

# SECTIONS FROM: TALKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR A GUIDE FOR OLDER ADULTS

The National Institute on  
Aging (NIA)



For the complete NIA guide, visit:  
[https://order.nia.nih.gov/publication/  
talking-with-your-doctor-a-guide-  
for-older-adults](https://order.nia.nih.gov/publication/talking-with-your-doctor-a-guide-for-older-adults). Select “Get” to  
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[www.shastahealthybrain.com](http://www.shastahealthybrain.com)

## Getting Started

# Choosing a Doctor You Can Talk With

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Finding a primary doctor (or primary care doctor) whom you feel comfortable talking with is the first step in good communication and can help ensure your best possible health care. This doctor gets to know you and what your health is normally like. He or she can help you make medical decisions that suit your values and daily habits. Your doctor can also keep in touch with other medical specialists and health care providers you may need.

If you don't have a primary doctor or are not at ease with the one you currently see, now is the time to find a new doctor. Whether you moved to a new city, changed insurance providers, or had a bad experience with your doctor or medical staff, it is worthwhile to spend time finding a doctor you can trust.

People sometimes hesitate to change doctors because they worry about hurting their doctor's feelings. Most doctors understand that different people have different needs and know that it is important for you to have a doctor with whom you are comfortable.

Primary care physicians frequently are family practitioners, internists, or geriatricians. A geriatrician is a doctor who specializes in older adults, but family practitioners and internists may also have a lot of experience with older patients. Here are some suggestions that can help you find a doctor who meets your needs.

## Decide What You Are Looking for in a Doctor

A good first step is to make a list of qualities that matter to you.



### Ask yourself if it is important that your doctor:

- Is a man or a woman?
- Speaks your language?
- Has an individual practice or is part of a group?
- Has evening or weekend office hours?
- Has a conveniently located office with adequate, free parking? Has an office in a building with an elevator? On a bus or subway route?
- Accepts your insurance or Medicare or Medicaid?
- Supports clinical research?
- Is associated with a specific hospital or medical center?
- Is board certified? In what field?

After you make your list, go back over it and decide which qualities are most important and which are nice, but not essential.



**To learn about a doctor, consider asking questions such as:**

- What are your thoughts about treating older patients?
- How do you feel about involving my family in care decisions?
- When I have questions, what is the best way to ask? Do you charge for telephone or email time?
- What are your thoughts about complementary or alternative treatments?
- Do you participate in clinical research or would you recommend a clinical trial for my condition?

See Worksheet 2: Questions to Ask Your Doctor, on pages 41–42 for a list of questions to consider when choosing a new doctor.



**When deciding which doctor to choose, you might want to ask yourself questions such as:**

- Was I comfortable talking with the doctor? Did the doctor answer my questions?
- Was the doctor really listening to me? Did the doctor keep eye contact?
- Could I understand what the doctor was saying? Was I comfortable asking him or her to say it again?
- Is the office staff welcoming, knowledgeable, and helpful?

If you are not satisfied after your visit, schedule a visit with one of your other candidates.

## Your First Appointment

Once you've chosen a doctor, make your first actual care appointment. It is best to see your new doctor when your health is stable. Having a physical exam is the ideal way for your new doctor to get to know you. However, health insurance companies generally only pay for a complete physical once a year. In addition to a physical exam, your new doctor may review your complete medical and family history. Be sure to bring your medical records or have them sent from your former doctor. Create a health history that includes your conditions, and the conditions of your parents and siblings, to bring with you. See Worksheet 3: Changes to Discuss, on pages 43–44 and Worksheet 4: Concerns, on page 45 for examples. Also bring a list of your current medicines with their dosages and number of times you take them each day. Alternatively, put all your medicines in a bag and take them with you. Use Worksheet 5: Medications, on page 47 to create a complete list of the medications, vitamins, and supplements you take.

## Summary

### Choosing a Doctor You Can Talk With

- **Decide what you are looking for in a doctor.**
- **Identify several possible doctors.**
- **Consult reference sources, including those online.**
- **Talk to office staff to learn more about the doctors you are considering.**
- **Consider talking with the doctor by phone, online, or in person to discuss becoming his or her patient.**
- **Make a choice.**

## How Should I Prepare?

# Getting Ready for an Appointment

Make the most of your appointment, whether you are starting with a new doctor or continuing with the doctor you've seen for years. The following tips will make it easier for you and your doctor to cover everything you need to talk about.

## List and Prioritize Your Concerns

Make a list of what you want to discuss. It is best to prioritize the list so you and your doctor can discuss the topics most important to you first. Put your most important concerns at the top of the list. For example,

- Do you have a new symptom you want to ask the doctor about? Take the time to make some notes about your symptoms before you call or visit the doctor.
- Do you want to get a shot to protect you from the flu, pneumonia, or shingles?
- Are you concerned about how a treatment is affecting your daily life?

Medical appointments average about 15 to 20 minutes, so ask your most important questions right away! Worksheet 3: Changes to Discuss, on pages 43–44 of this booklet can help.

## Take Information With You

Bring a list of your medications, including the dose and time you take each prescription drug, over-the-counter medicine, vitamin, and herbal remedy or supplement. Or simply bring a bag that contains everything you take so the doctor can review your medicines. Take your insurance cards, names and phone numbers of other doctors you see, and your medical records if the doctor doesn't already have them.

You may want to ask the doctor to send you all the forms you will need to complete for your visit, including:

- Health history
- Health insurance
- Health information privacy (HIPAA) agreement

The office staff can send the forms to you attached to an email message so you can print them at home, or they may be able to send the forms in the mail. That way, you can take your time completing the forms at home, where you will have all the information you need. If you have problems understanding how to fill out any of the forms, ask for help. The doctor's office staff and some community organizations can help.

## Make Good Use of Your Time



### Tips

**Decide what questions are most important** — Pick three or four questions or concerns that you most want to talk about with the doctor. You can tell him or her what they are at the beginning of the appointment, and then discuss each in turn. If you have time, you can then go on to other questions.

**Stick to the point** — Although your doctor might like to talk with you at length, each patient is given a limited amount of time. To make the best use of your time, stick to the point. For instance, give the doctor a brief description of the symptom, when it started, how often it happens, and if it is getting worse or better.

**Be honest** — It is tempting to say what you think the doctor wants to hear, for example, that you smoke less or eat a more balanced diet than you really do. While this is natural, it's not in your best interest. Your doctor can suggest the best treatment only if you say what is really going on. For instance, you might say:

“ I have been trying to quit smoking, as you recommended, but I am not making much progress. ”

**Share your point of view about the visit** — Tell the doctor if you feel rushed, worried, or uncomfortable. If necessary, you can offer to return for a second visit to discuss your concerns. Try to voice your feelings in a positive way. For example, you could say something like:

“ I know you have many patients to see, but I'm really worried about this. I'd feel much better if we could talk about it a little more. ”

**Remember, the doctor may not be able to answer all your questions** — Even the best doctor may be unable to answer some questions. Most doctors will tell you when they don't have answers. They also may help you find the information you need or refer you to a specialist. If a doctor regularly dismisses your questions or symptoms as simply a part of aging, think about looking for another doctor.

# Find Out About Your Medications

Your doctor may prescribe a drug for your condition. Make sure you know:

- The name of the drug
- Why it has been prescribed
- How often and for how long you should take it

Ask the doctor to write the name of the drug for you. Make notes about any other special instructions such as how to take the medicine or which food or drink to avoid while you are taking the medicine. If you are taking other medications, make sure your doctor knows what they are, so he or she can prevent harmful drug interactions.

Sometimes, medicines affect older people differently than younger people. It is important to tell the doctor if your medicine doesn't seem to be working or if it is causing problems or side effects. Do not stop taking the medicine on your own. Doing so may cause you more problems. Check with your doctor before stopping your medicine.

If another doctor (for example, a specialist) prescribes a medication for you, let your primary doctor know. Also, call to check with

your doctor's office before taking any over-the-counter medications. You may find it helpful to keep a chart of all the medicines you take and when you take them. See Worksheet 5: Medications, on page 47 of this booklet.

The pharmacist can also answer questions and help you select over-the-counter medications. Because your pharmacist keeps records of all prescriptions you get filled at that pharmacy, it is helpful to use the same store regularly. At your request, the pharmacist can fill your prescriptions in easy-to-open containers and may be able to provide large-print prescription labels.



## Questions to ask about medications:

- When will the medicine begin to work?
- What are the common side effects? What should I pay attention to?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Should I take it at meals or between meals? Do I need to drink a whole glass of water with it? What time(s) of day should I take it?
- Are there foods, drugs, or activities I should avoid while taking this medicine?
- Will I need a refill? How do I arrange that?

## What Are Side Effects?

“ My headache prescription always makes me sleepy. ”

“ Aunt Sarah's cough syrup gave her a rash. ”

Side effects are unwanted or unexpected symptoms or feelings that happen after taking a medicine.

Drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration are expected to have greater benefits than risks. However, all drugs have potential side effects. Many side effects are minor, others are more serious, and a few can

be life-threatening. Some side effects happen just when you start taking a medicine. Some happen only once in a while and you learn how to manage them.

Before you use any medicine, read the pharmacy label and any stickers that may be attached to the prescription bottle. The label and stickers have information on how to take the drug and possible side effects. Always read the label and package insert for over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, or herbal supplements, too.

Some side effects may make you want to stop taking the medicine. Tell your doctor if this happens. He or she may be able to prescribe a different medicine or help you deal with these side effects in other ways.

# Understand Your Prescriptions

When the doctor writes a prescription, it is important that you can read and understand the directions for taking the medication.

If you have questions about your prescription or how you should take the medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist. If you do not understand the directions, make sure you ask someone to explain them. It is important to take the medicine as directed by your doctor.

## A Note About Prescription Pain Medicine

Never take more opioid medicine than the doctor prescribes. By doing so, you risk becoming addicted. Anyone can become addicted to pain medicine. Read more about opioids and prescription pain medicines in *Pain: You Can Get Help* at [www.nia.nih.gov/health/pain-you-can-get-help](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/pain-you-can-get-help). You can learn more about using medicines safely from the National Institute on Drug Abuse at [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov).

Worksheet 5: Medications, on page 47 of this booklet can help.

## Common Abbreviations for Prescriptions

Doctors and pharmacists often use abbreviations or terms that may not be familiar. Here is an explanation of some of the most common abbreviations you will see on the labels of your prescription medications.

Abbreviation	Explanation
p.r.n.	as needed
q.d.	every day
b.i.d.	twice a day
t.i.d.	three times a day
q.i.d.	four times a day
a.c.	before meals
p.c.	after meals
h.s.	at bedtime
p.o.	by mouth
ea.	each

## Summary

### Getting Information

- Learn about medical tests.
- Discuss your diagnosis and what you can expect.
- Find out about your medications.
- Understand how to take your prescriptions.



# Make the Most of Your Appointment

Often, medical appointments are short but full of information. To make the most of your appointment and understand what your doctor is saying, ask about anything that does not seem clear. For instance, you might ask:

“ I want to make sure I understand. Could you explain that a little more? ” or

“ I do not understand that word. What does it mean? ”

Another way to check is to repeat what you think the doctor means in your own words and ask,

“ Is this correct? ”

Here are some other ideas to help make sure you have all the information you need.

**Take notes** — Take along a notepad and pen and write down the main points. Or, if you bring along a family member or friend, ask them to take notes. Many doctors print information for their patients to take home, or you can ask the doctor to write down the information for you. If you can't write while the doctor is talking to you, make notes in the waiting room after the visit. Or, bring an audio recorder to record what is said. Always ask the doctor if

it's okay to record your conversation before starting the recorder. Taking notes or recording your conversation is especially helpful if you want to share the details of the visit with others.

**Get written or recorded materials** — Ask if your doctor has any brochures or other materials about your health conditions or treatments. For example, if your doctor says that your blood pressure is high, he or she may give you brochures explaining what causes high blood pressure and what you can do about it. Ask the doctor to recommend other sources, such as websites, disease management centers, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies that may have written or recorded information you can use. Download or order NIA's free print publications on aging at <https://order.nia.nih.gov>.

**Talk to other members of the health care team** — Sometimes, the doctor may want you to talk with other health professionals who can help you understand and manage your condition. Gerontologists, pharmacists, case managers, and occupational or physical therapists may be able to spend more time working with you than the doctor can.

**Call or email the doctor** — If you are uncertain about the doctor's instructions after you get home, call the office. A nurse or other staff member can check with the doctor and call you back. Some doctors or other health professionals have an email address or online health portal you can use to send questions.



# Learn About Prevention

Doctors and other health professionals may suggest you change your diet, activity level, or other aspects of your life to help you manage medical conditions. Research has shown that these changes, particularly getting more exercise and eating well, have positive effects on overall health.

Preventing disease is especially important for older adults. We know that it's never too late to stop smoking, improve your diet, or start exercising. Getting regular check-ups and seeing other health professionals, such as dentists and eye specialists, helps promote good health. Even people who have chronic diseases, like arthritis or diabetes, can prevent further disability and, in some cases, control the progression of these diseases.

If a certain disease or health condition runs in your family, ask your doctor if there are steps you can take to:

- Help prevent it
- Manage it
- Keep it from getting worse

If you want to discuss health and disease prevention with your doctor, say so when you make your next appointment. This lets the doctor plan to spend more time with you.



## Questions to ask about prevention:

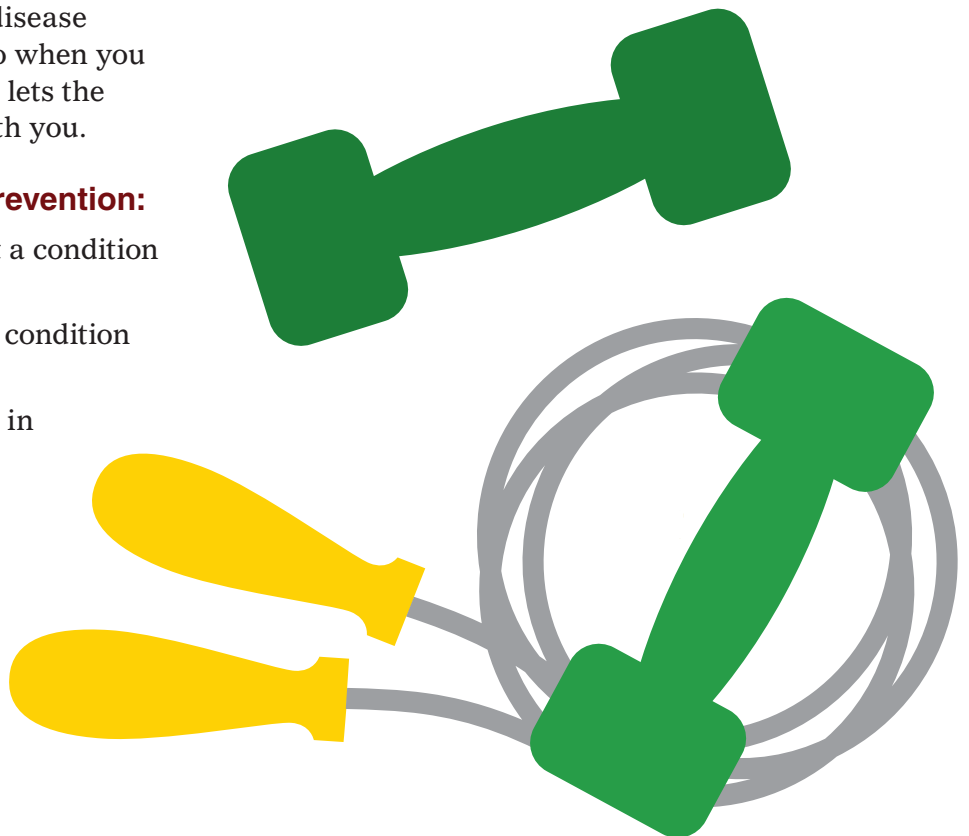
- Is there any way to prevent a condition that runs in my family?
- Are there ways to keep my condition from getting worse?
- How will making a change in my habits help me?
- Are there any risks in making this change?
- Are there support groups or community services that might help me?

It is just as important to talk with your doctor about lifestyle changes as it is to talk about medical treatment. For example:

“ I know that you've told me to eat more dairy products, but they really disagree with me. Is there something else I could eat instead? ” or

“ Maybe an exercise class would help, but I have no way to get to the senior center. Is there something else you could suggest? ”

As with treatments, consider all the alternatives, look at risks and benefits, and remember to consider your own point of view. Tell your doctor if you feel his or her suggestions won't work for you and explain why. Keep talking with your doctor to come up with a plan that works.



# If You Have a Health Emergency

A visit to the emergency room is stressful. It may go more smoothly if you take along the following items:

- Your health insurance card or policy number
- A list of your medications
- A list of your medical problems
- A copy of your advance directive, living will, or designated power of attorney for health care
- The names and phone numbers of your doctor and one or two family members or close friends

Some people find it helpful to always keep this information on a card in their wallet or purse. Depending on the problem, you may have a long wait in the emergency room. Consider taking things to make the wait more comfortable, such as something to read and a sweater in case the room is cold.

While in the emergency room, ask questions if you don't understand tests or procedures that are being done. Before leaving, make sure you understand what the doctor told you or ask for written instructions. For example, if you have bandages that need changing, be sure you understand how and when this should be done.

Tell your primary doctor as soon as possible about your visit to the emergency room.



## Questions to Ask Medical Staff in the Emergency Room

- Will you talk to my primary doctor about my care?
- Do I need to arrange any further care?
- Can I get printed or written instructions for further care?
- Is there someone here who speaks my language and can explain the instructions?

## Summary

### Talking to Specialists and Hospital Medical Staff

- **Ask questions if you are unclear.**
- **Ask for printed instructions or write down as much information as possible.**
- **Tell your primary care doctor if you see a specialist, need surgery, or have gone to the emergency room.**



## Changing the Subject

# Difficult but Necessary Conversations

Much of the communication between a doctor and a patient is personal. To have a good partnership with your doctor, it is important to talk about difficult subjects like sex or memory problems, even if you are embarrassed or uncomfortable. Doctors are used to talking about personal matters and will try to ease your discomfort. Keep in mind that you're not alone — these topics concern many older people. It is important to understand that problems with memory, mood, sexual function, and urinary or bowel function are not a normal part of aging and may be treatable. A good doctor will take your concerns about these topics seriously and not brush them off. If you think your doctor isn't taking your concerns seriously, talk to him or her about your feelings or consider looking for a new doctor.

The following subjects are examples of difficult but necessary conversations to have with your doctor.

- Planning for care in the event of a serious illness
- Driving
- Falling and fear of falling
- Moving to assisted living or a skilled nursing facility
- Paying for medications
- Alcohol use
- Feeling unhappy with your doctor
- Grief, mourning, and depression

- Sexuality
- Incontinence
- Memory problems
- Problems with family

We will discuss each of these in this chapter and provide suggestions for ways to bring them up with your doctor.

## Planning for Care in the Event of a Serious Illness

You may have some concerns or wishes about your care if you become seriously ill. If you have questions about what choices you have, ask your doctor. You can specify your desires through documents called advance directives, such as a living will or health care proxy. One way to bring up the subject is to say:

“ I'm worried about what would happen in the hospital if I were very sick and not likely to get better. Can you tell me what generally happens in that case? ”

In general, the best time to talk with your doctor about these issues is while you are still relatively healthy. If you are admitted to the hospital or a nursing home, a nurse or other staff member may ask if you have any advance directives.



## Advance Directives

Advance directives are written instructions letting others know the type of care you want if you are seriously ill or dying. There are two main kinds:

- **Living will** — A living will is an official record of your end-of-life wishes for medical treatment in case you are no longer able to speak for yourself. Living wills typically refer only to life-prolonging treatment when you are in a life-threatening situation.
- **Health care proxy** — A health care proxy is also called a “durable power of attorney for health care.” Sometimes, this person may be referred to as a representative, surrogate, agent, or attorney-in-fact. A health care proxy is named to make care decisions for you if you are unable to do so yourself. This type of advance directive is also important if you want your health care proxy to be someone other than a legal member of your family.

Make sure your doctor and your family understand your advance directives and your views about end-of-life care. That will help them make the decisions you would want. Sometimes, people change their minds as they get older or after they become ill. Review the choices in your advance care directives regularly and make changes as needed.

Advance care directives are legally valid everywhere in the United States, but laws concerning them vary from state to state. Forms approved for the state where you live are available from many different health care organizations and institutions. Make sure the form you choose is legal in your home state and in any other state that you may live in for part of the year.

Discussing advance care planning decisions with your doctor is free through Medicare during your annual wellness visit. Private health insurance may also cover these discussions.

Give copies of your advance directive to your health care proxy and alternate proxy. Give your doctor a copy of the advanced directive for your medical records. Tell close family members and friends where you keep a copy. If you have to go to the hospital, give staff there a copy to include in your records.

NIA offers free resources with more information about advance directives and end-of-life considerations. Visit [www.nia.nih.gov/health/advance-care-planning-health-care-directives](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/advance-care-planning-health-care-directives) to learn more.

To bring up the topic, you could say something like:

“ Since my last visit, there have been several times when I couldn’t control my bladder. ”

## Memory Problems

Older adults often worry about their ability to think and remember. For most older adults, thinking and memory remain relatively intact in later years. However, if you or your family notice that you have problems remembering recent events or thinking clearly, let your doctor know. Be specific about the changes you’ve noticed. For example, you could say:

“ I’ve always been able to balance my checkbook without any problems, but lately I’m very confused. ”

Your doctor will probably want you to have a thorough check-up to see what might be causing your symptoms.

In some cases, memory problems are caused by conditions such as high blood pressure,

## Free Information

If you are worried about memory problems or dementia, you can contact NIA’s Alzheimer’s and related Dementias Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center. ADEAR staff can:

- Answer specific questions about Alzheimer’s and related dementias.
- Send free publications.
- Refer callers to local resources.
- Provide information about clinical trials.
- Help you find materials about specific issues.

Call toll-free 800-438-4380 or visit the ADEAR website at [www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers](http://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers).

depression, or infection. Sometimes memory problems may be a side effect of medication. But other times, the problem is a type of dementia, such as Alzheimer’s disease. With a careful family history, physical exam, medical tests, and tests of memory and problem-solving, specialists can diagnose probable or possible Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia.



## General Resources

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### National Institute on Aging Information Center

800-222-2225 (toll-free)  
800-222-4225 (TTY/toll-free)  
[niaic@nia.nih.gov](mailto:niaic@nia.nih.gov)  
<https://order.nia.nih.gov>  
[www.nia.nih.gov/health](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health)

### Administration on Aging Administration for Community Living

202-401-4634  
[aclinfo@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:aclinfo@acl.hhs.gov)  
[www.acl.gov](http://www.acl.gov)

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

800-232-4636 (800-CDC-INFO;  
toll-free)  
888-232-6348 (TTY/toll-free)  
[cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov)  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

### Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

800-633-4227  
(800-MEDICARE; toll-free)  
877-486-2048 (TTY/toll-free)  
[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

### National Institutes of Health

301-496-4000  
301-402-9612 (TTY)  
[nihinfo@od.nih.gov](mailto:nihinfo@od.nih.gov)  
[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)

### National Library of Medicine MedlinePlus

[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)

Search for:

“Advance Directives”

“Caregivers”

“End of Life Issues”

“Exercise”

“Memory”

“Motor Vehicle Safety”

## Advance Directives

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### American Geriatrics Society Health in Aging Foundation

800-563-4916 (toll-free)  
[info@healthinaging.org](mailto:info@healthinaging.org)  
[www.healthinaging.org/  
making-your-wishes-known](http://www.healthinaging.org/making-your-wishes-known)

### National POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) Paradigm

202-780-8352  
[info@polst.org](mailto:info@polst.org)  
[www.polst.org](http://www.polst.org)

## Alcohol

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### National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

888-696-4222  
(888-MY-NIAAAA; toll-free)  
[niaaaweb-r@exchange.nih.gov](mailto:niaaaweb-r@exchange.nih.gov)  
[www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)

### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

877-726-4727 (toll-free)  
800-662-4357 (national  
helpline; toll-free)  
800-487-4889 (TTY/toll-free)  
[samhsainfo@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:samhsainfo@samhsa.hhs.gov)  
<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>

## Assisted Living

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### Housing Choices

#### AARP

888-687-2277  
(888-OUR-AARP; toll-free)  
877-434-7598 (TTY/toll-free)  
877-253-5908 (Español/línea  
gratis)  
[member@aarp.org](mailto:member@aarp.org)  
[www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)

### American Health Care Association

800-321-0343 (toll-free)  
[www.careconversations.org](http://www.careconversations.org)

### Nursing Home Compare Medicare

[www.medicare.gov/  
nursinghomecompare](http://www.medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare)

## Clinical Research

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### Alzheimers.gov

[www.alzheimers.gov](http://www.alzheimers.gov)

### ClinicalTrials.gov

<https://clinicaltrials.gov>

### NIA Clinical Trials Information and Resources

[www.nia.nih.gov/health/  
clinical-trials](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/clinical-trials)

### Registries and Matching Services for Clinical Trials

[www.nia.nih.gov/health/  
registries-and-matching-  
services-clinical-trials](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/registries-and-matching-services-clinical-trials)

### Brain Donation: a Gift for Future Generations

[www.nia.nih.gov/health/  
brain-donation-gift-future-  
generations](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/brain-donation-gift-future-generations)

## Driving and Transportation

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### AARP Driver Safety Program

888-687-2277  
(888-OUR-AARP; toll-free)  
877-434-7598 (TTY/toll-free)  
877-253-5908 (Español/línea  
gratis)  
[member@aarp.org](mailto:member@aarp.org)  
[www.aarp.org/families/  
driver\\_safety](http://www.aarp.org/families/driver_safety)

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**  
888-327-4236 (toll-free)  
800-424-9153 (TTY/toll-free)  
[ncsaweb@dot.gov](mailto:ncsaweb@dot.gov)  
[www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/older-drivers](http://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/older-drivers)

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## End-of-Life Care

**National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization**  
800-658-8898 (toll-free)  
[caringinfo@nhpco.org](mailto:caringinfo@nhpco.org)  
[www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org)

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## Exercise

**American College of Sports Medicine**  
317-637-9200  
[publicinfo@acsm.org](mailto:publicinfo@acsm.org)  
[www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org)

**National Institute on Aging**  
800-222-2225 (toll-free)  
800-222-4225 (TTY/toll-free)  
[niaic@nia.nih.gov](mailto:niaic@nia.nih.gov)  
[www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercise-physical-activity](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercise-physical-activity)

**President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition**  
240-276-9567  
[fitness@hhs.gov](mailto:fitness@hhs.gov)  
[www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)

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## Grief, Mourning, and Depression

**National Library of Medicine MedlinePlus: Bereavement**  
[www.medlineplus.gov/bereavement.html](http://www.medlineplus.gov/bereavement.html)

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## Help With Family and Caregiving

**Eldercare Locator**  
800-677-1116 (toll-free; bilingual)  
<https://eldercare.acl.gov>

**Family Caregiver Alliance**  
800-445-8106 (toll-free)  
[info@caregiver.org](mailto:info@caregiver.org)  
[www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org)

**National Alliance for Caregiving**  
301-718-8444  
[www.caregiving.org](http://www.caregiving.org)

**National Center on Elder Abuse**  
U.S. Administration on Aging  
855-500-3537  
(855-500-ELDR; toll-free)  
[ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov](mailto:ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov)  
<https://ncea.acl.gov>

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
202-514-2000  
800-877-8339 (TTY/toll-free)  
[elder.justice@usdoj.gov](mailto:elder.justice@usdoj.gov)  
[www.justice.gov/elderjustice/find-support-elder-abuse](http://www.justice.gov/elderjustice/find-support-elder-abuse)

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## HIV/AIDS

**HIV.gov**  
[www.hiv.gov](http://www.hiv.gov)

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## Incontinence

**National Association for Continence**  
800-252-3337  
(800-BLADDER; toll-free)  
[memberservices@nafc.org](mailto:memberservices@nafc.org)  
[www.nafc.org](http://www.nafc.org)

**Simon Foundation for Continence**  
800-237-4666  
(800-23-SIMON; toll-free)  
[info@simonfoundation.org](mailto:info@simonfoundation.org)  
[www.simonfoundation.org](http://www.simonfoundation.org)

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## Medication

**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services**  
800-633-4227  
(800-MEDICARE; toll-free)  
877-486-2048 (TTY/toll-free)  
[www.medicare.gov/part-d](http://www.medicare.gov/part-d)

**U.S. Food and Drug Administration**  
888-463-6332  
(888-INFO-FDA; toll-free)  
[druginfo@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:druginfo@fda.hhs.gov)  
[www.fda.gov/ForConsumers](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers)

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## Memory Problems

**Alzheimer's and related Dementias Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center**  
National Institute on Aging  
800-438-4380 (toll-free)  
800-222-4225 (TTY/toll-free)  
[adear@nia.nih.gov](mailto:adear@nia.nih.gov)  
[www.nia.nih.gov/health/alzheimers](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/alzheimers)

**Alzheimers.gov**  
[www.alzheimers.gov](http://www.alzheimers.gov)

**Alzheimer's Association**  
800-272-3900 (toll-free; 24/7)  
866-403-3073  
(TTY/toll-free; 24/7)  
[info@alz.org](mailto:info@alz.org)  
[www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

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## Sexuality

**Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders**  
888-234-7243 (888-234-SAGE; toll-free)  
[info@sageusa.org](mailto:info@sageusa.org)  
[www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org)