

ORTHOPEDIC CARE

GET BACK TO MOVING

Resuming healthy habits can work in your favor

By Courtney Diener-Stokes
For MediaNews Group

People are out and about more normally again, and gyms have been reopened for a while, but that doesn't necessarily mean that everyone is back to their old physical fitness regimens.

The length of time that many were sedentary and confined to their homes has made it difficult for some to get back on track.

Dr. Stephen Longenecker, medical director of Reading Hospital Joint Care Center and board certified by the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, has witnessed this among many older patients at his orthopedic practice.

"When I ask them, 'How are you doing with your knee pain and what are you doing for activity?' it is surprising how many people reduced their activity because of COVID and got out of a routine," he said. "It's hard to get back into that routine."

Pre-COVID, Longenecker's patients used to meet their friends for lunch and go to the gym regularly. Instead, he is now finding he has to steer patients to physical therapy to help get their routine back.

"A lot of time it's reeducating and helping them be aware," he said. "We are encouraging people to get into a routine — to write down and remember what you did or start something new — the opportunities are out there."



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Despite gyms reopening some time ago, many still haven't reestablished their healthy habits of going regularly.

He has also seen that remote at-home work environments for those in their 40s and 50s are taking a toll for the worse.

"I have a fair number of middle-aged people where their work environment changed," he said, adding that since they are at home they don't get as much

movement in a given day as they used to. "I have seen a fair number of 40- and 50-year-olds with injuries from being more sedentary."

Stretching at home, along with small tasks such as walking out to the car or taking small walks around the house can be benefi-

cial your orthopedic health. (Free public domain) Longenecker emphasized the importance for seniors, in particular, to get moving again. And while getting back to the gym is ideal, you don't have to take part in an organized workout to reap benefits. Things like walk-

GET BACK » PAGE 2

HOME MODIFICATIONS TO PREVENT FALLS

- Rearrange furniture. Ensure no furniture is blocking pathways between rooms.
 - Reduce clutter. It's easy to accumulate clutter, such as boxes. Take the time to declutter your home, especially the hallways and stairs.
 - Install handrails on both sides of the stairs. Each should be 30 inches above the stairs and extend the full length of the stairs.
 - Install nightlights. Keep the halls/walkways in your home well-lit and consider a nightlight in your bathroom. A clear path is especially helpful when trying to get to the restroom in the middle of the night.
 - Secure all loose area rugs. Place double-sided carpet tape or slip-resistant backing on all loose rugs around your home, including the bathroom.
 - Proper storage. Store items that you use on a regular basis within easy reach. For example, clothes, shoes in your bedroom and dishes and cooking equipment in the kitchen.
 - Install grab bars on the shower wall.
 - Wear the right footwear. Wear properly-fitting shoes with nonskid soles. Avoid high heels. Tie your shoelaces. Never walk in your stocking feet. Replace slippers that have stretched out of shape and are too loose.
 - Clean up immediately any liquids, grease or food spilled on the floor.
 - Designate a play area. Children may have lots of toys scattered around the house. It's important to contain those toys in a dedicated play area and clean up the toys after kids are done playing to avoid tripping.
 - Keep walkways clear. Keep the path between your front door, driveway and mailbox well-lit and clear of debris.
- Source:** American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons



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Get back

FROM PAGE 1

ing to the car, picking up the newspaper on the front stoop, a stretch routine or taking small walks around the house can work in your favor.

“Ten small activities are better than a full hour with a physical therapist,” he said. “It’s the small things that really do add up and are important and healthy.”

Longenecker said that fall prevention is a big topic in the world of orthopedics.

“That is working on balance exercises and working on stretches,” he said. “I met with one of the home health agencies the other day, and they do home visits just to look at the environment to make sure the environment is safe.”

As we age, the house we live in might not have changed, but we as individuals have.

“You might put a rail in the bathroom or put away the throw rug,” he said. “The prevention of fall is big in our world, and that comes through those little exercises specific to balance and adapting your environment to your advanced age.”

During COVID, people also got off track with their routines of getting their injections and surgeries.

“We did see an influx of people with untreated arthritic concerns, and I think that is starting to level off now that people are back in their routine of getting their injections and surgeries,” he said.

For those requiring surgery, Longenecker, an orthopedic surgery specialist, said there is a growing number of people requiring hip and knee replacements. Less are in need of shoulder replacement.

“The success of hip and knee replacement has really increased,” he said. “In the past two to five years we have picked up the advanced technologies that really enhance precision and outcomes due to robotic and computer assisted capabilities.”

Longenecker said pa-



COURTESY OF TOWER HEALTH

Dr. Stephen Longenecker is the medical director of Reading Hospital Joint Care Center and board certified by the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.



FREE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Getting back to your gym routine can be beneficial to your orthopedic health.

tients are less likely to have a bad outcome after surgery due to their medical preoperative optimization initiative.

“We give 10 good health parameters to make you safe for surgery,” he said of the parameters that are to be followed prior to the procedure taking place.

Overall, Longenecker suggests it’s best not to jump right into surgery and to steer clear of costly, out-of-pocket unproven remedies such as stem cells for arthritis that he said still aren’t supported by the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

“Make sure you feel good about asking your doctor what is a good alternative

to surgery,” he said, adding that a safe non-opioid medicine might be one such route that could serve as a more conservative form of treatment than surgery. “Ask your doctor and don’t pay for things out of pocket.”

If surgery is deemed the best route, Longenecker said that less invasive procedures mean people will get them done earlier in their lives, which is more beneficial than getting a bigger procedure done at a time when they are older and more vulnerable.

“Less invasive surgery will be done earlier making the big reconstructive surgery not as necessary,” Longenecker said.

PROMOTING SENIOR WELLNESS

What is orthopedic care and why might you need it?

By Jennifer Singley

Orthopedic care is a branch of medicine focused on the care of the musculoskeletal system, which includes bones, muscles, connective tissues, ligaments, tendons and joints. There are many reasons to visit an orthopedic doctor or specialist, ranging from arthritis pain and osteoporosis to dislocations, fractures and sports-related injuries.

People of all ages may find themselves in need of orthopedic care at one time or another, but when it comes to older adults, aging-related changes to the body often lead to an increase in orthopedic injuries and point to the importance of preventative orthopedic care.

Common reasons older adults seek orthopedic care

OSTEOPOROSIS» Bones are made up of living tissue that is constantly breaking down and regenerating. When the regeneration of new bone tissue no longer keeps up with the loss of bone tissue, the resulting condition is osteoporosis. Osteoporosis causes bones to become brittle and weak, so much that even a hard cough or sneeze can cause a bone fracture, let alone a fall. An orthopedic doctor can recommend treatment that will slow the rate of bone loss due to osteoporosis.

OSTEOARTHRITIS» Osteoarthritis, also commonly referred to as just arthritis, refers to the condition in which the cartilage in the joints deteriorates, causing pain, stiffness and swelling. Osteoarthritis most commonly affects the joints in the hands, feet, ankles, knees, and spine and can



DIRECT MEDIA ON STOCKSNAP

Stretching is one way to help minimize orthopedic issues as you age.

make everyday activities difficult. While there is no cure for osteoarthritis, an orthopedic doctor can suggest a treatment regimen to minimize discomfort.

FRACTURES» As bones age, they lose mineral density, making them weaker and more brittle. A fracture is essentially a broken bone, which can vary in terms of severity. Osteoporosis as well as trauma such as from falls or car accidents can cause fractures.

DISLOCATIONS» Dislocations occur when a bone pops out of its joint socket. As we age, our joints become less stable and thus more easily susceptible to dislocations. While a dislocation can occur at any ball and socket joint, the most common are shoulder dislocations and finger dislocations. Older adults might also experience disloca-

tions of the knees, hips, or elbows.

Ways to prevent orthopedic issues

There are several measures that can help prevent — or at the very least minimize — orthopedic issues, and it is not too late to start.

- Exercise
- Stretch
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Be mindful of footwear
- Develop and maintain a strong core
- Routinely visit a doctor

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SPOT OF T



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Recalculations often required on the journey that is life

By Terry Alburger

We've all been there, sailing happily on a car trip, trusting in the ever-faithful GPS for the best directions. We rely on that disembodied voice, trusting fully in its calming and all-knowing guidance. With that voice to guide us on the best and most efficient route, we know how much longer our trip will be, where the traffic jams are and even our es-

timated time of arrival, down to the minute. It is indeed a comfort to have that copilot riding along, ready to jump in at any moment.

But what happens when the unknown occurs? A tree fallen across the road, a flooded stream causing road closures, an unexpected accident blocking the road or any of a plethora of possibilities. What happens then?

We've all heard the dreaded word, "Recal-

culating." The electronic guide has to rethink the route quickly and determine what the next best step will be. And chances are, with some minor adjustments, we will still arrive safe and sound at our destination, albeit slightly delayed.

This is a lot like life. On our journeys, we can be sailing along, happy and content with the status quo. Then all of a sudden, things change, and you must recalculate. I

also like to call this a plot twist. When things don't go as planned, new paths must be forged.

There are many reasons for this, some difficult, some wonderful and others simply a logical progression. I came up against one of those recalculating moments just the other.

A good friend and faithful coworker is retiring. Of course, I am deliriously happy for her. It is a well-deserved and, quite honestly, overdue reward for 32 years of service. She not only served her coworkers but the residents at our workplace as well and treated each person as family. My journey, as well as those of literally hundreds of people, must adjust to the gaping hole that will be left. A huge recalculation will be in order.

Adjustments — they are never easy, but sometimes they bring out the best in

us. For years we get used to a steady path, but once that path is obstructed, we have to think outside the box to circumvent the obstacle. We must change our habitual ways to find a different path, and we must face the challenges. Adjustments can be as tiny as a tweak or as huge as a complete makeover to our way of doing things.

A tiny tweak can have a large impact and may be just what is needed. Consider the controls on the dashboard of your car. One small turn and you completely change the song on the radio. One small twist and your car's temperature is adjusted accordingly. A tiny turn of the wheel and your path diverges immediately. Small adjustments can make big changes.

With every challenge you face, you learn to adjust. It is not unlike the human body's ability to

thrive. It seeks something called homeostasis, which is basically your body's normal settings. Temperature is around 98.6 degrees F, blood pressure is within normal range, etc. With each prescription you take or the diet you maintain, you are attempting to reach your personal homeostasis.

Our adjustments in life are just like that. With each challenge, we adjust. We recalculate. We can only hope that the new paths created by these recalculations of life not only help us to continue our journeys but also assist us in thriving along the way.

With each tweak, we learn many new things, and hopefully the knowledge gained is worth the adjustments. Through it all, we have to smile and push forward to the new adventures that await.



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SENIOR LIVING

Five common questions about paying for senior living

By Kathy Ardekani

Perhaps you or someone close to you has questions about how to cover the costs of senior living, from selling your home to life insurance payouts and bridge loans, there are many options available.

Keep reading to learn about some of the most common questions people ask about paying for senior living at a senior living community like Echo Lake in Tredyffrin Township, Chester County.

How do most people pay for the move to a senior living community?

You may be able to pay for senior care by selling your house, setting up an annuity or investing in the stock market.

Renting your home and using the money to cover the costs of senior care is



Kathy Ardekani is the executive director at Echo Lake.

also an option.

If you have a long-term care insurance policy, that might cover some costs too.

Does my life insurance cover the cost of senior living?

If you are over age 65, you may be able to cash in your life insurance policy.

Depending on the type of life insurance coverage, a surrender of the policy before you pass away could net you its face value plus any cash values in other accounts associated with the plan.

Another option is to convert your life insurance policy into a deferred annuity that includes a long-

term care rider. A monthly payment will be sent to your senior living community in a tax-free and penalty-free manner, without IRS penalties.

I'm waiting for my home to sell. How can I pay for senior living in the meantime?

A variety of creditors provide bridge loans to older adults who are transitioning into senior living. Senior living expenses can be paid for with these loans because they rely on the equity in a home until it sells. With the proceeds from the eventual sale of the house, you can repay the loan. A bridge loan may facilitate a quicker transition to senior living by giving you cash for the first few months' rents.

Do Medicare benefits cover senior living?

If you're over age 65 and

have had a recent hospital stay, Medicare may pay for physician-prescribed skilled nursing and rehabilitation for up to 100 days.

However, these benefits do not apply to assisted living or independent living. Any physical or occupational therapy you receive while living at a senior community would be covered, as usual, by Medicare.

I'm a U.S. veteran. Can I get any help paying for senior living?

Veterans and their surviving spouses may be eligible to receive the VA's Aid and Attendance Benefit. Assisted living or nursing care may be covered by this benefit, in addition to the Veteran's regular pension. Echo Lake also offers a discount for veterans.

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Kathy Ardekani is the executive director of Echo Lake.

ASK RUSTY

Will claiming early affect my wife's survivor benefit?

By Russell Gloor

affect her widow's benefit amount?

— Confused husband

DEAR RUSTY» My wife will be turning 62 and eligible to collect Social Security this year. We realize it will be a reduced amount. I am 52 and have been the sole income earner for most of the last 20 years.

We also have an adopted son who will be turning 14 this year. We realize he will receive a dependent benefit until he turns 18, and this may make the case for filing early. I am confused about widow benefits — will my wife's early filing

DEAR CONFUSED HUSBAND» When your wife claims her own SS retirement benefit (e.g., at 62) will have no effect on the benefit available to her as your widow. The only thing that would affect her survivor benefit as your widow is her age when she claims it.

Claimed before her FRA, her survivor benefit would be reduced, but claimed at or after her FRA, your wife's survivor benefit as your widow will be 100% of



Russell Gloor

the amount you were receiving (or, if you are

not yet collecting, the amount you were entitled to receive) at your death. Your wife would get that amount, instead of her smaller personal amount.

However, for your awareness, your wife's spousal benefit while you are both living (which she can claim when you start your own SS benefit) will be less than half of your FRA benefit amount because she claimed her own SS retirement benefit at age 62.

The reason is that your wife's benefit as your spouse when you claim

will consist of her own reduced SS retirement benefit, plus a spousal boost to bring her payment up to her spousal entitlement. Since her spousal boost will be added to her own reduced early benefit, her total payment as your spouse will be less than 50% of your FRA benefit amount.

If your wife claims her own SS retirement benefit at age 62, she can also apply for your adopted minor son's benefits based on her personal lifetime work record. Although your wife's personal early ben-

efit will be cut (by 30%) for claiming at age 62, your son's benefit as your wife's minor child will be based on your wife's full retirement age (FRA) benefit amount.

Your son's benefit from your wife will be 50% of your wife's FRA amount (not her age 62 amount). As you know, your son will get that amount until he is 18 (or 19 if he is still in high school).

Russell Gloor is a certified Social Security adviser by the Association of Mature American Citizens: <https://amac.us/social-security-advisor>.

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MUSIC



COURTESY OF THE RED SATINS

Members of The Red Satins perform a 1950s doo-wop number for residents of Ashbridge Manor Senior Living in East Cain Township, Chester County, on July 7. From left are John Bullock, Bill Shirley, Jeff Stevens, Rich Carbo and Ray Walsh. Other members not shown are John O'Donnell and Dan Ziobro.

Local doo-wop band entertains residents at Ashbridge Manor

By Bill Shirley

On July 7, residents of Ashbridge Manor in East Cain Township, Chester County, were transported back in time to the 1950s and '60s by The Red Satins, a group of locally-based vocalists specializing in the doo-wop sounds made famous in that era.

"Like many Ashbridge residents, we spent our teen years and 20s listening to artists like Frankie Avalon, the Drifters, Dion & the Belmonts and The Temptations," said John O'Donnell, Red Satins manager and band member. "Those artists recorded the popular songs that formed the soundtrack of our lives, and for more than a decade now, we've been recreating that music for audiences across Chester County and beyond."

O'Donnell and the other

six members of The Red Satins are all in their 60s and 70s. All live in the Downingtown-Coatesville area. And all are members of the parish choir at Downingtown-based St. Joseph Catholic Church.

"When we go on stage, we live for the moment when smiles light up the faces of audience members as our harmonies take them back to their youth," said O'Donnell, whose group's show featured more than 30 golden oldies well-known by their audience. "For us, it's all about helping people have fun. And when we see those smiles, we have fun, too."

Sophia Llopiz, activities director at Ashbridge Manor, said The Red Satins are a fan favorite at her community, where they've performed at least eight or nine times in recent years.

"Our residents love the Satins' music," Llopiz said.

"We always get a great turnout when they appear."

In addition to Ashbridge Manor, The Red Satins have performed at several other 55+ communities in the county, including Freedom Village, Simpson Meadows and Spring Run Estates, along with other venues such as Coatesville Country Club, St. Anthony's Restaurant in Downingtown and the Merrill Lynch office in Exton.

The group is also performing this month at Hershey's Mill Villages & Golf Club in West Chester, and they look forward to booking more engagements now that large gatherings previously prohibited by COVID-19 restrictions are once again permitted.

Visit The Red Satins' Facebook page to learn more about the group and get a sampling of their singing style.

TRAVEL



TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Las Vegas topped the list of best U.S. destinations for seniors.

The most welcoming destinations for senior travelers

Tribune News Service

Retirement is the perfect time to enjoy traveling, but where to go? New research shows the best places for seniors to travel.

The Retirement Travel Index, created by AgingInPlace, compiled the list using several data points to reveal the most ideal places for older travelers to visit. Countries were ranked on their public transport links, sightseeing opportunities, weather and hotels.

Highlighting the countries that offer the most accessible places can help seniors narrow down where to spend their tourism dollars.

In the 2022 Retirement Travel Index, the U.S. took the top spot. One of the main reasons the country scored a 9.14 out of 10 was because of its transportation systems and the Americans With Disabilities Act, which ensures that so many facilities in the country are wheelchair accessible. In fact, nearly half of the hotels in the U.S. (46.85%) are marked as wheelchair-accessible on TripAdvisor.

Australia holds the second spot on the Retirement

Travel Index. With a score of 9.04, Australia has the highest percentage of wheelchair-accessible hotels out of all countries on the list, at 50.89%, and an intricate network of public transportation offerings.

In third place, Canada is a senior traveler paradise. The country scored 8.49 out of 10 across all criteria.

The list also revealed some of the worst places for seniors to visit with Iceland, Luxembourg and Slovenia rounding out the bottom of the list of OECD countries.

The biggest problem for seniors traveling to these destinations is that there are far fewer hotels that are accessible for those with disabilities. Weather and transportation were also hindering places like Iceland, which had the highest rainfall totals as well as a low amount of transportation infrastructure. Luxembourg was dinged for its lack of accessible hotels and fewer options for sightseeing, which was also the same for Slovenia.

Top 10 countries for senior travelers

1. United States

2. Australia
3. Canada
4. Italy
5. Spain
6. Germany
7. United Kingdom
8. France
9. Japan
10. Turkey

Top U.S. destinations for seniors

The research also highlighted the top places to visit in the U.S. for seniors.

Las Vegas topped the list with a score of 7.95 out of 10. Las Vegas is home to more art galleries, areas of nature and wildlife and attractions than most other cities on our list, according to AgingInPlace.

San Francisco was second on the list with a score of 7.73. Chicago ranked third with a score of 7.35 out of 10.

These are the top 10 cities:

1. Las Vegas
2. San Francisco
3. Chicago
4. Los Angeles
5. New York
6. Tucson, Ariz.
7. Austin, Texas
8. Seattle
9. Orlando, Fla.
10. Portland, Ore.

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EMPLOYMENT



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“Many employers now actively look to hire seniors. More and more of them are starting to recognize that experienced and mature workers often have strengths that some younger workers lack. For example, many older workers exhibit strengths like loyalty, a strong work ethic and a good attitude.”

More seniors are choosing to keep working for a variety of reasons.

More seniors choose to remain in the workforce

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By John Grimaldi

More senior citizens are saying, “I’m too young to retire.”

Some simply can’t afford to retire; others remain in the workforce because it makes them feel productive. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says that by 2028, nearly one in four seniors 65 years old and older will be working. They’ll be staying on the job or they’ll come out of retirement in search of work that can give them a sense of accomplishment.

The senior living company, Provision Living, conducted a survey of more than 1,000 seniors between the ages of 65 and 85 who were working full time or part time. The poll found that 47% of respondents wished they could retire but were still working to make ends meet.

Meanwhile, 53% said they chose to stay on the job, full time or part time, because they could. Among the old-timers who were still work-

ing, most of them — 45% — said they enjoy it, 18% said they would be bored were it not for their jobs, and 6% work for social engagement.

A poll conducted last month by CNBC focused on men and women who quit or lost their jobs during the height of the pandemic, among them a significant number of retirees. It found that 94% of them would consider getting back to work but only for the right job and the right pay. Meanwhile, 68% of retirees who participated in the survey said they would consider getting back to work for the right pay and a flexible work schedule.

There was a time when older workers found it hard to find a job. These days, however, hiring seniors seems to be a trend. The Great Senior Living website reports that “many employers now actively look to hire seniors. More and more of them are starting to recognize that experienced and mature workers often have strengths that some

younger workers lack. For example, many older workers exhibit strengths like loyalty, a strong work ethic and a good attitude.”

The online job site Indeed.com offers advice for seniors who are deciding to go back to work.

“If you’re returning to work out of a desire to keep busy, interact with your community or explore a new career field, your job out of retirement may look different from your previous career,” according to the website. “This can be an exciting opportunity to discover new occupations or develop existing hobbies. If you’re an avid gardener, you could explore part-time employment at a local gardening center. If you’re a golf enthusiast, consider applying to a sporting goods store or golf course ... Those with extensive experience in an industry may even choose to capitalize on their background and begin an independent venture. Starting your own business can be an exciting opportunity.”

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