

HSI Connection

Helping People • Changing Lives

What to Expect in Aging: How to Increase the Quality and Quantity of Later Years

Good news, there is much you can do to prevent or lessen the effects of serious disease, mental illness or injury.

- ✓ Healthy eating - a good diet low in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol
- ✓ Physical activity that includes some flexibility exercise and strength training as approved by your doctor
- ✓ Avoiding tobacco completely
- ✓ Avoiding excessive use of alcohol
- ✓ Adequate health care, regular check-ups and proper medication
- ✓ Staying active socially.
- ✓ A safe environment.
- ✓ Accepting help when needed

The generation of older American “baby boomers” will turn 55 years old this year. Predictions are that this group of 76 million middle aged boomers will celebrate their 55th birthdays at the rate of every 7 seconds for the next 20 years.

But yet they are not the fastest growing age group in America. Their parents are!

Older Americans are living longer and leading more productive lives. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that the population of people over age 65 has grown from 3 million in 1900 to 33 million in 1994 and projections put the elderly population at 80 million by 2050. Here in Washington County, the population of people age 60+ in 2020 will grow to 21.4% (52,560).

While the goal for most is quality of life, a balance of living well *and* long is most desirable. With the increase in aging comes a need in providing services to the elderly and caregivers.

What to Expect in Later Years

There are three stages of aging, according to the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging, although aging can be different in each person. The first stage includes people ages 65-75, in which the elderly are typically thinking about or enjoying the first years of retirement. In the second stage, between ages 75 and 85, elders often face changes in physical capabilities, among other things. Most beyond age 85, are in the third stage, and will need daily help at home or within a care setting, if they are not receiving it already.

The typical challenges facing today’s seniors are many, including everything from Alzheimer’s disease to adequate nutrition. While medical advances continue to improve, the reality is that elderly people are more at risk for serious disease and injury. As the elderly population increases, so does the incidence of disease. Elderly are at greater risk for the four leading causes of death:

1. **Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)** – nearly every minute someone dies from CHD, and 84% of these are people over age 65. This is the leading cause for death of all Americans including those over age 65.

2. **Cancer** – over 77% of cancers are diagnosed in people over age 55. While cancer death rates have declined in recent years, the number is expected to rise due to the projected increase in the elderly population.
3. **Stroke** – people over age 75 are at the highest risk for stroke. Someone dies from stroke every three minutes and stroke is a leading cause of long-term disability.
4. **Alzheimer’s disease (AD)** – it estimated that 4.34 to 5.8 million Americans may have AD. Some project that by 2050 as many as 16 million may be affected. Alzheimer’s usually begins after age 60 with the risk of getting this disease increasing with age.

In addition, seniors are at greater risk for falls, arthritis, high blood pressure, thyroid disease, dementia, diabetes, osteoporosis, Parkinson’s, visual or hearing impairments, sleep problems, insufficient nutrition, memory loss, and respiratory, urinary and gastrointestinal disorders.

Yet another challenge to healthy life in later years includes mental illness. As much as 25% of the elderly population may suffer from some form of mental illness including depression, dementia, and Alzheimers. Only 10% may be receiving treatment. Mental illness in the elderly is projected to rise 275% by 2030.

Change in a relationship can also be a challenge. Some elderly couples may have always cared for each other, now one needs more help than the other, which can lead to negative feelings or feelings of inadequacy. Some elderly may not recognize the changes in daily living that has happened over time, nor sees a need for help. Some may resist help of any kind in their reluctance to become dependent on anyone or face the reality of diminishing capabilities. The young-at-heart who have always taken care of themselves with pride, struggle with losing a youthful, independent identity.

Accepting help with grace can be one of the biggest challenges of getting older.

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When Does Your Loved One Need More Help?

Many elderly don't always recognize the need for help or may be afraid or too proud to ask. Don't wait for a crisis, but instead watch for these warning signs and changes in activities of daily living that indicate that a loved one may need more help:

- Dents or scratches in the car, decreased driving skills, accidents or driving violations
- Marked increase in forgetfulness, such as inability to remember who you are or to take medication properly
- Lack of food or spoiled food in the refrigerator, little interest in eating, or weight lost
- Bumps, bruises or scratches on your loved one
- Unopened or unpaid bills, notices of lack of payment, or overdrafts
- Change in personality, mood, routines, activities, or socializing

- Persistent low mood or depression
- Burned or scorched pots and pans
- Diminished self-care, soiled clothes, or poor personal hygiene
- Inadequate housekeeping, lawn care or home repairs

"Being pro-active with early detection especially with health care issues can make a world of difference in many cases. It helps ensure that a loved one stays safe and at home longer plus keeps them healthier longer. You don't have to go it alone, HSI along with many other community agencies are here to help with your questions and concerns," states Roxanne Emerson, HSI Director of Services to Seniors & Person with Special Needs.

Important Information:

The information that is provided in this newsletter is not meant to be used to diagnose. Only a health professional is qualified to diagnose illness and prescribe treatment.

Finding the Help for Your Loved One

It's often said that it requires many people to raise a child, but it is equally true when it comes to nurturing the elderly. Any person later in life may need help with cleaning, bathing, shopping, meals, errands, repairs, transportation, shoveling, lawn care, finding peers, engaging in stimulating activities, and more. Some may welcome their loved ones as caregivers for many of these needs, while others prefer help outside of family and friends due to embarrassment or undo burden. In any case, no one caregiver can do it all. Asking for help, learning about the illness and identifying community resources improves your loved one's quality of life and eases the caregiver role.

Yet determining where or what the outside services/resources are can be overwhelming and complicated. Case managers, through your county's public health department for elderly care, or private agencies such as HSI, can conduct care planning assessments to identify problems, eligibility for assistance and need for services. They can help you see your strengths, make a plan to manage your challenges, and find the services, assistance, and agencies you need and qualify for that best fit you and your loved one's current and future needs.

Many communities provide support services for people in need of in-home or community based services such as transportation, meals, personal

and in-home services, home health care, cleaning and yard work services, Senior Centers and respite services including adult day care.

Services provided through HSI:

- **Transporter** provides door-through-door, low-cost rides for seniors and person with special needs throughout Washington County. **Call 651-275-4300**
- **Circle of Friends Adult Day Programs** meets the needs of frail or isolated older adults while providing needed respite time to family and friends who are the primary caregivers. **Call 651-275-5801**
- **Meals on Wheels** delivers low-cost, nutritious, hot meals to the homes of persons who are homebound, or who may not be able to prepare meals that meet their dietary needs plus a safety check as well. **Call 651-275-5810**
- **Senior Dining** provides meals in a congregate setting to seniors who are not homebound, but are in need of nutritional assistance and opportunities to socialize. **Call 651-275-5810**
- **Volunteer Visitors** offer home visits and/or outings to seniors who are homebound and in need of companionship, friendship and support. **Call 651-275-5813**
- **Caregiver Support and Services** offers free coaching and counseling to caregivers. **Call 651-501-2195**

HSI

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FEATURE FOCUS

The combination of increased longevity and lower birth rates has now created a new phenomenon in our society "family care giving." Studies have shown that the average working couple has more living parents than children.

HELPING YOUR COMMUNITY

10K Run for HSI

Saturday, August 21st - 8:30 a.m.

This USATF certified course begins and ends at Aggregate Industries' Larson Quarry located on Grey Cloud Island. Enjoy the natural beauty of the river, woods and wildlife as you run or walk this wonderful scenic course. All proceeds from this event will benefit the programs and services of HSI. "One of the reasons we selected HSI," says race director Patty Christensen of Aggregate Industries, "is that they are a charity that serves our most needy throughout all of Washington County." HSI annually serves more than 8,600 residents by providing multi-services for adults, adolescents, children and families who face daily struggles related to mental and chemical health, domestic or sexual abuse. In addition, HSI provides services for the elderly and adults with special needs, which include nutritional services (Meals on Wheels and congregate dining) and door-through-door transportation. For more River Run information go to www.raceberryjam.com or www.active.com or call Patty Christensen at (651) 683-8133.



Get Help on National Depression Screening Day, October 7

Thursday, October 7th- 4:00 - 6:00 pm

This free, walk-in Mental Health Screening Day is part of a national effort to call attention to the prevalence of depression and other mental health disorders, educate people to the signs and symptoms, and refer people in need of treatment. The screening includes a film, free brochures, short screening test, and a brief and confidential conversation with a mental health professional. No appointment necessary! Screening from 4:00 – 6:00 PM at HSI Oakdale office, 7066 Stillwater Blvd. N. (651) 777-5222.



HSI's mission is to help people overcome and prevent life impairments by developing individual potential and promoting meaningful participation in family and community life.

Caregiver Self-Care Checklist

Anyone, especially caregivers, can feel any of these things at times. However, if you recognize several of these signs in yourself over a period of many weeks, it may be time to explore ways of reducing your stress, and possibly readjusting the level of help you are getting.

Watch for signs of caregiver burnout:

- ✓ Devoting more time to caregiving than feels comfortable
- ✓ Irritability towards and lack of patience with other family members
- ✓ Losing touch with friends and usual activities
- ✓ Frequent illnesses
- ✓ Frustration over your busy schedule
- ✓ Resentment towards siblings for not participating more
- ✓ Guilt for not doing more yourself
- ✓ Anger towards the care receiver
- ✓ Feeling a loss of control of your life

Caregivers sometimes feel guilty that they could have made better decisions along the way. It may be helpful to remember that your job is not to make decisions for your loved one, but instead, to understand and facilitate their wishes for care as much as possible. It can be invaluable to talk about your feelings and experiences to other people who are in your situation, and therefore understand your daily joys and concerns.

Caregiving: A Fact of Life

“There are only four kinds of people in this world, those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who need caregivers.” — Rosalyn Carter

The job of a caregiver is a vital and important role in our today’s society. A caregiver may live in the same household, same town or out of state. Often misunderstood as a professional caregiver such as a nurse, nursing assistant or home health aide, most caregivers are family members, neighbors or friends. Care may range from modest tasks such as helping with routine errands like driving to the grocery store or doctor’s appointment, to more personal care like bathing or personal grooming, to challenging issues such as managing finances, to around the clock care. Currently about one fourth of American families are caring for an older family member, an adult with special needs, or a friend. Roughly 80% of caregivers that are family members are the average age of 46. **If you are not already a family care giver, it’s likely that you will be at some point in your life.**

The role of care giving can bring a sense of satisfaction and confidence. Family members who are caretakers often report that they feel closer to the person they are caring for and many discover personal growth and an inner strength that they never knew they had. Many receive “education” about the person’s disabilities, the health care system, additional support services in their community and beyond.

In today’s busy world, caregivers juggle work, family, school, church, sports, community and more, as well as meeting the needs of an older loved one or neighbor. Rallying family support among the siblings to care for a parent is often difficult, especially if some live far away or have conflicting ideas about care. “Often times a caregiver has been placed in the role suddenly and unexpectedly. Feeling ‘spread too thin’ or ‘there is never enough time in the day’ is common. Adjusting to the new role of caregiver can be physically and emotionally stressful for both people,” continues Emerson.

Feelings of anger, guilt, depression and frustration are very common for both. Research indicates that those who are caregivers may have higher rate of impaired immune function which leaves them at higher risk for chronic health problems such as: headaches, back or neck pain, stomach distress, or heart palpitations, among others. Also challenging for caregivers of parents or spouses is the emotional shift. Once vital people who cared for you, now need your help.

Washington County has services designed just for caregivers. HSI staff are devoted to helping caregivers find the support and services they need. To talk about your challenges, or for more information about support groups and educational seminars for caregivers, call Kathy Miggins, HSI coordinator of Caregiver Support and Services at 651-501-2195, or for additional support groups and educational seminars provided by FamilyMeans, call Mary Bornung at 651-439-4840.

Suggestions for Planning Ahead

Planning ahead can ward off family squabbles and allows elders to maintain control over their life and death.

- Fall-proof the home
- Know and understand health care coverage
- Get finances in order, choose a power of attorney and prepare a will
- File a Health Care Directive-sometimes called a “living will”
- Make funeral and burial plans



Do you worry about leaving an elderly loved one home alone?

Many families are struggling with the issue of leaving an elderly loved one home alone.

This individual may have special needs such as those experiencing a chronic illness, memory loss, disability, depression, loneliness, or a need for post-hospitalization assistance. In addition, family or caregivers need respite time. HSI's Circle of Friends, established in 1998, is an affordable licensed adult day program for persons age 55 years or older.

"The goal of the program is an alternative care option to out-of-home placement. We offer a wide range of services designed to keep elders in their homes as long as possible" states Deb Paulson, HSI Circle of Friends program supervisor.

"Families feel at peace knowing their loved ones are safe and provided stimulating activities, exercise programs, personal care and grooming such as baths, shampoos and foot care. In addition, staff closely

monitors health, medications, and prepares personal care plans," continues Paulson.

Participants may attend either the Oak Park Heights location in Boutwells Landing, 5610 Norwich Parkway or the Woodbury location in Woodbury Estates, 2825 Woodlane Drive from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday through Friday (extended hours are available upon request).

For the caregiver, Circle of Friends provides support and resources. Time may be freed up to run errands, keep appointments, visit with friends ...or just relax. Costs of the program are paid privately or by long term care insurance, the Veterans Administration or through medical assistance. **For more information about Circle of Friends or to arrange a visit, please call 651-275-5801 or visit www.hsicares.org.**

QUESTIONS.... WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Like more information about our services? Call 651/777-5222

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From the CEO...

Aging is becoming less a "chronological" concept and more a "functional ability concept." Some people work productively well into their 80s, while others withdraw much earlier. Physical decline usually increases rapidly after about age 75, but here again, there is wide variation.

Much of our meaning in later life comes from our ability to provide for our needs, and actively fulfill our role as an active member of society. When physical limitations impair our ability to actively participate in our social and cultural roles, it is unfortunate. Services to support older adults are designed best when they focus on specific impairments, and recognize that with appropriate support, our chronological age becomes less appropriate in defining our life. While age 65 is used as a demographic marker, it is not usually significant in defining our vitality. Nevertheless, older individuals need to rely on external support at some point in their lives. Our independence in later life is supported by the relationships we have with family, friends, and the broader community resources, including churches and service organizations. The resources listed in this newsletter are designed to support older adults in maintaining their dignity and active involvement with their family, friends, and community life.

HSI Locations

8200 Hadley Ave. S.
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
(651) 458-4116

121 11th Ave. S.E.
Forest Lake, MN 55025
(651) 251-5220

7066 Stillwater Blvd. N.
Oakdale, MN 55128
(651) 777-5222

375 East Orleans St.
Stillwater, MN 55082
(651) 430-2720

TDD: (651) 770-6834

www.hsicares.org

**24 Hours Mental
Health Crisis Line
651-777-4455**

Additional resources within Washington County

**Washington County Public
Health and Environment**
651/430-6655
*Providing case management,
advocacy or skills development.*
www.co.washington.mn.us

FamilyMeans
651/439-4840
*Respite care, caregiver support
& counseling*
www.familymeans.org

**CVS (Community Volunteer
Services & Senior Centers)**
651/439-7434
*Senior Centers, congregational
dining, chore services &
volunteer opportunities*
www.volunteercvs.org

Meal Services
*Food shelves, nutrition
programs, dining centers and
meal delivery programs.*
www.nutrition.gov

**Lakeview
HomeCare & Hospice**
651-275-5765
*Providing skilled nursing and
personal assistance for daily
living.* www.lakeview.org

Senior Housing Inc.
621/617-1921
*A comprehensive guide to senior
housing in the metro area.*
www.seniorhousingdirectory.com

**Metropolitan Area
Agency on Aging**
651/641-8612
*Linking seniors and families to
local services, information and
articles on aging.*
www.tcaging.org

Senior LinkAge/Rx Connect
1-800-333-2433
*Case management, advocacy or
skills development, or direct you
to appropriate services*

More Resources for ElderCare

American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org or
1-800-242-8721

American Stroke Association
www.strokeassociation.org or
1-888-478-7653

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

Alzheimer's Association
*24 hr information, referral
and support.*
1-800-272-3900 www.alz.org

Caregiver Support
www.caregivermn.org

Medicare
*"Guide to Choosing a Medicare-
Approved Drug Discount Card"*
1-800-633-4227
www.medicare.gov

Benefits Check-Up
*help elders and their families
identify programs they may
qualify for*
www.benefitscheckup.com

If you are looking for a way to give back to your community, we can help.
We do our best to match you to your interests. Call Celinda Doyle at 651/275-5813.

Long Term Care Consultations – A Good Place to Start

All elderly Washington County residents are eligible for a long term care assessment at no cost. This assessment identifies resources or services an individual or couple may need in order for them to live safe, healthy and independently. Based on certain eligibility requirements such as income levels, county case managers can determine whether an individual(s) is eligible for County Case Management and reimbursement for services. Subsidized services can include: home care, adult day care, skilled nursing visits, supplies and equipment, and independent living skills assistance. Washington County residents can call the Adult Intake line at 651-430-6484 during county business hours for more information. If individuals are **ineligible** for County Case Management, a list of independent providers or non-profits are provided.

Personal Advisor on Senior Services

Eldercare Partners brings together the senior services expertise of six of the Twin Cities area's most respected non-profit organizations: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, Catholic Charities, DARTS, HSI (Human Services, Inc.), Senior Community Services and Volunteers of America. They can link you to services such as respite care, chore services, nutrition (Meals on Wheels), home health care, homemaker services, housing and nursing home options, personal emergency response systems, transportation, volunteer support, health care advocacy, legal aide, and financial assistance. Eldercare Partners also provides a list of caregiver support groups throughout the metro area as well as Washington County locations. For a free caregiver kit, or for information about services, call Eldercare Partners at 651-234-2262.