

CELEBRATE • *Healthy Aging* and the Contributions of Older Adults



Active Aging in Manitoba in conjunction with the International Council of Active Aging, is celebrating **the 20th Anniversary of Active Aging Week. Oct 2 – 8, 2023**, Active Aging Week, kicks off October which is Seniors and Elders month nationally.

This year the theme is celebrating the valuable contributions older adults continue to bring to their families, communities, and the country. Older adults continue to contribute as volunteers, employees, employers, entrepreneurs, coaches, advisors, and mentors, just to name a few!



Active Aging week is an opportunity to recognize the contributions of older adults and help transform traditional thinking about the aging process. At Active Aging in Manitoba, we value the contributions of our many volunteers including our own volunteer Peer Leaders who give of their time to help their peers stay active and socially engaged.

Active Aging in Manitoba is encouraging all older Manitobans to celebrate active aging by planning events for Active Aging week. Inspire others by planning events between Oct 2 – 8, 2023 and let AAIM know so we can add your event to our website!

This is a time to bring your community together reach out to all older adults and invite to the celebration. We encourage older Manitobans to try out something new during Active Aging week and carry on that activity beyond the first week of October.

Active Aging is not solely about physical activity, although that is a very important component, it is also important to challenge your brain.

It is great to combine these two components and get the health benefits of being active while challenging your cognitive fitness. Research confirms learning something new can improve one's cognitive function.

Take a walk with friends, try yoga or tai chi, take up a new hobby, or try a new sport. Experience your favourite park this fall - try Nordic Pole Walking, bird watching, or photography, and enjoy the fall colours Manitoba offers. These are all good ways to be more active and improve your brain health at the same time. The possibilities are endless, and AAIM believes you are never too old to try something new!



Celebrating Wellness

Active Aging Week focuses on the whole person. Take the time to review each of these wellness dimensions to examine your own wellness as an older adult.

Wellness is a dynamic and a conscious development of oneself. Taking a proactive approach to your well-being is important as we age. Several areas in life need to be in balance to help achieve optimum well-being. We tend to think of wellness including physical and mental health, but there are other dimensions that are just as important to achieve wellness. These dimensions are inter-dependent and need to be in balance. Actions to improve wellness might include routines, choices and developing coping strategies.

Physical Wellness - Being active, good nutrition, getting enough sleep, staying strong and following medical guidelines all contribute to your physical wellness. Setting goals for physical activity, and sleep will help you achieve physical wellness. Healthy eating and tending to medical needs will all help you achieve physical wellness.

Emotional Wellness - Are you in tune with your feelings? Are you able to express your feelings? Emotional health means being able to cope with stress and life's changes. Getting enough sleep, managing stress, and asking for help if you need it can improve your emotional wellness.

Social Wellness - includes having a strong network of friends and family who you can stay connected to is key for social wellness. Schedule activities that you can look forward to and include regular chores so that you have time to connect with friends.

Mental Wellness - Continued learning and building skills are ways to support your mental wellness. Being a mentor to others, problem solving, and reading are all ways to make mental wellness a priority.

Spiritual Wellness - is a set of beliefs, principles and values that provide direction and purpose to our lives. Spiritual Wellness can include gratitude, morals, values, meditations, beliefs, etc. Going for a walk outside in nature is one way to enhance your spiritual wellness.

Vocational Wellness - Older adults have acquired many skills throughout their lifespan. Sharing knowledge and experience through mentoring and volunteering are meaningful ways to improve your vocational wellness. Continuing to learn throughout your life span also contributes to your vocational wellness.

Environmental Wellness - interacting with the environment can have a positive effect on your wellness. One idea is to engage in physical activity in nature - walk in the park, reading outside, or gardening are all ways to interact with the environment.

Join us for an Active Aging Day Event

When: October 5th

Where: The Wellness Institute, 1075 Leila Avenue, Winnipeg

Admission is FREE and all are welcome!

This free event includes a keynote speaker at 9:30 am - Protect Yourself from Harm.

Exhibits and activities are open from 10:15 - 1:30. Keynote address will be offered again at 7:00 pm.

Please register for the keynote speaker by calling **204-632-3900** or register at **www.wellnessinsitutue.ca**

Come check things out and try a new activity!



CELEBRATE • *Positive Aging*

Dispelling the Myths of Aging

Many people have negative ideas and attitudes about aging. Positive images of aging can help get rid of myths and stereotypes. For example, some people believe that getting older means being inactive, unhealthy, and dependent – but this is rarely the case. In fact, older adults are living longer, healthier, more independent lives than ever before!

Older people make important contributions to society, as friends and neighbours, family members, caregivers, volunteers, employers and employees, business owners, artists, musicians, and community leaders.

Celebrating older adults is an important way to promote positive images of aging!

Myth: Aging means declining health or disability

There are some diseases that become more common as you age. However, getting older does not automatically mean poor health or that you will have to use a walker or wheelchair. Preventive measures like healthy eating, exercising, and managing stress can all help reduce the risk of chronic disease or injuries later in life.

Myth: Memory loss is a part of aging

As you age, you may eventually notice you don't remember things as easily as in the past, or memories may start to take a little longer to retrieve. Occasionally forgetting an appointment or losing your keys are typical signs of mild forgetfulness, which is very common in normal

aging. However, significant memory loss is not an inevitable result of aging. Brain training and learning new skills can be done at any age and there are many things you can do to keep your memory sharp!

Myth: Older adults can't learn new things

One of the most negative myths of aging is that after a certain age, you just won't be able to try anything new or contribute to things anymore. Not true! Older adults still have the ability to learn new things, create new memories, and are just as capable of learning new things and thriving in new environments, plus there is wisdom that comes with life experience. If you believe in and have confidence in yourself, you are setting up a positive environment for change no matter what your age.

Myth: The older you get, the less sleep you need

A common misconception is that a person's sleep needs decline with age. Older adults need the same amount of sleep as all adults — 7 to 9 hours each night. Getting enough sleep keeps you healthy and alert. Adequate sleep can also help reduce your risk of falls, improve your overall mental well-being, and have many other benefits.

Myth: Older adults should avoid exercise so they don't get injured

As you age, you may think exercise could do more harm than good, especially if you have a chronic condition. However, studies show that you have a lot more to gain by being active — and a lot to lose by sitting too much. Exercise and physical activity are not only great for your mental and physical health, but can help keep you independent as you age. Tai Chi and similar mind and body movement practices have been shown to improve balance and stability in older adults and this can help maintain independence and prevent future falls.

CELEBRATE • *Connection & Belonging*

Celebrating Staying Active and Involved

Thinking about how you could contribute to your community?

Studies show that volunteering for the purpose of helping others increases our own well-being. Check out www.activeagingmb.ca for volunteer opportunities.

Volunteering helps one to stay engaged with the local community, provides the sense of belonging, and helps maintain mental sharpness.

Intergenerational Opportunities

Being a mentor or an advisor can provide the sense of purpose and allow you to share your experience and knowledge. Grand Pals™ is an successful intergenerational program that matches Grade 5 students with older adults with the purpose of providing that connection for both the student and the older adult which again provides that sense of belonging that is so important for our well-being.

Students learn from the older adults and use their creativity to tell the story of their Grand Pal. There are many other intergenerational opportunities available throughout the province. Seek out those opportunities at your local community centre or senior organization.

Health Care

Volunteers in a hospital have long been recognized as a valuable resource. Volunteers can support a hospital by working in a gift shop, guiding patients and visitors, delivering reading material to patients, and providing much needed services. Hospital volunteers contribute thousands of hours per year providing services that otherwise would not happen. Check out your local hospital website for volunteer opportunities

Volunteer Driving Programs

Think of all the people you know who are not driving or who could get to activities if they only a ride! If you are interested in getting involved in a volunteer driving program, please consult the Transportation Options Network For Seniors website at www.tonsmb.org.

Coaching Opportunities

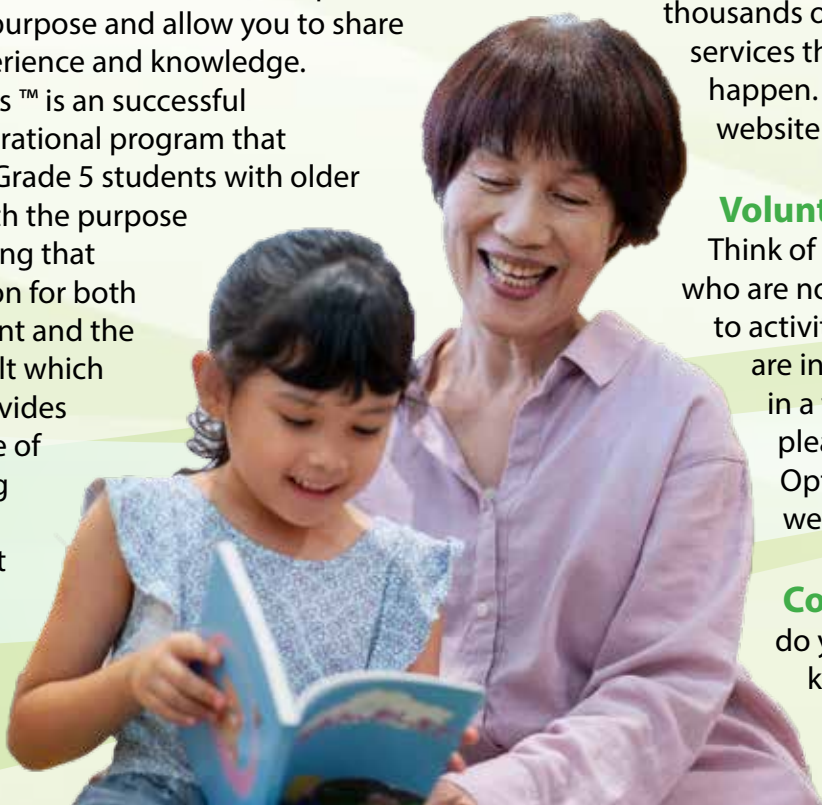
do you love to play a sport and know you could share that

knowledge passion? Consider becoming a Coach or a program volunteer. Most sport programs in this province run on volunteer power!

Whether it is at the recreational or competitive level your expertise could be an asset. Experience the joy of seeing someone learn a new skill and help them experience success. If you are looking for coaching opportunities check out the Sport Manitoba website: www.sportmanitoba.ca/coaching

Multiple coaching or program volunteer opportunities are also available at Special Olympics Manitoba. Visit: www.specialolympicsmb.ca for more information.

For a multitude of volunteer opportunities please contact Volunteer Manitoba where you are sure to find an opportunity that matches your skills and experience. Up for a challenge? Consider seeking out new volunteer opportunities. Visit the Volunteer Manitoba website: www.volunteermanitoba.ca



CELEBRATE • Active Aging Week

20 Years of Active Aging Week

About Active Aging Week

Active Aging Week, which was first launched by the International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) in 2003, is an annual weeklong campaign aimed at celebrating and highlighting the positive aspects of aging. The event showcases the abilities of older adults and their valuable contributions to society while also emphasizing the role models who lead the way.



The overarching goal of Active Aging Week is to challenge society's negative perceptions of aging by demonstrating that individuals over 50 can thrive in all aspects of life, including physical, social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, vocational, and environmental, regardless of age.

The campaign seeks to provide older adults with opportunities to engage in wellness activities and exercise in a safe, supportive environment, promoting the benefits of healthy, active lifestyles throughout the lifespan.

This week is meant to celebrate how positive the process of aging can truly be. Active Aging Week encourages adults over the age of 50 to take advantage of all that life has to offer!

The 2023 theme is, **Celebrate the Contributions of Older Adults.**

Many people have negative ideas and attitudes about aging. Positive images of aging can help get rid of myths and stereotypes. For example, some people believe that getting older means being inactive, unhealthy, and dependent – but this is rarely the case. In fact, older adults are living longer, healthier, more independent lives than ever before!

Older people make important contributions to society, as friends and companions, neighbours, advisors, family members, caregivers, volunteers, employers and employees, business owners, artists, musicians, and community leaders. Celebrating older adults is an important way to promote positive images of aging!

We are encouraging every community in Manitoba to take part and celebrate healthy, active aging!

For more information, contact us:

Phone: 204-632-3947

Toll free: 1-866-202-6663

Email: info@activeagingmb.ca

Website: www.activeagingmb.ca



How to Celebrate Active Aging Week

Host an event

Consider hosting an Active Aging Week event in your community. This is one of the best ways you can help spread the word throughout your area! Make it fun and accessible!

Share a personal story

If you have benefited from becoming active and adopting a healthier lifestyle, consider sharing your story with friends, family co-workers etc. Others are sure to benefit from learning about your wellness journey - you never know who you could inspire to make some positive changes!

Talk about Active Aging Week on social media

Social media platforms are an excellent way to bring awareness to important initiatives. By discussing Active Aging Week on social media, you might just encourage someone to get out and start pursuing a healthier lifestyle.

Why Active Aging Week is so Important

Active Aging Week encourages older adults to get moving

Staying active and taking care of our minds and bodies is the secret to living, moving, and feeling better with age.

For some older adults who reside in assisted living communities, or have mobility issues, just getting out and about can present quite a challenge. Active Aging Week highlights all of the different ways that someone can participate in simple exercise. There truly is something for everyone.

Active Aging Week challenges stereotypes

The focus of this week challenges society's expectations of aging by showing that older adults can live full, rewarding lives regardless of age or health. In fact, many adults have rekindled a former hobby or passion or in most cases, started a new one. They are more active. More social. More engaged. According to the ICAA, "Active Aging Week challenges society's diminished expectations of aging by showing that, regardless of age or health conditions, adults over 50 can live as fully as possible in all areas of life—physical, social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, vocational and environmental."

Active Aging Week creates a sense of community

We're much more likely to accomplish our goals if we have other people helping to keep us accountable. Active Aging Week helps bring communities of adults together to work towards a common wellness cause or goal.

The Benefits of Active Aging

An active social life allows older adults to experience an array of benefits that help to enhance their overall well-being. Some of the main benefits include:

Enhanced Mental Health

Socializing can help older adults feel loved and needed as their lives are affirmed by their activities and those with whom they interact. Being around other people, especially if you're doing something fun or rewarding, helps us keep a positive outlook on life.

Sense of Belonging

Enjoying the company of others with similar personalities or interests helps us feel like we belong. The need to belong may be more intense for those who may have lost a spouse, family member or friend. Engaging with others can cultivate new friendships and can create lasting bonds.

Better Self-Esteem

The more people socialize or participate in activities with others, the more they benefit by feeling like they contribute to their community. Any positive interaction with friends, family or neighbours can help us feel confident in ourselves and our abilities.

Improved Physical Health

When we have good conversations or do things we love with others, our bodies release health-promoting chemicals that boost the immune system and make us feel physically well. Also, socializing promotes an active lifestyle and better nutritional intake.

Increased Cognitive Functioning

Socializing is also key to keeping the brain sharp as we age. An active social life encourages us to continue learning, observing and responding to the world. Conversation and activity are great for exercising the mind and can potentially lower the risk of dementia.

Purposeful Living

Having somewhere to go, something meaningful to do, or people to see helps us get excited for the day. When we build strong relationships with others, we gain a sense of fulfillment, and spending quality time with those we love reminds us that life is worthwhile.



CELEBRATE • *Spreading the Word*

Ideas for Planning an Event or Activity

Active Aging Week is a celebration of the benefits of active living and highlights the capabilities of older adults.

Hosting free events for older adults is an excellent way to draw participants into your facility, centre, or community. Active Aging Week events will provide opportunities for people to meet new people, have new experiences, and continue learning. Here are some great ideas for local events, however small or large you are planning:

Host an Open House – a great way to get local involvement and provides opportunities to network and promote your facility/organization.

Host a speaker series – engage speakers for different topics that are of interest to the older adult community. Consider experts from the medical field such as pharmacists, Physio Therapists, hearing specialists or local police or RCMP who will provide personal safety presentations.

Host an Expo – invite organizations in your community to sponsor a table and promote their programs and services. Consider inviting speakers to run workshops or demonstrations.

Additional ideas – concerts, dances, classes (cooking, languages or art), luncheons, group exercise programs, walking groups/nature walks, bake or craft sale. Collaborate with local churches or hospitals to host workshops that cover relevant information for older adults.

Promoting your event

Organization is key – ensure the event is fully organized before you start promoting.

Know your Audience – consider how and where you will promote your event to ensure you attract the right people.

Keep your message simple – Make your message easy to understand, keep it clear and consistent everywhere you promote your event.

A picture is worth a thousand words – Visual images stick with people more than words do. Don't forget about social media when you are promoting your event and be sure to use pictures from past events, your event location, etc.

Get people excited – Creating buzz before your event is crucial in generating interest and promoting participation. With social media networking tools such as Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) it is easy and affordable!

Use relatable language – Stick to fun, friendly and appropriate language in your promotions. Avoid using too many acronyms or terms your audience may not be familiar with.

Be sure to visit our website: www.activeagingmb.ca and check out our downloadable Active Aging Week Guide for more information and event planning tips!

Prevention is Key this Flu Season

Make sure to get vaccinated

As we age, we know that eating healthy foods and being physically active will contribute to our overall health and well-being. However, we sometimes tend to pay less attention to other healthy choices that could be life-changing, for example, getting the vaccination for Influenza that is appropriate for us.

Older adults are at greater risk of influenza during the autumn season. What's worse, the flu can aggravate pre-existing health conditions and even require hospitalization.

According to the World Health Organization, influenza vaccination is the 3rd priority intervention to achieve healthy aging after the prevention of falls and the promotion of physical activity.

As we age, there is a natural weakening of the immune system, which increases the risk of Influenza related complications.

Many older adults are living with a chronic condition, such as cancer, heart disease, pulmonary disorder or diabetes, which can put increased stress on the immune system, making them much more susceptible. Diabetes, cardiovascular disease and respiratory conditions are just some of the chronic diseases that can be worsened from the flu.

The flu is highly contagious and can spread up to 6 feet away. People with the flu are contagious one day before developing symptoms and up to 5-7 days after.

The seasonal flu vaccine is the most effective way to reduce the risk of a severe flu infection and prevent hospitalizations and other serious complications.

Get vaccinated to help protect yourself and prevent the spread of flu to others!

Factors that can increase your risk

DIABETES

If an adult has diabetes, the flu can:

- Heighten the risk for severe flu-related complications
- Impair blood glucose levels and increase risk of diabetic ketoacidosis (a serious complication that may occur resultant of abnormal insulin activity)
- Increase the risk of hospitalization by 3x and admittance to the ICU by 4x

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Cardiovascular disease can include heart attacks, heart failure, inflammation of the heart, stroke & blood clots. In these cases, the flu can:

- Trigger serious cardiovascular complications within a few days following a flu infection
- Increase risk of heart attack 6-10x
- Increase risk of stroke 3-8x and admittance to ICU by 4x

RESPIRATORY DISEASE

If an adult has a respiratory condition, the flu can:

- Trigger asthma attacks, worsen asthma symptoms, which can also lead to pneumonia and other acute respiratory diseases
- Decrease lung function and increase susceptibility to infection
- Result in worsening asthma and COPD



Always consult your healthcare provider about what choice is best for you. Supported by an education grant from Sanofi Pasteur.