

SPRING 2020

SENIOR Living

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3 benefits of owning a pet as you grow older

Pets bring their human caregivers joy, security, companionship and more. But did you know that owning a pet is scientifically shown to benefit your health? Here are three good reasons to consider adopting a pet.

1. They improve your health. Spending time with pets reduces stress and decreases blood pressure levels. Furthermore, caring for a pet will encourage you to get more exercise. Taking a dog for a walk, or playing with a cat, is an easy and enjoyable way to stay active.

2. They provide companionship. People often have fewer opportunities for social interaction as they grow older and begin to feel isolated. But pets are good company, and dogs in particular can provide you with more

opportunities for social interaction. Walking your dog or taking them to the dog park allows you to strike up conversations with other dog owners.

3. They give you a sense of purpose. Knowing that your pet cares for you and that they are dependent on you for food, exercise and companionship will imbue your life with added meaning and importance. Plus, caring for your pet can help you establish a routine and give your day structure.

These are just a few of the many advantages of owning a pet. However, you can also reap many of these benefits simply by spending time with animals. To this end, an increasing number of senior facilities have programs where pets are regularly brought in to visit residents. If having a pet at home doesn't work for you, look to see whether you can arrange a visit from one instead.

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Aging at home: what you should know

Are you a senior facing the challenges of aging? If so, retirement homes provide an assortment of services that can make them a sensible choice of residence later in life. However, living at home is possible if you make a few adjustments. Here's what you should know.

YOU MAY NEED TO MODIFY YOUR HOME

As you age, living at home may begin to present a number of obstacles. This means you'll probably need to make some changes. Some modifications you may want to consider making include:

- Widening doorways to allow for the use of mobility aids like wheelchairs and walkers
- Lowering countertops for easier access, especially if you use a wheelchair
- Replacing existing showers and tubs with safer walk-in models
- Removing tripping hazards such as

shaggy rugs

- Applying anti-slip products to hardwood and tile floors
- Installing wheelchair lifts and ramps.

YOU CAN GET VARIOUS KINDS OF ASSISTANCE

Everyone's needs are different, but many seniors benefit from using home support services. If required, you can get in-home medical care. However, it's also possible to receive help with basic tasks such as household chores, meal preparation and bathing. Whatever your specific needs are, remember that some of these resources are available through government and community-based programs.

IT CAN BE EXPENSIVE

The costs of modifying your place of residence and getting home support services can add up quickly. Fortunately, some states offer tax credits for seniors living at home. These will usually cover a portion of your expenses.



“Aging is not lost youth, but a new stage of opportunity & growth.” – Betty Friedan

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Functional fitness training: what it is and how it benefits seniors



As we age, everyday tasks become more physically challenging. Activities such as getting up from a seated position, putting on a coat, dusting furniture and putting away groceries become difficult for many people. Functional fitness training helps seniors continue to perform these types of tasks without experiencing excessive strain.

WHY IS IT GREAT FOR SENIORS?

Nearly everyone stands to benefit from functional fitness training, but it's particularly advantageous to seniors. As we grow older, we begin to lose muscle mass, bone strength and our sense of balance. Functional fitness training will help seniors remain independent for as long as possible. Plus, unlike exercise machines and weight training, it's a low-intensity form of exercise and shouldn't cause strain or injury.

WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL FITNESS TRAINING?

Functional fitness training involves exercise routines that mimic the activities of daily life. The focus is primarily on balance, core strength, endurance and multi-joint flexibility.

Want to give functional fitness training a try? More and more commercial gyms are starting to offer such programs. See if there's a class close to you that you can sign up for.



SAVE THE DATE

2020 SENIOR GAMES
AUGUST 5-8

COVID-19 Quarantine self-care: how to remain sane

It's normal to experience anxiety, insomnia, sadness and despair after a few days or weeks of being cooped up at home. Here are a few tips to help ease any symptoms of depression you may feel during this period.

STAY IN TOUCH

Whether it's via phone, text message, video chat or social media, there are many ways to connect with loved ones while you're in quarantine. Besides, the pandemic is a good reason to reach out to old friends. During these stressful times, they'll likely appreciate the distraction.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Focus on maintaining your physical

health as well as your mental health. Wash your hands often, eat balanced meals, drink lots of water, exercise daily and get enough sleep. Additionally, remember to laugh. Lighten the mood at home by watching a comedy, listening to a funny podcast or reading a silly comic book.

SEEK HELP

If you're in self-isolation, it doesn't necessarily mean you're alone. If you're feeling overwhelmed and struggling to see the light at the end of the tunnel, don't hesitate to take advantage of the resources available to you. This includes reaching out to health professionals and dedicated volunteers who are just a phone call or a keyboard click away.



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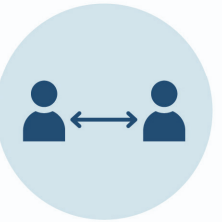
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