

Senior Living



Find Inner Peace

Some of us constantly find our minds racing. Whether it's about health conditions, financial burdens or family difficulties, clearing the distractions from your head and finding inner silence is beneficial.

It helps us work through our problems and navigate life with a sense of calm.

While it may be easy to think that you can just shut your mind off and relish in serenity, that's not always the case. Finding peace in your mind takes practice, dedication and accepting what makes your brain race.

If you're ready to stop the chatter in your mind that disturbs your daily life, here are some tips to get you started.

LIVE STRESS FREE

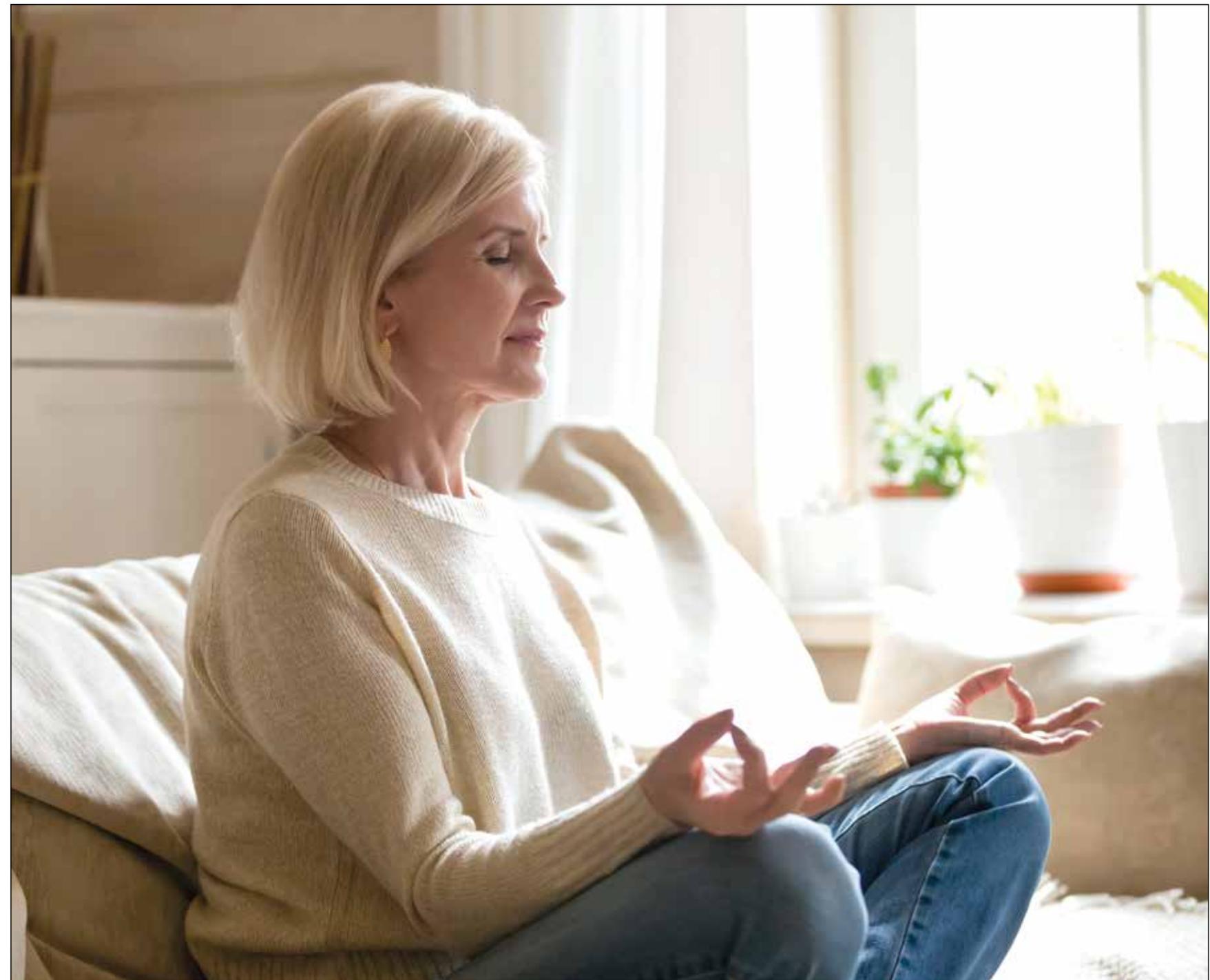
According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, suffering from long-term stress can strain your body and contribute to worsening symptoms regarding mental health. They say these are the most common reasons people are susceptible to becoming stressed.

Understanding them can help plan a strategy to avoid these situations. They include not getting enough sleep, lack of a support network, experiencing poor physical health and not eating a healthy diet.

While there may be bigger factors at play, making minor changes can decrease the amount of stress you experience.

DON'T NEGLECT YOUR BODY

Much like your vehicle you rely on to



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navigate you through town, your body requires maintenance to perform at its best. Regular exercise doesn't only benefit your physical health, it also releases stress-relieving hormones throughout your body. While beginning a routine may be difficult, as it becomes a part of your life, it's a fun and expected experience for your body and mind.

You should also treat yourself to healthy eating options. The NAMI suggests that eating unprocessed foods like whole grains, vegetables and fruits is the foundation for overall health. Eating a healthier diet is also shown to stabilize your mood.

MEDITATE

If you are skeptical of the benefits

gained through meditation, the experts at the Exploration of Consciousness Research Institute encourages us to try it to improve self-discipline, concentration, motivation and a positive mindset. Meditation is a way to delve deep into our minds to discover the roots of stressful issues and can teach us to accept them or build a plan of resolution.

Vacation in an RV

For those who retired and reside in a cooler region, it's not uncommon to leave home as fall and winter enter.

Traveling to warmer destinations can be affordable if you have a vacation home. However, when your plan includes an extended stay hopping from condos or hotels, the costs can rack up quickly.

One way to avoid the expense is by investing in an RV and bringing the comforts of home with you. Driving the American roadways and stopping for rest at different campgrounds or camper resorts offers a new perspective on vacation and can even create life-long friendships with other travelers.

Before heading to the RV dealership, here are some decisions you should plan to make.

TYPE OF CAMPER

The size and length of your camper largely lies on the type of vehicle you plan to use for hauling. If you already have a truck for towing, explain to your salesman its limits. However, if you plan to purchase an RV, then a vehicle for hauling, your options for weight and towing options are vaster.

Here are a few of the most common RVs you should expect to choose from.



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Class A & C: Perfect for full-time campers, you can forgo an additional towing vehicle as these camping companions are built on a truck or bus chassis and equipped with a drivetrain.

Fifth wheel: These RVs typically offer the largest living space in towable campers. Your truck must be equipped with a fifth-wheel hitch which usually requires an additional installation.

Travel trailer: A camper built to be towed with a common bumper hitch, they accommodate campers with easy towing and a wide variety of floor plans and features to choose from.

BUY NEW OR USED?

Many RV shoppers may choose to purchase their vehicle through a private party to save money. Unless you're buying from a trusted source,

this investment can be a mistake, especially if the camper was mistreated by a previous owner.

For the best peace of mind that you are buying a reliable vehicle, work with a professional dealership. Even their used units may come with an extended warranty and a guarantee that it has been thoroughly inspected. Buying a brand new unit is your best chance to take advantage of

the latest and greatest features offered by a manufacturer.

Look for enhanced heating or cooling systems if you plan to trek into extreme temperature regions and floor plans that make sense to your lifestyle. Don't be discouraged if you don't see your dream machine sitting on the lot, most reputable dealers can custom order the perfect RV because of their relationships with manufacturers.

Lessen the Risk of Strokes

The risks of experiencing a life-threatening stroke increases with age.

In fact, the National Center for Biotechnology Information estimates that 70% of victims are aged 65 or older. While the risks associated with age are out of your control, there are numerous lifestyle changes you can make to lessen your chances of experiencing one.

Do you know the signs that you or a loved one is suffering from a stroke? The National Institutes on Aging encourages us to become familiar with these symptoms and call 911 immediately if you are experiencing them:

- Sudden confusion or inability to speak coherently;
- Numbness or weakness to the head, arm or leg - especially on one side of the body;
- Problems seeing in one or both eyes; and
- Sudden dizziness or a severe headache occurring with no known cause.

The speed at which you identify a stroke and receive medical help can greatly impact the lasting effects during recovery.

LOWER THE RISKS

The United States Department of Health and Human Services suggests that keeping your blood pressure in the normal range is one of the most important steps to lower your risk of a stroke. Here are a few more actions they recom-



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mend.

Be physical and eat healthy to maintain a healthy weight. Quit smoking. Regulate cholesterol and blood sugar levels and treat conditions of heart disease.

PROACTIVE HEALTH CARE

Without regular checkups, it's impossible to understand your stroke risks. Take control of your health by committing

to a proactive routine with your primary physician. With a few simple tests, they can discover your likelihood of an episode and offer tips on how to resolve the risks.

Harvard Health Publishing says one such screening, a carotid ultrasound, is efficient in identifying a buildup of cholesterol-filled plaque in arteries in the neck. These are the vessels that deliver blood to the

brain and can cause a stroke once blocked. Doctors may also determine stroke-inducing heart problems by simply listening with a stethoscope. They will be watching for irregular rates or rhythms.

LEARN FAMILY HISTORY

While you can change your lifestyle to promote healthier living, your genetics may mean you are predisposed to the risks

of a stroke. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says conditions like heart disease, sickle-cell disease and heredity attributing to unhealthy choices, can all be passed down genetically. Understanding your risk due to family history can show you the seriousness of your risks and improve your efforts to make changes to maintain your health.

Benefits of Assisted Living

Requiring the help of others can be a hard reality to accept.

Many seniors may view moving to an assisted living center as giving up their independence. However, these specialized facilities offer people much of your familiar lifestyle with the security that someone is watching over your health. Consider these benefits they provide for the next new and exciting chapter in your life.

CAMARADERIE WITH RESIDENTS

Social isolation can be a devastating condition for seniors. In fact, the American Association of Retired Persons offers these sobering statistics to consider.

- 17% of adults aged 65 and older feel isolated.
- 26% are at an increased risk of early death due to the feeling of loneliness.
- 46% of women aged 75 and older live alone.

An assisted living facility helps maintain a social life as community events are held to stimulate physical and mental health. Seniors can participate in exercise programs, exciting games and build relationships with staff and fellow residents.

CONSTANT HEALTH CARE SUPERVISION

You may not feel like you need constant supervision at this stage in your life, but as



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you continue to age, it's likely your capabilities will falter and make daily activities more difficult. Deciding to commit to an assisted living community before this occurs, allows you to become familiar with the staff and professionals you will later rely on. They are highly

trained to offer 24/7 care in a professional and dignified manner.

MORE FREE TIME

One reason seniors decide to move into assisted living is when the demand of maintenance for their family home becomes too much. Once you

downsize and sell your previous property, you gain more free time to use for fun activities or to enhance your health.

HEALTHY AND DELICIOUS MEALS

Cooking can become increasingly difficult due to

conditions like arthritis, but it's still important to eat healthy. Most assisted living facilities offer delicious meals which include the nutrients your body needs to age gracefully. Dining centers also give residents the opportunity to enjoy the company of friends as they share an elegant meal.

Activities with Limited Mobility

While there are many health disorders that can affect your mobility and energy, you shouldn't be discouraged from engaging in more stationary activities.

If it's difficult to stay physically active, challenging your mind can have great health benefits to your cognitive health.

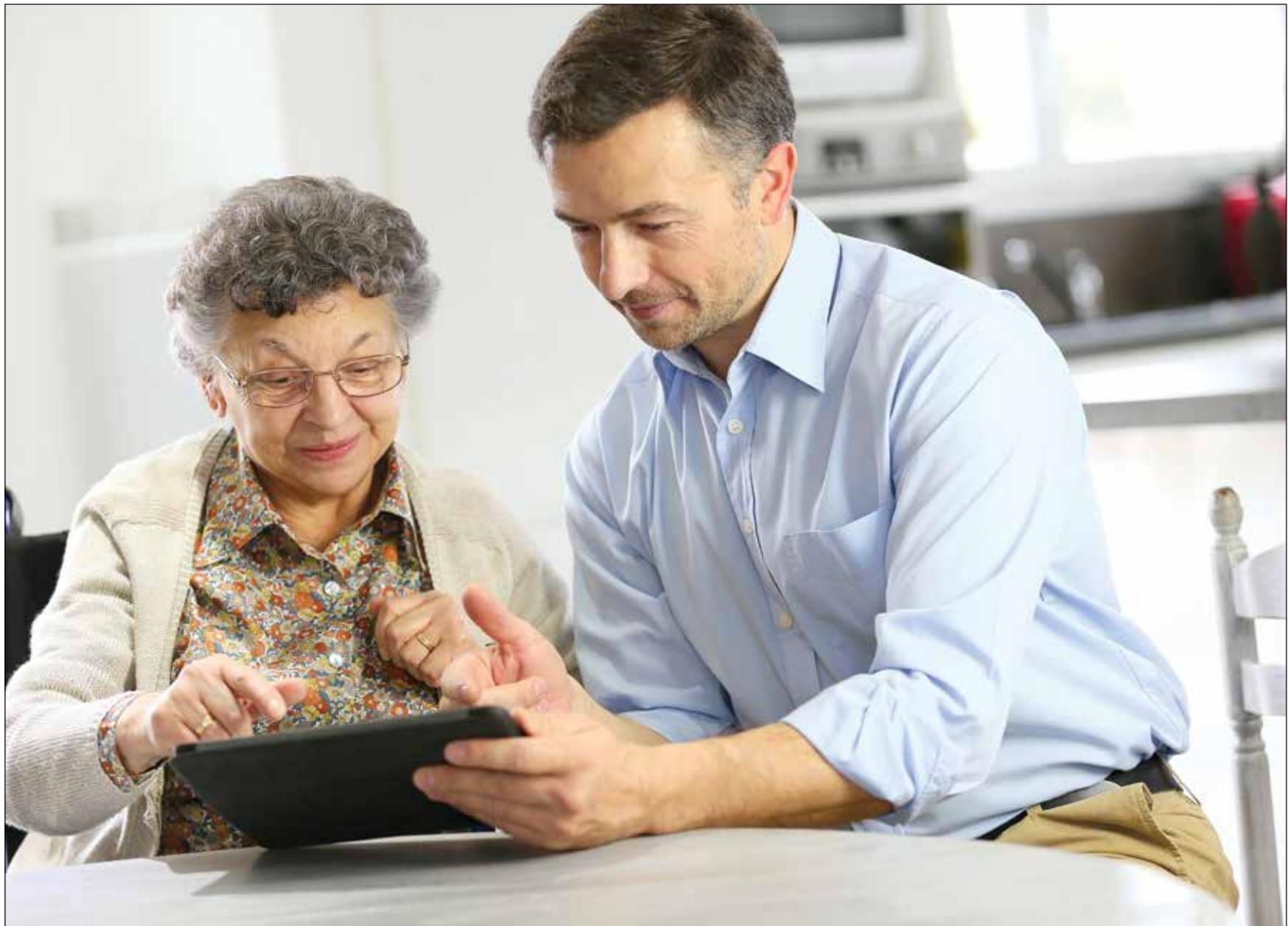
According to the National Institutes on Aging, simple activities like reading, photography and learning a new skill can improve your memory and ability to think. If you're struggling to find activities to occupy your time, consider partaking in some of these beneficial activities.

READING

A great way to spend time indoors during the crisp autumn temperatures is in the company of a good book. Whether you're aiming to improve your knowledge on a subject or inspiring creativity by delving into a nonfiction read, the organization Reading Partners suggests reading is a proven way to reduce stress, combat mental decline and increase empathy. The mental benefits of enjoying a story or article are something to take advantage of.

VOLUNTEER AT A LOCAL CHARITY

Contributing monetary donations is a great way to feel a sense of accomplishment and help a worthy cause. Volunteering your time can be even more beneficial. Look around your community for organizations who need help to enhance their mission. You can look for jobs like serving at a food shelter, reading to children and preparing community events to raise money.



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PLAY CHALLENGING GAMES

Challenge and improve your mental skills by participating in puzzle solving games. You can typically find difficult crossword puzzles or sudoku challenges within your daily newspaper. When using a pencil to complete these activities is too difficult, consider investing in a touchscreen tablet and download challenging apps that are easier to play.

TAKE IN THE LOCAL ARTS SCENE

Enhance your culture by absorbing art contributions from your local artists

or by visiting different museums in your own region. Familiarize yourself with different techniques, and styles like abstract, realism and impressionism.

Become a part of the local art community where you can build significant relationships with other enthusiasts or collectors. Don't be afraid to try your hand at creating your own masterpiece. Look around your area for painting or art lessons and ask the peers you find navigating art galleries about local classes.

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Change your Diet

It's never too late to make lifestyle changes that positively impact our health. As people age, diets become increasingly important to lessen the risks of disease by eating nutritious items.

If you're unfamiliar with what it takes to create a well-balanced menu, you should start by asking your general practitioner for a referral to a quality nutritionist.

Based on your health and diet, they can recommend a plan that works specifically for you. Check with your health care provider to ensure their services are covered by your insurance. Here are some basic tips to get you started toward clean eating from the National Council on Aging.

USE MYPLATE

Do you remember the food pyramid that the United States Department of Agriculture introduced to America in 1992? While it served as an efficient guide to help people understand the important nutrients they needed, in 2011, the MyPlate system was created.

While it stays true to the importance of fruits, vegetables and protein, the new guide makes it simpler to visualize how much of each



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should be eaten. Check it out before changing up your diet toward better health.

VARIETY OF NUTRIENTS

In addition to sticking to the proper serving levels of different nutrients, the National Council on Aging also recom-

mends that a plate should contain bright, colored foods as they contain important vitamins.

Make sure to check the Nutrition Facts label and ensure it is packed with nutrients and low on fat, sugar and sodium. Discuss your new

eating plan with your doctor or nutritionist to discover what your body needs and what you should avoid based on your health.

STICK TO RECOMMENDED SERVINGS

Even healthy foods should

be eaten with a serving limit in mind. Check out these new guidelines from the American Heart Association for people over 60 years of age: five servings of vegetables per day; four servings of fruit per day; and eight to nine servings of meat per week.

Embrace Technology

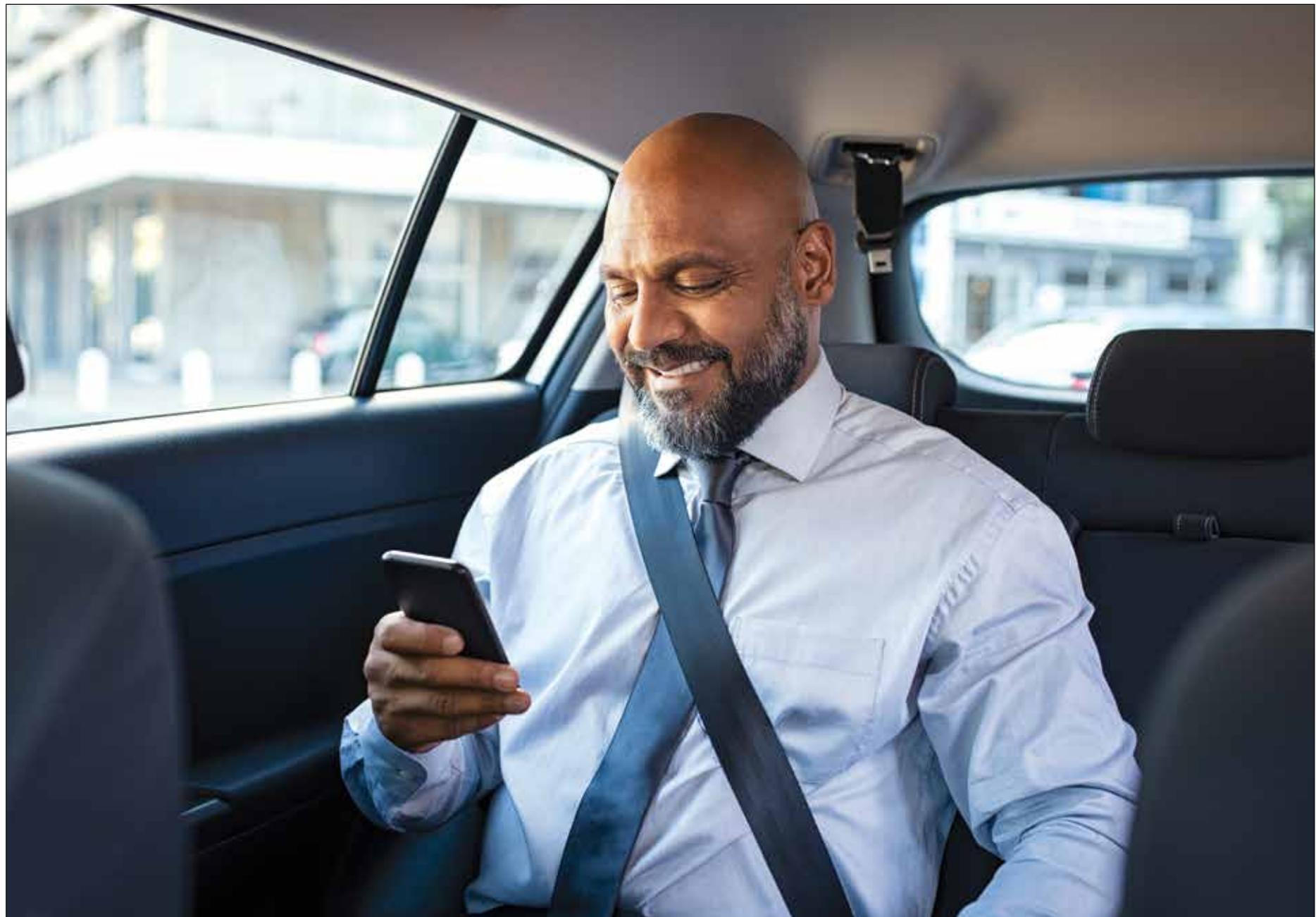
Since modern technology advances so rapidly, it's hard to keep up with the latest trends and innovations. However, smart devices can benefit seniors by offering life-saving alerts, health trackers and offer exciting ways to stay in touch with family.

If you feel like you've been left behind by tech upgrades, it's not too late to get back in the swing of things and learn how it can enhance your life.

The experts at the Consumer Technology Association estimate that the aging tech industry will reach \$30 billion by 2030. This will include senior-specific devices and innovations that directly benefit aging people, their caregivers and family members. Here are a few exceptional technologies that are already available.

MEDICATION REMINDERS

If you take different medicine doses throughout the day, it's easy to forget or lose track of time. Ensuring you stick to the schedule as prescribed by a doctor is important so the medicine can reach its potential.



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There are numerous apps and software available that will alert you when it's time to take your meds.

Some cool features a few include is the ability to share information with your family members and track which pills have already been ingested. Having an extra support system to remind you is beneficial when ensuring you're on schedule.

SOCIALIZE

When life gets in the way, it's not always easy for families to gather for dinner or personal conversations. Thanks to video chats, people can participate in a chat that's far more intimate than a phone call. Usually, all you need is an efficient internet connection and an application to view your family members while you talk, hands free. It's a great way to see how

much your grandchildren have grown when you live on the other side of the country.

SAFETY DEVICES

Personal emergency-response systems have become much more advanced than the previous call button used in the past. Today, there are pendants and sensors available that can be carried on your person or attached to places you frequent

like your bed, couch or favorite chair.

Some fall devices can detect when a tumble occurs if you are unable to call for help or alert medical help with the press of a button.

You will get peace of mind that they can work from anywhere, not just home. Ensuring medical assistance is notified as soon as a fall happens can have life-saving effects.