

senior review

FREE

May 2023

in this issue...

- ▶ Pain from Arthritis
- ▶ Mental Health: There are Solutions!
- ▶ Unfortunately, Medicare Fraud Is Always in Season
- ▶ Make a Plan for Your Pet
- ▶ A Story of Gratitude: Diane Arnes
- ▶ Poppy Day - Honor and Support Our Veterans
- ▶ May is Better Sleep Month!
- ▶ Foods That Are Ruining Your Senior's Sleep
- ▶ Brain-Health Trends for 2023
- ▶ Decades of Lessons I've Learned About Dementia

A Senior Magazine for Living a Healthier, Smarter and More Active Life in Rock County

Pain from Arthritis *by Mercyhealth*

Arthritis is a common cause of hip pain, but it's not the only one.

If you're experiencing more than minor, occasional hip pain, it's a good idea to see a doctor—the sooner, the better. Hip pain can have many causes, and a doctor can start finding out what's behind yours.

Osteoarthritis—the gradual wearing down of cartilage in a joint—is a common culprit. It can cause deep groin or hip pain and might make activities like getting out of a chair or walking painful. But there are a lot of other possible causes too, according to the Arthritis Foundation, the American Academy of Orthopaedics and other experts. For instance:

Other types of arthritis. There are more than 100 kinds of arthritis and related conditions, many of which can cause hip pain. One of them is rheumatoid arthritis (RA). That's when the body's own immune system attacks the joints. As with osteoarthritis, your hip may feel painful, stiff and swollen. But since RA typically affects joints on both sides of the body at the same time, the other hip may hurt too.

Hip bursitis. This happens when the bursae (fluid-filled sacs that help cushion areas between bones and other tissues) become inflamed. It often results from overuse—repetitive stress on a joint—as well as sudden injuries. Often, the pain is worse at night, when lying on your hip and when getting out of a chair.

Tendinitis. This involves inflammation and swelling of the tendons that connect muscles to bones. Like bursitis, hip tendinitis is often an overuse injury. If you have this condition, your hip may be painful to move and tender to the touch.

Hip fracture. For younger adults, it usually takes a forceful injury—like falling off a high ladder—to break a hip. But for many older adults, even a minor fall after tripping over something can cause a hip fracture. A broken hip is often very painful. If the bone is broken, you will probably not be able to stand on that leg.

Hip strain. A strain is when a muscle is stretched beyond its limit or torn. Most hip strains occur suddenly during sports, though they also can result from falls or everyday activities. Some hip strains happen over time. Symptoms include pain that's worse when you use your hip, swelling of the hip, stiffness and muscle weakness.

Low-back problems. Sometimes pain from a bulging disc in the spine can extend to the hip. If this is the cause of your hip pain, you will likely have back pain as well.

Blood-flow problems. An achy pain in your hip, buttocks or thigh while walking can be a sign of poor circulation to the legs. Another sign of this condition is slow wound-healing.

Talk to your doctor

Without treatment, some hip problems can cause further joint damage. And in some cases, hip pain can be a sign of a serious disease or injury. So don't put off talking with a doctor.

If you're experiencing hip pain, talk to an orthopedic specialist or your primary care doctor. If you need help finding a doctor, visit or call (888) 396-3729.



May is National Stroke Awareness Month

SUSPECT A STROKE? ACT F.A.S.T.

STROKE IS AN EMERGENCY AND A BRAIN ATTACK. ACT FAST AND CALL 9-1-1 AT THE FIRST SIGN OF STROKE.



FACE: Facial Weakness. Ask the person to smile. Does the face look uneven? Does one side of the face droop?



SPEECH: Speech problems. Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence or phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?



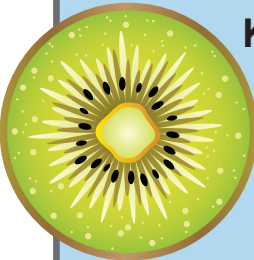
ARMS: Arm Weakness. Ask the person to raise both arms in front of them. Does one arm drift down?



TIME: If the person shows any of these symptoms, time is important. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Brain cells are dying.

May is Better Sleep Month!

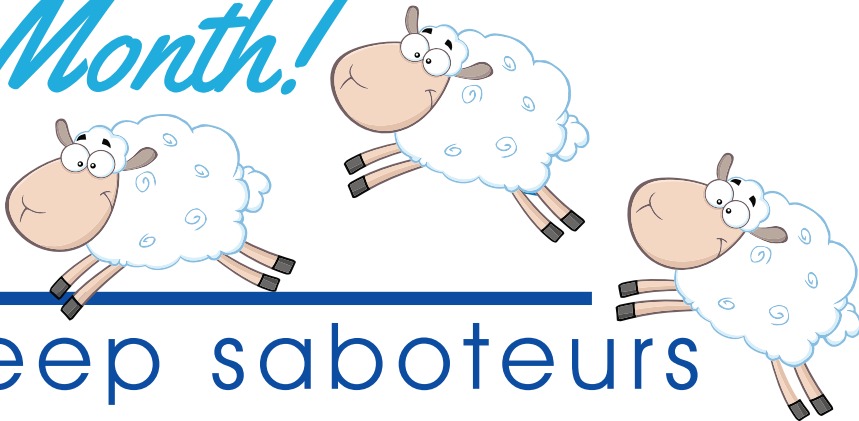
EAT THIS: SLEEP BETTER



KIWI could be the ultimate pre-bed treat. Studies show people who ate two kiwis an hour before bed, slept almost a full hour longer than those who didn't. Kiwis are full of vitamins C and E, serotonin and folate - all can help you get your zzz's.

SOYFOODS such as tofu and edamame are rich in isoflavones., which increase the production of serotonin. Those who ate two or more servings of soy a day slept longer and reported a better quality of sleep.

FIBER-RICH FOODS could be key for sleeping better. Fiber prevents a surge in blood sugars that may lower melatonin. Get a boost of fiber from artichokes, quinoa, and bran cereal.



E-BOOK READING

Reading before bed is good - reading from electronic books is not! The blue light can suppress melatonin.

NEW ENVIRONMENT

Sleeping somewhere new is called first-night effect. Bring something you usually sleep with to make the room feel familiar.

A FULL MOON

Moon madness is a real thing! Make sure your blinds are drawn to keep out the extra light.

Many people let their pets sleep with them. Whether your cat or dog hurts or helps your sleep depends on your pet's temperament, there is no definitive rule. There are some other things to consider too. Make sure your pets are up to date on their vaccines. Some diseases can be passed from pets to people. Also, good grooming can help keep you from getting things like poison ivy from your pet. From a behavioral perspective, pets should only be allowed on the bed by invitation.



WOMEN WHO REPORT BETTER SLEEP WERE **33% MORE** LIKELY TO HIT THEIR WEIGHT LOSS GOALS.



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Mental Health: There are Solutions!

By Carl A. Trapani, MA, MS, LPC, Chippewa Manor Campus Chaplain

Growing older has never been easy, and growing older with mental health challenges can be overwhelming.



The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 20% of people age 55 years or older experience some type of mental health concern. The most common conditions include anxiety, severe cognitive impairment, and mood disorders (such as depression or bipolar disorder). Not surprisingly, many of these issues can actually lead to suicide or attempted suicide. So what can we do to help those dealing with these types of difficulties? And what can we do to help maintain positive mental health as we grow older?

First and foremost, we should maintain close emotional and physical ties with the elders in our family or network of friends. We can also encourage seniors to stay active and engaged. Being around people and having hobbies or activities to look forward to on a regular basis, can help fight against the loneliness that can result from disrupted personal ties, moving from one's home or losing a spouse.

Another important thing we can do is talk. Talking about our feelings (good and bad) with someone who cares about us or that may even be a professional counselor, clergy or mental health professional, can have a profound impact on how we digest and react to emotions. Want to be able to best deal with your feelings? Don't hold them inside – talk them out! Mental and emotional health issues are no longer things to be ashamed of anymore. They are just like any other medical problem we deal with as we age.

Just like medications we take to deal with cancer, headaches and even COVID, there are many treatment options to help with our

mental health as well. Thanks to television commercials regularly promoting pharmaceutical treatments for depression, bipolar disorder, and anxiety, our society is becoming used to the idea that people can have issues with their mental health – and still be active and useful members of society. This is a wonderful breakthrough! Remember, just like other diseases, quality treatments and cures are available. If you, or someone you love is struggling with their mental health – seek help as soon as possible.

In addition to treatments – there are things we can do to be proactive about our mental health as we age. Psychotherapist, facilitator and trainer Glenn Baird suggests there are five simple actions that people can take which have been proven to improve mental wellbeing.

- Build and maintain strong relationships. These are the foundation of mental wellbeing.
- Be active. Always make time in your week to do something that gets you moving.
- Keep learning. Stimulate your brain by picking up an old skill or trying out a new one.
- Give. Giving back to the local community or helping out a friend or colleague is a great way to boost your self-esteem and raise a smile.
- Take notice and appreciate what is around you. Be grateful for what you have and what you've experienced.

Some Key facts about Seniors and Mental Health

- Due to population aging, the number of seniors with mental disorders is expected to double by 2030.
- Depression is the most common mental health problem in older people.
- People aged 85 and older have the highest suicide rate of any age group.
- Two-thirds of seniors with mental health problems do not get the treatment they need.
- Mental health services for older adults are limited in comparison to other age groups.



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Unfortunately, Medicare Fraud Is Always in Season

By Ingrid Kundinger, SMP Project Manager

If you keep track of things by season, spring has sprung! Really, it's there, even if it is still covered in snow. If you keep track of things by sports season, baseball season is here.



One season that seems to be a year-long season, however, is Medicare scam season. Winter, spring, summer, and fall. Football season, basketball season, baseball season. Medicare scams are, unfortunately, always in season. We can never be too careful.

Here are a few important reminders to help keep you and your Medicare information safe:

- Do not share your Medicare number over the phone with people who call you out of the blue, regardless of what it is they tell you or offer you. If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is!
- There is NOT a new Medicare card, so don't let the fraudsters who call convince you otherwise. The paper red, white, and blue Medicare card is the only card issued by Medicare. There is not a plastic card, a card with a chip reader, a card that requires your physician's name, or a card with other colors. There are NO NEW Medicare cards.
- Take the time to review your statements, either Medicare Summary Notices or Explanation of Benefits, to make sure that all claims filed with your information are accurate.
- Remember that the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol is a phone call away if you have any questions or concerns. In Wisconsin we can be reached at (888) 818-2611.

Reporting your concerns to us make a difference! Recently, a CEO of a healthcare company in North Carolina was sentenced to 80 months in prison for her role in fraudulently billing Medicare over \$50 million in durable medical equipment between 2014 and 2021. Of this amount billed, Medicare paid more than \$17 million.

What is the Wisconsin connection? A Medicare beneficiary in Wisconsin called our toll-free helpline with concerns about claims that were submitted to Medicare by one of the companies involved in this case. Our team worked with the beneficiary to get copies of the documentation to submit to the Office of Inspector General for possible investigation. And in this case, there was an investigation, and this CEO will be spending some time in prison for healthcare fraud.

All reports matter! Please don't hesitate to contact us if you think something is suspicious with your Medicare statements. We are here to help!

**Here's how you can reach us: Call: (888) 818-2611,
E-mail: smp-wi@gwaar.org, Website: www.smpwi.org,
Facebook: [@WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol](https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol)**



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SMPs are grant-funded projects of the federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL).

Make a Plan for Your Pet By Becky Streeter

Many people speak with lawyers and have estate plans set up with hopefully years of advanced notice. That estate plan, however, may or may not include your wishes for your beloved pet. Most of us expect to out-live our pets—but what if we don't? Suddenly your survivors have a 12-year-old cat or 14-year-old dog, and they don't know what to do with it.

With no plan in place, many older pets are sent to shelters. During the pandemic, millions of Americans became sick and/or died, and shelters were suddenly overwhelmed with pets. Veterinary costs and price of food also increased sharply, and it became difficult for these crowded shelters to maintain the level of care required for the animals. Unfortunately, older pets are not frequently adopted and are therefore often euthanized first in order to keep overall shelter expenses down and create more space for incoming pets.

Today, however, many humane societies across the United States have signed a pledge to become a “no-kill” shelter by 2025. The goal is to have save every dog and cat who can be saved. According to Best Friends, the organization spearheading the movement, “Typically, the number of pets who are suffering from irreparable medical or behavioral issues that compromise their quality of life and prevent them from being rehomed is not more than 10% of all dogs and cats entering shelters. Therefore, we designate shelters that meet the 90% save-rate benchmark as no-kill.” Research the shelters in your area to see if they are on the “No-Kill 2025” list. Additionally, there are some facilities, such as Bob’s House for Dogs in Eau Claire, that work with shelters to take on some of the dogs the shelters cannot care for, but even Bob’s has limited space and means.

Another option is a pet sanctuary, such as Coco’s Heart Dog Rescue in Somerset or Moses Ark Rescue and Sanctuary in Menomonie. These sanctuaries usually provide love and care for animals, with a goal of helping them find a forever home.

However, they often fill up quickly and sometimes have waitlists or periods of time where they do not accept surrenders. Some sanctuaries also require a fee to hold a spot, so make sure you have all the information before you sign anything.

Here are some steps you can take if you don’t want to rely on a spot in a sanctuary or have your pet sent to a shelter in the event of your hospitalization or death:

Designate an emergency caregiver who can provide immediate care and support for your pet. Make sure you speak with them about your wishes so they know what actions need to be taken in your stead.

Designate a permanent caregiver and forever home for after you pass.

Add language to your will with detailed instructions on the care of your pet.

Sources: Best Friends. “What No-Kill Really Means.” 2023. <https://bestfriends.org/no-kill-2025/what-does-no-kill-mean>. • McDaniel, JoBeth. “Finding Caring Homes for Older Pets.” Next Avenue. 31 January 2023. <https://www.nextavenue.org/how-to-make-plans-for-the-care-of-your-pets>.



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DHS Approved 5/27/2021



A Story of Gratitude: Diane Arnes by Kristi Gay

The very first time I met Diane at age 82 as a terminal pancreatic cancer patient receiving home hospice care she said, “I have had such a wonderful life. I am grateful for everything and I’m completely at peace whenever the Lord says it’s my time to go.” A year later, our weekly visits have been filled with stories from her childhood to present day that many would have considered much less than wonderful, if not traumatic. Yet every week, the moral of each story of what some would consider hardship ends with, “but I loved it!” She has been able to find and focus on the best part of every season of her life, leaving only the best memories. Diane’s attitude HAS given her the best life because of this perspective that she chooses day in and day out.

This story was written in the last month of Diane’s life with her permission by her Hospice Volunteer, Kristi, and with the help of Diane’s story telling and picture finding. This is just a short summary of the full biography that is available on Amazon.com for Diane’s family, friends and loved ones to remember her legacy.

Diane was born in 1939 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and was the middle child between two brothers. With her birth father in the service, her birth mother would leave the three small children under five years old home alone for hours or days at a time. When Diane was four years old her and her brothers were taken to an orphanage in Sparta, WI where they lived and went to school with over 150 other children until Diane was 10 years old. She had good memories of this orphanage including a grandma-like figure that nurtured the kids and other young girlfriends that she would get into mischievous trouble with.

She struck gold with her first foster parents who took in all three kids and were the only two people she ever called “Mom and Dad”. They loved Denny and Jenny Ahl with all their hearts, and had many happy memories, Christmases, and adventures with them. They were older in age at 64 and 65 when they took them in, so when Diane was 13 she was the first of the siblings to be plucked out and re-homed she had no information as to why but she had to assume it was that they were too old to care for them anymore. Without addresses and phones for her brothers, the siblings lost touch until they were adults.

Diane met her husband, Dean, while working as a waitress in Spooner, WI in her late teens and they married and had two children. They did not have a happy marriage, but Diane refused to leave him until the kids were both out of the house because she never wanted them to end up in an orphanage or foster homes like her. Eventually, she moved out and divorced her husband. She was very proud of herself for watching out for her children and sacrificing her own happiness for their stability.

As an adult she had various jobs, all of which she seemed to be singled out with love from the managers or owners. She had a special way with everyone she met, because of her positive attitude and willingness to work hard. People went out of their way to gift her things or write her a sweet note about how much she meant to them.

After retirement she lived in an apartment building for 17 years without a car, and mainly did crafts like making homemade cards. She LOVED to clean and would “clean her apartment top to bottom” taking out everything from a dresser or cupboard to clean everything and return everything back. “It keeps me young!” she would say as an 83-year old terminal cancer patient. She felt great her entire year

living with cancer as she chose not to pursue any treatment, and had no pain or symptoms really. Many days she even wondered if she had been misdiagnosed, but was just enjoying each day being in the present moment. She was the most unassuming human that didn’t ask questions, didn’t gossip, and just kept to her low-maintenance self, enjoying each day making cards, for years.



Diane has kept long relationships with the people in her life, including her closest foster sister, Peachie, from when she was 15 years old and her best friends, Aggie and Pat who she met when she was 16 years old. All of them now in their 80s, they have maintained lifelong friendships. Diane’s children, Dean and Diane, lived less than ten minutes away and saw her frequently, having a great relationship.

Sadly, Diane passed away on Thursday, April 6, 2023. However, as she said the first day we met, “I am grateful for my life and I’m ready whenever the Lord says it’s my time to go!”. Her only wish was that she didn’t suffer, and she was sharp as a tack and sassy as every right up until a week before she passed, and then it was quick after that. She got her wish, and she is definitely making crafts up in Heaven and smiling down on all who read her story.

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Poppy Day - Honor and Support Our Veterans

Each year on the Friday before Memorial Day in the United States, members of the American Legion Family hand out small paper or silk poppies for people to wear in honor of our past, current and future veterans. It's celebrated as Poppy Day, and this year it falls on Friday, May 26, 2023.



The origins of Poppy Day come from World War I, specifically starting in France and Belgium. It is believed that the rubble left by the war there enriched the soil with lime, and the poppy flourished during and after the war. Shortly after seeing the beautiful, bright red flowers on the front line, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D. penned the haunting poem "In Flanders Fields." The poppy soon became a symbol for all the blood shed during the war.

On September 27, 1920, the American Legion began to use the poppy as the official flower to memorialize soldiers from WWI, and then began nationally distributing them in 1924. Today, the flower honors all the living and those who have fallen in service to our country. Your donation helps support the medical and financial needs of all veterans, active-duty military personnel and their families.

Ways to participate in honoring our veterans on Poppy Day:

- Wear a red poppy and explain it to people who ask
- Distribute poppies (see website below for details)
- If you accept a poppy from someone, make a donation
- Collect donations for the Poppy Program (see website below for details)
- Share on social media

Source: American Legion Auxiliary. "National Poppy Day."
<https://www.legion-aux.org/national-poppy-day>

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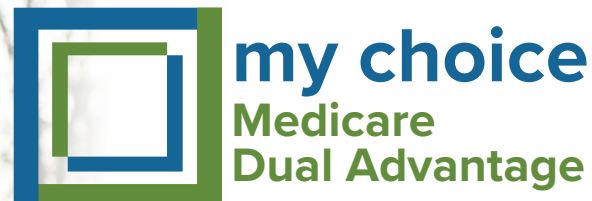
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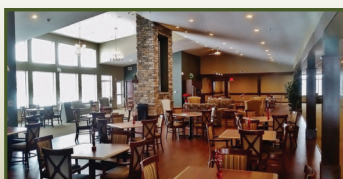
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Foods That Are Ruining Your Senior's Sleep *By Azura Memory Care*

Sleep. Some of us get plenty of it, some don't. We do all know that the amount of sleep you get affects your mental health, focus, physical health and your overall well-being. This need for sleep increases as you get older, but some seniors have a very hard time falling asleep and staying asleep. If they go a prolonged amount of time without a decent night's rest, it can have a major impact on the overall wellness of your health.

"Later in life there tends to be a decrease in the number of hours slept,"

Dr. Karen Carlson, associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and director of Women's Health Associates at Massachusetts General Hospital, explained. "There are also some changes in the way the body regulates circadian rhythms."

According to the National Sleep Foundation, food and sleepiness are interconnected more than you may think. Certain amino acids in foods can cause sleepiness or alertness, so it is important that your aging loved one eats balanced meals that won't slow them down or cause them to become jittery during certain times of the day.

Here are some foods to avoid if your senior needs some extra sleep:

1. TOMATOES

Weird, right? As non-controversial as these vegetables (or fruits?) are, according to AARP, they are packed with tyramine, which is actually a chemical used in common energy drinks. Tyramine is an amino acid that tells the brain to release norepinephrine, which is common for triggering high brain activity. While tomatoes are not bad for you, try to encourage your senior to enjoy them in the morning so they can get a good night's sleep.

2. FATTY FOODS

In a perfect world, these wouldn't be a thing for anyone, but c'mon, there's nothing like a juicy cheeseburger, fries and pizza. These are some of our favorite comfort foods, but unfortunately, they don't do anything good for us. Seniors should be limiting this kind of food anyway to avoid weight issues, but if they do decide to eat the burger, try to do it in the early afternoon. Fried foods have a very high fat content, and the body has a harder time digesting it.



This can cause an upset stomach, gas, and discomfort as your senior is trying to sleep.

3. ALCOHOL OR CAFFEINE

I feel like this one is kind of a given, but if you enjoy these drinks, try to find the decaffeinated version. Consuming drinks that are meant to keep people awake probably isn't the best thing to have before bed. Also, did you know that chocolate has a high caffeine content in it? Sorry to all you chocolate lovers out there...

4. FOODS WITH HIGH WATER CONTENT

Although your doctor recommends you to eat your fruits and vegetables, try to avoid the ones with a high water content (celery, cucumbers, watermelon...). Why you ask? Because they are mostly water, this will cause your senior's bladder to fill up faster, causing them to have to use the restroom in the middle of the night and disrupting their sleep.

5. SPICY FOOD

Spicy food is notorious for causing heartburn, but did you know that it can also impact your sleep? Food that contains a significant amount of spice and heat can actually raise your core body temperature, making it difficult to get into a comfortable sleeping position due to the temperature. If your senior loves spicy foods, the best time to eat it is in the early afternoon so your body has time to cool down.

Considering we spend one-third of our lives sleeping, encourage these adjustments to your senior's diets to make sure they are enjoying their slumber.



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Brain-Health Trends for 2023

By Becky Streeter

Science is always trying to learn more about the brain and what makes it healthier. The brain controls every part of our lives and bodies, thus everything we do or don't do has an impact on the brain. Below are some of the current trends for brain wellness.

Nutrition: Research from Harvard Medical School shows “that the most important strategy is to follow a healthy dietary pattern that includes a lot of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains. Try to get protein from plant sources and fish and choose healthy fats, such as olive oil or canola, rather than saturated fats.” These foods protect both your heart and your blood vessels, as well as being great food for your brain. (Check out the sidebar from Harvard Health: “5 Foods Linked to Better Brainpower.”)

Exercise: Staying active helps keep your brain active. For example, which do you think provides more brain stimulation: watching a movie, or taking a walk? You might be watching the world's most educational movie, but your body is just sitting there. If you go for a walk, even just a short one, think of how much activity is going on in your brain and body—you are noticing everything around, perhaps stopping to speak with a friend, or listen to the birds sing, and blood is circulating throughout your entire body while your muscles get a workout. Try adding exercise “snacks” to your routine: nuggets of time, it can even be seconds to minutes, where you intentionally move. Feel free to snack as often as you'd like!

Sleep: Getting quality sleep is essential for good health as it gives the brain a chance to recharge and the body the opportunity to heal. Most of us don't get the amount of sleep our bodies need. Thankfully, there are all sorts of new tech gadgets out there to help us sleep better:

Whoop Wristband - A vibration system that will wake you at the optimal time based on your sleep needs and cycles. It can also monitor and record key vital signs.

Oura Ring - Senses what your body needs in terms of sleep, stress levels and physical activity, and makes recommendations based on stored data.

Eight Sleep Mattress/Pad - The temperature continually adjusts throughout the night on each side of the bed based on each individual's sleep needs.

Apollo Wristband - Monitors key vitals that sense stress and softly pulses with vibrations to calm the body down, even at night while you sleep.

Or, if you're old fashioned, just work on going to bed when the sun goes down and waking up when it rises.

Source: Araya-Fischel, Ximena. “From Brain Health To Sleep Syncing: What's New in Wellness.” Next Avenue. 9 February 2023. www.nextavenue.org/5-wellness-trends-in-2023.

“Foods linked to better brainpower.” Harvard Health Publishing - Harvard Medical School. 6 March 2021. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/foods-linked-to-better-brainpower>


5 FOODS LINKED TO BETTER BRAINPOWER

GREEN VEGGIES



1. Leafy greens such as kale, spinach, collards, and broccoli are rich in brain-healthy nutrients like vitamin K, lutein, folate, and beta carotene. Research suggests these plant-based foods may help slow cognitive decline.

FATTY FISH



2. Fatty fish are abundant sources of omega-3 fatty acids, healthy unsaturated fats that have been linked to lower blood levels of beta-amyloid — the protein that forms damaging clumps in the brains of people with Alzheimer's disease.

BERRIES



3. Flavonoids, the natural plant pigments that give berries their brilliant hues, also help improve memory, research shows.

TEA + COFFEE



4. Coffee and tea might offer more than just a short-term concentration boost. In a recent study, participants with higher caffeine consumption scored better on tests of mental function.

WALNUTS



5. Nuts are excellent sources of protein and healthy fats, and walnuts in particular might also improve memory, according to a study.

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Decades of Lessons I've Learned About Dementia

by Shelley Krupa, Business Operations Coordinator Jefferson Memory Care

Exactly one year and one day from the day my mother passed from strokes that led to her vascular dementia, I was standing at the door of our memory care facility welcoming new residents with Alzheimer's, dementia, and vascular dementia. It was a heart-tugging, heart-warming day - healing in a way. Ten years later, our facility is still warmly welcoming residents. Each one is unique in their age, background, etc. I often remind myself that dementia does not discriminate - we all are at risk simply because we have brains.



Don't get me wrong, from a business standpoint, having a steady flow of customers is a measure of sustainability and longevity. From a healthy life measurement, I find the increasing flow of people with dementia sad and alarming.

Dementia continues to increase in numbers depending on what stats you read. The large baby boomer population contributes to the increase in the number of people living with dementia. As a baby of the baby boomers, having a mom who died from it, and a dad who has early stages of Alzheimer's, I take notice of the increase in dementia over the years since 1988, when my mom was first diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes.

The data and stats role I have at work shocks me some days. It takes my breath away when a referral or an admission is for someone close to my age, my age, or even younger than me - I am 58, just a spring chicken - yikes - talk about a wake-up call! I looked for common threads in their underlying health conditions. Is there an answer, a cure, a prevention, or something I should pay attention to that will help me and others avoid the course my parents and our residents' health took?

Have I noticed any patterns in health risks that I can share with you that do not break HIPAA privacy rules? I think so.

The diseases running in residents with dementia fall into a common list. If you are a baby boomer or interested no matter what age you are, you may want to pay attention to the top 5 on the risk list:

hypertension; type 2 diabetes; depression; cardiovascular disease; and obesity.

In retrospect, I was attracted to memory care because my heart needed healing due to the grief of losing my mom. Fast forward to ten years later, I've learned to avoid the risk factors for dementia by keeping up with my healthy heart efforts daily.

For those interested in learning ways to prevent dementia, try giving 5 simple changes to your lifestyle a chance:

Aim for a healthy waist-to-height ratio (under .48 for adult women and .52 for adult males); avoid added sucrose/sugars, highly processed foods, and seed oils; eat whole foods; exercise regularly; educate yourselves on what causes the underlying diseases that lead to dementia - don't take the first answer as the only answer.

Always remember - what is good for your heart is good for your brain!

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