Healthy LIVING while aging!

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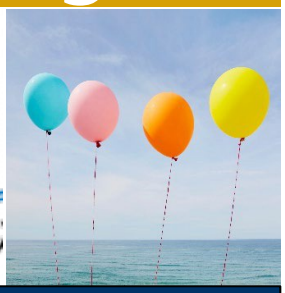

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Skin Health & Wound Care: What You Should Know

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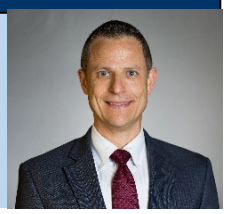

Skin Health

The skin is the body's largest organ! It protects you from germs, helps control body temperature and keeps moisture in. As we age, our skin becomes thinner, drier and more fragile. This makes it easier to tear or bruise and slower to heal when injured.

Over time, our bodies produce less collagen and oil. Collagen gives skin strength and elasticity, while oil helps keep it soft. Medical conditions such as diabetes, poor circulation or nerve damage can make healing harder. Understanding how to care for your skin and wounds can help you stay healthy and avoid infections.

Common Wounds

Older adults may get wounds from falls, bumps or long periods of sitting or lying down.

Skin tears happen when fragile skin pulls away from deeper tissues.

Pressure sores (also called bedsores) form when skin is pressed on for too long, usually on heels, hips or the tailbone. This occurs from sitting or lying for extended periods of time.

Venous ulcers can develop on the lower legs when poor vein circulation causes swelling.

Diabetic ulcers form on the feet when blood sugar and circulation problems slow healing.

The same disease that causes a heart attack and narrowing of the arteries that supply the heart, can also cause circulation problems in the arteries to the leg or feet. This is known as peripheral arterial disease or PAD.

How to Care for Your Skin

- ✓ Keep your skin clean and moisturized. Use mild soap and apply hydrating lotion every day.
- ✓ Avoid long, hot baths. Warm water is the best.
- ✓ Wear soft clothing. Avoid fabrics that rub or scratch.
- ✓ Protect from the sun. Use sunscreen and cover yourself up outdoors.
- ✓ Stay hydrated. Drink water often unless your doctor restricts your fluid intake.

Caring for Wounds

If you get a cut or sore:

Clean it gently with mild soap and water. Cover it with a clean bandage or dressing.

Watch for infection. Signs of infection include redness, swelling, warmth, pus or a bad smell.

Seek medical help if you have diabetes or poor circulation or a wound doesn't improve after a few days.

If your wound looks worse, becomes painful or shows signs of infection, or if it does not heal within 7-14 days, contact your healthcare provider.

Quick treatment can prevent serious complications. You may need to see a doctor specializing in wound care if your wound does not heal or gets worse.

Please visit extension.unr.edu/Healthy-Aging to enjoy our accessible, online newsletter and discover additional Healthy Aging education and resources. Or, email HealthyAging@unr.edu.

Summer Safety for Older Adults

Older adults should take special precautions during the summer months to ensure their safety and well-being. Here are some essential tips to help stay safe and healthy in the heat:

- **Stay Hydrated**: Drink plenty of water and other fluids to prevent dehydration, especially during hot weather.
- **Protective Clothing**: Wear lightweight, loose-fitting and light-colored clothing to reflect heat and stay cool.
- **Air Conditioning**: Utilize air conditioning to stay cool in hot and humid conditions.
- **Sun Protection**: Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen to protect against sunburn and skin cancer.
- **Monitor Health**: Keep an eye on signs of heat-related illnesses and seek medical attention if needed.

By following these tips, older adults can enjoy the summer while minimizing the risks associated with excessive heat.

Summer Eating for Older Adults

Summer is a time when seniors can enjoy fresh, light and nutritious meals that are easy to prepare and digest. Here are some meal ideas that cater to the dietary needs of older adults during the summer months, keeping seniors hydrated and nourished, supporting their overall health and well-being. Enjoy delicious and healthy options that are easy to prepare and perfect for the hot weather. Additional recipes available on the SNAP-Ed Connection website.

Tomato Poppers

Ingredients:

- 16 cherry tomatoes, tops slice off and insides scooped out
- 1 bunch basil, torn into small pieces
- 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, combine the cheese, basil, salt and pepper. Mix thoroughly.
2. Fill the empty tomatoes with the cheese mixture. Enjoy!

Summer Fruit Salad

Ingredients:

- 4 oranges, peeled and sliced
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup pomegranate seeds, opened and seeds removed
- 1 cup mint, chopped
- 1/4 cup sunflower seeds (raw), unsalted

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, add oranges, strawberries, pomegranate seeds, mint and sunflower seeds.
2. Toss until well combined. Serve and enjoy!

Why Brain Games Matter for Seniors

- Boost memory and recall speed
- Improve problem-solving and decision-making
- Strengthen focus and attention span
- Reduce stress through fun and relaxation
- Encourage social interaction and reduce loneliness

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