



THROUGH OUR LENS

FALL 2026

HEALTHY LIVING 50+

GOOD TO KNOW

What aging
well looks like

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Pro Football Hall of Famer

Tony Gonzalez

talks diet, exercise, mindfulness,
and his new podcast

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SCAN ME

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Black adults are about twice as likely as others to develop diabetes. ... “Before there’s anything wrong, get those annual visits to discuss your ongoing wellness.”

— Jada C. Bussey-Jones, MD, chief of general medicine and geriatrics at Grady Health System in Atlanta

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PRIME BALANCE

At 50, NFL legend Tony Gonzalez isn't just staying in shape, he's figured out how to sustain the health of his mind, body, and spirit



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Cover and Contents Image: Photography by Tommy Garcia; Grooming by Dominique Diaz

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WHY PREVENTION MATTERS

Shingles may be less common in Black adults, but new research suggests its complications can be more severe. A study of more than 2 million U.S. adults examined how the condition affects people from different racial groups. Researchers found that Black adults were diagnosed with it less often than White adults. However, when the infection did occur, they were more likely to experience complications such as long-lasting nerve pain and hospital stays. These differences may be related to underdiagnosis or variations in where people receive care. Talk to your doctor about ways to lower your risk.

SOURCE: *Open Forum Infectious Diseases*

BUILDING TRUST THROUGH EDUCATION

Despite the availability of vaccines that prevent serious illnesses, many older adults—especially Black Americans—remain undervaccinated due to barriers such as limited access to care, mistrust of the health care system, and misleading information. To address this gap, U.S. researchers tested two community education programs led by pharmacists and trained peers. The programs included 287 older adults from sites mostly serving Black communities. Both programs significantly improved knowledge and trust in vaccination. Community-based education should be expanded to help older adults access trusted health information and make informed decisions about preventive health measures, including vaccinations.

SOURCE: *Journal of Managed Care + Specialty Pharmacy*

Nearly \$27 billion

Estimated yearly amount spent by the U.S. population on treating vaccine-preventable diseases such as the flu in adults 50 and older.

SOURCE: National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

STAY SHARP

As people age, memory and thinking skills can sometimes decline. To see if healthy habits could help, a U.S. study followed more than 2,100 older adults, including Black adults, with risk factors such as low physical activity and unhealthy diet. Those who followed a structured plan with guidance—including exercise, a brain-healthy diet, social engagement, and heart health monitoring—showed greater improvements in thinking skills over two years than those who made lifestyle changes on their own. These findings encourage working with trained health coaches and support staff to take curated steps to stay physically active and mentally engaged.

SOURCE: *JAMA*



4.6 million

Estimated shingles cases that could be prevented by 2032 if 65% of eligible people got the shingles vaccine.

SOURCE: National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

This content was created using several editorial tools, including AI, as part of the process. Human editors reviewed this content before publication.

STATS & FACTS

Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS, WebMD Medical Reviewer

47%

How much less likely Black adults were to receive all age-appropriate vaccines compared with U.S. adults overall in 2022.



ALMOST 80%

Amount of the shared financial burden from vaccine-preventable diseases linked to unvaccinated people.



17%

Amount of Black adults ages 50 to 79 who were up to date with lung cancer screenings, compared with 14% of White adults from 2021 to 2023.

60 or older

Recommended age to get a dilated eye exam every one to two years to help detect age-related eye diseases early.



16%

Amount of Black adults who likely skipped a doctor's visit in the past year due to cost, compared with 12% of White adults.



ABOUT 3 MILLION

Emergency department visits each year due to falls among older adults.

45 to 74

Recommended age range for yearly mammograms; starting at 55, screening is recommended every two years or annually.



SOURCES: American Cancer Society, KFF, Office of Minority Health, CDC, National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, National Eye Institute

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75 COUNTRIES

THE STORY IS IN THE NUMBERS

SHINGRIX has been approved in 75 countries, including the U.S.

What Is SHINGRIX?

SHINGRIX is an FDA-approved vaccine for the prevention of shingles (herpes zoster) in adults 50 years and older.

SHINGRIX is not used to prevent chickenpox.

Important Safety Information

- You should not receive SHINGRIX if you are allergic to any of its ingredients or had an allergic reaction to a previous dose of SHINGRIX
- An increased risk of Guillain-Barré syndrome (severe muscle weakness) was observed after vaccination with SHINGRIX
- Fainting can happen after getting injectable vaccines, including SHINGRIX. Precautions should be taken to avoid falling and injury due to fainting

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SHINGRIX } **GSK**
(ZOSTER VACCINE
RECOMBINANT, ADJUVANTED)



INCLUDING OURS

99% of people 50 years of age and older have the virus that causes shingles inside of them. The virus can reactivate at any time, causing a painful rash that can last for weeks. 1 in 3 people will develop shingles in their lifetime. The risk of the virus reactivating sharply increases after 50 years of age.

If you're over 50 years old, talk to your doctor about SHINGRIX.

Important Safety Information (cont'd)

- The most common side effects are pain, redness, and swelling at the injection site, muscle pain, tiredness, headache, shivering, fever, and upset stomach
- SHINGRIX was not studied in pregnant or nursing women. Tell your healthcare provider if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breastfeeding
- Vaccination with SHINGRIX may not protect all individuals
- Ask your healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of SHINGRIX. Only a healthcare provider can decide if SHINGRIX is right for you



**Scan to visit
shingrixstory.com
to learn more.**

You are encouraged to report vaccine adverse events to the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Visit www.vaers.hhs.gov to file a report, or call 1-800-822-7967. You may also file a report with GSK at gsk.public.reportum.com or 1-888-825-5249.

Please see Important Facts About SHINGRIX inside back cover.

ACTIVE, ENGAGED, AND INDEPENDENT

Memory loss and rapid decline are not foregone conclusions of getting older. Learn what aging well can look like.

By Sonya Collins Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS, WebMD Medical Reviewer



Aging well isn't about avoiding change—it's about understanding what's normal, what's not, and how much control you still have over your health.

"You can still be vibrant, productive, active members of society," says Jarrod A. Carrol, MD, a geriatrician at Kaiser Permanente in Los Angeles.

DON'T LET MYTHS ABOUT AGING HOLD YOU BACK

Too often, people assume that growing older means inevitable decline. But that belief can hold you back from all that you can still do and be. No matter what you've seen in other older adults, aging isn't one-size-fits-all.

"If you meet one 80-year-old, you've only met one 80-year-old," Carrol says.

While some changes—like slower mental processing speed or reduced strength—are normal, serious conditions like dementia are not inevitable. Even when certain diseases run in your family, you're not guaranteed to get them.

"A lot of people think, 'Everyone in my family has diabetes or everyone has high cholesterol, so I'll get it too,'" Carrol says. "They don't understand the crucial role that they play in that."

OWN YOUR ROLE: TAKE CONTROL

That role is increasingly important as you age. Carrol recommends focusing on five key areas: eat a healthy diet, stay physically active, get enough sleep, manage stress, and maintain social connections.

Staying engaged is particularly important as you grow older. Without the structure of work or taking care of kids, it's easy to become isolated, which can affect mood, memory, and overall health.

Just as important: Don't wait until something feels wrong to see a doctor. Regular checkups and open conversations with both your provider and your family can help you stay well longer.

JG/JAMIE GRILL/VIA GETTY IMAGES

looking to
STAY WELL
every day



Fuel Your Body with Good for You Ingredients



ECHINACEA

Beautiful flower traditionally thought to help your body's defenses

LEMONGRASS

Tasty herb commonly thought to be a supportive hand to your overall health



ROSE HIPS

Tart and tasty herb commonly used to help support your well-being

ELDERFLOWERS

Light colored flower traditionally considered to help support a healthy lifestyle



BIGELOW
BENEFITS

Redefining Wellness
EVERY DAY

STAY AHEAD OF ILLNESS

These cancer screenings and vaccines should be top priority for you

By Sonya Collins

Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS, WebMD Medical Reviewer

Good health after 50 isn't just about treating problems. It's about staying ahead of them. Recommended cancer screenings and vaccines can catch serious illness early, when it's most treatable, or prevent it altogether. That's especially important for Black adults, who are more likely to face certain cancers and who may be less likely to get vaccinated against preventable illnesses.

CANCER SCREENING: START EARLY AND STAY CONSISTENT

Routine cancer screenings are especially important for Black adults, says Winfred T. Frazier, MD, a family physician at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pennsylvania. "Black adults have the highest overall cancer rate and are more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage."

Breast cancer: Mammogram screenings typically begin at age 40 and continue every one to two years. Early, consistent screening is essential.

"Black women are diagnosed with breast cancers at a younger age and with more aggressive subtypes," says Morgan White, MD, a family physician at UW Health in Madison, WI.

Colorectal cancer: Screening now starts at age 45 for those who are at an average risk. Black adults are about 40% more likely to die of colorectal cancer than others, making timely screening critical. Colonoscopy is the most effective test because it can both detect and remove precancerous polyps.

Prostate cancer: "This is a really important one because African American men have twice the mortality rate of other races," Frazier says. General guidelines suggest starting discussions about screening at 55, but many experts recommend Black men begin conversations and screening with a PSA blood test as early as 40 to 45.

Cervical cancer: Screening begins in early adulthood and typically continues through age 65, assuming prior tests are



normal. Regular Pap or HPV testing can detect precancerous changes early, when they are highly treatable.

Lung cancer: Screening is recommended for adults ages 50 to 80 with a significant smoking history. Even former smokers remain at risk years after quitting. Discuss eligibility with your doctor.

STAYING PROTECTED AS YOU AGE

Vaccines are another key part of healthy aging, but Black adults are less likely to receive them, despite higher risks from some infections.

Shingles: Recommended starting at age 50, this two-dose vaccine protects against a painful rash caused by reactivation



of the chickenpox virus.

Flu: An annual flu shot is important because influenza can lead to severe illness or death in older adults.

COVID-19: Ongoing annual vaccination remains important. “I recommend the COVID vaccine for everyone,” White says, “but particularly for individuals in Black communities, which were hit harder and experienced higher rates of illness and death than White communities.”

Pneumococcal (pneumonia): Now recommended starting at age 50, this vaccine helps prevent serious lung infections that become more dangerous with age.

Tdap booster: Recommended every 10 years, it protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. Any adult who has

RED FLAGS FOR EARLIER SCREENING

Cancer screening recommendations are based on the general population. You may need to start earlier if you:

-  Have a family history of cancer
-  Have concerning symptoms
-  Have a history of smoking or other factors that increase your risk

not had a Tdap booster should get one. And then every 10 years they should get either a Tdap booster or a Td booster (without the pertussis protection).

RSV: Recommended for adults 65 and older to prevent severe respiratory illness in older adults. It is also recommended in younger adults 50 and older who are at increased risk of severe RSV illness.

KNOW YOUR RISK

As your age increases, so does your risk for shingles and chronic diseases. Stay a step ahead.

By Sonya Collins Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS, WebMD Medical Reviewer

Each new decade of life brings new health risks to stay ahead of. Your risk for conditions like shingles, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes increases with age. But you can prevent or manage them with the right steps.

SHINGLES: PAINFUL AND PREVENTABLE

One in three people get shingles. If you had chickenpox as a kid, you're at risk. You can also get shingles if you got the chickenpox vaccine, but your chance of getting shingles is much lower than if you had the disease. The virus that causes chickenpox lies dormant in your body and can reactivate as shingles. You develop a painful rash that causes a "burning, sharp, tingling, lightning-like pain," says Jada C. Bussey-Jones, MD, chief of general medicine and geriatrics at Grady Health System in Atlanta.

Even after the rash fades, some people develop lingering nerve pain and, in some cases, long-term nerve damage.

Your best protection against shingles is the two-dose vaccine, starting at age 50.

HYPERTENSION: THE SILENT KILLER

High blood pressure is most common in older adults. Black adults have the highest risk. Nearly 60% have hypertension.

Described as a "silent killer," hypertension can damage the body over time without causing any symptoms.

"You often feel fine up until the point that it really starts affecting you in negative ways," says Ta'Loria D. Young, DO, a primary care physician at Houston Methodist in Texas.

Left untreated, hypertension can lead to serious preventable complications, including stroke, heart attack, and vision loss.

Annual blood pressure checks are a good start. If your numbers are high, you may need more frequent monitoring, lifestyle changes, or medication.

DIABETES AND RELATED RISKS

Black adults are about twice as likely as others to develop diabetes. Type 2 diabetes raises your risk for serious conditions, including heart disease, stroke, kidney





TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR WELL-BEING

-  Stay active most days.
-  Prioritize fruits, vegetables, and whole foods.
-  Monitor your blood pressure regularly.
-  Know your blood sugar levels.
-  Get all your recommended vaccines, including the shingles vaccine at age 50.

failure, and vision loss. It can also weaken the immune system, making infections, like shingles, harder to fight.

A basic blood test at your annual physical can flag early warning signs and allow for early intervention.

LIFESTYLE AND VACCINES: YOUR STRONGEST DEFENSES

Across these conditions, the same prevention strategies apply: regular exercise, a healthy diet, and maintaining a healthy weight.

“Get up and move your body,” Young says. Even modest activity—like a 30-minute walk most days—can lower the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and obesity.

Diet matters, too. Small changes add up. “Maybe instead of reaching for what’s easy in a bag or a box, reach for carrots, reach for celery,” Young says.

These healthy habits also help keep your immune system strong to keep infections like shingles at bay. But remember, your best defense is the vaccine, which is more than 90% effective.

You can stay ahead of all these risks with the help of a primary care provider. “Before there’s anything wrong, get those annual visits to discuss your ongoing wellness,” Bussey-Jones says.

Some of the most serious health threats arise after 50, but with awareness, prevention, and regular care, you can stay ahead of them.

DRAGANAG997/VIA GETTY IMAGES

IT'S A LIFESTYLE

Make physical activity a part of your routine

By Rachel Reiff Ellis Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS, WebMD Medical Reviewer

How can I get
more movement
into my day?



Gardening.

Raking, weeding, digging, mowing—many common garden chores count as moderate-intensity exercise.



Park far away from the grocery store and walk to your vehicle.

Adding steps up to a total of 6,000 or even 8,000 a day can help reduce health risks.



Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

Stair climbing improves bone density, raises your “good” cholesterol levels, and improves leg strength and joint health, which can help reduce your risk of falls.



Walking meetings.

One half-hour walking meeting every workday will get you the 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity doctors recommend per week.



Do leg extensions at your desk.

Sitting all day raises your risk for obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, deep vein thrombosis, and metabolic syndrome, so make a point to move at regular intervals.



Do squats while folding laundry.

Just 10 to 15 squats can help strengthen your core, lubricate your joints, and improve your balance.

SOURCES: Harvard Health; UCLA Health; Duke; Mayo Clinic; Cleveland Clinic

STILL WINNING

At 50, NFL legend Tony Gonzalez isn't just staying in shape, he's figured out how to sustain the health of his mind, body, and spirit by transitioning the ferocity of the gridiron mindset into a calmer, more consistent second half

By Wendy Wilson

Reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD,
WebMD Chief Physician Editor, Medical Affairs



Football fans across the globe will forever debate which players are the biggest, brightest, or the greatest of all time. When the conversation turns to tight ends, there is one undisputed truth: Tony Gonzalez set the gold standard. His contributions during 17 years in the NFL with the Kansas City Chiefs and Atlanta Falcons garnered him record-setting stats and earned him the respect of his peers, coaches, sports journalists, and fans. Inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2019, he is widely regarded as the greatest tight end in NFL history.

There's no one-size-fits-all path to this level of excellence. Players like Gonzalez dedicate countless hours to training and maintaining their bodies for peak performance. Mentally, they employ an intense focus, blocking out distractions and manifesting success.

"I had a little mental shift going into my third year in the NFL, when I started studying other players who came before me," Gonzalez says. "Honestly, I was shocked, because I thought I was working hard. I realized that if I wanted to be one of them, I had to make a change."

He spent more time practicing, lifting weights, and studying film, becoming increasingly obsessed with getting his body in better shape the right way. Once he understood how nutrition, sleep, and mental wellness could work together to enhance his performance, everything else started to fall in place. He believes that shift ultimately changed the trajectory of his career.

"Around my ninth year in the NFL, I finally understood the connection between what you put in your body and how that drives you. That's when I started to feel different," Gonzalez says. "At that point, I was just trying to squeeze in another two years, but I truly believe that by changing my eating and off-the-field habits, I was able to play seven more."

In 2009, Gonzalez co-authored *The All-Pro Diet: Lose Fat, Build Muscle, and Live Like a Champion*, outlining what

he'd learned about nutrition and fitness. A voracious reader and lifelong student, he's constantly in search of information that will improve every aspect of his life, and he has turned to self-help books and sports biographies for inspiration.

"I really wanted to be great and do what the greats were doing. I always say, 'Copy genius.' Eventually, your individuality will shine, but copy genius until you get there," Gonzalez says. "I started to meditate, do breathing exercises, journaling, and found ways to calm the pressure that comes with being at that level. I wanted to win and I wanted it badly."

FROM PRESSURE TO PRESERVATION

Since leaving the gridiron, Gonzalez has transitioned his expertise from the field to the mic. After becoming a Fox Sports analyst for *FOX NFL Kickoff*, he now co-hosts Amazon Prime Video's *Thursday Night Football*, providing weekly coverage during the NFL season. He's had several film and television appearances and is preparing to launch a podcast with his wife of nearly 20 years, October "Tobie" Gonzalez. Together, they'll discuss marriage, parenthood, and everything in between, with other high-profile couples each week. As the show suggests, the conversations will be honest, funny, and unfiltered.

TONY'S HEALTHY TIPS

- ★ I always make hydration a priority first thing in the morning. Starting the day with at least one big glass of water—sometimes two—helps me feel energized and ready to go.
- ★ Work out consistently. Consider 30 minutes, four times a week.
- ★ Get quality sleep that's restorative and uninterrupted.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOMMY GARCIA; GROOMING BY DOMINIQUE DIAZ



MAKING MEMORIES: TONY AND HIS WIFE, OCTOBER (“TOBIE”), POSE WITH THEIR CHILDREN—MALIA, NIKKO, AND RIVER (LEFT TO RIGHT)—AT THEIR FAMILY HOME IN LOS ANGELES IN 2024.



PREGAME COVERAGE: CO-HOSTS TONY GONZALEZ, CHARISSA THOMPSON, RYAN FITZPATRICK, ANDREW WHITWORTH, AND RICHARD SHERMAN CHAT IT UP DURING THURSDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL IN 2022.

“My hope is that listeners have a good time—that it’s entertaining, fun, and that they learn something,” Gonzalez says. “We’ve done counseling, raised four kids together, and co-parented. We’ve been married a long time in this industry and we’re pretty proud of that. We’ve realized you just have to take it one day at a time.”

The impulse to do this project coincides with Gonzalez turning 50 earlier this year. He’d spent so much of the first part of life carrying this enormous amount of pressure to be the best and a responsibility to prove his peak performance wasn’t a fluke. Now, he’s ready to redefine the next half, loosen the reins a bit, and stop taking things so seriously. Part of that perspective comes from a need to ensure he’s living a well-balanced, happy, and healthy life.

As a man of mixed-race descent, Gonzalez is keenly aware of the national statistics. About 1 in 6 Black men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime, and they experience heart failure-related cardiovascular disease deaths at rates 2.6 to 2.97 times higher than White men. Though many of these health disparities can be linked to access to care or environmental factors, others stem from genetic variants common in people of African ancestry as well as a lingering fear and mistrust of the medical system.

Gonzalez is working through the recommended list of medical tests for men in their 50s. With a family history of cardiac issues and prostate cancer, he’s already had a colonoscopy and his first appointment with a cardiologist and plans to stay proactively on top of everything else.

“I always tell my kids, no matter what route you take in life, it’s always going to be hard, so choose your ‘hard’ wisely,” Gonzalez explains. “It’s hard to work out and eat right most

of the time. But imagine how hard it would be to manage life after a stroke or heart attack. I know it’s not easy, but there are ways to make the experience more enjoyable. Find an exercise you like, whether it’s basketball, tennis, surfing, or start with something as simple as walking.”

FINDING YOUR WAY TO HAPPY

For Gonzalez, being healthy extends beyond the physical. He’s candid about managing his mental health with 20 minutes of meditation each day. His routine often starts in the morning as soon as the alarm rings. He stays in bed for an extra 10 minutes in quiet reflection. He describes it as a prayer where he’s communicating with a higher power. He thinks about the day ahead and how he plans to engage with others. The moment typically ends with gratitude. At night, he reflects on what went well and what he could have done better. The practice, he said, helps him stay calm, focused, and motivated.

With his pro football days behind him, Gonzalez has scaled back his intense workouts and training. These days, he’s in the gym four days a week for 30 to 40 minutes, mixing in weight training, boxing, and long walks while prioritizing sleep. He still has a sweet tooth, but he’s smart about it. It’s true what they say: With age comes wisdom, because he’s finally figured out the right direction toward his joy.

“I had a damn good career, and I’m really proud of it, but my first two years were really hard—physically and mentally. If I could, I’d go back to my 21-year-old self and tell him to relax, enjoy it, and be present in the moment.”

“It’s hard to work out and eat right most of the time. But imagine how hard it would be to manage life after a stroke or heart attack. I know it’s not easy, but there are ways to make the experience more enjoyable.”

—Tony Gonzalez



YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

A lifetime of discrimination and stress can take a toll

By Kendall K. Morgan

Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS,
WebMD Medical Reviewer

As you get older, thinking about your mental health is essential to your overall health and well-being, says Jasmin Brooks Stephens, PhD, a licensed clinical psychologist and expert in Black mental health at the University of California, Berkeley.

“Mental and physical health are deeply intertwined, especially as people age,” Stephens says. “We often talk about healthy aging in terms of blood pressure, diabetes, mobility, or heart disease, but mental health is just as central.”

DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND STRESS

Depression makes it harder to manage chronic illnesses that become more likely with age. Other mental health challenges or difficult emotions can take a toll, too. Anxiety can disrupt sleep and worsen physical symptoms, Stephens says. Chronic stress can contribute to inflammation and strain across multiple body systems. PTSD among Black adults is associated with an elevated risk for conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and stroke.



“For older Black Americans, this is especially important because mental health does not develop in isolation from lived experience,” Stephens says. “Many are managing chronic medical conditions while also carrying the cumulative effects of stress, loss, trauma, racism, and caregiving burden across the life course. If we ignore mental health, we are missing a major part of what healthy aging actually requires.”

TRAUMA AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

A study by Stephens and her colleagues found that 8 in 10 older Black Americans and Black Caribbean Americans had experienced at least one traumatic event over the course



of their lifetime. Those experiences were also linked to mental health concerns, including symptoms of depression, distress, and reduced life satisfaction.

“Trauma can continue to shape well-being long after the event itself has passed,” Stephens says. “Trauma is not always ‘over’ simply because it happened years ago. For many older adults, its effects accumulate, linger, or resurface later in life.”

If you’re living in places where you’re exposed to air pollution, noise, or unsafe conditions, those environmental factors also are detrimental to both physical and mental health, says Karen D. Lincoln, PhD, MSW, a social

WHEN TO GET HELP

Reach out if you or an aging loved one has signs of poor or worsening mental health including:

- 📖 Constant worrying
- 📖 Mood changes
- 📖 Isolating yourself from others
- 📖 Sleep problems
- 📖 Not eating
- 📖 Feeling sad or hopeless

worker and sociologist at the University of California Irvine. Financial stress and family concerns are also common causes of chronic stress with age.

STAY ENGAGED

In addition to talking with your primary care doctor or a mental health practitioner, Lincoln recommends leaning on your family, your faith-based community, or other social networks. Staying engaged socially is important for your brain health and can reduce your risk for dementia and Alzheimer’s disease, she says.

“Social isolation is a risk factor for both physical health conditions and mental health conditions, so the extent to which you can activate and stay engaged is really important,” Lincoln says.

Don’t underestimate the power of activities you may already be doing. For instance, Lincoln says games such as bid whist, dominoes, and spades serve not only as cultural traditions but are also brain games that can keep your mind active.

BE YOUR BIGGEST ADVOCATE

Persistence and preparation are key

By Kendall K. Morgan

Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS,
WebMD Medical Reviewer

Advocating for yourself is essential for supporting your health as you get older. It ensures your voice and health concerns are heard. Jamie Mitchell, PhD, a social work and health disparities researcher at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and founder of the Healthier Black Elders program in Flint, MI, which aims to reduce health disparities through research and education, has some advice on how you can be your own best advocate.

TRUST YOURSELF

“Advocating for yourself in a health care context means being informed,” Mitchell says. “It means being persistent about your own care.”

Mitchell says that many older people are passive recipients of health care. You may get “white coat syndrome” or assume your doctor knows best. While your doctor has expertise in medicine, “we’re the experts on our own body,” she says. Remember that you are “uniquely positioned to know when something doesn’t feel right.”



BE PERSISTENT

It isn’t always easy to feel your voice is being heard. It can be an “uphill battle,” Mitchell says. But don’t give up.

“If you feel like you’re not being heard, be persistent about that,” she says.

BE PREPARED

Think ahead about what you want to share and how you’ll get your point across in the brief time you’ll have with your doctor.

“Even if it’s a few minutes in the parking lot before you go into the office, just take a moment to center yourself, calm your mind, and think ahead about the top two or three things that you want to ask,” Mitchell says.

KEEP A RECORD

Make sure each doctor’s visit is well documented, Mitchell advises.

“Documenting for your own records, as well as insisting upon key things being documented in your electronic medical chart, are two things that folks can actively do to advocate for themselves,” she says.

Important Facts About



SHINGRIX

(ZOSTER VACCINE
RECOMBINANT, ADJUVANTED)

WHAT IS SHINGRIX (ZOSTER VACCINE RECOMBINANT, ADJUVANTED)?

- SHINGRIX is an FDA-approved vaccine for the prevention of shingles (herpes zoster):
 - In adults 50 years and older
 - In adults 18 years and older who are or will be at increased risk of shingles due to being immunocompromised by known disease or therapy
- SHINGRIX is not used to prevent chickenpox

WHAT IS SHINGLES AND WHAT CAUSES IT?

- Shingles, also known as herpes zoster, is a painful skin rash
- Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. 99% of people 50 years and older carry this virus. After a person recovers from chickenpox, the virus stays inactive in the body. As you age, your immune system starts to naturally decline, increasing your risk of the virus reactivating and causing shingles. 1 out of 3 people will get shingles in their lifetime

HOW DOES SHINGRIX WORK?

- SHINGRIX is a shingles vaccine that works to boost your body's protection against shingles

HOW IS SHINGRIX GIVEN?

- SHINGRIX is given as a 2-dose vaccine series (0.5 mL each, given in the muscle of the upper arm). It is important to complete the 2-dose series
 - In adults 50 years and older the second dose should be given between 2 and 6 months after the first dose
 - In adults 18 years and older who are or will be immunocompromised due to disease or medication and might benefit from a shorter vaccination schedule, the second dose can be administered 1 to 2 months later

WHO SHOULD NOT GET SHINGRIX?

- You should not receive SHINGRIX if you are allergic to any of its ingredients or had an allergic reaction to a previous dose of SHINGRIX

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS?

- An increased risk of Guillain-Barré syndrome (severe muscle weakness) was observed after vaccination with SHINGRIX
- Fainting can happen after getting injectable vaccines, including SHINGRIX. Precautions should be taken to avoid falling and injury due to fainting
- The most common side effects are pain, redness, and swelling at the injection site, muscle pain, tiredness, headache, shivering, fever, and upset stomach
- More people experienced fever and shivering when SHINGRIX was given with PNEUMOVAX 23

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- SHINGRIX was not studied in pregnant or nursing women. Tell your healthcare provider if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breastfeeding
- Vaccination with SHINGRIX may not protect all individuals
- Ask your healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of SHINGRIX. Only a healthcare provider can decide if SHINGRIX is right for you

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information
- To learn more about SHINGRIX, talk to your doctor, pharmacist, or other healthcare provider
- Visit [SHINGRIX.com](https://www.shingrix.com) or call 1-800-772-9292 for more information

Please see Important Safety Information on back cover.

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Produced in USA.

Clinical trials proved that compared to placebo, **SHINGRIX was more than 90% effective in preventing shingles** in adults 50 years and older.

90%
EFFECTIVE

Your immune system naturally weakens with age.
The risk for shingles increases sharply after 50 years of age.

If you're over 50 years old, talk to your doctor about SHINGRIX.

\$0

SHINGRIX is \$0 for almost everyone.

\$0 with Medicare Part D, \$0 for 98% of privately insured people.



Discover the numbers of a vaccine that's tested and proven. Scan to visit shingrixstory.com to learn more.

What Is SHINGRIX?

SHINGRIX is an FDA-approved vaccine for the prevention of shingles (herpes zoster) in adults 50 years and older.

SHINGRIX is not used to prevent chickenpox.

Important Safety Information

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You are encouraged to report vaccine adverse events to the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Visit www.vaers.hhs.gov to file a report, or call 1-800-822-7967. You may also file a report with GSK at gsk.public.reportum.com or 1-888-825-5249.

Please see Important Facts About SHINGRIX inside back cover.



SHINGRIX } **GSK**
(ZOSTER VACCINE
RECOMBINANT, ADJUVANTED)