



Leading an active life in later years

Maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle can seem daunting as we get older but there are lots of easy ways to stay independent and active.

Our hints and tips will help make sure you can keep doing the things you need to do and enjoy.



Which? Elderly Care

*Free, independent and practical information
about caring for those you love*

Royal College of
Occupational
Therapists



Taking care of yourself

Listen to your body

Aches, pains and stiffness are not an inevitable part of getting older. If you begin to notice changes in your health talk to your GP. Have your hearing, vision, teeth and gum health checked regularly to maintain a good quality of life.

Keep active

Hobbies and activities that keep our mind and body moving are essential to our health and wellbeing. They provide stimulation and routine and the opportunity to connect with other people and the wider community.



Stay independent

Consider what support you currently have and what you might need in the months and years to come. There is equipment available that can make your life easier. You can also get assistance with the more mundane jobs, leaving you time and energy to enjoy the activities you love.

Remaining safe in your own home

Prevent falls

Remove or secure hazards such as loose rugs and check that there are clear pathways in all rooms, hallways and staircases. Use non-slip polish on hard floors and use a non-slip mat in the bathroom.

Improve lighting

Make sure rooms are well lit, especially the hallway and stairs as eyesight tends to deteriorate as we get older.

Rearrange your living spaces

Are rooms set up to meet your needs? For example is the kitchen organised so that the equipment and utensils you commonly use are within easy reach?

Consider seating

If you are having difficulties getting on and off certain chairs or seats, including the toilet, there are things you can do. You may need more height, the seat to be firmer, an armrest or rails to help push or pull yourself up.



If you require expert advice and guidance, see an occupational therapist

Occupational therapists can help you to:

- Adopt strategies and techniques to continue with daily activities, such as preparing meals, socialising with friends, volunteering in the community
- Keep in contact with family and friends
- Make changes to stay safe in your home
- Getting to the shops and local facilities for example, libraries, parks and onto public transport
- Continue with valued roles, such as caring for others

How to see an occupational therapist

- Talk to your GP about being referred to an occupational therapist
- Call the help desk of your local authority adult social service team to request an assessment
- Contact occupational therapists working in health teams that provide help and advice on specific health conditions, like dementia and arthritis, and broader services like enablement teams.

What to do next?

Visit the Royal College of Occupational Therapists www.rcot.co.uk to get advice on how to find an occupational therapist on the NHS, or to access details of independent occupational therapists.

Royal College of Occupational Therapists

The UK professional body for occupational therapy staff

(The Royal College of Occupational Therapists is the trading name and a subsidiary of the British Association of Occupational Therapists)

www.rcot.co.uk

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