The importance of knowing your family medical history

When visiting a physician for the first time, patients may notice an extensive questionnaire about their family history. One of the requisite forms the doctor will ask you to fill out is this family health history form. Though it can be hard to remember, family members’ conditions and the diseases they have are good reasons to ask about their patients’ family medical histories.

Family medical histories can be vital to one’s own health care. The National Center for Biotechnology Information states that family history might be one of the strongest influences on a person’s risk for developing cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and more. While you cannot modify your genetic makeup, knowing your family’s cancer history can take you the steps necessary to prevent illness.

Family history reports can help determine if you are at risk for certain cancers. A thorough health care history might reveal your family medical history and lead to an update in time to prevent or manage cancer. It can help the process by letting the information available to the doctor. For the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests the following:

- Family talk. Make a list of close family members and discuss any conditions or issues you had at what ages.
- Know about chronic diseases. Speak to your relatives about chronic diseases like diabetes or high blood pressure, being sure to ask how severe such issues were and if they exhibit any symptoms of CVD or if they have been exposed to anyone with the virus. The CDC notes that symptoms of COVID-19 include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, muscle or body aches, fatigue, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, and nausea or vomiting.

Take charge of your health today, ask your provider for information about programs that offer virtual services that ensure dementia patients to engage in meaningful and significant activities that encourage social engagement can lift patients’ spirits and remain socially active.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that older adults are at the highest risk of severe illness from COVID-19. This puts dementia caregivers in a difficult position. The World Health Organization states that the strongest known protective factor against COVID-19 is the richest known social determinants of health.

The Alzheimer’s Association advises caregivers to follow guidelines recommended by the CDC as they continue to provide care. Wear face masks or cloth face coverings. Face masks provide protection against the spread of COVID-19 and help caregivers to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to patients. People with rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn’s disease, Hashimoto’s and other chronic illnesses may be at higher risk than the general population for COVID-19. Caregivers should have a backup caregiver in case of

The right foods can fight inflammation

The human body and its immune system excel at fighting off inva- sive bacteria and viruses. Experts call this “the body’s immune system.”

Unfortunately, the inflamma- tion that is a hallmark of chronic illness becomes a daily problem that may result in chronic pain and other complications. While many people may not re- alize that the foods they are putting into their bodies may exacerbate inflammation, others may be unaware that they are doing so.

Inflammatory foods and beverages that are commonly consumed include:

- Grilled or fried foods
- Salty or smoked foods
- Processed meats
- Soft drinks
- Alcoholic beverages
- Caffeine
- Red and processed meats
- Excessive saturated fat, sugar, and sodium

The right foods for fighting inflammation include:

- Berries
- Nuts and seeds
- Leafy green vegetables
- Monounsaturated fats
- Olive oil
- Krill oil
- Antioxidants
- Fish rich in Omega-3 fatty acids
- Turmeric
- Ginger
- Pomegranate
- Walnuts
- Cherries
- Tomatoes
- Broccoli
- Spinach
- Milk
- Yogurt
- Beans
- Legumes
- Turmeric
- Ginger
- Green tea
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Citrus

The right foods can help improve your immune system and help fight off infections and diseases. Many people are also concerned about the right foods for inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Patients with IBD have a higher risk of developing certain types of cancer, including colorectal cancer. People with IBD should be particularly aware of the foods and beverages they consume.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people with IBD avoid the following foods:

- Processed meats
- Red meats
- Saturated fats
- Trans fats
- Alcohol
- Sugar
- Caffeine
- Spicy foods
- Fried foods
- Grilled foods
- Barbecued foods
- Fast food
- Packaged snacks
- Junk food

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A license to drive has long been symbolic of independence. Teenagers drive long for the day they earn their licenses and can take to the road without morn or dad riding shotgun, while aging drivers want to keep driving as long as possible so they can continue to drive and as they please in their golden years.

There’s no formula for this; their families and their careers can require them to determine when it’s time to take the car keys away from senior citizens. Thankfully, local collisions involving older drivers have declined considerably in recent decades. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, collision-related fatalities among drivers ages 70 and older declined by 35 percent between 1997 and 2018. A host of factors have no doubt contributed to this decline, including lane-assist technology and forward collision warning systems that have become standard offerings on many modern vehicles.

As much as technology has helped make driving safer for everyone, aging drivers should still keep their eyes out for certain signs that may indicate their skills be- hind the wheel are diminishing, potentially making their ability to drive safely appealing. According to AARP, the following are warning signs of unsafe driving:

- Delayed response to unexpected situations. Frequent close calls and narrowly avoiding collisions when other drivers stop suddenly or indicate a response time that puts aging drivers at an elevated risk of being involved in an accident.
- Becoming easily dis- tracted while driving. Elec- tronic distractions have become a significant concern in recent decades, but it’s often associated with young driv- ers. However, aging drivers who are simply distracted also pose a safety risk to themselves and other motorists.
- Difficulty keeping an appropriate distance between vehicles and/or seeing the road ahead. This indicates drivers are not alert to their surroundings and may need to be on safer on the road.
- Difficulty changing lanes. Only drivers will know if they feel comb- sting enough to drive safely, and it’s vital that aging driv- ers be honest with them- selves when assessing how they feel when driving. If you have difficulty mov- ing arms or maintaining the normal lane of traffic. Lane-assist technology can help drivers recognize how often they’re staying in the cen- ter lane of traffic. When the warning bell goes off frequently, it might be time for older drivers to realize it’s safer for them to pass.

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- Difficulty keeping an appropriate distance between vehicles and/or seeing the road ahead. This indicates drivers are not alert to their surroundings and may need to be on the road more carefully.
- Difficulty changing lanes. Only drivers will know if they feel comfortable enough to drive safely, and it’s vital that aging drivers be honest with themselves when assessing how they feel when driving. If you have difficulty moving arms or maintaining the normal lane of traffic. Lane-assist technology can help drivers recognize how often they’re staying in the center lane of traffic. When the warning bell goes off frequently, it might be time for older drivers to realize it’s safer for them to pass.
- Hitting curbs when making right turns or backing up. Hitting curbs when turning or backing up indicates drivers may have difficulty controlling their vehicles and/or seeing the road both of which makes it’s no longer safe for drivers to go behind the wheel.
- Getting scraps or dents on cars, garage or mailbox. These signs also indicate drivers are having trouble controlling their vehicles.
- Driving too far or too fast for road conditions. This indicates drivers are not in alert to their surroundings and may need to be on the road more carefully.

Signs of the transitional years between perimenopause and menopause are one of the first indicators that a woman’s body is changing. Periods may come at different times or be shorter or longer. Some women bleed more or less than usual. Women should consult their gynecologists if their periods last more than a week or bleeding is especially heavy.

Hot flashes could occur. The National Institute on Aging says experience hot flashes in both premenopause and menopause. Hot flashes are believed to be related to changing estrogen levels. The sudden feeling of heat in the upper part or all of the body is often accompanied by flushing of the face and neck. When they occur at night, hot flashes are called night sweats. Mood changes/sleep is- sues

Fluctuating hormones can cause other changes in the body. It’s common for women in perimenopause to experience mood changes. However, mood may also be affected by interruptions of sleep that can occur at this time. Women can speak to their doctors about remedies that can help with mood and sleep issues.

Additional changes since hormones are responsible for many opera- tions in the female body. Additional changes are pos- sible at this point in a woman’s life. Menopause occurs 12 months after a woman’s last period. It marks the end of a woman’s monthly cycles and the cessation of menstruation.

Menopause is a natural occurrence in a woman’s life. Menopause occurs 12 years after her last period. It marks the end of the reproductive years and the cessation of menstrua- tion.

Many women mistakenly believe that the years lead- ing up to the end of their reproductive years is a transitional period known as perimenopause.

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