

# 10 Myths about Aging: What Do We “Know” and What Do We “Think” We Know

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #1: Older individuals are pretty much all the same.</b>          Fact: The fact is, as we get older, we get more unique. We begin our lives shaped by our genetics and influenced by our environment, our family circumstances, and the choices of others. As we grow into adulthood, our lives are shaped by our own choices, including our health, employment, whether we have a family, hobbies/habits, etc. As we grow older, we evolve into multi-faceted individuals with our own stories, experiences and lifestyles.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #6: All older people are unhealthy.</b> Fact: While there are physical ailments that become more likely as we get older, getting older does not automatically mean poor health. Many older adults enjoy good health, often better than many younger people. There is no such thing as “normal aging” that applies to all of us. • Preventive measures like healthy eating, exercising, and managing stress can help reduce the risk of chronic disease or injuries later in life.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #2: The needs of older people are different from those of younger people.</b> Fact: As human beings our basic needs remain consistent throughout our lives. We all require air, food, water, sleep and shelter, but we also need to feel safe, to have relationships and personal connections, to have a feeling of personal self-worth and to be given the opportunity to grow and express ourselves.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #7: Older adults are not interested in sex.</b> Fact: A 2017 University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging showed that 65% of respondents aged 50-80 were interested in sex. Seventy-six percent agreed that sex is an important part of a romantic relationship at any age. 40% indicated that they were still sexually active.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #3: Older people cannot learn or change.</b> Mental and emotional development can continue our entire life. Changes in our cells that occur through normal aging do not necessarily interfere with our thinking, but they effect the speed at which we think. We may need more time to process information for longer term storage. A long life also provides us with more mental content which may have a bearing on how quickly we are able to access that information.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #8: Falls are a normal part of aging.</b> Fact: While it is true that more than one out of every four older people falls each year, falls are not inevitable, and most falls can be prevented by addressing an individual’s risk factors. These risk factors can include lower body weakness, Vitamin D deficiency, difficulties with walking and balance, Use of medicines, such as tranquilizers, sedatives, or antidepressants. Some over-the-counter medicines can also affect balance, Vision problems, Foot pain or poor footwear, home hazards or dangers such as broken or uneven steps and throw rugs or clutter that can be tripped over.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #4: Older people are an economic burden on society and contribute little.</b> Facts: According to the Longevity Economy® Outlook by AARP, the economic contributions of age 50- plus Americans totaled \$8.3 trillion last year, which puts them just behind the U.S. and China when measured by gross domestic product. People aged 50-plus contributed \$745 billion worth of unpaid activities such as volunteering and caregiving across the country. The 50-plus age demographic has a major impact on taxes. In 2018, the 50-plus age demographic contributed \$2.1 trillion in tax revenue, made up of \$1.4 trillion in federal taxes and \$645 billion in state and local taxes. That figure will increase four times by 2050.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #9: Dementia should be expected as a part of aging.</b> Fact: • Although 5.8 million people in the U.S. have dementia, it is not normal aging of the brain. • There is growing scientific evidence that healthy behaviors may reduce risk for memory loss. • Certain medical conditions and vitamin deficiencies, like a vitamin B12 deficiency, can mimic dementia symptoms. • Some prescription and over-the-counter medications can cause dementia-like symptoms also.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth 5#: Most older people will end up in a nursing home.</b> Fact: In 2014, there were about 48 million people over age 65 living in the United States. Of those, about 84% of older people lived in homes within the community and were not receiving any support or care services to stay in their home. Fewer than 14% of older people, were receiving support through the Aging Network to stay in their homes. That means that fewer than 3% were living in nursing homes and other long-term care settings.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Myth #10: All older people get depressed.</b> Fact: • While depression is a treatable medical condition, it is not a normal part of aging. • Though older adults are at an increased risk for experiencing depression, the majority of older adults are not depressed. • Older adults are often misdiagnosed and undertreated. • Older adults with depression may have less obvious symptoms or be less likely to discuss their feelings</p>