

**2** Senior  
Dental Care

**4** Water Activities  
for Seniors

**5** Summer  
Safety

**6** Summer  
Recipes

# healthwise

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# Senior Dental Care

## Quality oral care for total health

Healthy teeth and gums are important to your overall health. Good oral hygiene can help prevent bad breath, tooth decay, and gum disease — and even some medical conditions.

According to the American Dental Association as you age you enter into a second round of cavity prone years. One common cause of cavities in older adults is dry mouth. Dry mouth is not a normal part of aging. However, it is a side-effect in more than 500 medications, including those for allergies or asthma, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, pain, anxiety or depression, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. This is just one reason why it's so important to tell your dentist about any medications that you're taking. Your dentist can make recommendations to help relieve your dry mouth symptoms and prevent cavities.

Here are some common recommendations:

- Use over-the-counter oral moisturizers, such as a spray or mouthwash.
- Consult with your physician on whether to change the medication or dosage.
- Drink more water. Carry a water bottle with you, and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Your mouth needs constant lubrication.
- Use sugar-free gum or lozenges to stimulate saliva production.

- Get a humidifier to help keep moisture in the air.
- Avoid foods and beverages that irritate dry mouths, like coffee, alcohol, carbonated soft drinks, and acidic fruit juices.
- Your dentist may apply a fluoride gel or varnish to protect your teeth from cavities.

## Beyond the gum line

Problems that develop in your mouth can also affect the rest of your body. Your oral health is linked to various diseases and conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, pregnancy and birth complications, and pneumonia. With coordinated preventive care, your healthcare providers can help find and treat these conditions early.

## Tips for a healthy smile

- Go to the dentist regularly.
- Avoid snacking throughout the day.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.
- Brush your teeth twice a day and floss.
- Avoid tobacco use.

To learn more about Kaiser Permanente dental, visit [kp.org/dental/nw](https://kp.org/dental/nw).

Source: *Dental health concerns - adults over 60*. MouthHealthy. (n.d.). Dental Health Concerns - Adults Over 60 | MouthHealthy - Oral Health Information from the ADA.

Courtesy of Kaiser Permanente







# Water Activities for Seniors

Regular physical activity is important to health at all ages. Benefits can be seen in your physical, mental, and emotional health.

As you age, some forms of movement become more challenging due to things like joint deterioration, certain medical conditions, or loss of muscle mass. Movement is particularly important for adults over the age of 65 because it aids in muscle retention, bone strength, improved balance and mobility, and mental sharpness.<sup>1</sup> It can also add to your social health depending on the type of movement you choose.

Water activities are a great alternative to more traditional, high impact exercises such as weightlifting or running. Water exercise uses water for resistance. It also may be called water therapy, pool therapy, aqua therapy, or aquatics. Water activities come with a slew of benefits and are a great way to stay healthy and fit. Buoyancy reduces gravitational pull which takes pressure off joints, reduces pain, provides balance, and makes it easier to move.<sup>2</sup> With extra mobility and stability provided by the water, you can engage in activities that boost your cardiovascular & respiratory health, build and strengthen muscle, increase flexibility, and enhance your balance. This makes day-to-day activities much more manageable without becoming dependent on others.

It's recommended that adults 65 and older get 150 minutes of moderate-intensity movement each week.<sup>1</sup> If you are new to exercise, it may be more beneficial to start with 10-15 minutes a day, a few days a week, and work up to 150 minutes a week. This will help prevent injury or burnout. Before starting any new movement regimen, it's important to talk with your doctor.

Once you have the green light, here are some water activities you can try:

1. **Water walking:** a straightforward exercise that involves walking in the pool at a depth that is comfortable to you.<sup>3</sup>
2. **Water jogging or marching:** increase the intensity of your movement by jogging around the pool or marching in place.<sup>3</sup>
3. **Flutter kicks:** hold the edge of the pool and bring your body towards the top of the water. Kick your legs up and down at a speed and duration that meets your needs.<sup>3</sup>
4. **Standing water pushup:** great for upper body strength, firmly place your hands on the edge of the pool and extend your arms, lifting your body out of the water.<sup>3</sup>
5. **Swimming:** target all your muscle groups simultaneously while improving joint mobility.<sup>3</sup>
6. **Water aerobics:** this can be instructor led or done on your own. Combine a series of water movements such as marching, arm curls, and leg lifts.<sup>3</sup>
7. **Water dumbbells:** lightweight, foam dumbbells can be added to your movement and increase resistance when used on the surface or under the water.<sup>3</sup>

Whether you're a movement pro looking to add some variety to your routine, or new to exercise, water activities can be a great addition to your life.

## References:

1. (2023, April 13). *How much physical activity do older adults need?* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved March 5, 2024, from [bit.ly/3JuwoHp](https://bit.ly/3JuwoHp).
2. (n.d.). *5 Simple and Fun Water Aerobics Exercises for Seniors*. Senior Lifestyle. Retrieved March 5, 2024, from [seniorlifestyle.com/resources/blog/5-best-water-aerobics-exercises-seniors/](https://seniorlifestyle.com/resources/blog/5-best-water-aerobics-exercises-seniors/).
3. (n.d.). *9 Beneficial Water Exercises for Seniors*. Seasons Retirement Communities. Retrieved March 5, 2024, from [seasonsretirement.com/water-exercises-for-seniors/](https://seasonsretirement.com/water-exercises-for-seniors/).

Courtesy of Moda Health

# Summer Safety

With warmer weather here, you may be rushing outside to enjoy the sunshine. Here are some tips and information that may help you enjoy the summer months.

Think about putting together a portable health kit with items that may help you stay comfortable when you are on the go:

- Sunscreen – with broad spectrum protection.
- Sunburn relief.
- Insect repellents.
- First-aid supplies.
- A water bottle.

**Limit sun exposure.** More people in the U.S. are diagnosed with skin cancer each year than all other cancers combined, and most skin cancer is associated with sun exposure. Knowing how to help protect your skin from the sun may have a lasting impact.

- Your sunscreen should have broad spectrum (UVA and UVB) protection. This means that it filters both types of ultraviolet radiation.
- Sunscreen should be reapplied throughout the day. Sunscreens should also be reapplied immediately after swimming, toweling off or excessive sweating.
- Apply about one ounce (about 2 tablespoons) of sunscreen each time.
- Your skin is still soaking up UV rays even on cloudy days or while driving with the windows down. To be consistent, consider putting on sunscreen first thing in the morning, even if you aren't thinking about going outside.

**Drink water throughout the day.** Water does more than just quench your thirst – it keeps your body running. It allows your cells, tissues, joints and organs to work properly. It also regulates your body temperature, especially during physical activity, and helps get rid of waste.

Sources:

True or false: What to know when it comes to

sun protection | UnitedHealthcare (uhc.com)

5 ways to help protect your health during summer travel | UnitedHealthcare (uhc.com)

Why drinking water does more than just quench your thirst | UnitedHealthcare (uhc.com)

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*Courtesy of UnitedHealthcare®*



# Veggie-Loaded Deviled Eggs

This lighter take on a traditional party appetizer gets more colorful with veggies and tomatoes.

## Ingredients

6 hard-boiled eggs, peeled  
 ¼ cup low-fat plain Greek yogurt  
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
 Salt and pepper to taste  
 ⅛ teaspoon smoked paprika  
 2 tablespoons minced red bell pepper  
 2 tablespoons minced green onion  
 2 tablespoons minced celery  
 12 thin slices cherry tomato  
 1 teaspoon fresh dill leaves

## Directions

1. Cut eggs lengthwise in half. Remove yolks and place in medium bowl; mash with fork.
2. Stir in yogurt, mustard, salt, pepper and paprika, followed by the bell pepper, onion and celery.
3. Fill whites with egg yolk mixture, heaping mixture slightly.
4. Top each filled egg with one slice of tomato and a small piece of dill.
5. Cover and refrigerate up to 24 hours.

## Nutritional information (per serving)

Serving size: ½ egg

Number of servings: 12

Calories	41
Total fat	2g
Saturated fat	1g
Cholesterol	108mg
Sodium	71mg
Total carbohydrate	1g
Dietary fiber	0g
Sugars	0g
Protein	4g

Source: Renew Magazine, Issue 32, 2023

Courtesy of UnitedHealthcare®

# Peanut-Sesame Slaw with Soba Noodles

## Ingredients

### Slaw

4 ounces soba noodles or whole wheat spaghetti  
1 very small purple or green cabbage, sliced into quarters and core removed (about 16 ounces/6 cups shredded)  
1/2 pound (about 12) Brussels sprouts, nubby ends removed, or additional cabbage (about 2 cups shredded)  
4 carrots, peeled  
1 bunch of green onions, trimmed and sliced into thin rounds

### Peanut-sesame dressing

1/2 cup peanut butter  
3 tablespoons white wine vinegar or rice vinegar  
3 tablespoons toasted sesame oil  
3 tablespoons reduced-sodium tamari or other soy sauce  
2 tablespoons honey or maple syrup  
1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger  
2 garlic cloves, pressed or minced

### Garnish

Sprinkle of coarsely chopped peanuts  
Handful of cilantro, coarsely torn  
1 lime, sliced into wedges  
Optional, for spice lovers: sriracha or chili-garlic sauce

## Directions

1. Cook the soba noodles: Bring a large pot of water to boil and cook the noodles according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water before returning to pot.
2. Prepare the vegetables: This is easier in a food processor than by hand. If using a food processor, shred the cabbage and sprouts with the slicing disk, then grate the carrots using the grating disk. Or use a chef's knife to chop the cabbage and sprouts into thin strips, then coarsely grate the carrots.
3. Prepare the dressing: In a 2-cup liquid measuring cup or medium bowl, whisk together the dressing

## Nutritional information (per serving)

Serving size: 1 cup

Number of servings: 8

Calories	265
Total fat	13.8g
Saturated fat	2.5g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	431.4mg
Total carbohydrate	31.2g
Dietary fiber	4.6g
Sugars	11.5g
Protein	8.9g

Source: Cookie and Kate [cookieandkate.com/peanut-soba-noodle-slaw-recipe/](https://cookieandkate.com/peanut-soba-noodle-slaw-recipe/)

Courtesy of Moda Health

ingredients until smooth. The mixture should be thick but drizzly; if it's too thick, whisk in water in 1 tablespoon increments until it is the right consistency (at which point you might need to add a little salt, to taste, since the flavors have been diluted.)

4. In a large serving bowl, combine the cooked soba noodles, shredded cabbage, brussel sprouts, grated carrots, and chopped green onions. Pour dressing over the vegetables and toss to coat (you may or may not need all of the dressing). For the best flavor, let the slaw marinate for 20 minutes before serving.
5. Serve slaw with a sprinkling of chopped peanuts, torn cilantro, and a lime wedge. Serve with sriracha on the side if you'd like a spicy kick. This slaw keeps very well for a few days (covered and refrigerated). Before serving, wake up the flavors with a dash of lime juice or vinegar and more fresh cilantro.



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