

Aging “SMART”

(NAPSA)—In a recent survey by the Global Social Enterprise Initiative at Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business and Philips, 96 percent of senior respondents said it’s important to be as independent as possible as they get older. For seniors to maintain that independence, it pays to age “SMART.” By combining basic physical and mental wellness techniques with technology, seniors can continue living the full, active lives they want and deserve. Consider these ideas:

S—Stay active, eat healthy: Activities such as walking and light weight lifting can help with balance and agility, preserving mobility and making you less likely to fall. Group classes designed for seniors can be a great way to stay fit and socialize.

Eat lots of fruits and veggies, lean proteins and smart carbohydrates. High blood pressure can be of particular concern with age, so diets should be low in sodium.

M—Mental fitness: Your brain needs a workout, too. Studies have associated activities such as reading, playing a musical instrument, learning a new language, playing memory games and other cognitively stimulating exercises with a slower rate of mental decline. Staying sharp mentally can help you maintain your independence by empowering you to manage everyday tasks.

A—A good night’s sleep: Lack of sleep can impair your memory, slow reaction time and exacerbate other conditions. Keeping a regular schedule, avoiding caffeine and sleeping in a dark, relaxing environment can help.

R—Remembering medications: It can be tricky to keep track of your medications but getting doses and timing right are crucial to maintaining your independence. One in 10 senior hospitalizations is related to medica-



Staying sharp mentally can help you maintain your independence.

tion mismanagement. The good news is there are lots of tools out there to help, some as simple as plastic pill-organizing boxes. More advanced solutions include mobile apps that send you a reminder when it’s time for meds and automatic devices that dispense pre-sorted medications at preprogrammed times.

T—Technology to keep connected: E-mail, Facebook and Skype can be great ways to stay connected with family and friends. You can watch your grandkid’s soccer game from halfway across the country or catch up with a friend you haven’t seen in decades. Isolation and loneliness can take a huge toll on mental health, so it’s important to maintain and create relationships.

Technology also keeps seniors connected to help and lets them go about busy, active lives with less worry. Mobile response apps can connect seniors to a call center with the simple click of a button in the case of an emergency. Medical alert services provide seniors with direct access to a response associate both in their homes and on the go. Some even come equipped with fall detection technology that can signal for help if a fall is detected, when the senior is unable to do so.

For more resources related to aging “SMART,” visit Philips Lifeline at <http://philips.to/lifeline>.