

Healthy Aging

Tips To Help Baby Boomers Stay Active And Independent Well Into Their Golden Years

(NAPS)—As the baby boomer generation—around 78 million people born between 1946 and 1964—reaches what was once considered its “golden years,” many are redefining what it means to be an older adult. Instead of retirement and rocking chairs, these baby boomers are working longer and enjoying a much more active lifestyle than their parents ever did.

That can come with its own set of problems, however. “The demands of keeping up with friends, family, work and hobbies can take a toll on even the healthiest older bodies,” says David Elton, DC, and Senior Vice President of Clinical Programs for Optum Physical Health. “As we age, muscles, bones and joints undergo physiological changes that can affect mobility.”

What You Can Do

Dr. Elton offers these tips to help Baby Boomers maintain healthy joints and bones and continue living an active, independent lifestyle well into their 60s, 70s and even 80s:

- **Maintain a healthy weight:** Being overweight at any age can increase your risk of major health issues such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and even depression. Carrying excess weight can also be especially hard on older bones and joints, leading to complications or injuries that significantly limit mobility.
- **Stay fit, but be smart about exercise:** Daily physical activity, combined with weight management and a balanced diet, helps support healthy muscles, bones and joints. But be smart about choosing how to exercise—talk to your health care provider to determine which activities are safe for your health status and be sure to get the proper nutrition to support your body's needs.
- **Don't ignore low back or joint pain:**



You may be able to keep both back pain and the effects of aging at bay.

While it's normal to experience more aches and pains with age, it's important to know when to seek professional help for a more serious issue. Most back and joint pain can be eased with rest and simple at-home treatments, such as an ice pack or heating pad. If you have severe pain or have been hurting for more than a week, however, see your health care provider. Acute and ongoing pain is your body's way of telling you something is wrong—ignoring it could lead to complications that require serious medical intervention.

- **Consider all treatment options if the need arises:** If you do have an issue that requires professional care, explore all your options. Chiropractors and physical therapists offer treatment plans that may help you avoid invasive and costly medical procedures. Surgical techniques and long-term outcomes for joint replacement surgery have also improved a great deal over the past 20 years and can significantly reduce pain and improve mobility.

Learn More

Find further tips and information to help older adults stay active at www.Optum.com/HealthyAging.