

Adventures in Life-Long Learning

Feeling elderly is all in the mind. And challenging your mind on a daily basis is as important as challenging your body through exercise to fend off the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Fortunately, keeping your mind sharp can be as easy as picking up a book to learn how to garden or run that sometimes-confusing computer. Try a Sudoku puzzle or stimulate your mind by volunteering at a community event or researching a health condition you or a loved one suffers. For some, taking a class at a local education center, such as a university, might be appealing; and for others, traveling is intriguing. Whether you're exploring fascinating places with like-minded people or taking on the classroom with leading experts who enable you to gain an insider's

perspective on the world's stage, learning is an integral part of life. Make the most of it!

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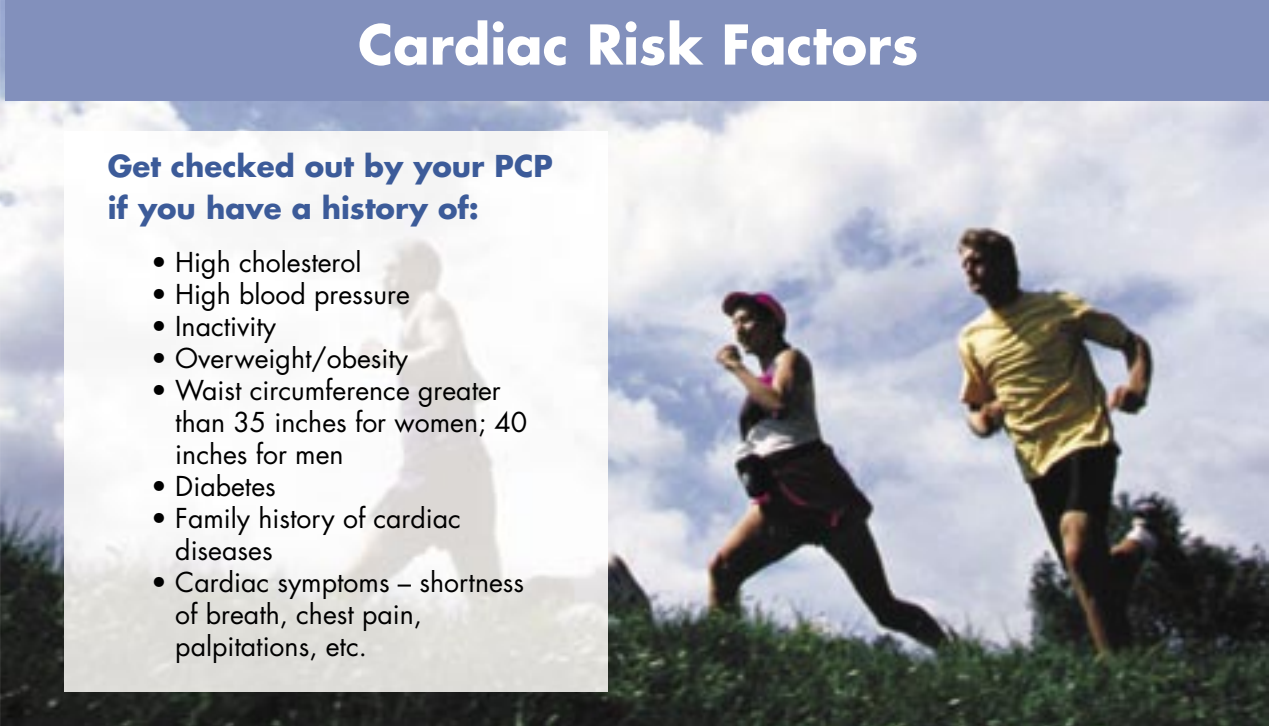
- **Deaconess Active Life Lunch & Learns** – Join in on our monthly seminars with a light lunch to follow.
- **Deaconess Active Life Travel Club** – Take a trip on our monthly excursions and quarterly meetings with Myrna and Joy Travel Company or try out a more extravagant sightseeing trip with Collette Travel.

- **Elderhostel, Inc** – Educational opportunities abound across the country and around the world. Beyond a typical sightseeing adventure, with Elderhostel you'll find lectures by experts in their field, experienced group leaders, and field trips and excursions from cycling across Europe to taking inventory of markers at historic cemeteries on St. Kitts island in the Caribbean to tutoring school children on their English as a second language in Italy. Look for the literature in the Resource Center the next time you visit the Goetz Center.

Weekend Warriors Battle Heart Trouble

While some mature adults have been active in sports and fitness pursuits over the course of their lives, many more are interested in beginning a heart-pumping regimen after age 50 — and on the weekends only. Hopefully, these so-called “weekend warriors” will ask their primary care physician for a cardiac evaluation prior to getting started. Boomers may be willing to get active, but their hearts might not be ready!

If you wish to participate in recreational sports or begin a fitness routine, or if you're experiencing cardiac symptoms during exercise, including chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness or drastic changes in blood pressure, it's important to see your physician first, says cardiologist Dr. Joe N. Hackworth of Comprehensive Cardiology Consultants. “Weekend warriors should always have a full physical examination with their family physician before starting a regimen.” He recommends that fitness evaluations, especially for weekend warriors, should be done at least on an annual basis. Dr. Hackworth says in addition to a screening for risk factors, a complete cardiac clinical evaluation would include a graded exercise stress test and an echocardiogram. It's especially important for those who are overweight, smoking or hypertensive to personalize their exercise program with considerations for their current heart health, he says.



Cardiac Risk Factors

Get checked out by your PCP if you have a history of:

- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Inactivity
- Overweight/obesity
- Waist circumference greater than 35 inches for women; 40 inches for men
- Diabetes
- Family history of cardiac diseases
- Cardiac symptoms – shortness of breath, chest pain, palpitations, etc.

What's an Important Paper?

No one ever plans a major operation, illness or disabling event, but sometimes it just happens. Yet it's just this kind of planning that can make all the difference in an emergency. Keeping copies of all of your important papers in a central location, such as a lock box on the top shelf in your closet or in a filing cabinet in the den, and telling a trusted friend or relative the location can make an important difference in preparation of the unexpected.

But what is an important paper? The answer may be different for every family. The following list can help you decide what is important for you.

- Birth, marriage, divorce, citizenship adoption and death certificates
- Social security numbers and SS & Medicare information

- Legal residence
- Names and addresses of spouse and children
- Names and addresses of close friends, relatives, doctors, clergy and lawyers or financial advisor
- Medications you take regularly
- Wills and trusts
- Advance directives, such as durable power of attorney or DNR requests
- Financial papers
 - Sources of income and assets/investments,
 - Insurance policies
 - Name of bank and account numbers and safety deposit boxes
 - Liabilities, including mortgages and debts

- Titles — property, car
- Credit cards
- Location of personal valuables — jewelry, art, etc.
- Employers and dates of employment
- Education and military records
- Religion, name of church or synagogue and names of clergy
- Memberships and awards

If you are in need of assistance for emergency planning, resources are available. Stop by the Resource Center and a volunteer can help you find the legal aid you need. Or, visit the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys at www.naela.com

Health Fair Promotes Wellbeing



Joy Benison, right, visits with the staff of Arden Court of Anderson at the Senior Living Communities Long Term Care Fair in April.



Mary Mays, right, receives a lei from Evercare Hospice, one of more than 50 exhibitors at this year's fair.

Happy Fingers

Do you have osteoarthritis in your hands and fingers? Be careful when carrying plastic grocery bags! Studies have shown an increased risk in finger and hand bone fractures in older adults who carry too much weight in plastic bags, and it happens without them even knowing it. When you buy groceries, be sure to ask checkout to keep your bags light! Or, be green and choose paper, not plastic. Even better, bring your own reusable canvas bags with thicker, wider straps! For more information about osteoarthritis, call the Deaconess Hospital Arthritis Center at (513) 559-2787.





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Stuck in the Middle

An estimated 16 million Americans find themselves “sandwiched” between two generations, struggling to raise their kids and grandkids while caring for an aging loved one. That number is about to explode: In 25 years, there will be 60 million Americans between the ages of 66 and 84, many of them needing full- or part-time care.

Aging isn’t easy. Neither is parenting, nor is parenting your own parent. But, as more people live well into their 80s and 90s, and families are dispersed across the country, everyone will eventually be squeezed into the sandwich generation.

Traditionally, the sandwich generation includes those 45 to 64 with unmarried children under 25 who also have an aging parent(s) or loved one who needs care and/or help in daily living and decision-making. The “Club Sandwich” are those in their 50s or 60s, sandwiched between aging parents, adult children and

grandchildren. OR those in their 30s and 40s, with young children and aging parents and grandparents.

Caring for Your Parents

If your parent lives a distance away, you have to monitor his or her well being from afar. To reduce your stress, involve your siblings (if you have any). Or, if your parent’s needs are great enough, hire a professional. Look into homemaking services in their area, Meals on Wheels, or volunteer programs that serve seniors. Check with friends to find a retirement facility. You may decide that your parent needs to move in with you. If this happens, share all your expectations in advance and be sympathetic and supportive of your children — they’re trying to adjust, too.

What Can You Do to Prepare?

Take time to determine your goals and work on a flexible plan. Planning ahead gives you the chance to take the wishes of the entire family into account and to reduce future disagreements with your siblings over the care of your parents.

- Review your financial goals regularly, and make any changes to your financial plan that are necessary to accommodate an unexpected event, such as a career change or the illness of a parent.
- Invest in your own future by putting as much as you can into a retirement plan, where your savings (which may be matched by your employer) grow tax deferred until you retire.
- Encourage realistic expectations among your children; their desire to attend an expensive college will add to your stress if you can’t afford it.
- Talk to your parents about the provisions they’ve made for the future. Do they have long-term care insurance? Adequate retirement income? Learn the whereabouts of all their documents and get a list of the professionals and friends they rely on for advice and support.



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SURVEY

Are you being squeezed? Take our survey!

Age: _____ Gender: _____

Occupation: _____

Do you have a parent who lives with you or is dependent on you for care? Yes No

Do you regularly care for one or more of your children or grandchildren? Yes No

Describe the activities this care entails (paying bills, doctor appointments, babysitting, etc.)

If we held an evening brown bag dinner once a quarter, with a program on topics revolving around surviving the sandwich generation, would you attend? Yes No

What topics would you be interested in?

After completing the survey, please mail your responses in with your registration form to:

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