

# Caring Matters

## Organizing KISS

### Keep It Simple Strategies

No matter how much space there is in our homes, we always think we want more. This could be because our stuff seems to expand to fit our surroundings. These days, however, it's not so much about finding more space, but about making the most of the space we already have. Whether you are moving into a smaller space or just want your current space to look bigger, here's a Downsizing Diva KISS:



Find a place for everything and keep everything in its place.



- This expression has been around for ages because it makes sense!
- When you only keep items you want, use and need, you are taking a major step towards successful space management.
- Clear out drawers, closets and cupboards regularly.

Store "like" with "like."

- This rule is most effective for items that purchase regularly.
- When you store paper products, laundry detergents and cleaning supplies together, you will know when they are running low and it's time to buy more.
- With bulk buying, it's easy to end up with far more of these products than you actually use.
- Keep tape, staplers, scissors, pens, envelopes, stamps and paper in one drawer so you can find them when you need them.

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## Director's Message

*"Making resolutions is a cleansing ritual of self-assessment and repentance that demands personal honesty and, ultimately, humility. Breaking resolutions is part of the cycle."*  
Eric Zorn

As 2011 draws to a close, it is time to reflect on the amazing accomplishments of the past year as we renew our thoughts and plan for 2012.

Every new year people make resolutions to change aspects of themselves they believe are negative. Most revert to how they were and feel like failures.

This year, the challenge should be to make a new resolution . . . to be yourself.

To each of our readers, we extend the heartfelt wish that the tasks and goals that you aspire to achieve throughout the year will be met with success and the happiness that comes from the consequences of your diligence and efforts. May you also have 365 days of happiness and good cheer!

To our clients, care recipients and caregivers, we trust this coming year will bring each of you and your loved ones abounding health and good fortune.

Happy New Year!



David

David Porter, CPCA



*"Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart."*

Victor Hugo

## How to Communicate with Your Parents Medical Team

For children of aging parents, caregiving is often a role they do not feel ready to play. Being our parents' children has certain built-in dynamics, which is why bringing a doctor or another professional into the conversation can be so helpful. Here are some tips for opening and improving the lines of communication with a parent's medical team.



### Do the Legal Paperwork:

Give the doctor copies of your parent's signed health care proxy or durable medical power of attorney so he or she knows who in the family is responsible for making medical decisions should your parent be unable to do so. In addition, have your parent give the doctor a list of family members allowed access to his or her medical condition. Most doctors will have the patient sign consent forms so they can speak with that family member without the patient's presence.

### Pick One Family Liaison:

Pick one family member that you want the physician to speak to and who will then transmit this information to the rest of the family. Physicians do not have time to field phone calls from several family members.

### Attend Doctor's Appointments:

Even if you just attend one appointment, it makes an enormous difference. Ask the doctor how he or she would like to be contacted whether by phone or e-mail and then give him or her a list of all the ways you can be reached in case of an emergency.

### Get Help if You Need It:

If you can't attend appointments, consider hiring an agency or nurse who can do it for you. You can request this person to relay what was said during the visit, ask any questions you have, and bring up any concerns.

A personal support worker or nurse might notice things like weight loss, poor hygiene, disorder in the house, the mail not being collected, etc., and care professionals are particularly helpful when communicating with senior and medical providers.

Many individuals have found a care manager, personal support worker or nurse invaluable when they couldn't be there for their loved one.

Source: care.com

## Organizing KISS (cont from pg 1)

### One in, one out.

- This strategy will definitely help you control the clutter in your home.
- Clothing you no longer need can be put to good use by your local family shelter or thrift shop.

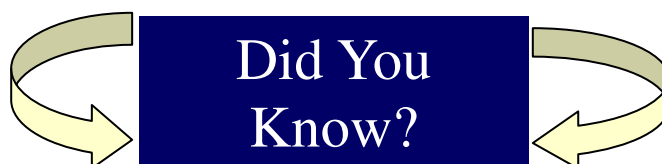


### If you haven't used it in a year, donate it.

- When seasons change and you are storing clothes, clean each item to make sure it is ready to wear next season.
- Check for missing buttons, droopy hems and split seams. Make these minor repairs before storing each item.
- Try clothes on before putting them away to make sure they will fit next year.
- Edit your wardrobe seasonally and you won't be overwhelmed with clutter again.

Remember, the important things in life ... aren't things!

*Gail Sheilds and Karen Shinn are Move Organizers Extraordinaire and owners of Downsizing Diva - the company that helps seniors and their families downsize and move. Check out their website, [www.downsizingdiva.com](http://www.downsizingdiva.com) or call 1-866-836-6999*



### Essential Fatty Acids

**Why they are good for skin:** Omega-3 fatty acids help nourish your skin by reducing inflammation and the production of androgen, a hormone linked to acne.

**Best food sources:** Salmon and small, fatty fish such as anchovies, sardines and herring are all good choices. Soybeans and ground flaxseeds are good alternatives.



**How much do you need?** The Institute of Medicine in Washington D.C., says 1.1 grams (1,100 mg) per day for women represents an adequate intake.

Source: Best Health Magazine

# Yoga For Seniors



Aging and health problems seem to go hand-in-hand. Arthritis, high blood pressure and decreased mental cognition are just a few of the more common ailments people face as they grow older.

Yoga, one of the most ancient healing practices around today, holds the key to helping fight off age-related diseases, or at least allows those afflicted to better

cope. It focuses on both our inner and outer lives while addressing our physical, mental and spiritual well-being. For seniors living a yogic way of life, the benefits are truly amazing.

Here are some of the ways yoga is improving the lives of seniors:

## Balance

Balance, defined as the ability to control and maintain the body's position whether in motion or when still, often deteriorates as people grow older.



Yoga poses help cultivate the tiny muscles around the joints, which are critical in the development of balance. These poses also strengthen the ankles and hips, which help the body remain stable.

## Bone Density

Any bone not used by putting pressure on it starts to lose density. Yoga teaches us how to put weight on our bones safely to build the density back. When combined with a sound nutrition program, these exercises promote strong bones



## Memory

There are two primary reasons for loss of memory as we age. The first is an inadequate supply of blood to the brain, which may be caused by a subluxation in the spine. The second is tension or scarring in the meninges, which puts pressure on the brain and prevents synapses from firing properly.

Yoga brings blood flow to the brain. It helps keep cranial sutures mobile so they don't cram the meninges. It assists the movement of the spine, preventing subluxations and reversing ones that are already present.

## Flexibility

Aging makes it harder for our bodies to move around compared to 20 or 30 years previously. The key to flexibility is enhancing alignment and strength to cultivate the joints. Yoga doesn't just aim to make us more flexible, but to balance flexibility with strength.

## Muscle Mass Deterioration

As the human body ages, muscle mass deteriorates. Traditional muscle-building activities such as weight lifting, however, can place undue stress on our bodies as we get older and may end up causing injuries. Yoga, on the other hand, is a safe and gentle way to help build and maintain muscle mass well into our senior years.



## Endurance

Yoga is a panacea for those over age 60 if for no other reason than endurance. Yoga teaches movement in a safe and aligned way. It relieves tension in the diaphragm and rib cage, which helps the heart pump more easily.

## Stress

Stress presents itself in a number of ways including headaches, muscle stiffness and tightness, fatigue and anxiety. Chronic stress, can lead to a number of degenerative diseases, including coronary thrombosis, brain hemorrhage, hardening of the arteries, high blood pressure, kidney failure, arthritis, peptic ulcers and cancer. Yoga is one of the most effective, natural ways to relieve the body of stress and enhance spiritual well-being.

## Getting Started

The best way to get started with yoga is to find a qualified teacher near you. Bear in mind that not all teachers are created equally. Make sure you find one who is a certified instructor. Also very important is to find a teacher with whom you are comfortable and who you feel is interested in your progress along the path of yoga. An excellent teacher will recognize how to guide you so you are learning and growing at a pace that is safe and effective. Never, force your body to make a movement that causes you pain. Much of yoga is listening to your body. Let it be your true teacher.

*Source: parentgiving.com*



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**Our Vision**

**To provide first-rate home care with reliable, conscientious, knowledgeable and affordable personal support workers to care recipients and families in need.**

**services**

## How Seniors can Ensure the Safe Passage of Winter

We can do some basic things to ensure the safe passage of winter. Overall, we must remember that caring for ourselves is a priority, and when it's not possible to go out, to surrender to the pleasures of a good mystery novel and a hot cup of tea.



Be sure every day to listen to the weather forecasts and pay attention when you are asked to stay off the roads in bad storms. Take extra precautions with winter driving. Make sure your tires have good treads and that your defroster and windshield wipers are in good working order. Keep your gas tank at least half full when you start out to do errands, in case you get delayed in storm-related traffic.

At home, ensure your comfort and avoid hypothermia by keeping the thermostat turned up above 65 degrees Fahrenheit (18-20 Celsius) and dressing in layers to maintain body heat.



When leaving the house, put road salt, or sand on steps and driveways, and wear footwear with excellent grips to avoid falling. Even if you don't normally use a cane, there's no harm in taking one on a winter walk for extra security when the pathways are snow-packed. If possible, avoid doing the heavy work of shoveling your driveway; seek help from friends or relatives or hire someone to do it for you.

Continue to do your daily exercises indoors if you can't get out, and make every effort to socialize when the weather is agreeable. Depression is more prevalent in the darkness of the cold months, and for many seniors, it is made worse by the isolation that comes with the inclement weather.

Most importantly, try to take advantage of the fun of winter, by finding a favourite activity, the chilly season will seem to fly by, and the spring buds will appear before you know it!

Source: [www.moncton.ca](http://www.moncton.ca)

## Happy, Healthy Teeth

According to the 2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey, even though cavities are largely preventable, 96 percent of adults have them. Dr. Alastair Nicoll, a dentist in Elford, B.C., says they are a result of bacteria metabolizing sugar into acid and dissolving tooth structure. Here are the top foods to avoid:



**Sugar:** "It doesn't matter whether its refined white sugar, brown sugar, or honey, sugar is sugar," says Dr. Nicoll. "It's not the amount, but how often you eat it." Sugar creates an acidic environment in your mouth, which persists for about two hours after it's consumed. Also, watch out for the large amounts of sugar found in many processed foods, including ketchup and spaghetti sauces. Be aware that juices that have no added sugar still contain natural sugar. If you are eating foods with lots of sugar, it's better to consume them during meals rather than as snacks because your mouth produces more saliva during meals, which helps neutralize acid production.

**Raisins, Dried Fruit:** These are high in sugar. Plus, they can get stuck between your teeth and stay there for hours, causing decay. If you can't brush immediately, after eating these foods, floss or rinse your mouth with water.

**Alcohol:** Alcohol dries out your mouth and reduces saliva production. It's also acidic, which dissolves enamel. Be sure to brush your teeth about 20 minutes after drinking alcohol.

Source: *Best Health Magazine*

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