

Eye Protection

Most people know about the danger of sun exposure to the skin. It is also important to be aware that exposure to the sun can have a detrimental effect on your eyes. Sunlight responsible for damage to the eyes is called ultraviolet or UV radiation.

Although our eyes provide some natural protection from the sun's harmful rays, over-exposure to sunlight can seriously damage vision. Photo keratitis (or snow blindness) can occur a few hours after activities such as skiing or sunbathing. The earth's diminishing ozone layer, which filters out less UV light, makes humans more susceptible to ultraviolet rays. In fact, exposure to UV radiation over many years is one cause of cataracts, a clouding of the eye lens. Moreover, if you have had cataract surgery to restore vision, you may be even more vulnerable to sun damage because the synthetic lens implant provides less protection.

You do not have to be basking on a sunny beach to compromise your vision. Ultraviolet light is strongest when it's reflected off snow, sand, water or pavement.

In order to protect yourself from potentially harmful UV radiation, the American Optometric Association recommends that sunglasses provide one of the best forms of protection. Sunglasses can block 99 to 100% of UV radiation and shield eyelids from sun exposure. Look for sunglasses that are close fitting to prevent light from entering through the sides. Try to get lenses that are polarized to reduce glare.

Avoid direct sun exposure in the late morning and mid-afternoon as this is when we are most susceptible to ultraviolet rays. Sitting in the shade of the gazebo or the lee of the porch is okay.

Wear a wide-brimmed hat in addition

to sunglasses for extra-protection (maybe we can get hats to make a comeback).

Be aware that some medications contain chemicals that can make the eyes especially sensitive to the sunlight. If you are taking psoralen compounds to treat psoriasis, antibiotics such as tetracycline, any sulfa-based drug or acne medication, you should talk to your doctor about possible sun-induced side effects.

We crave sunlight all winter long. Please add just a few precautions so that you can safely enjoy that sunlight all spring and summer.

Anti-Aging Tips

According to Prevention Magazine, some habits that age you include:

1. Shallow breathing- people with spinal curvature or who lean over their walkers, people who slump for extended periods of time in their recliner chairs, and folks responding to stress tend not to take deep, full breaths and instead have a habit of shallow breathing. Lungs that are not able to fully expand won't be able to ward off respiratory infections and deliver the best levels of oxygen to your brain. Stress increases the concentration of hormones that will increase your blood pressure and further lower your immunity. Try deep breathing exercises for at least two minutes twice a day. Attending sittersize in the afternoon will get you out of that chair and help you take those deep breaths!

2. More on fruits and vegetables- Your mother told you, your dietician told you and more research rolls in that you need to eat your fruits and veggies EVERY day! The antioxidants in vegetables remain active for only a few hours and need to be continuously replaced. (Broccoli for

breakfast!) a new University of Oxford study shows that those who ate 8 or more servings of fruits/vegetables a day were 22% less likely to die from heart disease than those who ate 3 servings. Simply make a promise to yourself that you won't ignore that rutabaga/ carrot/ etc... on your plate. Eat that salad at every opportunity. Your dining room staff work hard to make each meal pleasurable, so eat up and pretty soon you'll be more nutritious too!

High Blood Pressure

Hypertension is the medical term for high blood pressure. When your blood pressure is taken, two numbers are recorder. The top number is the systolic reading. This reflects the amount of pressure in the arteries as the heart pumps a surge of blood. It is the force the heart uses to get the blood away from the heart. The bottom number is called the diastolic level. This is the pressure the arterial system between the beats, or when the heart rests.

Both numbers are important. Studies have shown that keeping the systolic number below 140 and the diastolic number below 90 results in a much lower risk of developing hardening of the arteries. As the blood pressure rises above those levels, the chance of developing a heart attack or stroke climbs.

Please have your blood pressure checked regularly and discuss it with your doctor. Be heart smart!



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INDEPENDENT AND ASSISTED LIVING

Red Oak Residence



Stay Active!

May is National Fitness month! Physical activity does not need to be strenuous to be beneficial. You can obtain significant health benefits with a moderate amount of physical activity, preferably daily.

Keeping your body active can help you maintain the ability to live independently by reducing the risk of falling and fracturing bones. Plus, you'll lessen the risk of developing high blood pressure, colon cancer and diabetes. By staying active, you can improve your stamina and muscle strength, maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints; and control swelling and pain associated with arthritis.

The key is to do moderate activity each day. It is never too late to start. Some of the weakness that comes with age may be related to inactivity.

Staying flexible is important so you can reach, bend and keep your balance. Stretching is a great way to overcome muscle stiffness. Activity is so important that Red Oak has exercise options available to you at least six times per week. Learn simple stretches at our sittersize class. Watch the calendar for weather- dependent strolls. Let loose at balloon volleyball. There are many ways to add a little action to your day. Remember, now is the time to start. You can do it!

Mad Hatter's Tea Party

Saturday, May 13

2:00-3:00pm

Put on your best, zaniest or most outrageous hat and join us for tea and cookies in the Dining Room! This is a family affair invite anyone willing to have a good time!



We give thanks on Memorial Day that we live in a free nation and honor those men and women who gave their lives while serving in our armed forces for that blessing! Memorial Day is also called Decoration Day. Since WW I it has also been called Poppy Day. Volunteers sell small, red artificial flowers as a fundraiser for disabled veterans.



