

Living North of 50

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SPEAKER

PRINTING, PUBLISHING
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Winter 2024

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information on local services for
seniors.

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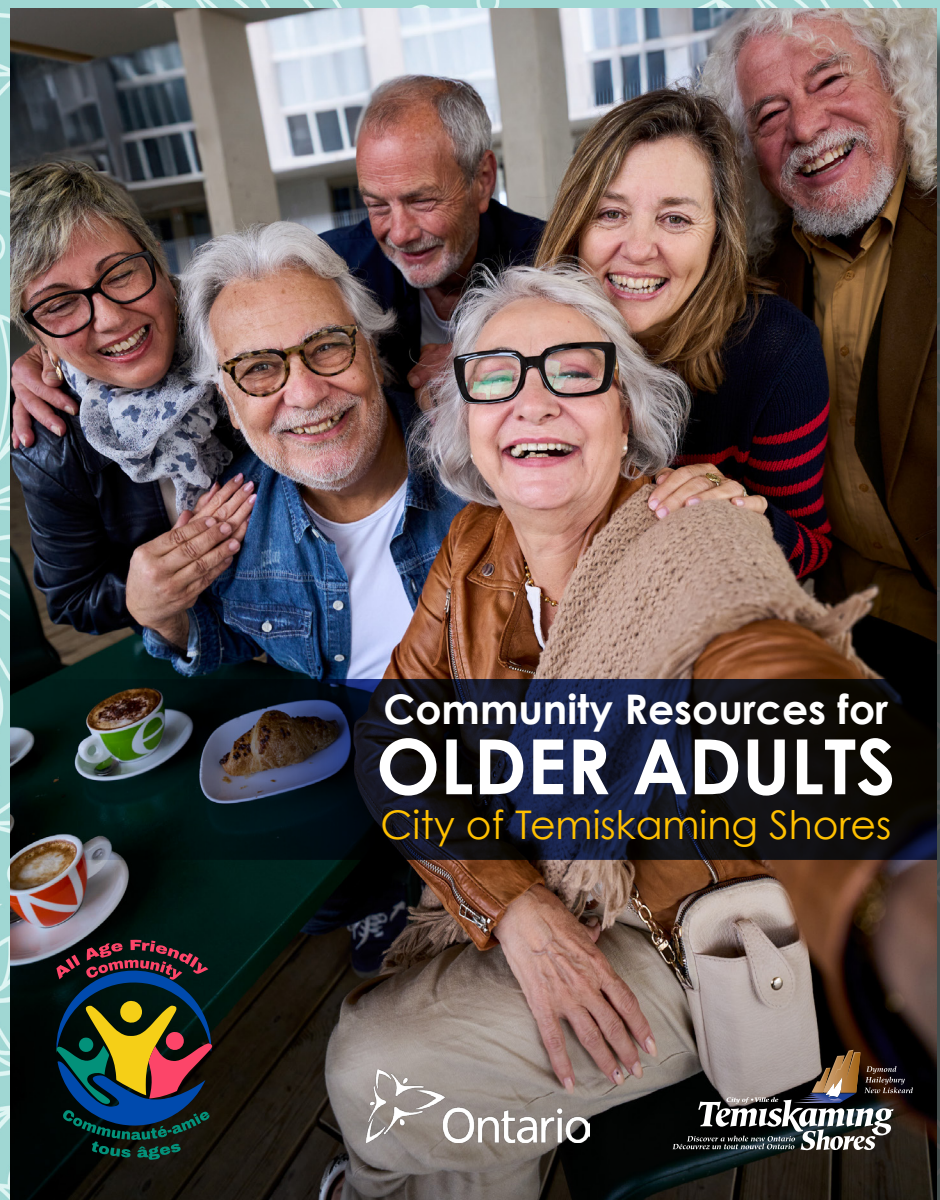
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Community Resources for
OLDER ADULTS
City of Temiskaming Shores



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Seniors: A visit to the museum is good for your health

Healthy aging isn't just about eating right and exercising. It's about embracing a full and enriching lifestyle. From staying active and socializing to getting a good night's sleep, every aspect counts. And let's not forget the joy of visiting an art museum. The benefits of this cultural activity are so numerous that some doctors even prescribe it to their senior patients.

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

Wandering through an art museum, whether in person

or virtually, to admire the creations of talented artists is truly uplifting. This activity is especially beneficial for older adults dealing with chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, diabetes, neurological issues, cognitive impairment or mental health challenges.

The World Health Organization (WHO) published a report revealing the positive impact of artistic and cultural activities on health and well-being.

In fact, extensive research conducted in England found that individuals who frequently visit cultural venues like museums have a lower risk of developing dementia and depression by half.

Exploring art in a museum has been shown to have a calming effect on older individuals, leading to reduced blood pressure, lower heart rate and decreased stress levels. In other words, visiting a

museum can help relax your body and mind.

Whether you're browsing the halls of a museum on your own or with your loved ones, whether in person or from the comfort of your home on a computer or tablet, you've got everything to gain by immersing yourself in the world of art. When's your next museum visit?



Lynn Julien
Age Friendly Coordinator

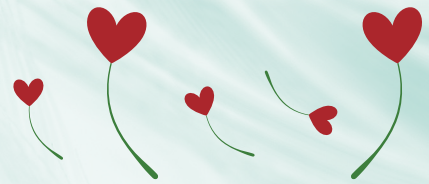
For more information on Age Friendly activities and programs in the community, contact Lynn at 705-647-5709 or by email at

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WASHING YOUR SCARF IN WINTER: Show it some TLC



THIS ACCESSORY IS A REAL DIRT CATCHER!

You wrap your scarf around your neck on all your winter outings and hang it up without a second thought when you return, but when was the last time you gave it a good wash? If you're like most people, chances are you don't wash this accessory as often as you should. However, scarves need regular cleaning. In fact, you should wash yours several times throughout the cold season. Here's why.

CLEANLINESS AND HEALTH

Scarves are worn close to the mouth and nose. Because of this, they act like a magnet for all kinds of things, such as saliva, food crumbs, traces of make-up and skin care products, dead skin cells, mucus, pollution particles, microscopic bacteria and fungi.

When you think about it, a scarf is one of your clothing

items most deserving to be washed often and thoroughly! Wearing a scarf or neck warmer that's unclear—even if it doesn't look like it—can lead to skin problems like pimples. If you have a virus like the flu, you should wash your scarf after every use. As an older adult, you've got to do everything you can to protect your health!

Wash your scarf at least once a week in cold or lukewarm water, depending on the material. If it's a delicate or precious piece, gently launder it by hand to keep it looking its best.



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Do you really *lose* the ability to learn new things as you age?

Are you in your fifties and considering returning to school or taking a course in a new subject, such as art, languages, music or history? You might hear some people saying that your brain is “too old” to learn. Don’t listen to them.

First and foremost, there’s no age limit on learning some-

thing new. The idea that young people always learn better than their elders is a myth. Research has proven that the brain remains adaptable throughout your entire life, thanks to a fascinating process called “neuroplasticity.”

In practical terms, when you stimulate your brain by taking a course or memorizing a

concept, the existing connections between your neurons strengthen and new ones form. To really “boost” your brain, pick an area that genuinely interests you but also pushes you out of your comfort zone. In other words, it must be fun, but not too easy.

However, it’s true that aging has an impact on working

memory, making it more challenging for you to recall events and connect them with their context. This is a perfectly normal phenomenon and should in no way discourage you from pursuing your desire to learn.

Want to keep your brain healthy? Look for courses and workshops in your area and sign up today.



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Celebrate *Valentine's Day* in your retirement home with these 3 ideas

Do you live in a retirement home? In this dynamic living environment, the possibilities for activities are virtually limitless. This Valentine's Day, get in on the fun by organizing a themed activity for all the residents to enjoy. Collaborate with your recreation staff to make it a memorable celebration.

1. DANCE PARTY

Decorate a common room with red, pink and white flowers, balloons and garlands. You can play upbeat or slower tunes, catering to the musical tastes of the participants. Invite guest artists, like a band or singer, to create a unique atmosphere. Dancing as a group or with your special someone is an excellent way to shake off any feelings of isolation and have a great time. Everybody

to the dance floor!

2. SENTIMENTAL CINEMA

Get together with your neighbours to watch a hilarious rom-com or a classic romance movie with a happy ending. Show some Valentine's Day spirit by dressing in red or pink and snacking on sweet treats like red licorice, cupcakes or strawberries. Get ready for a night full of positive vibes and feel-good emotions.

3. IMPROVISED SPA

Invite your fellow residents to pamper themselves from head to toe. Transform your space into a luxurious spa retreat with face masks, exfoliating treatments and relaxing massages. Serve rose-coloured drinks and heart-shaped chocolates and diffuse heavenly scents to add to the spa atmosphere.

Happy Valentine's Day!



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SHINGLES: *have you been vaccinated?*

Your health matters, no matter your age. If you're over 50, vaccinations are crucial to ward off various illnesses, including shingles. Find out why.

WHAT'S SHINGLES?

Shingles is an illness caused by a virus that appears in

people who have previously had chickenpox. It usually shows up as painful blisters on one part of the body, like the chest, back or stomach. The condition is more common in adults, especially seniors. However, anyone who has had chickenpox is at risk of developing shingles.

These painful lesions can

feel like a sharp burn or electric shock. Patients might also experience other symptoms along with the discomfort, such as fever, headaches and itching. A bout of shingles typically lasts for two to three weeks.

WHY GET VACCINATED?

Vaccination is the best protection against shingles and its painful complications, such as neuralgia. Neuralgia is a persistent pain that can linger in the affected area for months or even years. By getting vaccinated, you significantly lower your risk of getting shingles and experiencing neuralgia after having the disease.

If you do get shingles, you can reduce the intensity of your symptoms with antiviral medication. However, you must begin treatment within the first three days of the blisters appearing. If you miss this window, moist compresses and pain-relieving medication can provide relief.

Protect yourself and your loved ones from shingles by making an appointment to be vaccinated at a local health-care facility.



In most provinces, the Shingrix shingles vaccine is free through primary health care providers for seniors who have not previously received a shingles vaccine.

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The e-reader, *a practical device you can't live without*

Do you consider yourself a bookworm? E-readers can be a game-changer for seniors. If you're thinking about buying one, here are a few reasons why you should.

NUMEROUS ADVANTAGES

This gadget is designed to take your reading experience to the next level and enhance your comfort. First, you can easily adjust the font size to cater to your vision needs, making it perfect for those with reduced vision. Say goodbye to borrowing large-print books from the library or using a magnifying glass to decipher a text.

Secondly, e-readers are lightweight and easy to handle. You can read for longer without tiring or developing aches and pains. If you love reading hefty tomes of 500 pages or more, this is something to consider.

Additionally, e-readers have a matte-finish touch screen and built-in backlighting. This means you can read in the dark at night without having to turn on a lamp. You can also dim or brighten the screen to suit the ambient light in your surroundings—ideal for preventing eyestrain and glare.

Another interesting point about e-readers is their incredible storage capacity. You can “carry” thousands of books on the device without adding clutter to your home.



Finally, depending on the model, you can enjoy access to dictionaries, information that enriches your reading experience practical functions like highlighting.

Visit your local electronics retailer to find the perfect e-reader for you.

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SENIORS, get some quality boots... ...before **WINTER** sets in!

The cold season has arrived, and the first snowfall can quickly turn the sidewalks into slippery paths of ice. To reduce the risk of injury while walking, older adults are well advised to have boots that are both comfortable and safe. Get a grip on these options:

BOOTS WITH BUILT-IN CRAM PONS

Several boot models have small studs, or cleats, integrated into the sole. These studs are usually detachable, so you can easily adjust your footwear in response to the weather conditions and replace them when needed.

NON-SLIP MODELS

These boots boast wider soles that provide excellent grip on icy surfaces, eliminating the need for crampons. They're designed with the same technology found in top-quality winter tires. They'll keep you comfortable and warm on your winter walks.

Many types and styles of boots are available to fit your budget and walking habits. Visit your local footwear retailer to find the right pair for you.

STUDDED SOLES

If you enjoy walking and don't mind the elements, you can buy detachable studded soles that fit almost any boot or shoe. These are particularly good in challenging conditions. However, make sure you can easily remove them indoors, as they can be slippery on surfaces like ceramic or wood.



Are *your* stairs **SAFE** enough?

As you age, getting up and down the stairs can become a major challenge. Your balance tends to diminish, as do your reflexes. Some older adults even develop such a fear of falling and injuring themselves that they avoid climbing stairs altogether. Here are a few crucial points to consider so you can stay safe when using your upstairs or basement staircase:

- **Lighting.** Make sure the staircase is illuminated so you can see where you're stepping. It's a good idea to install a ceiling light, for example. Place switches at the top and bottom of the staircase for optimal light coverage and ease of movement.
- **Surface.** Some materials, such as wood, can be slippery. Consider hiring a carpenter to install a non-slip

covering. If you have carpet on your staircase, make sure it's firmly anchored to the steps, or have it removed and secure the newly exposed surface.

- **Handrails.** Handrails and banisters can loosen over the years. Have them professionally reinforced to support you. A safe handrail should be 86 to 97 centimetres high, and you should be able to grip it with your whole hand.
- **Space.** To prevent trips and falls, remove loose objects like shoes from the steps and don't attach things like decorations to the banister.

Staircase safety shouldn't be neglected: take your time when using the stairs and consult a professional for maintenance.



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2 expert tips for safe online shopping

Online shopping is becoming increasingly popular among consumers. However, some older individuals are less comfortable with this new method of shopping, and hackers often view it as an opportunity to exploit them. Keep these two tips in mind to ensure you stay safe while shopping online:

1. BEWARE OF MISLEADING ADVERTISING

Exercise caution with ads promising big discounts or miraculous products. Scammers often use these tactics to direct you to fake sites and steal your personal information. Remember, the site isn't secure if you don't see the padlock symbol or "https" in the address bar. Close the page and go to another site.

2. IDENTIFY PAYMENT TRAPS

Are you ready to move from your virtual shopping cart to the checkout page? Be wary if you're asked to pay before confirming your purchase or if you're required to complete the transaction via a pop-up window. After making a purchase, watch your credit card statement closely to ensure the retailer's name matches the transaction. If you're unsure, contact your banking institution to clarify the situation.

You can shop online with peace of mind by following these tips. Consider shopping on the websites of your local businesses.



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3 myths and facts about menopause

Menopause, a stage in a woman's life marked by normal hormonal changes, is still plagued by several erroneous beliefs. Increasingly, initiatives aim to demystify menopause and frame it as a moment of transition rather than a dreaded step toward mortality. Want to find out more? It's time to debunk these stubborn myths.

1. "IT LOWERS LIBIDO"

Although menopause is often accompanied by symptoms that can impact sexuality, it doesn't mean the end. A woman's sexual response may change with respect to arousal and climax, but desire doesn't disappear. In other words, a menopausal woman's sexuality doesn't go away, but it can change.

2. "IT CAUSES DEPRESSION"

Many people still associate menopause with mood swings or depression. However, menopause isn't an illness that needs to

be cured. The hormonal changes associated with this transition can influence a woman's mood or stress levels, but these symptoms gradually resolve themselves. Mental health remains a separate issue.

3. "IT LEADS TO WEIGHT GAIN"

Weight gain is due to the normal age-related slowing of metabolism — which applies to men, too — and is not caused by menopause. A focus on healthy eating and regular exercise remains the most effective way to limit weight gain.

Menopause doesn't mark the end of an active and fulfilling life! Consult a health professional if you have any questions about menopause.

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What treatments are available for glaucoma?

Glaucoma is an eye disease that affects many people aged 60 and over. It's caused by the poor flow of aqueous humor, the liquid inside the eye. This excess fluid puts pressure on the optic nerve, which can lead to complete vision loss if not treated early. How can glaucoma be treated?

DROPS

The most common way to slow the disease's progression is to use eye drops prescribed by a doctor or licensed optometrist. Depending on the diagnosis, the patient may take these drops either to reduce the production of aqueous humor or to facilitate its outflow. Following the dosage and application instructions from your pharmacist is crucial.

SURGERY

Surgery, a highly effective intervention, may be required if glaucoma causes serious damage to the eye or if drops are inef-

fective. Various techniques, such as laser surgery, can increase the flow of aqueous humor and reduce pressure inside the eye.

Additionally, some cases of glaucoma can be treated with oral medication.

Detecting glaucoma early is crucial as treatments can't restore lost vision. Since some symptoms take a long time to appear, it's advisable for individuals over 65 to get their eyes checked annually. Make an appointment today to ensure the health of your eyes.



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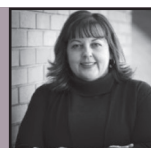


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Does *reading* slow down the effects of brain aging?

The normal aging process brings about various changes in the body and brain, especially in cognitive functions. Memory and concentration decline, and information processing slows down. Although these changes affect older adults differently depending on their age, gender and genetics, reading has been found to help slow down the progression of cognitive disorders. Whether you read a little or a lot, this activity offers significant benefits.

IMPROVED MEMORY

Studies have shown that seniors who read frequently and engage in other intellectual activities, such as doing puzzles and listening to music, are much less likely to develop memory problems than those who do not. People who are more intellectually active throughout their lives have also been observed to be at

lower risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

REDUCED STRESS

Reading helps reduce stress at any age, and the benefits are even more pronounced in more mature populations. As the brain ages, it becomes more susceptible to the effects of stress hormones, which can disrupt concentration and

mood. By reading regularly, you can maintain better brain capacity and keep your spirits high.

Of course, aging comes with its own set of symptoms, some less desirable than others. But mentally stimulating hobbies like reading can help you age healthily. Now that you know all this, why not visit a local bookstore?



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5 tips for reducing the stress of moving into a seniors' residence

For many people, moving into a seniors' residence can be an exciting but stressful experience. Can you relate? It's normal to feel uncertain about this big life change. A few simple steps can help you make a smooth transition.

Using these strategies, you can significantly reduce the stress associated with your move. Remember that this is a new adventure, and you're allowed to take your time settling in.

1. Get informed. Take the time to visit the residence and ask questions. Familiarize yourself with the property, common areas and staff. The more information you have, the more comfortable you'll feel.

2. Visualize the positive aspects. Spend time imagining your new life, including shared meals, friendships and various activities. Focusing on the advantages of your future home will help transform your anxiety into positive anticipation.

3. Take it one step at a time. Packing and sorting through your belongings can be exhausting. Create a list of priorities and focus on one task at a time.

4. Involve your loved ones. Don't hesitate to ask your family and friends for help. Their support can lighten the load and make the transition easier.

5. Take care of yourself. Set aside time to relax by listening to music, meditating or practicing breathing exercises.



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Northern Ontario Magazine for those getting better with age.

SPEAKER

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