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Northern Ontario Magazine for those getting better with age.

6

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TO HELP AN
ELDERLY
LOVED ONE

LEARNING
HAS NO
AGE LIMIT

*Seniors:
gadgets to
simplify
everyday life*

TRAVEL PLANNING
FOR SNOWBIRDS

SPEAKER

PRINTING, PUBLISHING
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Winter 2023



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Lynn Julien
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What to do after a fall

Although fall prevention measures can help minimize the risk of older adults taking a tumble, they cannot prevent them 100 per cent of the time. Here's what you should do if you fall in your home and are unable to get up:

- Keep calm, stay still and determine if you feel pain in any part of your body. Don't try to stand up if you think doing so will aggravate your injury.

- Before moving, look around to ensure there aren't any broken

objects like knick-knacks or glass that could hurt you if you try to move.

- If you live with someone else, try to call them for help.

- If you're alone, try to get the attention of a neighbour. You can try banging on a wall, tapping the floor or using an object like a remote control, book or cane to make noise. If possible, move closer to a door or window to make yourself heard.

- If your neighbours

aren't home or far away, gently crawl toward a telephone. Take breaks if needed to avoid exhaustion. When you reach the phone, contact someone close to you for help.

- While waiting for someone to come, find a comfortable position. For example, you can place a cushion or piece of clothing under your head for support. Remember to move your joints regularly to avoid stiffness.



Fall detection

Have you heard of genealogy tourism?

Are you retired or close to retirement and want to plan a memorable trip where every stop along the way has significance? Genealogy tourism, also known as roots tourism, might appeal to you.

What is it?

Genealogy tourism involves choosing a holiday location linked to your generational past. For example,

you could visit a town or country where your ancestors lived before emigrating to your birthplace. The aim is to admire places where former family members lived to learn more about your origins and yourself.

Genealogy tourism is a chance to discover the home country of your ancestors. It's also an excellent

opportunity to learn about the experiences of certain relatives who lived during difficult or historically significant times.

How to plan a trip


Planning a genealogical trip is more complex than planning a traditional holiday. For example, you may need to meet with a local historian or genealogy expert recommended by your hotel. You can also contact a travel

agency to create a personalized trip or use a company that develops themed group trips.

If you prefer going on an unforgettable trip rather than sifting through historical documents to discover your heritage, genealogy tourism is for you. Don't hesitate to ask for help when planning your trip to the past.

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Chocolate: a delicious source of benefits for seniors

Chocolate is enjoyed by people of all ages. Are you a senior citizen who enjoys this sweet treat? Chocolate with high cocoa content (at least 60 per cent) has many benefits when consumed in moderation. Here are some great reasons to indulge.

Chocolate is good for your heart

Chocolate, specifically cocoa, contains flavonoids. These plant pigments have a positive impact on cardiovascular health. Flavonoids help reduce inflammation, which can be a risk factor for heart attacks. They also help lower bad cholesterol which helps to prevent high blood pressure.

Chocolate feeds the brain

Cocoa is a source of antioxidants. Antioxidants stimulate the brain to help combat the cellular aging responsible for certain diseases like Alzheimer's. Cocoa also contains minerals that help slow cognitive decline.

Chocolate improves mood

Chocolate has anti-depressant properties due to components like tyramine, theobromine and phenylalanine. If you let the chocolate melt in your mouth, it increases levels of mood-boosting hormones, like dopamine and serotonin.

Enjoy!



How to choose a medical alert device

Are you considering purchasing a medical alert device to give you peace of mind and ensure you get the help you need in an emergency? Here are four tips when shopping for a medical alert device.

1. Consider your lifestyle and health. If you regularly engage in outdoor activities, for instance, look for a system that's suitable at home and on the go. If you take medications that cause you to lose your balance, for example, you may be more interested in an alarm system that detects falls.

2. Think about comfort. The bracelet or pendant you choose should be lightweight and comfortable because you'll be wearing it every day. Falls happen more frequently in the bath and shower. Therefore, the device should be waterproof. If you prefer a pendant, ensure the cord breaks away easily to prevent choking.

3. Check your contract. Your contract should clearly state which costs are included and which aren't, so take a good look to avoid unpleasant sur-

prises. Additionally, check that you won't have to pay out of pocket if you accidentally press the alert button. You should also inquire if the service can be transferred should you move.

4. Invest in professional installation. If you have your device professionally installed, the installer can clearly explain how the alarm system works. They'll also ensure the device is compatible with your living situation. For example, they'll choose the optimal location to ensure the system is always within close range.

Don't hesitate to ask for help when choosing the most appropriate medical alert device for your situation.



A short guide to signing a lease in a seniors' residence

Signing a lease is an important step when it comes to finding a new home, and moving into a seniors' residence is no exception. Here are some things to keep in mind when you're deciding on your next home.

Information to know before signing

When visiting a residence for the first time, a staff member should give you a document outlining the services they offer and how much they cost. It should also detail how the place works and how to file a complaint. Additionally, you should receive information on the code of ethics for staff and volunteers and receive proof of the facility's certifications.

Don't hesitate to ask questions and gather as much information as possible during your visit.

ITEMS TO VERIFY ON THE LEASE

Your lease should state the amount of your rent

with a breakdown of the basic cost and personal services included, as well as a listing of the residence's conditions and amenities. These details should state who is responsible for paying taxes and utilities like the electricity bill and whether any renovations are required before you move in. You should also receive lists of available services, their prices and the facility's rules.

Before signing a lease for a private seniors' residence, use all the resources at your disposal to make the process easier.



7 signs you have balance problems

Getting older often comes with less muscle strength and balance. Osteoarthritis and other health problems, like vision and vestibular issues, can exacerbate these changes. The following seven signs may help you determine if it's time to seek help from a health professional for your balance issues.

1. You sometimes step sideways when walking in an unobstructed area where it's possible to walk in a straight line.

2. You slide your hand along walls or furniture when walking around your home.

3. You drag your feet rather than lift them when you walk.

4. You occasionally stumble when there are no obstacles in the way.

5. You reach for someone's arm or a handrail when coming out of a house.

6. You often struggle repeatedly to get up from a chair, couch or bed due to a lack of leg strength.

7. You walk up or down the stairs with both feet on the same step rather than alternating between them.

Have you noticed any of these signs in your daily life? Reduce the risk of falling by visiting an expert, such as a physiotherapist or kinesiologist, for advice. They'll create an exercise program tailored to your condition.



Different worlds, one province

By Darlene Wroe

Ontario is a vast place and its regions vary greatly.

Experiencing all parts allows us to have an appreciation, respect and responsible attitude toward both development and protection of all that exists, or could exist.

I have lived in Northeastern Ontario most of my life and I love it deeply.

My earliest memories include trekking through a black spruce forest behind my parents. At about five, I was big enough to motor along on my own two feet while my younger siblings were pulled on sleds. This was the shortcut, about a mile long, from our place to my grandparents' place. By road it would have been about a mile-and-a-half.

I remember loving the winter transformation of what we called the bush, not the forest.

It was a place we often went. My father had a trapline there, and it was not unusual for him to take me and my younger brother, three years old at the time, out with him when he checked it.

I can still remember the distinct aroma of a pelt hanging from the rafters of the shed where he kept them. Interesting that the word "distinct" contains within it the apt, somewhat onomatopoeic description of how

the pelts smelled, but very often that's life in the country. Plucking freshly dispatched chickens leaves the same olfactory impression - an activity I undertook many times throughout my childhood and teens.

Nevertheless, a life that often included outdoor activities was a life filled with beauty and awe.

The hike through the bush to my grandparents' home that one day was in the early winter. The snow cover was enough to blanket all the underbrush, which I generally found impeded my travels in the other seasons of the year.

We walked the bush enough that we had trails ground into the earth. Likely the undergrowth in the spring, summer and fall kept me from wandering off. I clearly remember having wanderlust when I was very young.

However, the snow cover had broken down some of those natural trail delineations and my adventurous eye was following the paths of unknown fellow travelers. Mice and snowshoe hares, foxes and even larger animals seemed to have business in that beautiful snowscape. I wondered where they were going. Might it be true that there were secret doors beneath the clumps of snow, leading

down into another and even more beautiful world? Even then, my mind was primed for storytelling, and the inspirational land around me was filling me up with ideas.

These days, every few months I will launch off across country to Southwestern Ontario, driving the highways and backroads, marveling in the beauty of the season, whichever one that it may be.

In the winter, the shifting light on snow-clad fields and frost-rimmed trees is a beautiful accompaniment as I close in on my destination where my daughter lives with her husband.

Very often, there is no snow by the time I get to the Kitchener-Waterloo area where my daughter lives and works.

When it does fall though, it turns grey features into white, and peaks and tree branches are picked out in black providing an artistic ren-

dition of the city's basic form, defined by that great draftsman in the sky.

They are two different worlds, the north and the south of Ontario. Our way of life, the country, our expectations and even our politics are different here in the north. Our childhood memories, our life expectations, our values and our ways are all different from those of our southern neighbours, and even our view of the world in its entirety is different. (The fact is, a Northerner's sense of the geography of the province is much more developed than almost everyone in the southern reaches.)

But by sharing our two different worlds, we become stronger and deeper in our outlooks and appreciation of what the province is, and all that exists both to improve and to protect.



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8 fun intergenerational activities

Grandchildren form a unique bond with their grandparents. To mark Grandparents' Day on September 10, why not create fun and unforgettable moments with these eight intergenerational activities?

- 1. Make a traditional dish.** Dig up old family or local recipes and teach your grandchildren how to make them.
- 2. Read a story.** Check out a good book or listen to a children's album and discover fascinating stories together.
- 3. Do a craft.** Try your hand at crochet, pottery, a collage or ceramic painting to make a beautiful keepsake you'll cherish.
- 4. Take a walk down memory lane.** Tell your grandchildren about your younger years and talk about the changes that time has brought.
- 5. Go for a bike ride.** Get on your bike and ride the trails in and around your municipality. If necessary, use an electric bike.
- 6. Explore nature.** Go on an adventure and learn about the flora and fauna in your area.
- 7. Try geocaching.** Enter your postal code or town into a GPS treasure-hunting website or app. Then, go in search of hidden treasures. Once you find an item, leave something for the next

players.

- 8. Play a game.** Test your skills at mini-golf or bowling or visit an entertainment venue everyone can enjoy.

Do these ideas inspire you? Book a day to do them!



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6 ways to help an elderly loved one

Whether due to health problems, physical limitations or loneliness, seniors often need help to lead fulfilling lives. Are you wondering how you can help an older loved one, like a neighbour, grandfather or aunt? Here are six ways you can make their day-to-day life more enjoyable.

1. Offer your presence and emotional support. Older adults often face social isolation. Take the time to visit your elderly loved one regularly, talking to them and spending quality time together. Listen carefully to their concerns, memories and stories. Your presence can have a considerable positive impact on their well-being.

2. Help with household chores. With age, household chores can become more difficult. Offer to help your elderly friend or relative with tasks, such as laundry, washing the floors and doing the dishes. You could also consider hiring a housekeeper to relieve your elderly loved one of their daily responsibilities.

3. Facilitate access to medical care. The elderly must often attend medical appointments and follow-ups. If necessary, help your older loved one by scheduling their appointments, accompanying them to consultations and taking notes to ensure they understand medical recommendations. Avoid infantilizing them by constantly checking that they're taking their medication correctly.

4. Encourage physical and mental activity. Physical exercise plays a crucial role in main-

taining health and mobility as you age. Encourage your elderly loved one to stay active by taking walks with them or suggesting they join an exercise or activity group suited to their physical abilities. You can also encourage them to stimulate their mind by suggesting interesting games or reading.

5. Encourage social interaction. Socialization is crucial to the emotional well-being of older people. Help your elderly friend or relative stay in touch with others by encouraging them to take part in community activities or join leisure groups. Suggest that they invite friends or family over to spend quality time together.

6. Ensure safety at home. Safety is paramount for older adults. Regularly check on your loved one's living environment to be sure it's safe. For example, ensure their smoke detectors are in good working order and install grab rails to reduce the risk of falls. You can also consider using technology like personal alarms or surveillance systems to give them extra peace of mind.

You must be patient, committed and attentive when caring for an elderly relative. Providing them with your loving presence, practical assistance and emotional support can greatly enhance their quality of life.



6 senior-friendly board and board games



Did you know that board and card games are more than just fun pastimes? Playing games can help fend off isolation, maintain cognitive function and improve mental health. In addition to classics like Scrabble, chess and dominoes, here are six other board and card games that'll give you a dose of playful fun.

1. Qwirkle. Create a line using blocks of the same colour or symbol to score maximum points.

2. Skyjo. Flip, trade and collect cards over the

course of several rounds to secure the lowest-scoring hand before the game is over.

3. Sequence. Using a traditional 54-card deck, work with a teammate to make two rows of five chips on a board before your opponents block you or win.

4. Bananagrams. This fast paced Scrabble-inspired game challenges you to use up your letter tiles before your opponents by creating a personal crossword.

5. Lucky Numbers. Fill in your 4x4 grid as quickly as possible by placing numbers in the correct places. You can also take on individual challenges in single-player mode.

6. Timeline. Put your cultural knowledge to the test by correctly placing events on a timeline.

Visit a game and toy store to discover more entertainment.

For more information on local services for seniors.

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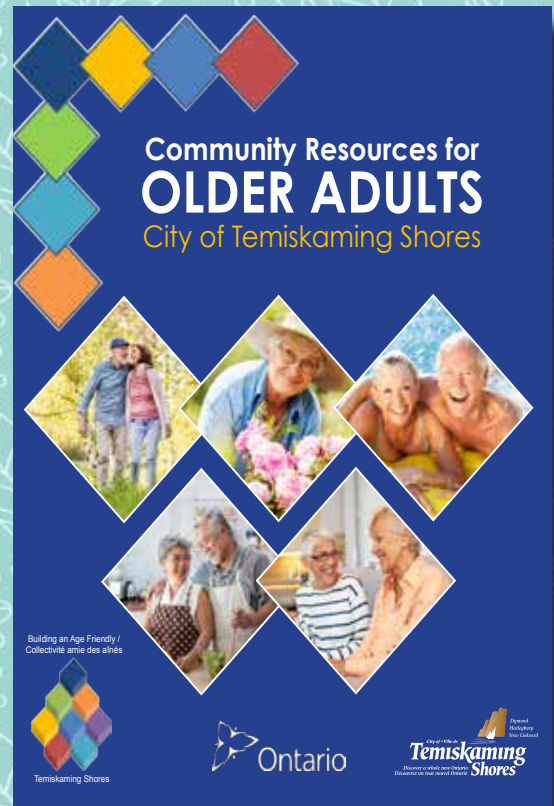
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3 reasons to be physically active after 65



Did you know that seniors can greatly benefit from regular physical activity? If you're 65 or older, here are three good reasons to make exercise part of your daily life.

1. Prevent chronic illness

Exercise can help reduce the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and even certain types of cancer. Moving your body can also help strengthen your immune system and improve your body's ability to fight infections.

2. Improve balance and coordination

Falls and injuries are more likely to occur as you get older due to poor balance and coordination.

Fortunately, physical activity can help improve these physical abilities. Balance exercises can be particularly beneficial for seniors as it helps strengthen the stabilizing muscles and improve coordination.

3. Promote mental and cognitive health

Exercise promotes the release of endorphins, also known as "happy hormones," which help reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Several studies have shown that physical activity can also improve cognitive function and reduce the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.


Incorporate exercise into your daily routine to improve your quality of life, maintain your independence and make the most of your golden years.

Seniors: gadgets to simplify everyday life

Did you know there are several gadgets on the market that can make life easier for older adults? Here are just a few that can help improve their health and safety.

- **Smartwatches** are practical and versatile. You can use them to monitor your real-time heart rate and blood pressure. What's more, they sometimes come with an emergency button for added peace of mind.
- **Virtual assistants** can answer your questions, provide medication reminders, set alarms, help you manage connected home devices like your smart thermostat and so much more.
- **Simplified phones** offer basic functionality and a more user-friendly interface than standard smartphones. They allow seniors to make calls and send text messages in the blink of an eye. These models often come with emergency buttons so the user can contact a loved one in a pinch.


Smart gadgets offer many solutions to make everyday life easier for older adults. Do you want to improve your quality of life? Visit the stores in your area to select the devices that best meet your needs.



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Learning has no age limit

Do you think learning new things is just for young people? Think again! It's been proven that there's no age limit to learning. Here's why it's beneficial for older people to continue expanding their knowledge as they age.

A spirit of lifelong curiosity

Learning doesn't have to be confined to the classroom. It can extend into every area of your life. Learning allows you to develop new skills, acquire knowledge and cultivate your innate curiosity. Whether it's learning to play a musical instrument, discovering a new technology or picking up a foreign language, lifelong learning stimulates your mind and boosts your self-confidence.

Adapting to an ever-changing world

In today's modern society, knowledge and skills are constantly evolving. What was once considered a skilled

trade can quickly become obsolete. Staying up to date on the latest innovations is essential if you want to be more independent in your personal and professional life.

Beneficial individual development

Learning is beneficial on an intellectual and personal level. Exploring new areas of interest can help you discover your passions and talents. This feeds your self-esteem, strengthens your identity and allows you to fulfill your potential.

In short, the thirst for knowledge and personal development doesn't diminish with age. Find out about courses and workshops in your area and sign up for those that interest you.



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Fireplace Safety



Use dry and well-aged wood. Wet or green wood causes more smoke and contributes to soot buildup in the chimney. Dried wood burns with less smoke and burns more evenly,

Senior Safety



- SENIORS - Assess your safety level with these 10 questions

The effects of aging vary from one person to the next. While some people experience significant limitations, others remain relatively active. However, as you age, your physical and cognitive abilities inevitably decline.

If you're dealing with reduced vision, hearing loss, changes in mobility and balance or memory loss, you need to be extra careful. No matter how mild or severe the changes may be, it's essential to take safety precautions. Here are ten questions to help you assess your safety level.

1. Do my home and yard have optimal lighting?
2. Are my floors clear of obstructions or tripping hazards, especially around fire exits?
3. Are my smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in good working order?
4. Is my first-aid kit fully stocked and easily accessible?
5. Do my stairs have a non-slip surface?
6. Do I keep a list of emergency contact numbers near my phone?
7. Does my bathroom have slip-resistant accessories?
8. Are all the medications in my medicine cabinet up to date?
9. Are my doors and windows secure against intruders?
10. Do I know how to detect phone, door-to-door and online scams?

As you age, it's important to be cautious and take steps to protect yourself from potential dangers. Consult professionals in your area to ensure your home is as safe as possible.



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Alzheimer's Disease: Strategies for maintaining your quality of life

Alzheimer's disease has no cure, but there are ways to delay its progression and maintain a good quality of life. If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with this condition, here are some strategies you can try.

- **Stay physically active.** Exercise helps improve mood, reduce stress and maintain cognitive function. Even simple activities like walking, swimming and dancing can help.

- **Maintain social connections.** Isolation and loneliness are common challenges for

people with Alzheimer's. Spending time with friends and family, joining a support group or volunteering in your community can provide essential social interactions.

- **Challenge your mind.** Activities that stimulate your brain, such as reading, playing games or learning a new skill, can help keep your mind active and engaged.

- **Take care of your health.** Eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep and managing stress can help improve your overall well-being.

- **Be patient with yourself.** As Alzheimer's progresses, you may experience changes in your memory, thinking and behavior. Practice self-compassion, and don't be afraid to ask for help.

- **Find hobbies.** Engaging in activities you enjoy can provide a sense of accomplishment. This can be anything from gardening to cooking to playing music.

Although living with Alzheimer's can be challenging, remember that you're not alone. Many resources are available to

help you maintain a good quality of life. With the sufficient support, you can live well and continue to enjoy your life.



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SNOWBIRDS

SEE YOU LATER, WINTER!

Travel planning for snowbirds

Have you and your significant other had enough of winter with its ice storms, snowfall, high winds and treacherous driving conditions? Are you feeling envious of your friends and relatives who go south every year? If you think the snowbird life is for you, here are some things to consider before taking off.

FINANCES

Whether you're already retired or considering early retirement, carefully calculate whether you have the means to make the move without compromising your quality of life. Hiring a financial professional to help you draw up a budget and manage your tax responsibilities can save you a lot of trouble.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Where will you stay in your sunny paradise? An apartment, chalet, condo or campsite? Be sure to arrange a place that suits your preferences before packing your bags. Remember to book early because the best spots are in high demand.

HEALTH

If you're planning to be away from home for several months, see your doctor, dentist and any other regular specialists for checkups and prescription renewals before you leave. Additionally, be sure to get any recommended vaccinations for your age group and health conditions.

TRANSPORTATION

How will you get there? By car, plane or RV? Depending on your preferences, each of these options has its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Talk to a travel agent to evaluate your options. If you decide to drive your own vehicle, make an appointment with your local mechanic or visit your RV dealership to get a complete tune-up.

INSURANCE

Even if you're in good health and your vehicle is in excellent condition, remember that nobody is immune to accidents, illness or mechanical failure. Call your insurer and arrange to get the coverage you'll need. Medical costs can be astronomical, so don't take any chances.

PROPERTY

While you're away, you'll need a plan to handle snow removal, yard and plant maintenance, pet care, mail and bills. Arrange for relatives or a trusted local business to keep your belongings safe while you're not at home.

The snowbird life is well within reach if you do the right planning. Visit your local professionals to make your winter escape with peace of mind.

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WINTER WALKING

Enjoy and be safe.

Keep moving in the winter months to stay strong,
help your balance and give you more energy.

PLAN AHEAD TO BE SAFE:

- Keep sidewalks, steps and driveways well lit, consider installing sensor lights.
- Spread salt, sand or non-clumping cat litter on walkways to keep them free of ice. Carry a small bag in your pocket to spread on icy patches when out walking.
- Consider using a walking aid with ice prongs or a ski pole.
- Carry a flashlight with you in the dark.
- Carry a cell phone and put a whistle in your pocket for emergencies when walking alone.
- Ask a friend or a neighbour to come along with you.

WEAR THE GEAR:

- Dress in layers to stay warm.
 - Cover your ears, head and fingers to avoid frostbite.
 - Wear sunglasses and a visor to reduce glare from sun and snow.
 - Wear sturdy boots that have a deep tread and fit well.
 - Try ice-grippers on your boots for better traction on icy and snow-packed surfaces.
- * Remove your ice-grippers to walk on smooth surfaces such as tiles or ceramic areas.**

Physical activity throughout the year is a part of healthy aging and can help prevent falls and fractures. *Walking is a great way to stay active.*