

Seniors' early winter HEALTH TIPS

By Emma Taylor

As we age it is important to take care of ourselves to ensure we meet our bodies need for nourishment, physical activity and mental stimulation.

Now that the snow has arrived, walking and enjoying activities outdoors can be more difficult, especially for those with disabilities. There are ways to make sure you get the exercise you need to stay healthy. Many malls and schools have indoor walking clubs during the winter months. Exercises can be modified and done in a chair for those who have mobility issues.

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit has some guidelines for exercising, which can be found here: www.healthunit.org/physact/guidelines/oldadults.htm

The Public Health Agency of Canada's Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults can be found here: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/index-eng.php

Community and Primary Health Care (CPHC) runs indoor seniors' exercise classes, September-May for adults aged 50 and older, in various locations, including Athens, Brockville, Gananoque, Lansdowne, Prescott, and Kemptville. Indoor walking programs are offered twice weekly in Gananoque and Mallorytown. The schedule can be seen here: www.cphcare.ca/images/sitepicts/download/Seniors%20Exercise%20Program%20-%20Class%20Schedule%20-%20APRIL%202013.pdf

Make sure you check with your doctor before starting any exercise program just to be safe.



Your appetite changes as you grow older, so it is important to make sure you are eating enough each day. If cooking has become a problem for whatever reason, there are meals-on-wheels programs available through the CPHC.

Frostbite on exposed skin can occur very quickly-in as little as thirty seconds in extreme weather- especially if you get wet. The elderly or people with circulatory disorders are more at risk of frostbite, so make sure to dress adequately for the weather and cover up with scarves, mittens and hats. The elderly have trouble regulating their body temperature, so they are more at risk for hypothermia. Make sure to either stay indoors during extreme cold, or if you must venture out, dress appropriately.

Skin thins and loses its elasticity as we age, so it is important to keep hydrated and keep skin in good condition. Using skin moisturizer after bathing and each time you wash your hands is a good idea to keep skin supple.

Keeping active socially is very important, not only for mental stimulation but to prevent isolation and loneliness. The Brockville Seniors Club 85, located at 15 Elm Street, is a social club for people 50 and older. Call the office at 613-345-2266 for more information.

Community and Primary Health Care (CPHC) also provides many programs for seniors, including diners clubs, friendly visits, meals-on-wheels, and telephone reassurance. Call CPHC at the Brockville central office at 1-800-465-7646 or 613-342-3693, Athens and area 613-924-1629, and Prescott and area 613-925-3731 for more information.

Check out your local library or college campus, to see what classes or lectures are available-it is never too late to learn something new! If you have a computer and internet access, there are classes available online through distance learning.

Have a safe, healthy and happy winter! LH