

# Senior Health

## What You Should Know About Healthy Aging

by Heidi Schwarzwald, MD

(NAPS)—Seniors, caregivers and their families and support systems should prioritize certain steps to promote healthy aging—many of which can happen from the comfort and convenience of their homes—including the following:

**1. Improve your lifestyle:** Improving lifestyle is crucial with age, with 95% of adults over 65 having one or more chronic conditions—diseases heavily influenced by lifestyle decisions that can be prevented with the right education, support and personal health engagement. Giving up smoking, changing your diet, cutting out alcohol, and moving your body are all incredibly important.

**2. “Know your numbers,” get routine testing:** Early detection is vital for controlling chronic disease progression. Seniors should regularly track key health indicators, such as blood pressure, weight, cholesterol levels, and blood sugar, and get screened for the most common yet debilitating diseases, such as heart disease, kidney disease, COPD, and diabetes.

**3. Get screened for cognitive changes:** Many aging adults don’t know they’re experiencing cognitive decline but will recognize and get frustrated by certain changes (e.g., memory loss, attention deficit, loneliness and depression). Unfortunately, a lot of this decline is untracked—the Alzheimer’s Association’s “2024 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures Report” states that 54% of people who believe they have cognitive decline have not consulted a healthcare professional.

Getting the proper behavioral health screenings for mental health issues and cognitive impairment is thus incredibly important for seniors, as is getting connected to the right support and health care providers to help seniors take the next best action.

**4. Understand your medications:** Not taking medications correctly (or at all) can cause a snowball effect of unmanaged health conditions, while certain combinations of drugs—including common over-the-counter medications and supplements—can lead to avoidable interactions, emergency room visits, and hospitalizations. Getting a comprehensive medication review is one of the most important steps seniors can take to stay on the right track with their health and adhere to their care plans.



**Proactive health management plays a huge role in helping people age happily and healthily.**

At Signify, during In-Home Health Evaluations (IHE), clinicians and members review prescribed medications, and those taken over-the-counter. After a visit, clinicians will refer seniors back to their doctor and specialty physicians if they have any concerns that adjustments might be necessary. See if you are eligible for a no-cost IHE at [HelloSignify.com](https://HelloSignify.com)

**5. Get connected to your primary care doctor:** Staying engaged with your primary care doctor can have a huge effect on improving your overall health. However, it can be easier said than done. One in five Americans lives in a rural area and often has a harder time accessing health care services. Fortunately, IHEs can help them stay engaged from their home.

While not replacing your regular doctor, the IHE is an added touchpoint. When clinicians meet with you where you live, they can better understand your medical, social, and environmental needs, help to bridge any gaps in your care and give you the information you need to age healthily.

By scheduling an IHE via [HelloSignify.com](https://HelloSignify.com), at no out-of-pocket cost to eligible health plan members, Signify Health clinicians help seniors understand symptoms they shouldn’t ignore, be the eyes and ears in the home when family or care support can’t be there, and help encourage members to improve their lifestyle to age healthily.

**Learn more and see if you’re eligible:**

If you or a loved one is interested in engaging more in your health as you age, keep these things in mind and visit [HelloSignify.com](https://HelloSignify.com), the self-scheduling portal, to see if you’re eligible for an In-Home Health Evaluation.

• *Dr. Schwarzwald is Chief Medical Officer at Signify Health, a CVS Health Company.*