

HEALTHY AGING STARTS ... NOW!

As a nation, we are growing older. By the year 2030, after all the “baby boomers” have reached age 65, older Americans will number 70 million ... that’s 20 percent of all Americans.

The **GOOD NEWS** is ... the traditional notion that aging is an unavoidable process of disease and deterioration is wrong! Recent research confirms that quality of life really depends on lifestyle choices, no matter what our age. The Health Department offers these 10 tips on healthy living ... and healthy aging:

- 1 EAT RIGHT** by choosing a variety of foods that include lots of whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Limit foods high in fat, cholesterol, sugar and salt (sodium).
- 2 KEEP MOVING.** Balance the food you eat with exercise to maintain or improve your weight, build muscle mass, and keep you flexible.
- 3 MAINTAIN STRONG BONES** with regular weight bearing exercise (walking) and plenty of calcium and vitamin D.
- 4 KEEP VACCINATIONS UP-TO-DATE.** A Tetanus-Diphtheria booster should be given every 10 years (or after 5 years if there is a deep wound). The pneumonia vaccine is recommended once for all adults over age 65. Get a flu shot every year since the virus tends to change with each flu season.
- 5** It’s never too late to **QUIT SMOKING!** When an older adult quits smoking, circulation improves immediately, and the lungs begin to repair damage. Visit www.nj.quitnet.com or call toll-free 866-NJSTOPS (866-657-8677) for smoking cessation information.



- 6 USE MEDICINE WISELY.** Older adults often take multiple medications, both prescription and over-the-counter. Always take medication exactly as prescribed. Make a complete list of *all* your drugs: include prescriptions, vitamins and herbs, pain relievers, laxatives, sleep aids, allergy medicine, antacids, etc.

- 7 PROTECT YOUR EYES.** Since most eye diseases can be treated when found early, have a complete eye exam every 1-2 years, or every year if you have diabetes or a family history of eye disease.
- 8 GOT THE BLUES?** True depression - more than feeling “down in the dumps” - is not a normal part of aging, but it is a common problem. There is no reason to suffer with depression, as it can be treated successfully in most people of any age.
- 9 BE AN INFORMED CONSUMER.** Medicare - and some private plans - will pay for many preventive services, screening tests, as well as the pneumonia and annual flu shots. Check your policy to make sure you are taking advantage of all your medical benefits.
- 10 PARTICIPATE IN YOUR COMMUNITY.** Join a club or exercise program, do volunteer work, take a class ... keep your mind and body active.

