

EATON

BESPOKE SUPPORT AT HOME

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## THE KEY MESSAGE

# The normal aging process

## Aging: What to expect

WONDER WHAT'S CONSIDERED A NORMAL PART OF THE AGING PROCESS? HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT AS YOU GET OLDER — AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

You know that aging will likely cause you to develop wrinkles and grey hair. But do you know how the aging process will affect your teeth, heart and sexuality? Unfortunately, for many of us, aging also brings anxiety and fear. How will I take care of myself late in life? What if I lose my spouse? What is going to happen to my mind? However, many of these fears often stem from popular misconceptions about aging. The truth is that you are stronger and more resilient than you may realize.

Find out what kind of changes you can expect in your body as you continue aging — and what you can do to promote good health at any age.

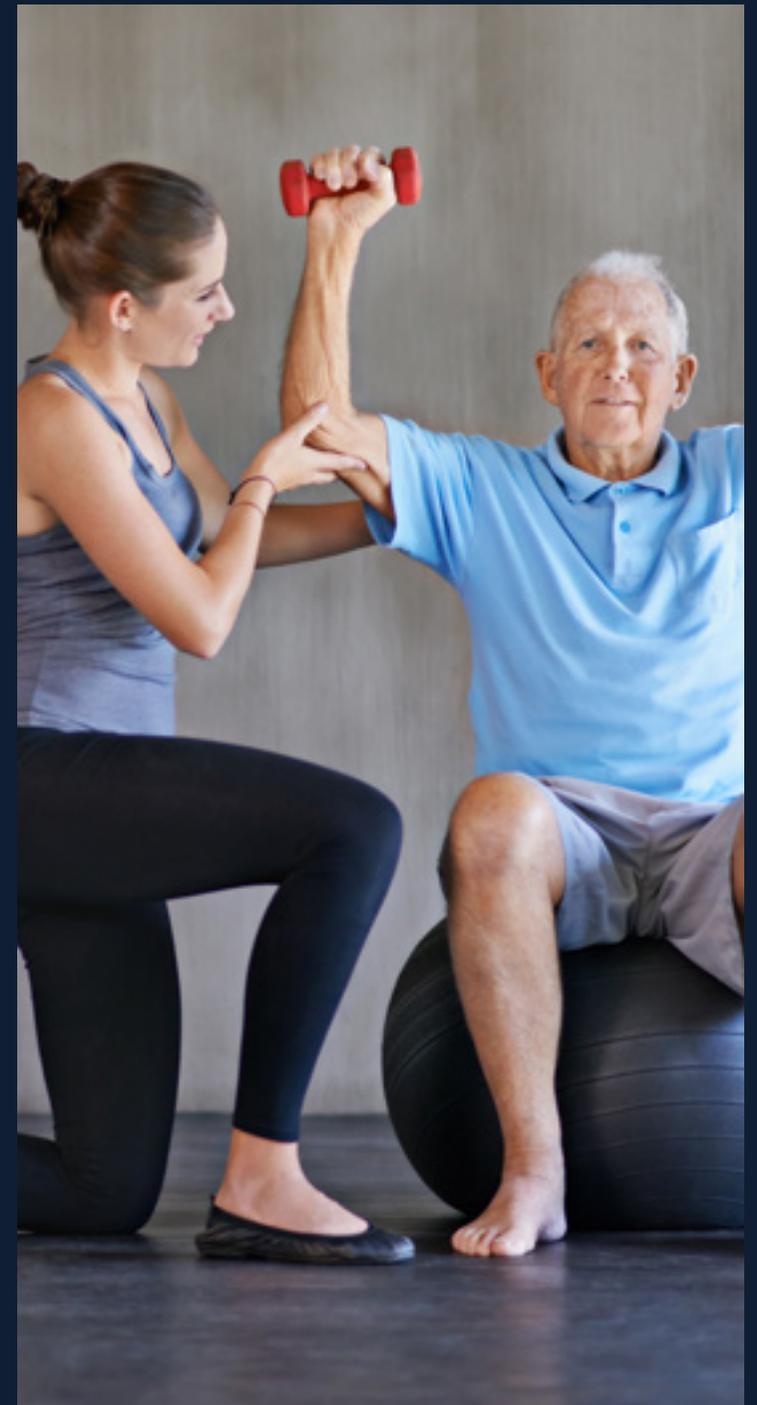
# Your cardiovascular system

## What's happening

As you age, your heart rate becomes slightly slower, and your heart might become bigger. Your blood vessels and your arteries also become stiffer, causing your heart to work harder to pump blood through them. This can lead to high blood pressure (hypertension) and other cardiovascular problems.

## What you can do to promote heart health:

- Include physical activity in your daily routine. Regular moderate physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight, lower blood pressure and lessen the extent of arterial stiffening. Even if you cannot get out and about to exercise try the exercises you can [download HERE](#). Your Eaton support worker will be happy to join in to make exercise fun
- Eat a healthy diet. Choose vegetables, fruits, whole grains, high-fibre foods and lean sources of protein, such as fish. Limit foods high in saturated fat and sodium. A healthy diet can help you keep your heart and arteries healthy. If you prefer not to or can no longer cook for yourself your Eaton Support worker will be able to make you delicious, nutritious meals and keep you company while you eat if you choose.
- Don't smoke. Smoking contributes to the hardening of your arteries and increases your blood pressure and heart rate. If you smoke or use other tobacco products, ask your doctor to help you quit. If you choose not to stop smoking, consider cutting down just a little bit. Having company and doing enjoyable activities can take your mind off smoking, your Eaton Support worker can spend time with you doing things that you enjoy, even if it is simply playing cards.
- Manage stress. Stress can take a toll on your heart. Take steps to reduce stress — or learn to deal with stress in healthy ways. We all get stressed and worried. Especially if we are alone or concerned about a loved one. One of the best ways to relieve stress is to talk about it, or to talk about something else, having the company of your Eaton support worker will reassure you that there is always someone to talk to or to distract you.
- Get enough sleep. Quality sleep plays an important role in healing and repair of your heart and blood vessels. People's needs vary, but generally aim for 7 to 8 hours a night. If you cannot sleep or wake up still feeling exhausted, your Eaton support worker may be able to suggest some things to try to improve your sleep, or may recommend that you see your doctor as some medical conditions can interfere with good sleep.





# Your bones, joints and muscles

## What's happening

With age, bones tend to shrink in size and density — which weakens them and makes them more susceptible to fracture. You might even become a bit shorter. Muscles generally lose strength and flexibility, and you might become less coordinated or have trouble balancing.

## What you can do to promote bone, joint and muscle health:

- Get adequate amounts of calcium. Dietary sources of calcium include dairy products, almonds, broccoli, kale, canned salmon with bones, sardines and soy products, such as tofu. If you find it difficult to get enough calcium from your diet, ask your doctor about calcium supplements.
- Get adequate amounts of vitamin D. Although many people get adequate amounts of vitamin D from sunlight, this might not be a possibility for everyone. Other sources of vitamin D include oily fish, such as tuna and sardines, egg yolks, fortified milk, and vitamin D supplements. Your Eaton support worker can help you to get outside in clement weather to boost your natural vitamin D
- Include physical activity in your daily routine. Weight-bearing exercises, such as walking can help you build strong bones and slow bone loss. Even if you cannot get out and about to exercise try the NHS exercises you can [download HERE](#). Your Eaton support worker will be happy to join in to make exercise fun
- Avoid substance abuse. Avoid smoking and don't drink more than one or two alcoholic drinks a day, depending on your sex and age.

# Your digestive system

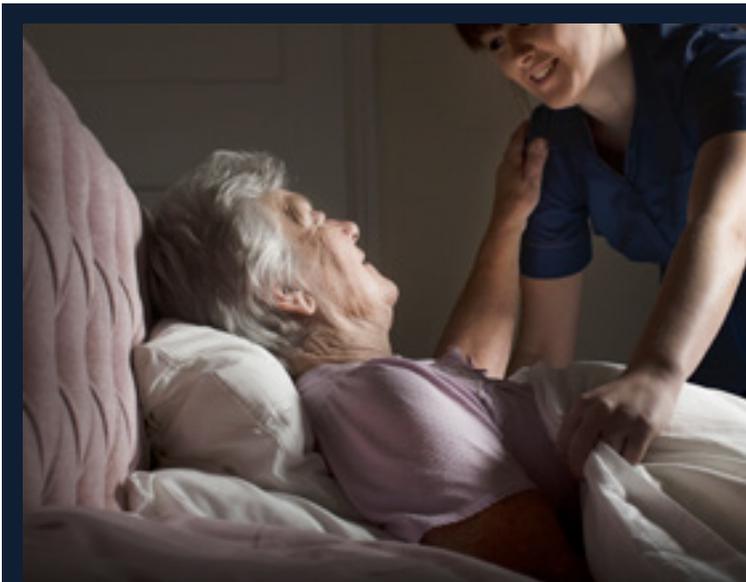
## What's happening

Constipation is more common in older adults. Many factors can contribute to constipation, including a low-fibre diet, not drinking enough fluids and lack of exercise. Medications — such as diuretics and iron supplements — and certain medical conditions — such as diabetes and irritable bowel syndrome — also might contribute to constipation.

## What you can do to prevent constipation:

- Eat a healthy diet. Make sure your diet includes high-fibre foods, such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Limit meats that are high in fat, dairy products and sweets, which might cause constipation. Drink plenty of water and other fluids. Your Eaton support worker will be happy to help you ensure that your diet and fluid intake are good for you.
- Include physical activity in your daily routine. Even if you cannot get out and about to exercise try the NHS exercises you can [download HERE](#). Your Eaton support worker will be happy to join in to make exercise fun.
- Don't ignore the urge to have a bowel movement. Holding in a bowel movement for too long can cause constipation. This is especially difficult if you struggle to get to the toilet alone. Your Eaton Support worker can help you to get into a routine. A routine can develop quickly if you sit on the toilet at the same time each day, are warm and comfortable and left in private for as long as you desire.





# Your bladder and urinary tract

## What's happening

Loss of bladder control (urinary incontinence) is common with aging. Certain medical conditions, such as diabetes, might contribute to incontinence — as can menopause, for women, and an enlarged prostate, for men.

## What you can do to promote bladder and urinary tract health:

- Go to the toilet regularly. Consider urinating on a regular schedule, such as every hour. Slowly, extend the amount of time between your toilet trips. This can be difficult if you are not as mobile as you used to be, or the bathroom is cold and uninviting. When deciding what support you would like from Eaton, think about having a programme of timed visits so that you can eventually go to the toilet every 3-4 hours without having continence problems in between. At Eaton we do not simply reach for incontinence pads. With patience and practice incontinence can be improved in most cases and helps you feel better about yourself.
- Maintain a healthy weight. If you're overweight, lose excess pounds. With an improved diet cooked by your Eaton support worker, you will naturally lose any excess weight.
- Do pelvic floor exercises. Tighten your pelvic floor muscles, hold the contraction for five seconds, and then relax for five seconds. Try it four or five times in a row. Work up to keeping the muscles contracted for 10 seconds at a time, relaxing for 10 seconds between contractions. By doing these with your Eaton support worker you will improve your own bladder control and have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping your support worker avoid early incontinence too!
- Avoid bladder irritants. Caffeine, acidic foods, alcohol and carbonated beverages can make incontinence worse.
- Avoid constipation. Eat more fibre and take necessary steps to avoid constipation, which can worsen incontinence.



# Your memory

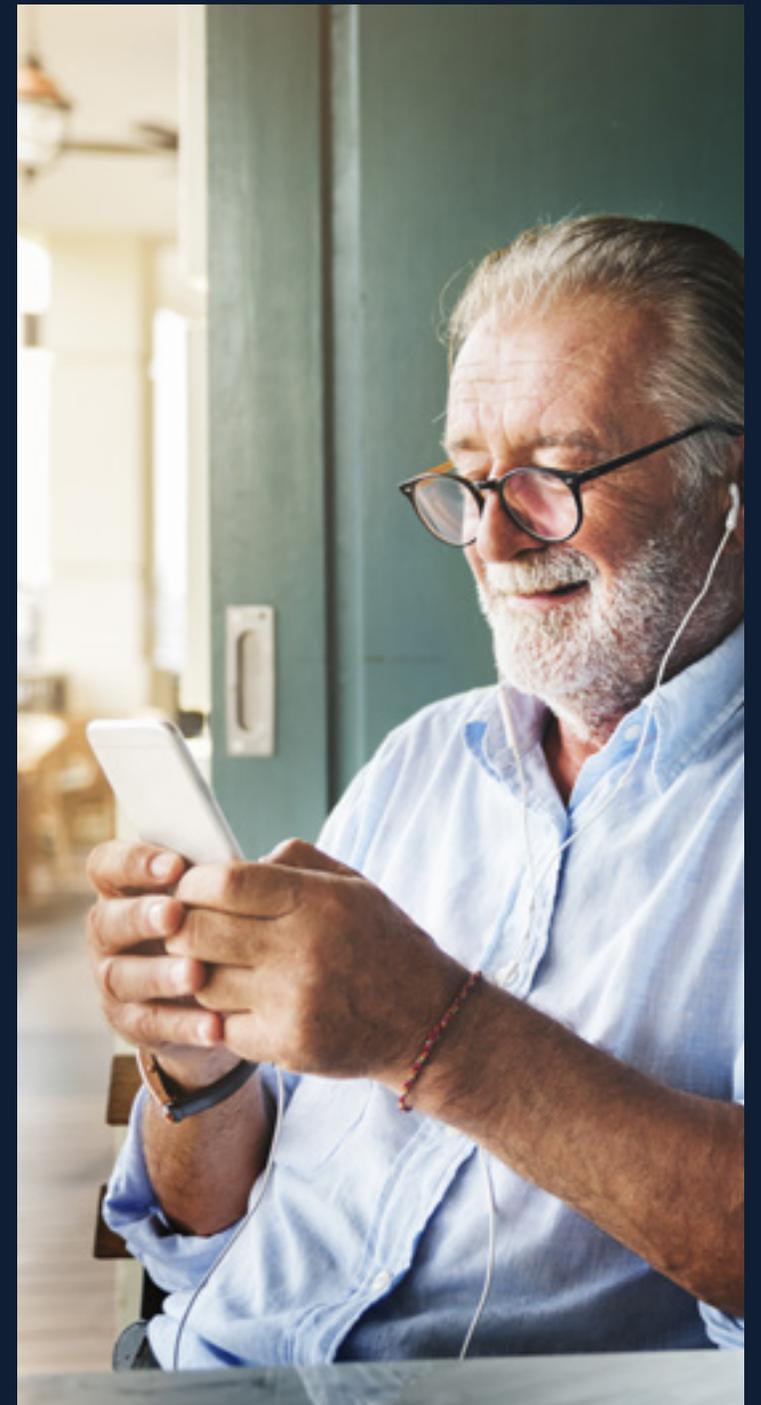
## What's happening

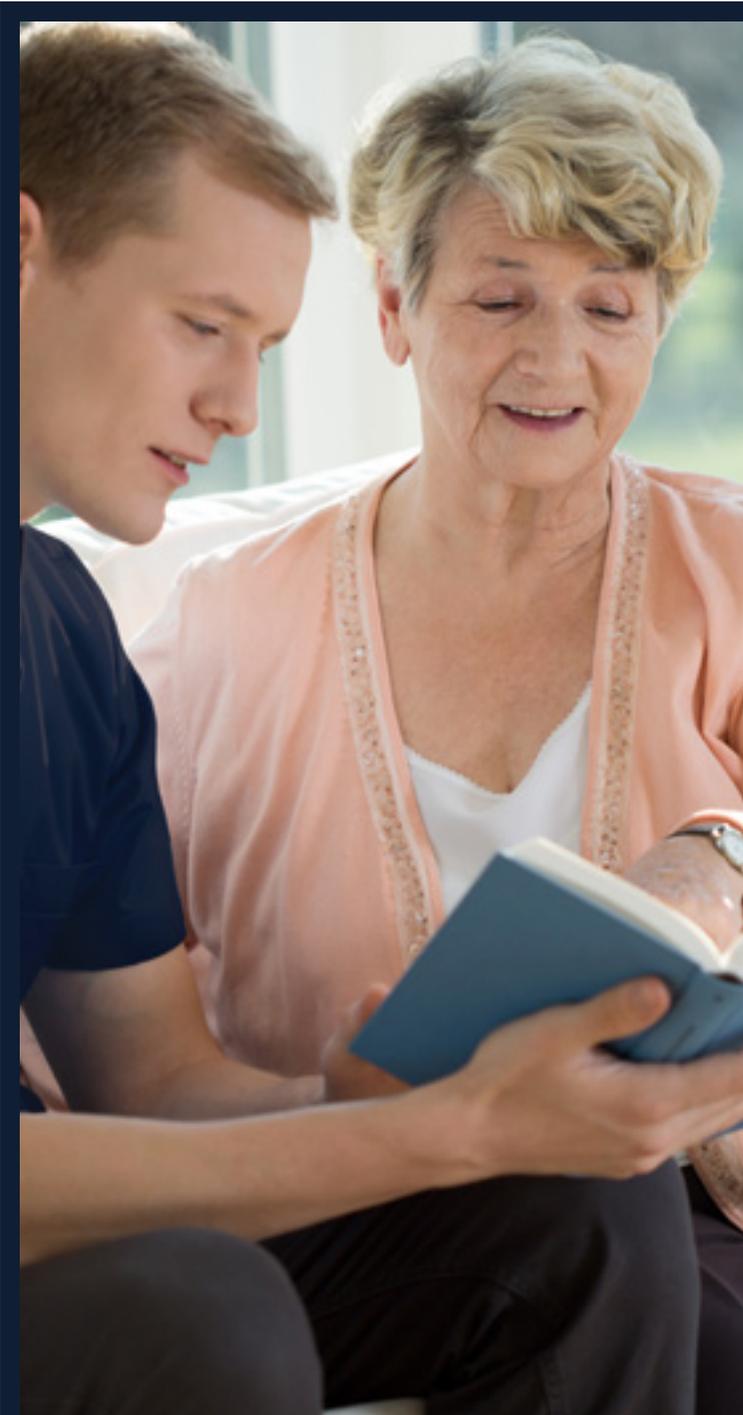
Memory might naturally become less efficient with age. It might take longer to learn new things or remember familiar words or names.

## What you can do to keep your memory sharp:

- Include physical activity in your daily routine. Physical activity increases blood flow to your whole body, including your brain. This might help keep your memory sharp.
- Eat a healthy diet. A heart-healthy diet might benefit your brain. What you drink counts, too. Too much alcohol can lead to confusion and memory loss.
- Stay mentally active. Mentally stimulating activities help keep your brain in shape — and might keep memory loss at bay. Play cards with your Eaton support worker, watch TV quiz shows together and see who gets most answers right. Simply having the stimulation of having another person around can make a huge difference to memory and recall.
- Be social. Social interaction helps ward off depression and stress, which can contribute to memory loss. Look for opportunities to get together with loved ones, friends and others. If you cannot go alone ask your Eaton Support worker to accompany you. If you prefer, they can help you get there and pick you up later.

If you're concerned about memory loss, consult your doctor.





## Your eyes and ears

### What's happening

With age, you might have difficulty focusing on objects that are close up. You might become more sensitive to glare and have trouble adapting to different levels of light. Aging also can affect your eye's lens, causing clouded vision (cataracts).

Your hearing also might diminish. You might have difficulty hearing high frequencies or following a conversation in a crowded room.

### What you can do to promote eye and ear health:

- Schedule regular check-ups. Follow your doctor's advice about glasses, contact lenses, hearing aids and other corrective devices. Eaton can arrange for sight and hearing tests to be carried out in your home if you prefer.
- Take precautions. Wear sunglasses or a wide-brimmed hat when you are outdoors, and use earplugs when you're around loud machinery or other loud noises.

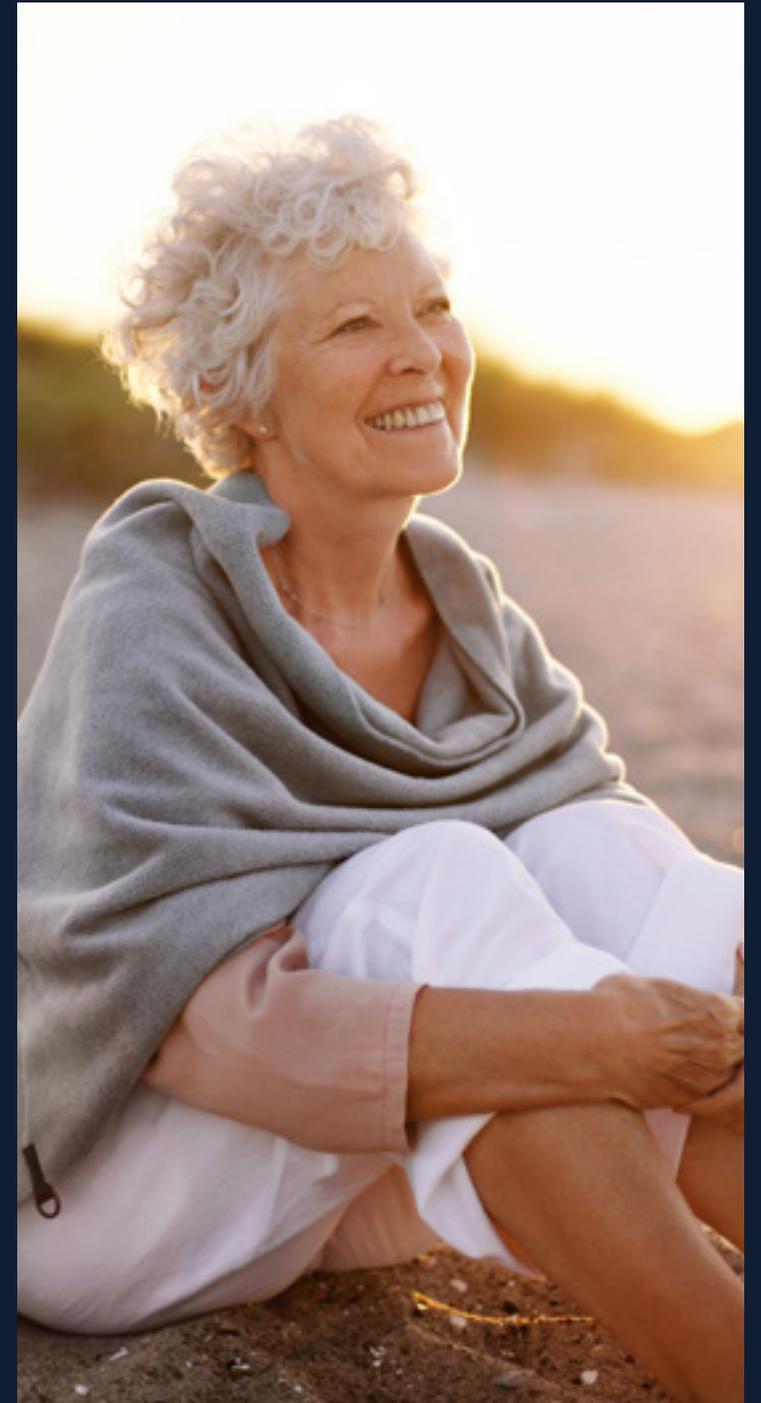
# Your teeth

## What's happening

Your gums might pull back (recede) from your teeth. Certain medications, such as those that treat allergies, asthma, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, can also cause dry mouth. As a result, your teeth and gums might become slightly more vulnerable to decay and infection.

## What you can do to promote eye and ear health:

- Brush and floss. Brush your teeth twice a day and clean between your teeth — using regular dental floss or an interdental cleaner — once a day. Look after your dentures and keep them clean, or if you prefer, your Eaton support worker can help you do this.
- Schedule regular check-ups. Visit your dentist or dental hygienist for regular dental check-ups.





## Your skin

### What's happening

With age, your skin thins and becomes less elastic and more fragile with a simultaneous decrease of fatty tissue just below the skin. You might notice that you bruise more easily. Decreased production of natural oils might make your skin drier. Wrinkles, age spots and small growths called skin tags are more common.



### What you can do to promote healthy skin:

- Be gentle. Bathe in warm — not hot — water. Use mild soap and moisturiser. Your Eaton support worker will be happy to apply moisturiser to those places that are harder to reach
- Take precautions. When you're outdoors, use sunscreen and wear protective clothing. Check your skin regularly and report changes to your doctor.
- Don't smoke. If you smoke or use other tobacco products, ask your doctor to help you quit. Smoking contributes to skin damage, such as wrinkling.

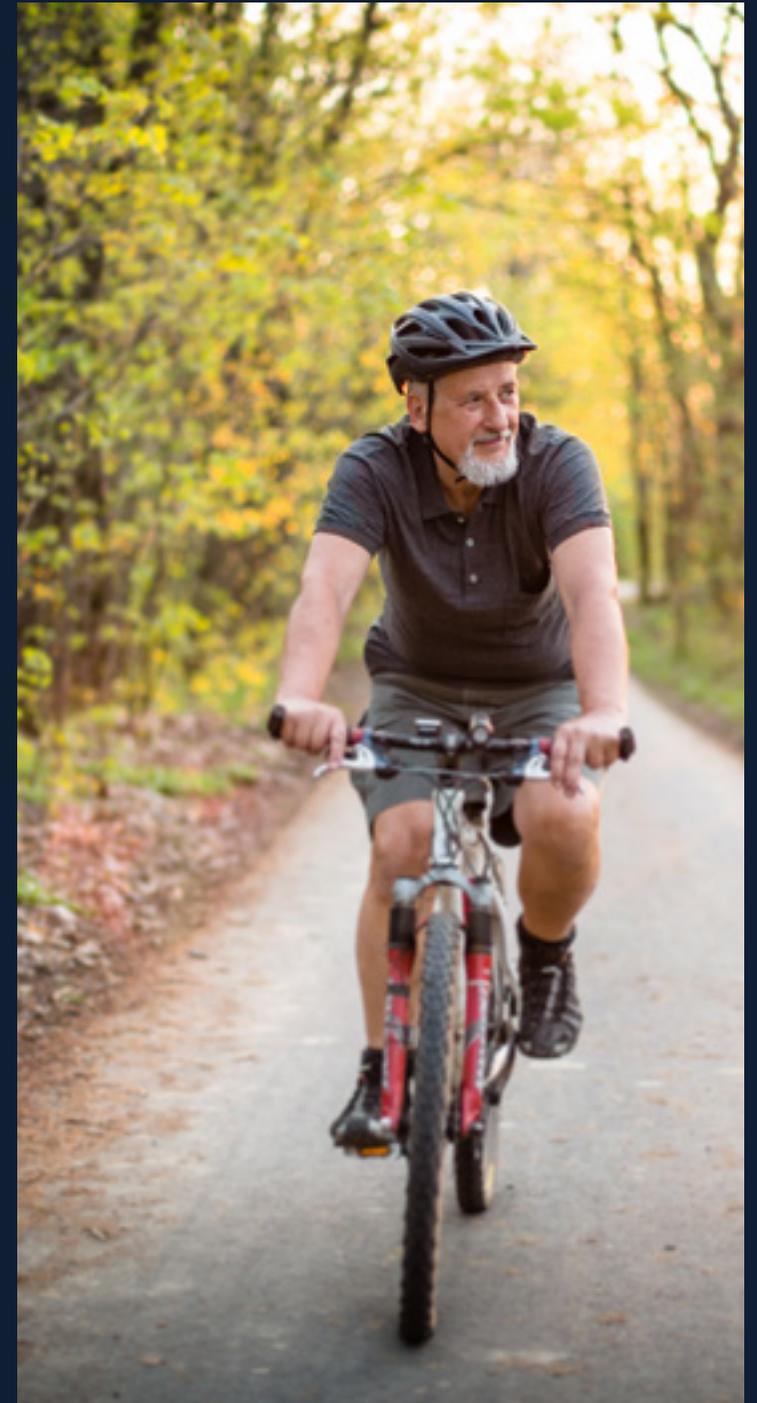
# Your weight

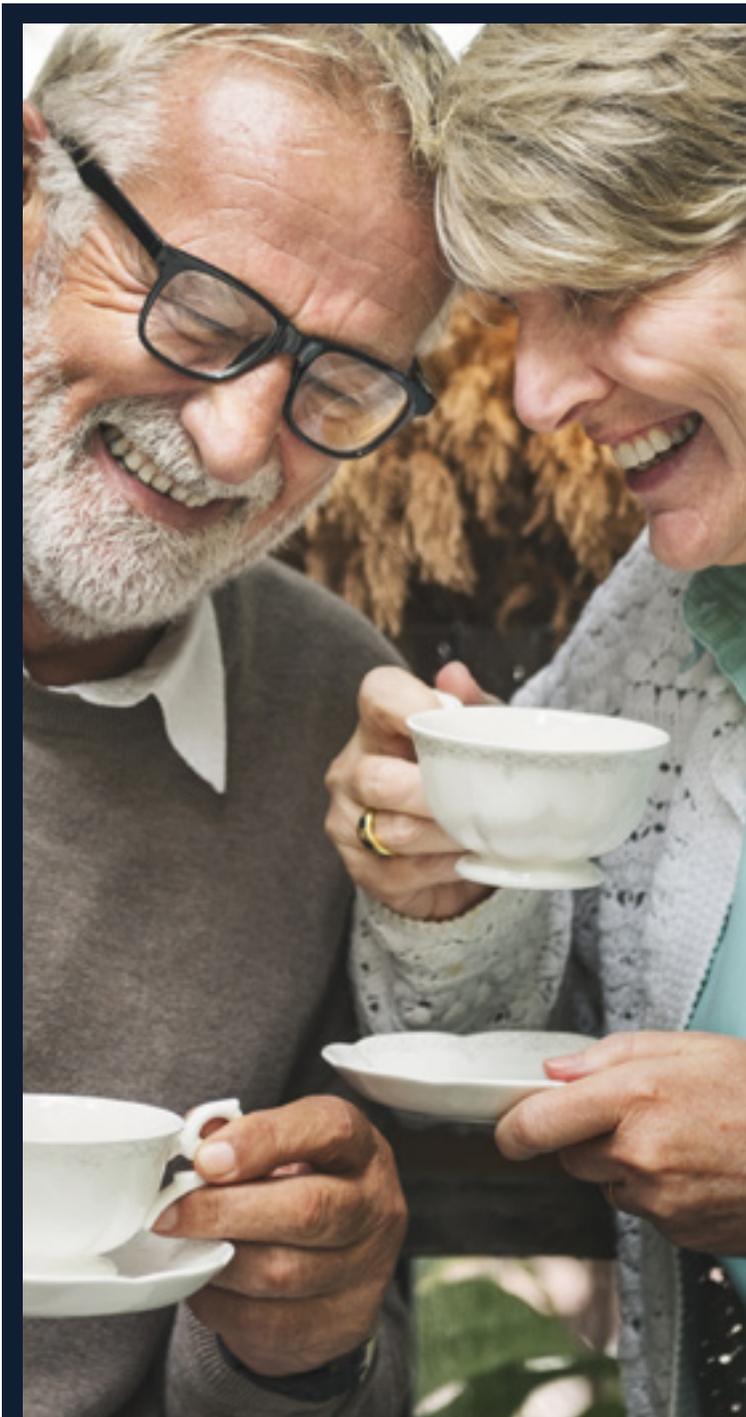
## What's happening

Maintaining a healthy weight is more difficult as you get older. As you age, your muscle mass decreases and body fats take its place. Since fat tissue burns fewer calories than does muscle, you need fewer calories to maintain your current weight.

## What you can do to maintain a healthy weight:

- Include physical activity in your daily routine. Regular moderate physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a healthy diet. Choose vegetables, fruits, whole grains, high-fibre foods and lean sources of protein, such as fish. Limit sugar and foods high in saturated fat.
- Watch your portion sizes. You might not need as many calories as you used to.





## Your sexuality

### What's happening

With age, sexual needs and performance might change. Illness or medication might affect your ability to enjoy sex. For women, vaginal dryness can make sex uncomfortable. For men, impotence might become a concern. It might take longer to get an erection, and erections might not be as firm as they used to be.

### What you can do to promote your sexual health:

- Share your needs and concerns with your partner. You might experiment with different positions or sexual activities.
- Talk to your doctor. He or she might offer specific treatment suggestions — such as estrogen cream for vaginal dryness or perhaps oral medication to increase libido in women or oral medication for erectile dysfunction in men.

Remember, it's never too late to adopt a healthy lifestyle. You can't stop the aging process, but you might be able to minimize its impact by making healthy choices.

## MYTHS & FACTS



**MYTH:** Aging means declining health and/or disability.

**FACT:** There are some diseases that become more common as we age. However, getting older does not automatically mean poor health or that you will be confined to a walker or wheelchair. Plenty of older adults enjoy vigorous health, often better than many younger people. Preventive measures like healthy eating, exercising, and managing stress can help reduce the risk of chronic disease or injuries later in life.



**MYTH:** Memory loss is an inevitable part of aging.

**FACT:** As you age, you may eventually notice you don't remember things as easily as in the past, or memories may start to take a little longer to retrieve. However, significant memory loss is not an inevitable result of aging. Brain training and learning new skills can be done at any age and there are many things you can do to keep your memory sharp. The sooner you start, the sooner you'll reap the benefits.



**MYTH:** You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

**FACT:** One of the more damaging myths of aging is that after a certain age, you just won't be able to try anything new or contribute to things anymore. The opposite is true. Middle aged and older adults are just as capable of learning new things and thriving in new environments, plus they have the wisdom that comes with life experience. If you believe in and have confidence in yourself, you are setting up a positive environment for change no matter what your age.





## The keys to healthy aging

COPING WITH CHANGE IS DIFFICULT,  
NO MATTER HOW OLD YOU ARE.

The particular challenge for older adults is the sheer number of changes and transitions that start to occur—including children moving away, the loss of parents, friends, and other loved ones, changes to or the end of your career, declining health, and even loss of independence. It's natural to feel those losses. But if that sense of loss is balanced with positive ingredients, you have a formula for staying healthy as you age and being able to continue to enjoy life. At Eaton we are able to support you in whatever you wish to do and our support workers can help you come to terms with changes in your mobility, independence and aspirations.

Healthy aging means continually reinventing yourself as you pass through landmark ages such as 60, 70, 80 and beyond. It means finding new things you enjoy, learning to adapt to change, staying physically and socially active, and feeling connected to your community and loved ones.



OPENING HOURS: MONDAY TO FRIDAY FROM XXXX UNTIL XXXX

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