

FACT SHEET

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GOOD HEALTH IN RETIREMENT

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Everyone needs to maintain good health but it becomes more difficult as one becomes older. However, medical science reveals that adding years to life does not mean adding diseases. Nor is good health just luck!

The following good health rules are few and simple. They can lead to good physical and mental health.

Develop good health habits. This means the proper food (Basic 4 food groups), adequate rest and relaxation, some play and recreation, daily exercise suitable to the person, neat, clean grooming and doing something that is satisfying. Keep your mind and body active!

Have adequate medical care. Your own doctor is very valuable. There should be regular checkups, at least once a year. Checkups for dental care, hearing, and eyesight, care of the feet and reporting warning symptoms (chronic cough, lump in breast) should be reported to your doctor. It is well to follow your doctor's recommendations.

Observe good safety practices. Moving the body safely, living in safe surroundings and being safe on the street or outdoors are ways to prevent accidents and injuries and maintain good health.

Pursue adequate mental health. Mental health is based on a "sound mind in a sound body." Good health habits, adequate medical care and good safety practices also contribute to adequate mental health.

In addition, the following practices should be included: facing reality, having good relationships

with family and friends, keeping the mind busy, practicing good grooming, finding emotional satisfaction in leisure, attaining a satisfactory spiritual life and seeing yourself and problems in perspective. Persons who participate in religious activities find it a great source of security.

Physicians can assist greatly by reminding patients about health examinations, immunizations, proper diet, weight control, reasonable exercise at regular intervals and the importance of rest. In a publication by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, it was recommended that doctors remind older people of the importance of these things. Other health tips are having a good attitude and making preparation for retirement, maintaining good relationships with friends and family, accepting yourself as you are and knowing what can and cannot be changed, using community resources and seeking worthwhile experiences. Refraining from harmful habits, especially drinking and smoking in excess, and diagnosing and prescribing medicine for oneself are also important to maintain good health.

Other topics for consideration about "health in retirement" could be: medical costs, how to save money on health care, health insurance, home care programs, nursing homes, government health services and health organizations (*i.e.* American Cancer Society), living a long life (heredity) and nutrition for older people.

Some important questions to answer when planning for good health in retirement include:

- Do you have a physician you can rely on?
- Do you follow the good health rules?
- What should you do to make a satisfactory change and adjustment in retirement?

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- What is your greatest health concern as you plan for retirement? What will you do about it?
- Have you learned to make a good appearance?
- What is the greatest hinderance to peace of mind as you approach retirement? Can you cope with it?
- Are you interested in other people?
- Do you look forward to what is ahead?
- Can you take responsibility easily?
- Do you face reality?

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