinolaryngology & Specialist, Raffles ENT Centre, age related hearing loss often occurs on both ears, affecting them equally. Due to this, most people do not even realise that they are losing their ability to hear. There are many causes of age-related hearing loss, usually arising from the changes to the inner ear. Certain medical conditions and medications may play a role to hearing loss.

Signs & Symptoms

- Muffling of speech and other sounds
- Difficulty understanding words, especially against background noise
- Trouble hearing consonants
- Frequently asking others to speak up
- Withdrawal from conversations

Treatment

Hearing loss is usually improved with the introduction of hearing aids. There are about five different types of hearing aids, which can be provided to the patient depending on the severity of their hearing loss.

A Mid-Life Transition:

Menopause

By Queenie Ho

In your life, you will experience telltale signs that your body is changing. If you are above 50 and experiencing irregular menstrual cycles, hot flashes, vaginal and urinary symptoms, and mood swings, menopause could be knocking on your door. Should you be worried about menopause? After all, it is a natural biological process. We speak to Dr Watt Wing Fong, Specialist in Obstetrics and Gynaecology & Consultant, Raffles Women's Centre on the things you should know about menopause.

Menopause is defined as the absence of menstrual periods for **12 consecutive months**. It is also the time when the function of the ovaries ceases.

Menopause symptoms usually continue for **four years after the last period**. For some, it can extend to 12 years.

The average age for menopause is **50 years old**. Menopause can occur between 30 to 60 years old. Menopause before 40 is considered "abnormal"

Menopause is a **gradual process**. The perimenopausal transition period is a different experience for each woman.

Menopause at a Glance

Not all irregular bleeding is due to menopause and **a visit to the doctor's is required to exclude other disorders**.

Symptoms of menopause may begin **years before** the actual menopause occurs and may persist for some years afterward.

Complications that women may develop after menopause include **osteoporosis and heart disease**.

Customised treatments can alleviate uncomfortable symptoms and manage associated medical complications.



5 Ways to Stay Healthy

1

Don't smoke. If you do use any type of tobacco, stop.

Healthy diet helps. Take foods low in fat, high in fibre, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and wholegrains, which are rich in vitamins and minerals.

2

Make sure you get enough calcium and vitamin D.

3

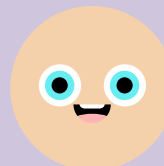
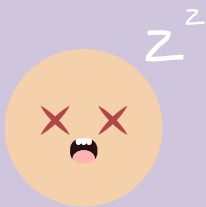
Learn what your healthy weight is, and try to maintain it.

4

Be physically active and exercise daily. Do weight-bearing exercise, such as walking, jogging, or dancing for healthy bones.

5

You may want to schedule regular pelvic and breast exams, Pap tests and mammograms and get checked for colon and rectal cancer. If you are concerned about the vaginal discomfort, consider using a water-based vaginal lubricant (not petroleum jelly) or a vaginal estrogen cream or tablet. Lastly, if you have been prescribed with medicine for health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or osteoporosis, you need to take them as per doctor's instructions, added Dr Watt.



Manopause

Man-opause, really?! The men do get it! Male menopause, also known as andropause, is used to describe ageing-related hormones (testosterone) changes in men, and has its own set of concerns and management. Unlike women, men do not have a clear transitional sign. Dr Lim Kok Bin, Specialist in Urology & Consultant, Raffles Urology Centre talks about andropause.

Andropause occur in all men generally **between the ages of 40 and 55**, though it can occur as early as 35 or as late as 65.

Testosterone declines naturally as men age. Testosterone levels would have lessened by **50 percent** by the time most men reach 70. A **blood test** is the only method to confirm low testosterone.

Andropause in Brief

Symptoms for andropause vary greatly between men. The difference in **sexual function** (e.g. lowered sex drive, erectile dysfunction, infertility) is usually the most noticeable symptoms for decline in testosterone levels. Another common sign is **insomnia and fatigue**. Some men will also experience **depression and weight gain** due to the lowered testosterone levels.

Andropause and Sexual Health

Sexual health is greatly affected when testosterone levels start to dip, causing men to lose interest in sexual activity. Dr Lim explains, "Even if the interest is there, he may find difficulty having or sustaining an erection. Most men assume it is part of getting older but there are ways we can improve testosterone levels."

A healthy lifestyle will improve and promote your health, not just for now, but for long-term benefits. A lower carbohydrate diet, weight resistance exercises, adequate quality sleep and being positive helps to improve testosterone levels. Go for

regular checkups and check your hormone levels as you get older. In general, the number of important hormones in men starts to decline between 40 to 55 years old. Testosterone treatment, where testosterone in blood is replaced via skin patches, application through skin, capsule consumption or injections, may provide relief from the andropausal symptoms too.

"However, do note that many of the symptoms are also a normal part of ageing, and may not be reversible with treatment. Your doctor is the best person to provide medical advice," says Dr Lim.

In a Nutshell...

Menopause and andropause are natural ageing processes. If you have no symptoms or if you aren't bothered by the symptoms you have, there is no need specific treatment except to adopt healthy lifestyle practices. But, if they are making you uncomfortable, talk to your doctor about ways you can get relief.

Embrace the process and think of it as an opportunity – a chance to make healthy changes in your lifestyle and get the most out of the rest of your life.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Home may be where the heart is, but it is also a minefield of fall hazards for seniors. Under certain conditions, seemingly innocuous objects around the house can cause a tumble. We identify some of them, and share tips on fall-proofing your home to give you and your family peace of mind.

By Stanley Wong

Falls among the elderly is more common than you think. According to the Health Promotion Board, approximately 30% of older people aged 60 years old and above had experienced at least one fall. For the young, falling is a trivial affair; they get away with some cuts and scrapes, or a bruised ego.

The same cannot be said for seniors. Falls often result in severe physical injuries, which in turn lead to potential physical and mental health consequences that are long lasting. It not only places a toll on those who fell, but also on their caretakers as well. As such, it is important to take preventative measures against falls.

If you think your home is a safe haven from accidents, think again. Research has shown that most falls occur in homes, of which many are preventable. Make your home safer by inspecting it for the following risk factors and removing them. Dr Nur Farhan Bte Mohammad Alami, Specialist in Geriatrics & Consultant, Raffles Internal Medicine Centre shares six tips to make your home less accident prone.



1

■ Install handrails or grab bars

Grab bars and handrails can give the elderly extra support. Install them in the bathroom, beside the toilets and in the shower.



2

■ Keep things easy-to-reach

The risk of elderly falling is reduced if they stay on stable surfaces. Keep frequently used items within easy reach so that the elderly do not need to climb or bend.

3

■ Let there be light

As most elderly have poor eyesight, ensure your home is well lit, especially at night. Ensure they have easy access to light switches, and you may consider using night lights, or motion sensor switches to allow ease of movement.



4

■ Clear up clutter

The easiest way to fall-proof your home is to keep it neat and tidy. Rearrange your home's furniture to maximise walking space and keep them clutter-free to allow unobstructed movement.



5

■ Remove tripping hazards

Some household items, such as rugs or cables, are potential items the elderly can trip over. Tie up or hide loose wires, or use cordless appliances, and use rugs with a non-slip backing. Repair or remove other furniture that are potential tripping hazards.



6

■ Keep floors dry

Wet floors are extremely dangerous. Clean up spills immediately after they occur. For areas where wet floors are unavoidable like the bathroom, use anti-slip mats or install non-slip tiles.



Cataracts

The Treatable Blindness

Like wrinkles on a person's skin, cataracts occur as one ages. Cataracts may happen to one who is in their 50s or they may not happen until one is 70. Find out more about this common ageing problem from Dr Lee Jong Jian, Specialist in Ophthalmology & Consultant, Raffles Eye Centre. By Noel Lee



What are Cataracts?

A cataract is the clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision. Being most commonly found in the elderly, cataracts can be a serious problem to them as it will alter their vision. By altering their perception of depth and distance, it can cause them to fall and potentially hurt themselves.

How Does Cataract Happen?

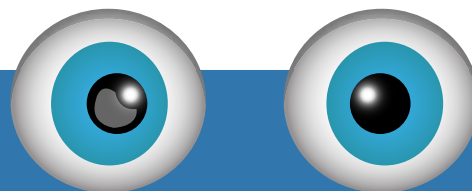
There are several causes of cataracts, ageing being the most common cause. Other risk factors include smoking, ultraviolet exposure, long-term use of steroids, trauma and radiation therapy.

Symptoms of Cataracts

- Cloudy or blurry vision
- Colours seem faded
- Double vision
- Frequent prescription changes in eyeglasses or contacts
- Poor night vision
- Glare, headlights, lamps or sunlight may appear too bright

How are Cataracts Detected?

- Visual Acuity Test
- Dilated Eye Exam
- Tonometry



Cataract Treatment

For most cataract cases, minor blurring of vision can be treated with eyeglasses, brighter lighting and sunglasses. If you find that you are changing your eye glasses too often or have difficulties carrying out your normal activities, your doctor may suggest cataract surgery.

Cataract surgery is a procedure where the clouded lens in your eye is replaced with an artificial lens. This surgery is considered a generally safe procedure and you will be able to go home after a few hours. Get someone to drive you back and avoid driving home after surgery.

You should recover within a few weeks and you must avoid strenuous activities for the first few weeks. You will notice that vision will be improved nearly immediately after surgery. Don't worry if it is not happening as your eyes might need some time to heal and adjust to the new lenses.



Before Surgery:
Lens affected by Cataract



Step One: Removal of the
cloudy lens

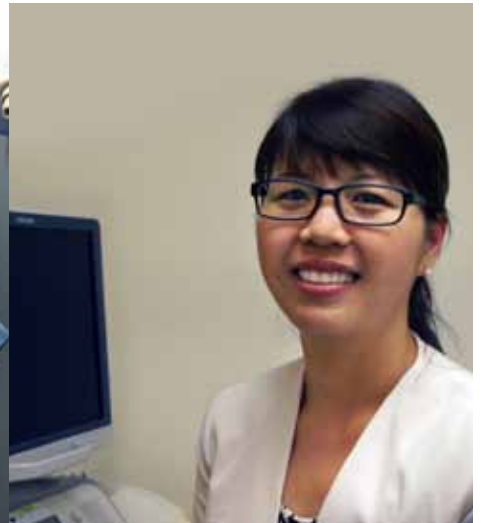


Step Two: A clear artificial
lens is implanted



After Surgery:
Intraocular lens is in place

I Touch
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4 D'S YOU DON'T WANT TO STRIKE

Emotional and Mental Vitality

By Magdalene Lee



1

DEMENTIA

Dementia is the progressive decline of memory and other thinking skills due to the gradual dysfunction and loss of brain cells. 10% of population aged 60 years and above have dementia.



Symptoms

- Problem with recent memory
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks
- Language problems
- Poor / decreased judgement
- Changes in mood, behaviour and personality
- Loss of initiative



Prevention

- Stay mentally, physically and socially active
- Quit smoking, maintain a healthy diet
- Maintain normal blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar



Tips for Caregivers

- Communicate slowly maintaining eye contact.
- Present one idea or instruction at a time.
- Promote exercise, physical activity and social interactions
- Establish a night time ritual.
- Limit caffeine, discourage daytime naps
- Encourage keeping a calendar or maintain a routine

2

DELIRIUM

Delirium is a serious disturbance in mental abilities that results in confused thinking and reduced awareness of your environment. There are three main types of delirium, namely, hyperactive, hypoactive and mixed.

Delirium Delirium
Delirium Delirium
Delirium Delirium
Delirium Delirium
Delirium Delirium



Symptoms

- Rapid onset in reduced awareness of the environment or drowsiness
- Poor thinking skills that occur rapidly especially confusion, inattention and visual hallucination
- Sudden behavioural changes
- Emotional disturbances such as anxiety and agitation



Prevention

- Avoid triggers
- Maintain peace, calm and order
- Ensure restfulness

Tips for Caregivers

- Promote good sleep habits
- Adequate hydration
- Seek medical attention immediately if one is suspected of having delirium



Everyone wants to age well and to enjoy their golden years. Other than being physically fit, mental vitality is an important aspect of ageing well. Dr Joshua Kua, Specialist in Psychiatry & Consultant, Raffles Counselling Centre, shares four conditions everyone should take note of. **By Magdalene Lee**



3

DEPENDENCE

Many elderly turn to substances such as alcohol, drugs and behavioural addiction such as gambling, to combat loneliness and stress. Seniors are more susceptible to drug and alcohol overdose as their bodies are less able to metabolise them.

Symptoms

- Memory problems
- Changes in sleeping and eating habits
- Unexplained bruises and chronic pain
- Irritability, sadness, depression
- Wanting to be alone often
- Losing touch with loved ones
- Failing to bathe or keep clean
- Lack of interest in usual activities



Prevention

- Healthy living such as exercise
- Build relationship with others
- Be active and develop new hobbies
- Be socially active

Tips for Caregivers

- Be aware of symptoms if alcohol or substance dependence
- Encourage the elders to seek treatment
- Be supportive



4

DEPRESSION

Elderly affected with depression will experience a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. While the suicide rate in Singapore has stayed constant at between eight to 10 suicides per 100,000 residents, the proportion of elderly who take their lives each year has risen.

Symptoms

- Reduced interest in doing things
- Memory difficulties or personality changes
- Physical aches or pain
- Fatigue, loss of appetite, sleep problems, aches or loss of interest in sex
- Prefer to stay home
- Suicidal thoughts or feelings



Prevention

- Take steps to control stress, increase resilience and boost self-esteem.
- Reach out to family and friends
- Seek treatment early
- Consider long-term maintenance treatment to prevent relapse

Tips for Caregivers

- Be more active and simplify life
- Encourage social activities, relaxation and stress management
- Structure their time
- Avoid making important decisions when feeling down





Since the opening of Raffles Hospital, 64 years old Concierge Supervisor **Mr Mohd Senin Bin Hombri** has been greeting all who walk into the hospital lobby with his signature smile, ever ready to offer help.

By Magdalene Lee

What's a typical day for you like?

When I report for work, I would check in with my fellow Concierge and respond to emails. I would also check with my superiors to see if there are any instructions to take note of for the day. I will then distribute and assign jobs within the Concierge team.

The bulk of our day-to-day work involves receiving and answering enquiries from walk-in patients and phone calls. The Concierge team also assists and guides patients, especially those who require assistance getting to the clinics.

A little known fact is that our Concierge also responds to enquiries from non-patients. One of the instructions I received during my first day at work is to give assistance to anyone who steps into Raffles Hospital, be they patients or non-patients.

**How did you join the Concierge?**

Back in 1999, I was retrenched from my banking manager role and was looking for jobs. At 47 years of age, it was difficult to get the same position and salary. Then, the two walk-in positions that appealed to me were both healthcare positions: MRO Supervisor for a public hospital and Portering Supervisor for Raffles Hospital. After the walk-in interview, Raffles called me back within two days to offer me the job, and the rest is history.

You've been in Raffles since the hospital opened. What do you enjoy about it?

I enjoy meeting people, and being able to help them. As Concierge, we meet all sorts of people. Most are appreciative of us, although there are some who think that since we are just doing our job, there's no need to say "thank you".

It is not easy keeping a positive demeanor all day. How do you do it?

We do our very best to assist everybody who walks through our doors. We even provide "red packets" to visitors. While we don't expect any word of thanks, even an appreciative smile would make us happy. We want both patients and visitors to view Raffles Hospital positively.

We do have unruly patients and visitors at times who have shouted at us. In my 16 years as Concierge, we have always kept our cool no matter how bad the situations are. We just contact our immediate supervisor to assist. It is funny that even though we spoke nicely to them, they would often complain that we were rude.

What does everyone need to know about growing older?

Growing old is natural. And health is important especially as you age. As you grow older, if you are not careful, you will get all sorts of sicknesses.

Never miss your appointments, faithfully take your medicine and you can manage your health issues. My diabetes and high blood pressure are under control because of this.

A lot of elderly are afraid of going for surgery. It may be scary but under the hands of good surgeons, you don't have to be afraid. I did my total knee replacement on the left leg back in 2012.

As a senior, what are some tips you would offer to others?

- If you are happy with your job, pursue and go all out for it. You have to give your all.
- Office politics exist everywhere. You have to learn to handle it.
- Never ever give up!

**Any memorable patients that you remember?**

An Australian couple, Bill, 80 years old, and Vena, 76 years old, came in to Raffles Hospital while on transit back in 2002 when Vena fell ill. From then on, we became friends. Every time they pass by Singapore, they would make a point to drop by and say hi.

I was assisting a female patient in wheelchair in the lift. The patient suddenly burst into tears saying: "Mr Senin, I have cancer and I don't think I can survive." I did not know what to do at that point but encouraged her to never give up hope, continue to take her medicine and pray to God. It was a humbling moment whereby I could lend support to someone in need.

Name: Hj Mohd Senin b. HJ Hombri Age: 64 years old
Occupation: Concierge Supervisor, Raffles Hospital

Senin has been married for 42 years to Hj Sumiati bte Suhada, a housewife. Together, they have two sons as well as a daughter, and six grandchildren.

Senin's greatest achievement was being able to perform Hajj twice, in 1999 and 2002.

He likes music and used to be a lead singer in a local group band "Muzika Group" back in the 70s.



Age Well, Eat Well

Healthy eating is important for all ages, more so for the elderly. Good nutrition is critical to well-being and help lower risks of developing chronic health conditions. A healthy diet can also be the key to a positive outlook and staying emotionally balanced. Find out what you should take note of when it comes to food for the elderly. *By Queenie Ho*

1

Maintain healthy weight with lesser calories

As you age, you'll need fewer calories to maintain a healthy weight due to lower metabolism rate and the loss of muscle. Stay within a healthy range by filling up on low-calorie nutrient-packed foods, such as vegetables and fruits. Carrying around extra pounds can increase your chances of developing heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, joint problems and some cancers.

2

Pack your diet

Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and other plant-based foods are rich sources of phytochemicals, beneficial compounds that may help protect against age-related conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure and macular degeneration. "Choose vegetables and fruits that represent a rainbow of colours," said Ms Bibi Chia, Principal Dietitian, Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre.

3

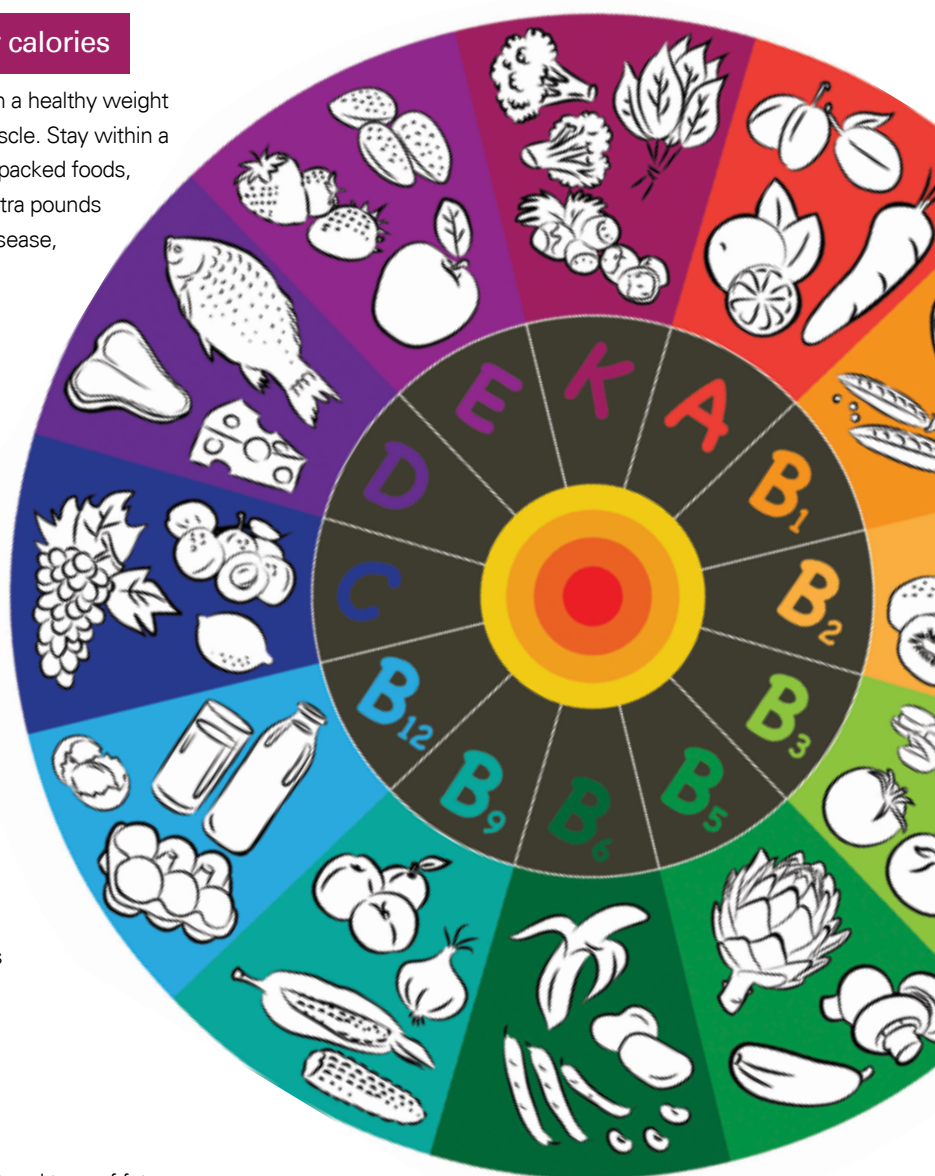
Concentrate on calcium

Getting enough calcium can help prevent osteoporosis, the leading cause of bone fractures in older adults.

4

Go easy on fat

Fat is important for health, the trick is the amount and type of fats you consume. Vegetable oils like olive or canola that are high in heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and low in the saturated fats are the best choices. Ms Chia added, "Saturated fats are associated with increased risk for conditions including heart disease and cancer and should be limited. When you are dining out, opt for items that are roasted, grilled, steamed, boiled, stewed or poached."



5 Don't forget about D

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium properly. It is available only in a few foods but we get most of our vitamin D through sun exposure when UV light penetrates skin, skin cells produce a compound that the liver and kidneys convert to vitamin D. But as you age, skin becomes less efficient at synthesising Vitamin D.

6 "B" aware of changing nutrient needs

As you age, your stomach produces less gastric acid, which makes it harder for the body to absorb vitamin B12 - a nutrient that helps keeps blood and nerves healthy - from natural food sources. Data suggest that up to one-third of older people can no longer absorb the vitamin from food, Ms Chia advises that people aged 50 and above get the recommended daily intake (2.4 mcg) of B12 from fortified foods, such as cereal or supplements.



7 Drink in moderation

Studies show that drinking moderate amounts of alcohol may protect against heart disease. But consuming alcoholic beverages may interfere with the effectiveness of certain medications. If you decide to drink, limit alcoholic beverages to no more than two drinks a day for men and one for women.

Healthy eating for the elderly: what does it look like? Ms Chia shares how healthy eating for the elderly can be achieved with some meal options below:

Sample Meal Plan One

Breakfast

- One bowl of shredded chicken porridge
- One cup of tea (less sweet)

Snack

- One piece of red bean pau
- One glass of low fat milk or high calcium soya milk

Lunch

- One bowl of brown rice or porridge
- One portion of stewed tofu with lean minced meat / egg omelette
- One portion of stir-fried mixed vegetables
- One glass of barley water, less sweet

Snack

- One carton of low fat yoghurt
- One slice of papaya
- One glass of plain water

Dinner

- One bowl of sliced fish beehoon soup with vegetables
- One slice of watermelon
- One glass of plain water



Sample Meal Plan Two

Breakfast

- One of cup cooked oatmeal with one tablespoon wheat germ
- One banana

Snack

- One bowl bean curd (less or no sugar syrup)
- One glass of fresh fruit juice

Lunch

- One bowl of chicken mushroom noodle soup
- Half cup of stir-fried spinach
- One glass of water

Snack

- One piece of sardine bun
- One cup of tea (less sweet)

Dinner

- One palm sized steamed fish
- Half bowl of watercress soup (includes half cup of watercress)
- One bowl of rice
- One glass of plain water



Making Mealtimes Easier

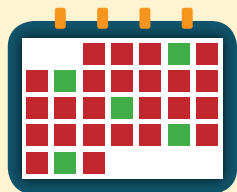


Our bodily functions slow down as we age. Besides our metabolism rate, our five senses are also diminished. This means we are no longer able to see, taste, or smell food as well as we could. For the elderly, this, along with decreased appetite, gives them little motivation to eat. Here are some minimally disruptive ways you can whet your appetite.

By Stanley Wong

It's all about the calories and nutrients

"It is not about how much you eat, but what you eat," says Ms Bibi Chia, Principal Dietitian, Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre. "Avoid making meals intimidating by serving large portions." Rather, the secret is to sneak in healthy calories into their daily meals – some extra olive oil into a dish, or extra peanut butter into their sandwiches. Alternatively, break their meals to smaller and frequent ones to make it more manageable.



Keep to a schedule

While everyone finds some comfort in structure and regularity, the elderly in particular craves it. "This is especially true for those who tend to forget easily," says Dr Joshua Kua, Specialist in Psychiatry & Consultant, Raffles Counselling Centre. "When they stray from their regular patterns, so do their appetites." Create meal plans scheduled at the same time of the day each day. To avoid digestive and sleep problems, avoid giving them supper too close to bedtime.



Remember food preferences

Many elderly have chronic conditions, requiring them to be on a strict diet. This may be unappealing to the elderly because of its lack of taste, and their lack of familiarity with it. Rather than an uphill battle to try out a new healthier recipe, it may be easier to stick to tried-and-tested meals. "It is easier to get the elderly to eat something that they are familiar with, which they like," says Dr Kua.

Even if those foods are unhealthy, the benefits of adequate food intake outweigh the health risks. "Older people are often undernourished and thin, especially those over 80 years old. I often encourage my patients' caregivers not to be afraid to add more sugar, salt or fats into the food to enhance its taste, which helps improve my patients' appetites", says Dr Nur Farhan Bte Mohammad Alami, Specialist in Geriatric Medicine and Consultant, Raffles Internal Medicine Centre.

Encourage social meals

For most people, the thought of eating alone can reduce their appetite. According to Dr Kua, our appetite often increases when dining in groups. So, make the effort to eat with your family often. You can then be assured that your ageing parents actually eat, and you get to ensure they eat right too.



Hire meal delivery services

Sometimes, the elderly is not eating well because they simply lack the stamina to prepare meals or dread the subsequent washing up. It may then be worthwhile to invest in third-party food delivery services. If you can get a peace of mind knowing that your parents or grandparents have easy access to ready-cooked food without the hassle of cleanup, why not?

Consider appetite stimulants



In certain cases, you may want to speak to your doctor and consider the use of appetite stimulants or supplements. Do take note that these should be taken under strict supervision and advice from the doctor.



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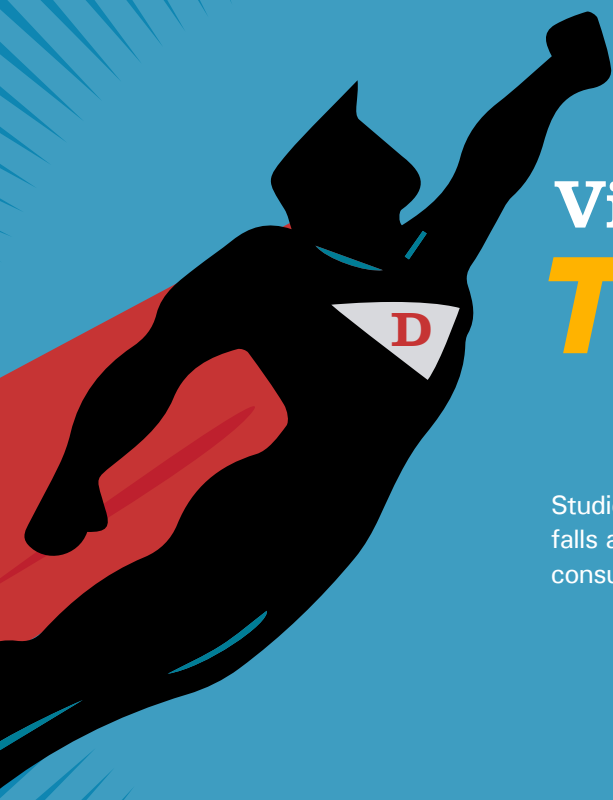


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PREVENTING FALLS, FRACTURES & MORE



Vitamin D to **THE RESCUE**

Studies have shown that taking vitamin D supplements can help in preventing falls and fractures amongst the elderly. Find out what's the ideal dosage to consume for greater mobility during your golden years. **By Magdalene Lee**

Health Supplements for Seniors

You would not need any additional health supplements if you are eating well-balanced diets daily, exercise regularly and leading a healthy lifestyle. Consider these supplements below for a healthier you.

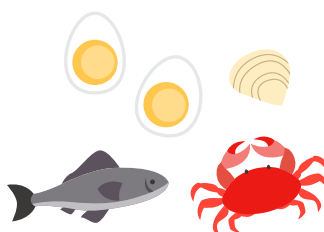
Multivitamins



This can help supplement poor nutrition especially for elderly who have problems consuming well-balanced diets.

Vitamin B12

2.4 mcg (micrograms) each day



This vitamin keeps our blood and nerves healthy. One in three elderly can no longer absorb natural vitamin B12 from their food.

Calcium

1200 mg (milligrams), but not more than 2500 mg a day



Calcium keeps our bones strong. Bone loss can lead to fractures, mainly of the hip, spine, or wrist, in both older women and men.



Vitamin D helps our body absorb calcium for strong bones, fight many diseases, and allows for proper nerve function. Low vitamin D has been associated with balance problems, impaired feet function, high fall rates, low bone mineral density and muscle weakness among the elderly.

As we age, our bodies no longer synthesise vitamin D from sunlight like we used to, leading to an increased risk of vitamin D deficiency. Our kidneys are also less able to activate vitamin D for our body's use.

Dr Nur Farhan Bte Mohammad Alami, Specialist in Geriatrics & Consultant, Raffles Internal Medicine Centre shares from her experience: "It is difficult to recommend a specific duration of sun exposure for everyone.



The production of Vitamin D will depend on your skin colour and differs amongst individuals. Many of our elderly are homebound and do not engage in outdoor exercises or activities. Incorporating outdoor activities for at least 30 minutes a day is good for exercise and balance. In addition, it includes sun exposure which allows the skin to produce Vitamin D."

Adds Dr Nur Farhan, "Many elderly may not have appetite or teeth to eat well, and this leads to poor nutrition. As such, their intake of vitamin D is often less than desirable."

Where to Get Vitamin D

The importance of vitamin D cannot be ignored. Yet this precious vitamin is not common in many foods. Here's where you can find vitamin D.

- **Food:** cod liver oil, salmon, mackerel, tuna, beef liver, cheese and egg yolks
- **Vitamin D fortified foods:** milk, breakfast cereals, and juice drinks
- **Sunlight:** Sunlight converts cholesterol to vitamin D in the body.
- **Vitamin D supplement:** One in three persons get enough vitamin D in their diet (National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2006). This is when supplementation can help.



Studies have shown that vitamin D supplements are useful in preventing falls and fractures. Dr Nur Farhan recommends that elderly above the age of 65 years old consume 1,000 IU of vitamin D from all sources daily. "For elderly who are frail and at risk of falls, they may need to take up to 4,000 IU of vitamin D from all sources." This is when vitamin D supplements can come in to supplement the intake.

More is not Necessarily Best

Contrary to popular belief, taking too much vitamin D is not good. Just as you can get vitamin D deficiency, you can similarly get vitamin D overdose which may lead to an increased risk in fractures and other health conditions. Speak to your doctor before starting on supplements to ensure you are taking the right amount of vitamin D as your necessary intake will depend on your gender, age, weight, diet, sun exposure and medical history.

Vitamin D

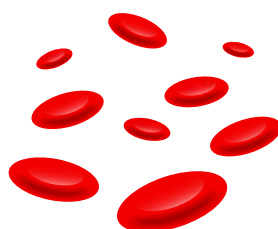
400 IU for ages 51 to 65 and 1000 IU for those over 65



Vitamin D helps our body build strong bones and fight diseases. It is needed for nerve function.

Iron

8 mg of iron a day



Iron keeps our red blood cells healthy. Postmenopausal women on hormone replacement therapy may need extra iron.

Vitamin B6

1.7 mg for men and 1.5 mg for women daily



Vitamin B6 is needed for forming red blood cells and to keep overall health.



AGE gorgeously


IN YOUR GOLDEN YEARS

By Alan Lim

No one can stop ageing. As we grow older, we experience an increasing number of major life changes – ranging from career changes and retirement, children leaving home, the loss of loved ones, and physical changes. But many people still age gracefully by leading full and active lives with minimal pain, disability or mental decline. What's their secret?

What You Can Do with Sunscreen


Is there someone you know of who wants to look older than his or her age? Of course not! Wrinkles and age spots may be the road map of life, but no one wants to read an atlas when they look in the mirror. Certain habits and behaviours increase the risk of premature skin aging and one of the leading causes is sun exposure. But it is never too late to halt the process by limiting your sun exposure, wear hats and use sunscreen.

- 
- Wear broad spectrum (protected against UVA and UVB) water resistant sunscreen with sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30.

- As the hands and face are particularly vulnerable to sun damage due to their frequent exposure, make sunscreen application part of your out-the-door routine.



SUNSCREEN
MAKES
YOU
LOOK
YOUNGER

- 
- Always apply on your body about 15 to 30 minutes before going outside.

- No matter how high the SPF of a sunscreen is or even if it is waterproof, you should still reapply sunscreen every two hours since rubbing, touching, swimming and perspiration will eventually wear away the sunscreen applied earlier.



Turn Back Time

Ageing is a multifactorial process which involves collagen and fat loss, muscle atrophy and bone remodeling. It is estimated that a volume of 5ml is lost every year upon reaching of age 40 years. Thankfully, modern advances and technology have provided a few options to maintain and rejuvenate our skin.

Here are some rejuvenation techniques you can consider.



Intense Pulse Light

A machine that tackles not only photo-ageing through reduction of age spots, facial redness and other pigmentation but can also photo-rejuvenate the skin. With almost no downtime, this is a great treatment for patients with busy lifestyles. Our dermatologist will assess suitability and proceed to specially select UV filters for your skin's needs. With regular sessions of individually tailored treatments, you can then say hello to brighter skin!



Spectra Nd:Yag

Powerful yet gentle, this multi-mode, multi-purpose laser can handle both pigmentation problems and skin rejuvenation. It aims to reduce or eliminate pigment, fine lines and post inflammatory scars with minimal downtime and treatment can even help out with active acne. Visit a dermatologist for a suitability assessment.



Venus Viva

Using radio-frequency, this treatment can help tackle uneven skin through controlled thermal injury and delayed collagen remodeling. This is another safe and non-invasive treatment suitable for all skin types! Great for wrinkles and acne scars, it can gradually improve the texture skin and also reduce pore size.



Essential Skincare Routine

Let's face it – our skin has unique nutritional needs and it becomes less able to perform its key barrier functions as we age. Instead of harbouring the thoughts of having "younger-looking" skin, wouldn't it be great to focus on having "healthy skin"?

Dr Lynette Low, Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics, recommends a core skincare regimen so that you can enjoy complexion perfection. "Prevention is always better than cure! It's never too early to start looking after your skin. But try to keep it simple, applicable and replicable." Dr Low says.



1

Cleanser

Wash your face with warm water, and a gentle cleanser suited to your skin type once in the morning and in the evening.



2

Moisturiser

Use an oil-free, non-comodogenic moisturiser suited for your skin type. This is best applied just after washing to lock in moisture.



3

Sunblock

Don't forget to put on a broad-spectrum sunscreen of at least SPF 30.



4

Night Time Treatment

Use a serum containing vitamins A, C or E. This will help prompt your skin to make more collagen, remove dead surface skin cells and also combat free radical damage. Follow that on with a moisturiser suited for your skin type.



STANDING IN THE GAP

It is inevitable for some of us to lose our teeth as we age. As our human life expectancy increases, what matters to many is often the comfort of having teeth and how tooth replacement options can allow us to continue enjoying good quality of life. Dr Jeffrey Sng, Specialist in Prosthodontics, Raffles Dental, shares a list of factors that you should consider when opting for tooth replacement procedures. [By Joanna Lee](#)

There are primarily three types of tooth replacement options – removable dentures, fixed bridges and dental implants. We review the treatment options to determine which would be best for you.



Bite Strength

If you want to be able to chew on a variety of food, including hard ones such as apples and well done steaks, dental implants are the best.

Fixed bridges leverage on the strength of two or more supporting natural teeth for chewing. Removable dentures have the weakest chewing strength compared with dental implants and fixed bridges.



Comfort

A dental implant is the go-to option if you want to experience the comfort of chewing on food like natural teeth. However, in a case of long span dental implant prosthesis you might experience food trapped under it and cause some discomfort.

Fixed bridges can possibly allow food to be trapped under the bridge and cause discomfort. Removable dentures are usually bulky and have poorer retention compared to bridges and implants.



Downtime

When it comes to minimising downtime, removable dentures only require approximately a month, while fixed bridges takes about two months to complete.

Dental implants usually require approximately three to six months after surgery and before crowning. This also depends on whether you require bone grafting. Generally, your health condition is the main factor that determines whether you are suitable to undergo a surgery.



Oral Hygiene

No matter which tooth replacement option you choose, oral hygiene is key to maintaining the outcome. If you prefer to keep it simple, choose dental implants because normal brushing and flossing like your natural teeth are all you need to do.

Removable dentures require daily removal and cleaning. You would also need to remember to remove them before going to bed. Flossing for fixed bridges can pose as a challenging task if you are not dextrous. And if not done properly, you can become prone to developing gum disease.



Cost

Budget is usually a concern for many. Removable dentures are the most affordable of the three. The cost of fixed bridges varies depending on the complexity and the planned length of the bridge. Dental implants are the most costly as it involves surgery and additional procedures.



Aesthetics & Follow Up

In most cases, the prosthetic tooth or teeth can appear natural when done properly. However, this also depends on other factors such as your bone structural support and remaining natural teeth. All three options require a six-month routine check and review.

✪ Deciding What Is Right for You ✪

- 1 Always consult a trusted dental surgeon.
- 2 Never be afraid to ask your doctor in detail about the available treatment options (eg pros and cons).
- 3 Address every concern (eg aesthetics, bite strength and cost) that you may have before you start the treatment.
- 4 Be aware of what you would be going through and what you would like to achieve at the end of the treatment.



“Tell-nail”

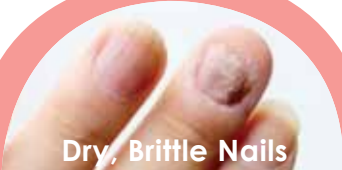
Signs of Your Health

Take a good look at your nails. Check your memory and ask yourself whether they have always looked like this.

Did you notice any change in colour, curves, ridges and thickness of your finger nails? The overall appearance can send you valuable warning signs of potential underlying health issues.

Let Dr Paul Chia, Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics, share five types of nail conditions that could help you decipher the status of your health.

By Joanna Lee



Dry, Brittle Nails

If your nails appear dry and brittle, check your hormone levels and bacterial health.

- Thyroid disease can lead to having brittle, dry nails that crack and split easily
- Fungus can make nails dry or break easily



Clubbed Nails

If the skin around your nails appears puffed around your fingers, this is known as “clubbed” and this suggests:

- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Liver disease
- Lung disease, especially if you always have breathing difficulties
- AIDS



Pitted Nails

Small holes and dips in nails can form from banging your hands. For those that don't go away after sometime, they could suggest:

- Connective tissue disorder
- Psoriasis
- Zinc deficiency (if the pit appears to form a line across the middle of your nail)



Discoloured Nails

A healthy fingernail should appear pink with a slight pinkish white near the base. Otherwise, the various colours below may suggest:

- Dull - vitamin deficiency
- Blueish - low oxygen levels in blood
- Green - bacterial infection
- Red streaks in nail bed - a warning of a heart valve infection
- White - signal liver disease such as hepatitis
- Dark stripes at the top (Terry's nails) - associated with ageing and congestive heart failure



Thick Nails

Thickening of nails are often a change that signal other health symptoms you may be ignoring. Allergic reactions to new medications can show up as thick nails.

- Thickened nails - lung disease
- Thick and rough-textured nails - fungal infection
- Thick and separated nails - may mean thyroid disease or psoriasis
- Unusual thickness - a symptom of a circulation problem



While your fingernails will not be the only signs of diseases, they can provide you with hints and motivation to seek medical help.



Never Too Old for Exercise

Truth be told, exercise is important at any age. Staying active is a great way to prevent injuries and promote a healthier life as we get older.

Many older adults often experience poor balance, weakness and inflexibility due to degeneration. These, coupled with brittle bones, can cause falls leading to injuries and even disabilities.

A good way to keep these at bay is to keep moving – regular exercises can help to strengthen muscles, improve mobility and balance.

Alan Lim speaks to Mr Shaun Toh, Senior Physiotherapist, Raffles Rehabilitation Centre, who shares three simple exercises you can consider.

FOR UPPER BODY MOBILITY

ARM RAISES

Step 1:

Sit upright, arms by your sides.

Step 2:

With palms forward, raise both arms up by the side. Raise up as far as is comfortable. Then return.

Step 3:

Keep your shoulders down and arms straight throughout. Breathe out as you raise your arms and breathe in as you lower them. Repeat five times.

1



2



FOR LOWER BODY STRENGTH

MINI SQUATS

Step 1:

Rest your hands on the back of a chair for stability and stand with your feet hip-width apart.

Step 2:

Slowly bend your knees as far as is comfortable, keeping them facing forward. Aim to get them over your big toe. Keep your back straight at all times.

Step 3:

Gently come up to standing, squeezing your buttocks as you perform the action. Repeat five times.

1



2



FOR BALANCE

HEEL TO TOE WALK

Step 1:

Standing upright, place your right heel on the floor directly in front of your left toe.

Step 2:

Then do the same with your left heel. Make sure you look forward at all times. If necessary, put your fingers against a wall for stability. Try to perform at least five steps. As you progress, move away from the wall.

1



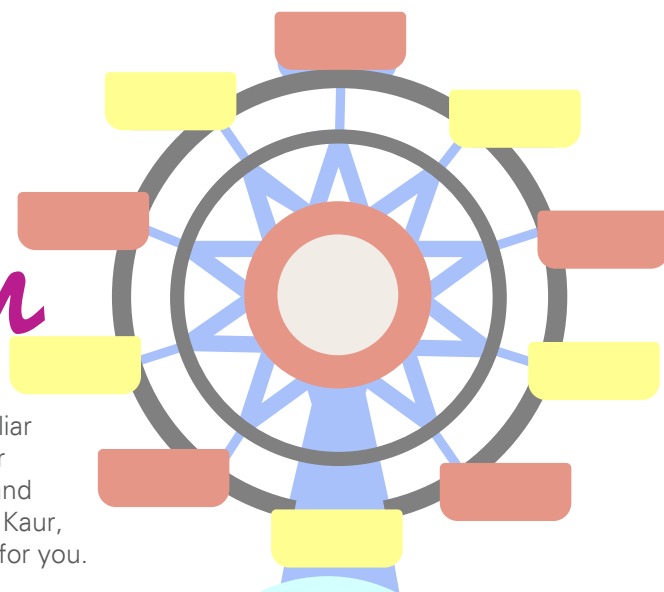
2



Life is Motion

"Active ageing" - a popular phrase that we have become familiar with in the recent years, has gotten many older adults off their chairs to start exercising regularly. If you are just starting out and wonder how much to do and what to do, read on as Ms Verin Kaur, Physiotherapist, Raffles Rehabilitation Centre, breaks it down for you.

By Joanna Lee



The Weekly Goal

For older adults who are generally fit and have no health conditions that limit their mobility, the national recommendation is 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity weekly. One way to look at it is to break this down to 30 minutes per session over five days in the same week.

An ideal exercise regime for anyone consists of four major categories: endurance, strength training, balance and stretching. It is key to plan your exercise regime and increase the level of intensity over time.

RPE Scale

Gauge your exertion based on how heavy and strenuous the exercise feels to you by combining all sensations and feelings of physical stress, effort and fatigue.

10	Maximum Flat out. Feels impossible to continue with activity.
9	Very Hard Feels difficult to maintain exercise intensity. Can barely speak.
7-8	Vigorous At a point of feeling uncomfortable. Breathing heavily but still able to speak.
4-6	Moderate Feels able to maintain activity for hours with heavy breathing. Can hold a short conversation.
2-3	Light Feels able to maintain activity for hours with easy breathing. Can hold a conversation.
1	Very Light No activity.

Physical Activities VS Exercise

If you wonder what the difference is, physical activities refer to those that get your body moving – such as taking the stairs, doing household chores, walking the dog and gardening. "These activities can be counted to the weekly recommended 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity as long as you feel a moderate amount of exertion when performing them," says Ms Kaur. The level of exertion can be gauged using a RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion) scale. You should be working at a level of 4 to 6.

Exercise is a form of physical activity that is planned, structured, and repetitive such as aerobics, weight training or yoga. It is advisable to include both into your daily life.

Benefits of Exercising

- **Delay and Prevent Diseases**
It can delay or prevent many diseases associated with ageing, such as colon cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and others. In some cases, exercise is an effective treatment for many chronic conditions.
- **Stay Mobile**
Exercise can help people remain mobile and independent.
- **Manage Stress**
Regular, moderate physical activity can help manage stress and improve your mood. Studies also suggest that exercise can improve or maintain some aspects of cognitive function.



Four Major Exercise Categories



1 Endurance

Cardiorespiratory endurance exercises make the heart pump faster and help to increase the body's ability to deliver oxygen and nutrients to tissues. After a few weeks of consistent exercising, there will likely be an improvement in your ability to exercise and perform day-to-day tasks without feeling tired easily.

Examples: Brisk walking, cycling, circuit training, dancing, hiking, football, running, martial arts, playing tennis and swimming



2 Strength Training

These types of exercise prevent loss of bone mass and improve balance over time. Strength training exercises can help elderly avoid falls and bone fractures. Whenever possible, do two to three simple strength training workouts per week. They should include exercises that target all major muscle groups such as the shoulders, arms, chest, abdomen, back, hips, and legs.

Examples: Controlled exercises using free weights, resistance bands, body weight and strength training equipment

3 Balance

Balancing exercises help to build up leg muscles, while there are other exercises that focus on stability. Strengthening exercises should be performed two or more days per week. On the other hand, stability exercises can be performed daily.

Examples of strength exercises for the lower body include back and side leg raise and single leg stand supported by a chair.

Examples: Pilates, yoga, exercises that require balancing on one limb at one time



4 Stretching

Stretching exercises improve one's flexibility. However, they do not improve endurance or strength. It is recommended that stretches are done after endurance and strength exercises. The general principal to do stretching exercises is after the body is warmed up as this will help prevent unwanted muscle injuries. Ensure that you warm up your body first with gentle movements or slow walking for 10 to 15 minutes.

Examples: Neck, shoulder, lower back, calf, and thigh stretches

Ask the Experts

Q: Why does our skin become drier and more prone to eczema as we age?

A: As the skin ages, there is decreased secretion from oil and sweat glands, leading to skin dryness, also known as xerosis. This may cause itching and is referred to as "senile pruritus". External factors may worsen this, including cold dry weather, excessive washing, or using soaps that are too harsh for the skin. When people develop itchy red scaling patches usually on the flanks and lower legs, this is a form of eczema called "asteatotic dermatitis". Before attributing the itch and dryness to just the ageing process, medical causes like kidney failure, liver problems, thyroid hormone imbalances, skin infections like scabies, iron deficiency needs to be excluded. Older patients also tend to be on multiple medications, and many of them can induce itching as well. Therefore, it is important to see a dermatologist early who will then be able to make the right diagnosis and prescribe the right treatment.



Dr Rachael Teo

Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant,
Raffles Skin & Aesthetics

Q: Can people with osteoarthritis exercise and what types are ideal?

A: "Wear and tear" on the joints is the basis of osteoarthritis. As such patients may minimise joint usage to slow down the disease's progression. However, exercising strengthens the muscles around the joints, which has various benefits. Hence, it should be done within tolerable pain limits. Suggested exercises include range of motion and flexibility exercises, involving stretching the muscles, which reduces stiffness and improves flexibility. Aerobic and endurance exercises improve stamina and reduce fatigue. Swimming is also ideal, as it does not put additional pressure on the joint. Alternatively, tai chi has been shown to increase physical functions in osteoarthritis patients.



Dr Chong Yong Yeow

Specialist in Rheumatology & Consultant,
Raffles Internal Medicine Centre

Q: What are the health implications of falling for the elderly?

A: In the worst case scenario, the hip, arm or pelvis is fractured; sometimes there may be internal bleeding in the skull. The psychological consequences may have a lasting effect on the elderly in that he may become fearful of falling and starts to adopt a furniture-groping gait. In very severe cases, they totally refuse to get up to walk again. Falls in the elderly is usually a marker of ill health and they should seek medical attention to uncover the causes of the falls. In one study, it was reported that 25% of those who fall died within a year.



Dr Teo Sek Khoo

Specialist in Geriatrics & Consultant,
Raffles Internal Medicine Centre

Q: How can acupuncture benefit the elderly?

A: Acupuncture is a non-drug, non-invasive therapy. It can be administered as frequently as needed, either as an independent treatment, or as a complement to other healthcare therapies. This is especially relevant to those elderly patients with low tolerance for pharmaceutical side-effects or shock arising from surgery. Similarly, a number of western clinical trials have shown that acupuncture is effective in managing chronic pain from medical conditions such as osteoarthritis. Research done by Chinese medical institutions and universities has also shown that acupuncture can benefit mild to moderate senile dementia patients. This includes improvements to memory, intelligence and ability to undertake daily activities.



Mr Chew Hong Gian

Senior TCM Physician,
Raffles Chinese Medicine

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We aim to empower you with the latest health news and tips, as well as for you to learn more about the people behind Raffles. Stay connected with us on social media.



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When asked about something fun having to work in Raffles, Ms Fareen Bte Kasbollah, Executive, Raffles Healthcare Institute said, "It would have to be the onboarding training programmes. Every month, I get to meet new hires as they embark on their career. My most satisfying experience so far would be to receive positive acknowledgement and feedback from those that I have trained. "



Raffles Medical Group

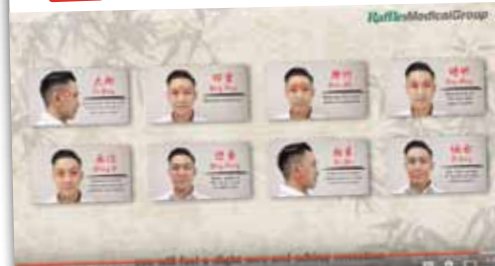


We look at eight silent signs of how stress can make us sick. It is probably worth to pay a little more attention if you have most of these symptoms.

Can Stress Make You Sick? 8 Scary Stress Symptoms!



Raffles Hospital videos.....



RafflesHospital



Did you know that there are various acupressure points on our face that can help to revitalise and restore tired-looking skin? We show you 8 points that you can massage no matter where you are. Give your face a beauty treat today!



Twitter

@RafflesMedGrp

What causes discoloured teeth, and how can teeth whitening help you get a brighter smile? - <http://bit.ly/2crimVw>



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