



**HELPFUL RESOURCES
for
SENIORS IN HALIBURTON COUNTY**

**Communications Working Group
Aging Together as Community**

New Horizons for Seniors Grant - June, 2023

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WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

A group of symptoms affecting memory, thinking and social abilities severely enough to interfere with your daily life. It isn't a specific disease, but several diseases can cause dementia. Ref: *Mayo Clinic*

	STAGES	SIGNS
EARLY 1	No clinical cognitive decline - some normal aging symptoms.	Possible difficulty multi-tasking, recalling names, spatial memory problems, slower reaction time.
EARLY 2	Very mild cognitive decline	Notice memory problems i.e. where you put things, forgetting familiar names. No significant changes on assessment.
EARLY 3	Mild cognitive decline	Multiple areas of deficit: getting lost in unfamiliar places; workplace difficulties and in finding words or names; decreased concentration and reading retention; losing valuables; difficulties in social settings; denial; mild to moderate anxiety.
MIDDLE 4	Moderate cognitive decline	Reduced knowledge of current and personal life events; decreased life history memory; difficulty in serial subtraction of numbers; trouble travelling and handling finances; decreased emotional expression; strong denial of problems; withdrawal.
MIDDLE 5	Moderately severe cognitive decline	Assistance required. Trouble remembering well known i.e. address, phone number, family names. Confusion about time, date, season, counting backwards. Difficulty choosing proper clothing but can still dress self.
LATE 6	Severe cognitive decline	Few abilities left. Memories are vague, unreliable and severe i.e. forgetting care giving spouse's name. Unaware of surroundings, recent events. Behaviour, personality and sleep changes. Incontinence can occur.
LATE 7	End Stage. Very severe cognitive decline	Inability to form words. Loss of motor skills; unable to walk. Need assistance with toileting and feeding. Nearing death.

Ref: *Geriatric Resources Inc. - Global Deterioration Scale; Dr. Barbara Clive, M.D. F.R.C.P.C.*

RISK FACTORS FOR DEMENTIA

There are certain conditions and lifestyle choices that can increase the risk of developing dementia in later years. However, those risks can be modified by educated choices in lifestyle.

RISK FACTORS	MODIFIERS
Education	Learn as much as possible and keep learning as you age. Be informed about dementia and how to manage the changing conditions to be proactive in planning.
Hearing Impairment	Pay attention to hearing impairment as soon as it is recognized. Get tested and treatment as required.
Traumatic Brain Injury	Wear helmets when required and guard against head injuries.
Hypertension	Check blood pressure regularly and get treatment for hypertension.
Diabetes Mellitus	Minimize diabetes through treatment and compliance with medical directives.
Alcohol	Avoid excessive alcohol consumption. Be aware of Canada's Guideline on Alcohol Consumption.
Obesity	Maintain frequent exercise. Know the recommended amount for your personal health.
Air Pollution	Be aware of your air quality and help to reduce air pollution.
Smoking	Stop smoking
Depression	Reduce occurrences of depression by seeking help if they are interrupting your daily life. Maintain frequent social contacts
Sleep	Address sleep disturbances and seek help as needed to meet adequate sleep requirements

Ref: Dr. Barbara Clive, M.D. F.R.C.P.C.



sleep hygiene

What is Sleep Hygiene?

'Sleep hygiene' is the term used to describe good sleep habits. Considerable research has gone into developing a set of guidelines and tips which are designed to enhance good sleeping, and there is much evidence to suggest that these strategies can provide long-term solutions to sleep difficulties.

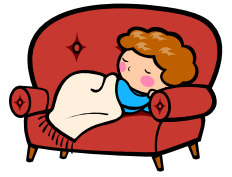
There are many medications which are used to treat insomnia, but these tend to be only effective in the short-term. Ongoing use of sleeping pills may lead to dependence and interfere with developing good sleep habits independent of medication, thereby prolonging sleep difficulties. Talk to your health professional about what is right for you, but we recommend good sleep hygiene as an important part of treating insomnia, either with other strategies such as medication or cognitive therapy or alone.

Sleep Hygiene Tips

- 1) **Get regular.** One of the best ways to train your body to sleep well is to go to bed and get up at more or less the same time every day, even on weekends and days off! This regular rhythm will make you feel better and will give your body something to work from.
- 2) **Sleep when sleepy.** Only try to sleep when you actually feel tired or sleepy, rather than spending too much time awake in bed.
- 3) **Get up & try again.** If you haven't been able to get to sleep after about 20 minutes or more, get up and do something calming or boring until you feel sleepy, then return to bed and try again. Sit quietly on the couch with the lights off (bright light will tell your brain that it is time to wake up), or read something boring like the phone book. Avoid doing anything that is too stimulating or interesting, as this will wake you up even more.
- 4) **Avoid caffeine & nicotine.** It is best to avoid consuming any caffeine (in coffee, tea, cola drinks, chocolate, and some medications) or nicotine (cigarettes) for at least 4-6 hours before going to bed. These substances act as stimulants and interfere with the ability to fall asleep.
- 5) **Avoid alcohol.** It is also best to avoid alcohol for at least 4-6 hours before going to bed. Many people believe that alcohol is relaxing and helps them to get to sleep at first, but it actually interrupts the quality of sleep.
- 6) **Bed is for sleeping.** Try not to use your bed for anything other than sleeping and sex, so that your body comes to associate bed with sleep. If you use bed as a place to watch TV, eat, read, work on your laptop, pay bills, and other things, your body will not learn this connection.



- 7) **No naps.** It is best to avoid taking naps during the day, to make sure that you are tired at bedtime. If you can't make it through the day without a nap, make sure it is for less than an hour and before 3pm.
- 8) **Sleep rituals.** You can develop your own rituals of things to remind your body that it is time to sleep - some people find it useful to do relaxing stretches or breathing exercises for 15 minutes before bed each night, or sit calmly with a cup of caffeine-free tea.
- 9) **Bathtime.** Having a hot bath 1-2 hours before bedtime can be useful, as it will raise your body temperature, causing you to feel sleepy as your body temperature drops again. Research shows that sleepiness is associated with a drop in body temperature.
- 10) **No clock-watching.** Many people who struggle with sleep tend to watch the clock too much. Frequently checking the clock during the night can wake you up (especially if you turn on the light to read the time) and reinforces negative thoughts such as "Oh no, look how late it is, I'll never get to sleep" or "it's so early, I have only slept for 5 hours, this is terrible."
- 11) **Use a sleep diary.** This worksheet can be a useful way of making sure you have the right facts about your sleep, rather than making assumptions. Because a diary involves watching the clock (see point 10) it is a good idea to only use it for two weeks to get an idea of what is going and then perhaps two months down the track to see how you are progressing.
- 12) **Exercise.** Regular exercise is a good idea to help with good sleep, but try not to do strenuous exercise in the 4 hours before bedtime. Morning walks are a great way to start the day feeling refreshed!
- 13) **Eat right.** A healthy, balanced diet will help you to sleep well, but timing is important. Some people find that a very empty stomach at bedtime is distracting, so it can be useful to have a light snack, but a heavy meal soon before bed can also interrupt sleep. Some people recommend a warm glass of milk, which contains tryptophan, which acts as a natural sleep inducer.
- 14) **The right space.** It is very important that your bed and bedroom are quiet and comfortable for sleeping. A cooler room with enough blankets to stay warm is best, and make sure you have curtains or an eyemask to block out early morning light and earplugs if there is noise outside your room.
- 15) **Keep daytime routine the same.** Even if you have a bad night sleep and are tired it is important that you try to keep your daytime activities the same as you had planned. That is, don't avoid activities because you feel tired. This can reinforce the insomnia.



Drinking less is better

We now know that even a small amount of alcohol can be damaging to health.

Science is evolving, and the recommendations about alcohol use need to change.

Research shows that no amount or kind of alcohol is good for your health. It doesn't matter what kind of alcohol it is—wine, beer, cider or spirits.

Drinking alcohol, even a small amount, is damaging to everyone, regardless of age, sex, gender, ethnicity, tolerance for alcohol or lifestyle.

That's why if you drink, it's better to drink less.

Alcohol consumption per week

Drinking alcohol has negative consequences. The more alcohol you drink per week, the more the consequences add up.

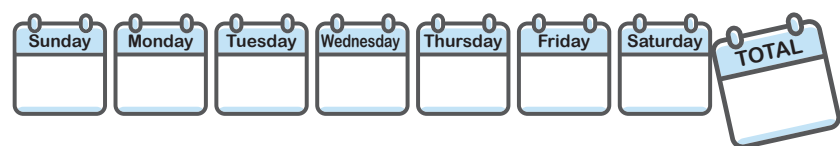


Aim to drink less

Drinking less benefits you and others. It reduces your risk of injury and violence, and many health problems that can shorten life.

Here is a good way to do it

Count how many drinks you have in a week.



Set a weekly drinking target. If you're going to drink, **make sure you don't exceed 2 drinks on any day.**

Good to know

You can reduce your drinking in steps! Every drink counts: any reduction in alcohol use has benefits.

It's time to pick a new target

What will your weekly drinking target be?



Tips to help you stay on target

- Stick to the limits you've set for yourself.
- Drink slowly.
- Drink lots of water.
- For every drink of alcohol, have one non-alcoholic drink.
- Choose alcohol-free or low-alcohol beverages.
- Eat before and while you're drinking.
- Have alcohol-free weeks or do alcohol-free activities.



SAFETY AT HOME



- * Keep emergency numbers on an easily visible and accessible list in the kitchen
- * Keep a list of your medical information on your fridge for EMS personnel to easily access (e.g.: known medical conditions, prescription medications, your health card #, Emergency contact info.)
- * Keep all medications in their original containers so you have directions as to when and how to take the medicine and to ensure medicines do not get mixed up
- * Keep all hallways, stairs, and pathways well-lit and clear of objects
- * Ensure all small rugs have a rubber backing on them and/or are secured to the floor so they will not move when you stand on them. This will help to prevent falls
- * Add grab bars in the bathtub/showers and near the toilet to provide stability (e.g.: when accessing or exiting a bathtub /shower or lowering or rising from the toilet)
- * Use rubber bathmats in bathtub or shower to prevent slipping/falling
- * Keep a cell phone with you when you are moving up or downstairs (e.g.: when going to basement or second floor) or subscribe to a medic alert “emergency” alarm system). Wear a medical alert bracelet when out and about.
- * Don't wear loose clothes or ones with billowing sleeves when you are using the stove. This eliminates the risk of fire / burns
- * Do not over-load electrical plugs or power bars with too many electrical cords.
- * Never run electric cords under rugs
- * Do not use any appliance or lamps with frayed or damaged electrical cords.
- * Make sure any heaters are at least several feet away from curtains, bedding, furniture. Turn them off before leaving the room or when heading to bed.
- * Make sure you have smoke detectors and that the batteries are changed twice a year
- * Do not leave candles unattended
- * Keep your doors and windows locked and never let a stranger into your home when you are there alone. Arrange for someone to be with you at home when you have maintenance or repair work being undertaken in your home.
- * Don't rush to answer a ringing phone. Let it go to voice mail, then return the call.
- * Consider joining an exercise class designed for older adults. Exercising can help improve your balance/stability and lessen the risk of falling
- * If you have a cane or walker, be sure to use them. Do not lean on furniture or against walls to make your way somewhere



BE THE BEST YOU!



- Keep annual check ups with your doctor. “Wellness exams” are more than diagnosis. They allow your doctor identify preventative measures that can keep you healthy.
- Exercise and stay active - vitally important to your health and quality of life. It affects how much you’re able to do, your mood and therefore your outlook on life.
- Maintain strong bones - like other aspects of health they need to be worked on. It’s never too late to start. Helps slow bone loss and reduce fracture risk
- Eat a healthy diet. A heart healthy diet has positive effects on the whole body.
- Get regular eye and dental exams to detect any age related changes early and learn preventative measures to ensure optimum eye and dental health.
- Take early notice of any hearing changes and seek medical help. Hearing loss interferes with daily activities and promotes a sense of isolation.
- Be aware of changes to your feet and ankles due to many years of constant pressure and use. Wear appropriate footwear that fully supports your arches and ankles.
- Know your medications and keep them organized and safe. Review your medications with your health care provider and pharmacist to confirm everything is still necessary and identify possible interactions.
- Understand and follow guidelines for getting adequate sleep.
- Maintain friendships and socialize regularly. Social stimulation encourages physical and mental agility. It has a positive effect on mood and reduces the negative

How Can You Help Seniors in the Community?

Empower the Elderly People in Your Life

1. Make seniors feel respected and heard to encourage them to share their knowledge and creativity.
2. Take a moment to empathize with your loved one and help them acknowledge and work through feelings of depression.
3. Acknowledge and appreciate the value your elders offer, even for tasks that seem small.
4. Continue to invest in your relationship with your loved one so they feel loved and important.
5. Join your loved one in physical activity to give them additional motivation to stay healthy and strong.
6. Learn a new hobby or task together to keep both of your cognitive skills sharp.
7. Prepare their home for aging in place.
8. Support their self-dressing.
9. Make other daily tasks easier.
10. Encourage socialization.
11. Help them stay active mentally and physically
12. Consider part-time help.
13. Don't take care of everything for them.

How Can You Help Seniors in the Community?

Have the important conversations

Most seniors will eventually need some form of help with their daily activities which could include getting dressed, making meals or being able to get from one place to another. Therefore, having open conversations with family members about things like medical decisions, finances and socialization is a key place to start preparing for a safe and healthy aging for seniors.

Look for senior-focused services

Keep a list of resources available that have senior-focused programming. Reach out to those local services to see what they offer. Talk to your physician for guidance on other options that might be available

Consider your loved one's unique needs

There's no one-size-fits-all solution. What's right for today could change tomorrow. Ultimately, deciding that you or your loved one will age in community boils down to communication and regular re-evaluation.

Make sure your paperwork is in order

Have estate documents completed for both seniors and caregivers. That can include power of attorney for health, a will, a trust if appropriate and pre-made funeral arrangements, which can be a verbal expression of wishes or a pre-planned, pre-paid arrangement.

Let a professional guide you

If available, work with an advisor who can help navigate issues pertaining specifically to seniors — like estate planning, health management and referrals for supports like transportation or meal delivery services.

Care.com



HELPFUL TIPS FOR SENIORS

Emergencies

- OPP and ambulance, Call 911
- Emergency Response System (necklace or wristband) - HHHS
705 457 2941

Food, Housing/Heat, Legal Assistance, Churches, Haliburton County Resource Guide,

Haliburton County Community Resource Directory www.sirch.on.ca/about-us/resources/

Haliburton Highlands Help Directory-print copy only

Health

- Haliburton Highlands Mental Health Services 705 286 4575
www.hhmhs@hhhs.ca
- Home and Community Care Support Services (formerly LHIN) In-home support,
705 457 1600, 1-800 368 8027
- Paramed (PSW'S), www.paramed.com/bancroft
- Haliburton County Community Paramedicine Program, mobile in-home health care.
705 809 0440, cparish@haliburtoncounty.ca

Community Supports

- Community Support Services, HHHS, offers friendly visiting, home help, meals on wheels, adult day programmes. 705 457 2941 www.hhhs.ca/community-support-services
- GAIN, Geriatric Assessment and Intervention Network, 705 286 2140 Ext. 3400
- Minds in Motion, Alzheimers Society brings individuals and caregivers together for two hours of stimulating activities, friendship and sharing personal stories. 705 748 5131
www.info@alzheimerjourney.ca

Transportation

- DYMO Bus Transportation Service, call 705 457 5076
- Hyland Taxi 705 457 1777
- Community Support Services, 705 457 2941, www.hhhs.ca/community-support-services



HELPFUL TIPS FOR SENIORS

Planning

- Helping Older Adults Chart a Path to Peace of Mind, Aging Well Haliburton County, contact 705 457 9660
- Options Open: The Guide for Mapping Your Best Aging Journey, Collaborative Aging, author Sue Lantz <https://optionsopen.org>
- Visit your lawyer to have an updated Will, including your power of attorney for personal care and finances
- Place important papers in one place.
- List prescriptions on your fridge
- Reach out to loved ones and have them check-in with you regularly