



Empowering
Seniors Every Day
and in a Public Health
Emergency



Senior SELF CARE

IT MAKES **ALL** THE DIFFERENCE



NEW MEXICO
DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH
PUBLICATION

Senior self care every day



As a senior, you can and should take charge of your own health. Most seniors have the power to do so. One of the most important breakthroughs is the discovery that your health can be transformed if you take simple actions. Scientific research shows that self-care plays a major role in your well-being, even if you have cancer, diabetes or heart disease.

Tips for healthy aging

- **Eat a balanced diet**, with five helpings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- **Exercise!** Even frail and very old adults can improve their mobility and feel better if they exercise.
- **Schedule regular health check-ups.**
- **Don't smoke.** It's never too late to stop.
- **Prevent falls and fractures** by making your home safer.
- **Always wear your seatbelt while driving or riding.**
- **Stay in touch with family and friends.** Stay active through work and play. Get together with others often.
- **If you drink alcohol, go easy.** Let someone else drive when you drink.
- **Learn about your medicines** and take them correctly. Consult your pharmacist about your medication plan.
- **Do things that make you happy.**

If you have a medical condition...

If you have a medical condition, learn all you can about it. Make changes to your lifestyle to improve your health. Awareness, prevention and early detection can keep you healthy! Your doctor can help you prevent side effects and complications of the diseases that cause death and disability.

Exercise

Thirty minutes, 5 days a week can make all the difference in your life and health. Exercise:

- Reduces the risk of dying suddenly from heart disease
- Reduces the risk of diabetes
- Lowers high blood pressure
- Reduces the risk of colon and breast cancer
- Maintains healthy weight
- Builds healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Helps older adults to be stronger and more active
- Prevents falls
- Reduces depression and anxiety
- Reduces memory loss
- Improves sleep



Eating well as you age

- **Drink more water.**
- **Reduce salt** to prevent water retention and high blood pressure.
- **Stay away from fatty foods.**
- **Eat more fiber-rich foods.**
- **Cut back on sugar.**
- **Take a multi-vitamin.**
- **Consume more calcium and vitamin D** for bone health.

Home safety & fall prevention

- **Prevent Accidents** – Install a telephone where you can reach it easily and tuck the phone wires away. Place non-skid tape or treads under area rugs, remove clutter from stairs and hallways. Don't leave things where you can trip over them. Wipe up spills fast. Make sure floors are not slippery. Install bars near baths and showers.
- **Fire safety** – Repair defective wires. Install fire and smoke alarms. Keep a fire extinguisher on hand.
- **Lighting** – Keep a self-charging flashlight where you can reach it. Use night lights.
- **Ask your doctor** if your medicines make you dizzy or blur your vision.
- **Set your hot water heater to 120 degrees** or lower to avoid burns.
- **And - Never smoke in bed.**

ICE – In Case of Emergency!

During an emergency, first responders are now trained to check your cell phone for an emergency contact person, listed under the heading ICE. **Why not put ICE in your phone now?** It only takes a few seconds and it could help save your life. Simply select “new contact” and enter ICE and the number of the contact person.

*Fill out the front and back
and keep with you at all times*

seniorcarecard

be prepared in case of an emergency

Name _____

Address _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ Blood Type _____

Soc. Sec. # (Optional) _____

FOLD HERE

Physician _____

Phone _____

Family Member _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Nearest Neighbor _____

Phone _____

FOLD HERE

Medical Conditions (Past & Current) _____

Pacemaker Oxygen Hearing Aid

Contact Lenses Glasses Other: _____

Senior self care in a public health emergency

- Have emergency numbers near a phone where you can get to them fast.
- Create a network of family and friends to call in an emergency.
- Use the SeniorCareCard (below).
- Keep all your medicines, glasses and keys together so you can get to them easily if you need to evacuate your home.
- Keep 3 days worth of food & water on hand.
- Have an emergency plan that includes friends or family who will check on you.
- Practice giving clear information about your health needs to rescue personnel in a crisis.

seniorcarecard be prepared in case of an emergency

Pharmacy _____

Phone _____

Drug or Food Allergies _____

FOLD HERE

Medications, Vitamins & Supplements _____

FOLD HERE

New Mexico Department of Health • Bureau of Health Emergency Management

Stay healthy during a pandemic or a bad flu season

Maintain good health practices. Eat well, get enough sleep and exercise.

Get a flu shot each fall. And ask your doctor for a shot to protect you from pneumonia, too.

Wash your hands often and for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water. An alcohol-based hand cleaner also works if your hands do not look dirty.

When should you wash your hands?

- Before, during and after you prepare food
- Before you eat
- After using the bathroom
- After sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- When your hands are dirty
- More frequently when someone in your home is sick
- After touching commonly used items

Practice good cough manners. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or cough into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue. Throw the used tissue away and wash your hands.

Stay away from people who are sick. Try to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick with the flu. **Stay home if you are sick** to make sure you get the rest you need and don't spread germs to others.

Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth. This is a common way to spread germs.

Avoid sharing anything that may carry germs such as towels, lipstick, cigarettes, drinks, or toys.

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