

# Healthy Ageing 101: Navigating New Health and Wellness Considerations for Older Persons in Light of this Never Ending Pandemic

**Dr. Samir Sinha MD, DPhil, FRCPC, AGSF**

Peter and Shelagh Godsoe Chair in Geriatrics  
Director of Geriatrics, Sinai Health and University Health Network

# Objectives



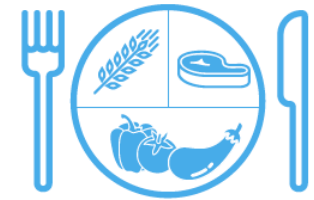
- What can you do to enable healthy ageing during a pandemic
- How to stay healthy through nutrition, exercise, sleep and social interactions
- What vaccines should you be getting as older persons and what about COVID-19 booster shots?
- Recommend strategies and resources to support healthy ageing

# COVID-19 Has Been Awful...

- With Older People being the most vulnerable population to COVID-19 – its been a tough and awful year.
- With over 90% of Canada's deaths being amongst the 60+, the silver lining is that now 94% have received at least their first dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine.
- We better appreciate the impact of social isolation and how poorly supported our LTC Systems are.
- So we have a lot to do, but every one of us can still do things to promote our own healthy ageing.

# Things that Enable Healthy Ageing

- A Balanced Diet
- Avoiding Smoking
- Drinking Alcohol in Moderation
- Regular Physical Exercise
- Regular Sleep and Rest
- Managing Stress
- Getting Recommended Vaccinations
- Maintaining Social Networks
- Staying in Contact with your Health Care Provider



# How to Achieve A Balanced Diet?



- Choose vegetables and fruits, whole grain foods and protein-rich foods at every eating occasion
- Choose foods with healthy fats instead of saturated fats
- Limit your consumption of highly processed foods. If you choose these foods, eat them less often and in small amounts
- Prepare meals and snacks using ingredients that have little to no added sodium, sugars or saturated fats
- Make water your drink of choice over sugary drinks

# Nutrition Risk and Ageing

- More than 33% of Canadians over 65 are estimated to be at risk for poor nutrition
- Nutrition risk increases 3-year risk of mortality and hospitalization
- The risk for poor nutrition increases if you
  - live alone
  - are physically inactive
  - are experiencing physical or cognitive decline
  - are using medications to manage certain chronic conditions

# Why are Older Adults More At Risk?



- Changes to our bodies as we age — decreased mobility, sense of taste and smell, vision, metabolism, oral health
- Diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, kidney disease and cancer all have their own dietary requirements
- Food preferences related to one's place of residence, ethnicity and lifelong habits can challenge maintaining good nutrition
- Some physical conditions, like arthritis, can make eating more physically challenging by making it difficult to swallow or digest food

# Drinking in Moderation



- Drinking too much alcohol can increase your risk of health problems
- Benefits to reducing your alcohol consumption:
  - Reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes
  - Increased energy and less feelings of fatigue
  - Improved sleep
  - Improved weight management as alcohol is high in calories

**Note:** Many prescription medicines can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol. Always talk to your health care provider about your medications if drinking alcohol.



# Staying Physically Active

- Older adults should aim to get 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic exercise per week, in bouts of 10 minutes. Activities such as:
  - Walking
  - Light jogging
  - Dance classes (via ZOOM)
  - Chair exercises
  - Yoga
  - Stretching exercises
  - Gardening
  - Taking the stairs instead of the elevator

## DID YOU KNOW?

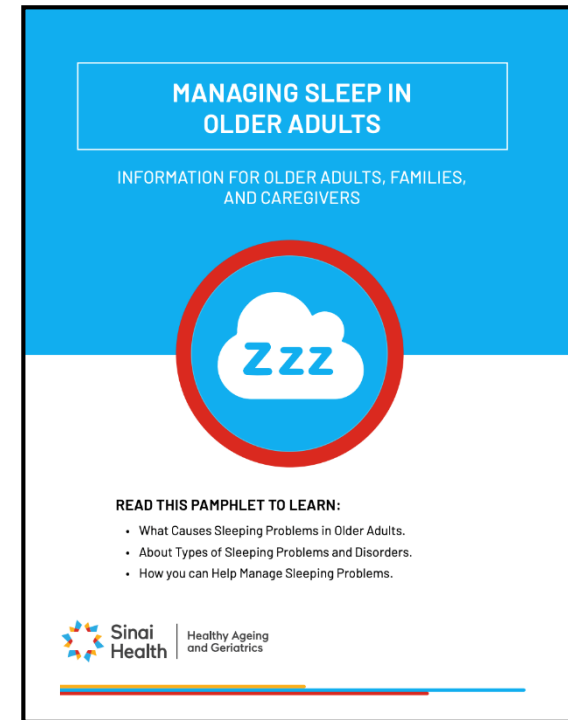
Climbing 20 flights of stairs a week reduces one's risk of death by 10%

# Benefits of Regular Exercise

- Gives You More Energy
- Promotes Mental and Cognitive Health
- Increases Physical Strength
- Promotes a more Restful Sleep
- Decreases Feelings of Fatigue
- Maintains/Improves Heart Health
- Reduces Feelings of Depression/Anxiety/Stress
- Improves Blood Sugar Control
- Maintains Bone Strength
- Prevents Falls by making your muscles and bones stronger, and improving your balance and coordination

# Common Sleep Changes As We Age

- Decreased total nocturnal sleep time
- Delayed sleep initiation
- Advanced circadian rhythm
- Reduced slow-wave sleep (stages 3 and 4)
- Reduced REM sleep
- Reduced threshold for arousal from sleep
- Fragmented sleep with multiple arousals
- Increased daytime napping



Find more information about sleep in our free resource "Managing Sleep in Older Adults" on our website <https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/patient-resources/managing-sleep-in-older-adults/>

# Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

You can tell if you are experiencing sleep problems if:

- You have trouble falling asleep at night
- You wake up constantly during the night
- Your sleep feels light
- You feel tired during the day
- You have difficulty concentrating throughout the day
- You have low energy and do not feel rested



# Sleeping Better As You Age



## DURING THE DAY:

- Avoid large meals and drinking fluids a few hours before bedtime
- Avoid napping
- Get out of bed at the same time each morning

## DURING THE NIGHT:

- Make sure your bedroom is quiet, dark, and cool to keep comfortable throughout the night
- If it helps, use soothing noise (e.g. a fan, other appliance, “white noise” machine)
- Develop a sleep ritual (same routine each night before going to bed) and only go to bed if you are sleepy

# Vaccinations for Older Adults

- Many older Canadians are at increased risk of developing preventable diseases. To avoid this, talk to your health care provider about the recommended vaccinations:
  - Pneumonia (Pneumococcal)
  - Shingles (Varicella/Herpes Zoster)
  - Tetanus
  - Yearly Influenza/Flu Vaccine
  - COVID-19 Vaccines



# Maintaining Strong Social Networks

- Staying socially active and maintaining positive relationships can help you maintain your physical and emotional health
- A lot of activities are being held virtually, so you can still stay connected as much as possible
- If you are doing in-person activities, remember to stay safe and protect yourself



# Keep Connected with Your Care Providers

- A Good Offence is a Great Defense
- If there is anything out of sorts, keep note of it and write down what you are experiencing.
- Take a list of your concerns to your care provider. This way it's written down and you can prioritize what should be dealt with sooner rather than later.
- Ask your provider on an annual basis if there are any vaccinations you are eligible for and what else you can do to stay healthy and well.

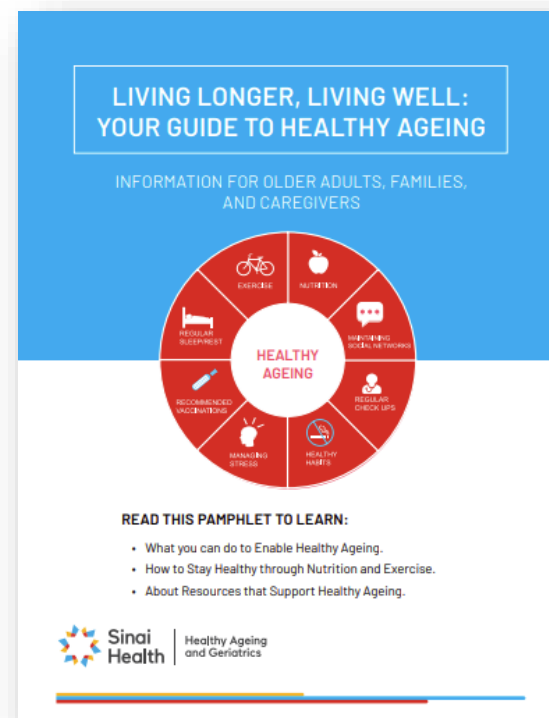


# Additional Resources

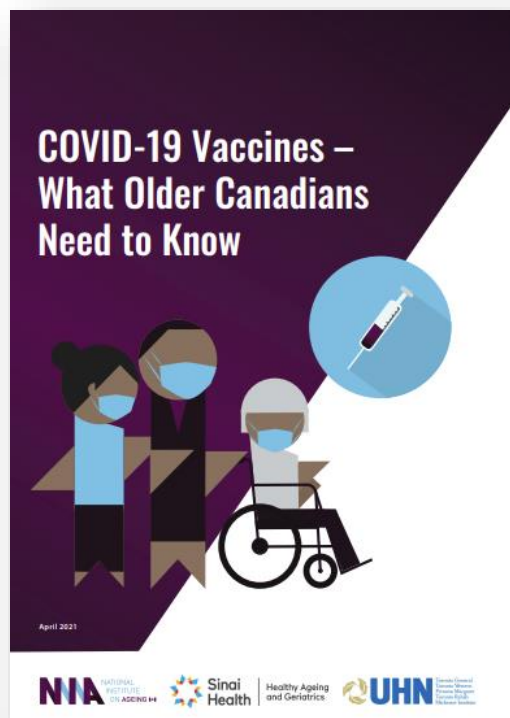
<https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/healtheducation/>

Find more information in “Living Longer, Living Well: Your Guide to Healthy Ageing” available on our website

<https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/patient-resources/living-longer-living-well-your-guide-to-healthy-ageing/>



# Additional Resources



Find more information in “COVID-19 Vaccines – What Older Canadians Need to Know” available on our website

<https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/patient-resources/covidvaccines/>

## Canada’s Food Guide

[www.unlockfood.ca](http://www.unlockfood.ca)

## Healthy Eating: Variety and Balance

[www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

## Physical Activity Guidelines

<https://csepguidelines.ca/>

## Exercise and Falls Prevention Programs

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/exercise-and-falls-prevention-programs>

# Questions? (Submit to Q&A)



# Stay Connected With Us



<https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/healtheducation/>

**Website:**

<https://sinaigeriatrics.ca>

**Twitter:**

@SinaiGeriatrics

@DrSamirSinha

# Upcoming Healthy Ageing Sessions

**October 19, 2021 12-1pm EST**

**Navigating the Good, the Bad and Avoiding the Ugly: Practical Medication Tips for Older Adults from an Expert Pharmacist**

Speaker: **Sabrina Haq** (Geriatric Pharmacist – Rexall, Sinai Health and University Health Network)

**November 16, 2021 12-1pm EST**

**Practical Technologies That Can Enable Ageing in Place**

Speakers: **Dr. Samir Sinha** (Peter and Shelagh Godsoe Chair in Geriatrics; Director of Geriatrics - Sinai Health and University Health Network)

**December 7, 2021 12-1pm EST**

**Understanding How to Recognize Dementia from Normal Age-Related Memory Loss, and How to Prevent and Manage It**

Speaker: **Dr. Sarah Colman** (Geriatric Psychiatrist – CAMH)

# Geriatric Medicine Grand Rounds

Thursday September 23, 2021 12:00 – 1:00 PM EST

City-Wide Geriatric Medicine Grand Rounds & the 2021  
Dr. Rory Fisher Lecture presents

*The Other Pandemic: Deconditioning and why  
#EndPjparalysis matters more than ever*

With Professor Brian Dolan, OBE, FFNMRC SI, FRSA, RN

Please visit <http://sinaigeriatrics.ca/events/> to register

# Join Us on November 5th

**Toronto Geriatrics Virtual Update Course**  
Friday November 5<sup>th</sup>; 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM EST  
4 Sessions + 4 Workshops  
To register, visit [torontogeriatricsupdate.ca](http://torontogeriatricsupdate.ca)



Healthy Ageing  
and Geriatrics



Toronto General  
Toronto Western  
Princess Margaret  
Toronto Rehab  
Michener Institute

## 2021 TORONTO GERIATRICS UPDATE COURSE

*Providing Excellent Care for Older Persons During  
the Pandemic and Beyond*



**Friday,  
November 5<sup>th</sup>**  
8:30 AM – 3:30 PM EST



This one-credit-per-hour Group Learning program has been approved by the College of Family Physicians of Canada for up to **5.0 Mainpro+ credits**.



For primary care providers interested in the **latest practical** and **evidence-based knowledge** for delivering **geriatric care**.



Sessions and Workshops include:

- Top 10 Articles of 2021
- Caring for Older Indigenous Adults
- Geriatrics Diabetes Update
- Managing Complex Dementia and Polypharmacy Workshops
- And More!



This program will be **delivered virtually**. All sessions will be recorded and available to paid registrants.

To register and for further information, visit [www.torontogeriatricsupdate.ca](http://www.torontogeriatricsupdate.ca)