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# NEWSLETTER

This is a monthly diary giving updates on activities at Graceful Living and providing information on ageing 'gracefully' to help elders live a life with maximum ease



GRACEFUL LIVING

LOVE LIFE LIBERTY

## SIX SIGNS YOU AREN'T SLEEPING ENOUGH...

If you're worried about your sleep or think something more serious may be wrong with your health, try paying attention to these signals that your body might be giving you:

### You don't have energy

A restless night could make you feel like crawling on to your desk by 10 am. If you'd rather run for your pillow than go for a run, that lack of energy could be the result of lack of sleep. Even simple tasks could seem monumental when you're feeling listless. Additionally, if your solution to feeling tired is a late afternoon caffeine pick-me-up, this practice could actually be what's keeping you up at night.

### You find it difficult to concentrate

Disrupted sleep might also have an impact on your memory. Science has shown that it's harder to focus, pay attention and make decisions when you're sleep deprived. Whether you're working at an office, working from home or just trying to get through your to-do list, not getting enough sleep will make concentrating more difficult.

### Your medical issues are worsening or developing

Sleep deprivation can lead to problems like high blood pressure and diabetes. If you have hypertension, your blood pressure most likely will go down while you sleep. The longer you're awake, the longer

your blood pressure may remain elevated. If you have diabetes, regularity in your sleep cycle could keep your blood sugar levels more stable. Reduced sleep could also impact your body weight by affecting hormone levels. Changes in hormone levels due to inadequate sleep can create erratic eating habits which in turn could have an impact on your blood pressure and blood sugar.

### You feel moody, depressed or angry

Although sleeplessness can be a symptom of a disorder like depression, you can feel depressed from lack of sleep as well. Sleep deprivation might also lead to reduced patience and make you not want to socialize. You might even anger more easily and find it difficult to cope with stressful situations.

### You doze during the day

Nap time is fine if you're an infant or if 20 minutes of shut-eye makes you feel recharged, but a typical adult doesn't need to nap during the day. If you're falling asleep during the day, it could interfere with your ability to fall and stay asleep at night.

### You get colds more frequently

Lack of sleep can wreak havoc on your immune system. Studies have shown that sleep deprivation could make you more susceptible to infection and make it more difficult to fight off disease.



### How to get better sleep

There are many techniques that might help you sleep more easily, from deep breathing to visualizations. Different techniques will work for different people, so try a few out to see what works best for you. Also try setting a consistent sleep schedule and keeping your room at a comfortable temperature. Minimizing screen time by shutting your devices off two hours before bed is highly recommended, but for a more realistic plan, try turning your devices off at least 30 minutes before shutting your eyes.

### The food-sleep connection

Certain foods practically seem like they can rock you to sleep, while others keep you staring at the ceiling. Cheese, cherries, kiwi, almonds and chamomile tea have been shown to induce sleep while caffeine, alcohol, spicy foods and greasy or sugary snacks can keep you wide awake. There's no need to go to bed hungry since a rumbling tummy can also keep you awake. However, if you do enjoy an evening snack, be mindful of portion sizes and avoid eating too close to bedtime.

Courtesy: U S NEWS

## AGEING AND GENDER

Though men and women age at the same rate, age is perceived differently for men than women. If a woman has grey hair, she'll often dye it to keep her looking younger until she's ready to join the silver sisters, sporting a more natural look. Yet when a man's hair turns to a salt and pepper combo, it's considered distinguished. When women put on a few pounds around the middle, they may squeeze into a 'corset' or resort to fad diets, cleansers and punitive plans while men might just loosen their belts and wear their shirts out of their pants. Of course this is a generalization, but if you pay attention to the ads for bikini bodies, Botox and skin solutions, women are most often the targets.

Does that mean that most of us will be obsessing over the wrinkles on our faces,

bags under our eyes and silver streaks in our hair, or will we finally applaud our biological age? To do the latter, we need to focus less on halting how we change on the outside and pay more attention to healthy ageing from the inside.

While age is just a number, each of us wears and views those numbers differently. And although ageism is prevalent in the workplace and marketplace, most advertisements geared towards turning back time target women.

### The danger of "Anti-Ageing" advertisements

Too many of those ads refer to "anti-ageing", a popular expression, almost as irritating as the term "anti-diet". The word "diet" is defined as "a way of life", so anti-diet would mean going against your way of

life. The reality is that anti-diet is more likely referring to anti-diet culture and the negativity that it sparks, including restrictive, unrealistic and punitive eating patterns.

Similarly, "anti-ageing" advertisements and media stories make it seem as if ageing is something to fight against instead of to embrace. Perhaps we need to change the language we use replace "seniors" or "the elderly" with something like "seasoned".

NOTE: Older people who felt younger than their age had a lower mortality rate than those who felt older, a new study has found.

Courtesy: Internet



**Pearl Savla**  
Nutritionist

Nutrition is about eating a healthy and balanced diet so our body is provided with all the essential nutrients that it needs to function and grow (nutrients include carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water). Having a healthy diet is crucial for all ages. It provides energy and can aid weight management. Additionally, it might aid in the prevention of various conditions like osteoporosis, high blood pressure, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers.

However, ageing changes your dietary needs. The two primary patterns of the ageing body follow decreased levels of metabolism and overall activity.

### Physical and Sensory Changes

Smell and taste are two important components of the sensual experience of eating. These senses can change with age, and if certain foods aren't as appealing as they once were, an older adult may lose interest in eating. Furthermore, older people who do not maintain an active lifestyle may become more sedentary, losing muscle and potentially gaining weight. Sedentary behaviour is relatively common among the elderly. All of these physical changes can be aided by understanding proper nutrition that an ageing body requires to function optimally.

### Gastrointestinal Changes

An ageing digestive tract may not only affect how you eat, but it may also cause some gastrointestinal conditions. Around 20 per cent of the elderly suffer from atrophic gastritis, which is characterized by a decrease in stomach acid known to aid nutrient absorption. GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease) is another gastrointestinal disease that affects 20% of adults. GERD is a chronic acid reflux disorder that can have an impact on one's diet and if left untreated, can lead to more health issues. Age may

also affect peristaltic activity (the contractions and relaxations of the small intestine, colon, stomach, and oesophageal muscles are referred to as peristaltic activity). These muscles push food through your digestive tract, and change your peristaltic activity which can affect how nutrients are absorbed by the body.

### Malnutrition and Vitamin Deficiencies

Each digestive, physical and sensory change that occurs with age may eventually lead to calcium, vitamin D, and B12 deficiencies; also omega fats, potassium, magnesium, fibre and other deficiencies. Some elderly people require additional protein. Malnutrition is a concern for the elderly population, but with the right diet and the right nutrients, malnutrition, vitamin deficiency, and weight fluctuations can be controlled. For instance, even if the caloric needs are lower, one still needs to consume enough nutrients.

### Nutrients Required for Healthy Ageing

**Protein-rich foods** can aid in the promotion of muscle strength, bone health, and other vital physiological functions. Protein can be found in lean meat, poultry and fish. Beans, nuts, and eggs can also be added to the diet to help your body get the protein it requires. Fibre can help regulate the digestive system and lower your risk of heart disease and obesity (fibre can be obtained by including whole-grain bread, breakfast cereals, brown rice, pasta, fruits, vegetables and lentils).

**Calcium** is essential for the maintenance of healthy bones, but as one ages, it is reabsorbed into the body from the bones, leading to osteoporosis, a weakening of the bone tissue that leaves bones brittle and fragile. Individuals can obtain calcium from milk and dairy foods such as yogurt and cheese, leafy green vegetables, and calcium fortified cereals to reduce the risk

of osteoporosis.

**Vitamin B12** improves the brain and nervous system functions. Its content is found in a variety of meat and poultry dishes, as well as milk.

**Potassium** strengthens bones and lowers the risk of high blood pressure and kidney stones. Potassium is abundant in fruits and vegetables such as bananas, prunes and potatoes.

**Magnesium** can improve mental health, heart health, bone health and increase immunity. It is found in fruits and vegetables, as well as nuts and grains.

**Iron** can be obtained from a variety of sources including red meat, fortified cereals and seafood. The function of iron is to transport oxygen in the blood stream to various parts of the body, which reduces a feeling of lethargy.

**Vitamin C:** This vitamin aids the body's production of collagen required for wound healing and bone and tooth repair. It is also required for the formation of skin, ligaments, blood vessels, and tendons, and its anti-oxidant properties may aid in the prevention of heart disease and cancer. Fresh fruits and vegetables are the best sources of vitamin C, but supplements can also help keep levels high.

Maintaining a diet rich in these foods can help your body absorb more of these specific nutrients, promoting health and well-being. Also staying active keeps one physically and mentally fit.

Eating right and exercising can help you stay young and active even as you get older.

*The writer has done her BSc in Home Science and MSc in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics.*

## HAIR LOSS IN WOMEN



**Dr Emma Guttman**

Hair loss in women can occur if certain nutrients are too low, such as iron, folic acid and vitamin B. Also, thyroid problems can lead to thinning of hair.

Even if women can't grow back the hair they've already lost, there are effective ways to maintain what's left, such as injections of vitamin B complex, biotin supplements and platelet-rich plasma injections.

"Hair loss is a big interest of mine because, as a woman, I feel that hair is so important for identity," says the writer, adding that it's important to check with a medical doctor before trying any treatment.

Some women are able to see improvement in hair density by using minoxidil, although improvements can disappear if the hair-growth product is discontinued, Guttman said. Minoxidil is the only drug approved by

the Food and Drug Administration for female pattern hair loss.

*Courtesy: Internet (The writer is director, Kimberly and Eric J Waldman department of Dermatology for Mount Sinai Health System)*





## I STILL MATTER

By Patricia A Fleming

I am still here, I am still here,  
My looks are nothing special,  
My face reveals my age,  
My body shows some wear and tear,  
And my energy's not the same.

Too often my memory fails me,  
And I lose things all the time.

One minute I know what I plan to do,  
And the next it may just slip my mind.

I try hard to avoid my mirror,  
There are things I would rather not see,  
And even those times when I just catch a glimpse,  
I can no longer recognize me.

The things I used to do with ease,  
Can now cause aches and pains,  
And the quality of things I do  
Will never be quite the same.

I always compare my older self,  
To those younger versions of me,  
And I know I'm wasting too much time  
Missing who I used to be.

But the thing that really makes me sad,  
But the thing that really makes me sad,  
Is despite what people see,  
Underneath my tattered, worn out shell,  
I'm still the same old me.

My heart can still feel endless love,  
And at times it still can ache.

My heart can fill with so much joy,  
And then it can suddenly break.

My soul can still feel sympathy  
And longs for forgiveness and peace,  
And there are times its light shines boldly through,  
And times when it longs for release.

It's true, maybe now that I'm older,  
Feeling lonely may be status quo,  
But it also has made me more willing  
To forgive and let past conflicts go.

So maybe,  
So maybe to some I look ugly and old,  
A person who barely exists,  
I'm still quite aware of the beauty inside,  
And my value should not be dismissed.

So although not as strong and no beauty, it's true,  
I'm still here and want so much to live,

And I know that there is no one in this world quite like me,  
And no one who has more to give.

*(With permission by the writer who released the same on  
"POETRYTHATINSPIRES" vocalised by Simerjeet Singh on Whatsapp)*

## TESTIMONIALS: What people say about us...

“ **Mr R R Gudi, Borivali Senior Association.** The program conducted on dance movement activity was very good and easy and involved practising simple dance postures. These exercises are truly very useful for senior citizens. GL is taking a great interest in the affairs of seniors, and we are truly grateful. They provide us with vital information on our well-being and fitness. I love attending these meetings.

“ **Mr Eaknath Khamkar, Dosti Group, Wadala.** I attended your meeting held in April, and the topic was a quiz on the two epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. I learned a lot after attending this session as however much one knows, it is never enough. Questions were asked and all were eager to answer. Thank you, GL, for creating a good opportunity and enriching the lives of seniors.

“ **Ms Anita Shinde, Dosti Group, Wadala.** The quiz on the two epics was very well conducted. GL has taught me the art of learning and the explanation was very apt. I really enjoyed this meet. Thank you, Graceful Living. I will definitely recommend seniors to attend your programs with relatives and friends. This was a good activity. The slides and questions were well presented.

“ **Ms Rashida Chittalwala, Mazagaon Seniors Association.** Meetings conducted by Graceful Living are definitely inspiring and motivating. The meeting conducted during a yoga session called "360 degrees of freedom" was a new learning experience. I enjoyed this meeting a lot and I learned new things. Thanks to the Rotary Club for arranging this session. We get valid information and are learning to lead a healthy life in these critical times of the virus and after. Your contribution and effort are very much appreciated.

“ **Deepa Bharani, regular attendee of support group meetings (online).** I am very grateful to Graceful Living for arranging webinars and guest lectures on issues related to ageing. I personally like to attend all the online programs. Recently, the guest talk on 'The role of neuropsychology in ageing' was an eye-opener in which Dr Shraddha Shah explained the topic in a very interesting and empathetic way, focussing on memory and brain function. I liked the prevention part very much, where she articulated on 'how to follow a neuro-plastic lifestyle'. Thanks once again for conducting such useful and informative programs for senior citizens.

## ★ WEBINAR

Graceful Living conducted an online webinar on 29 October. The topic: 'Working with Older Adults'.

Five panelists were part of the discussion: Mr Ankit Shah, co-founder of Silver Amore (24x7 eldercare home); Dr Pratha, co-founder of PRAJ-The Rehab Sphere (physiotherapy); Ms Rekha Param Anand, team leader, National Helpline 14567 initiated by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment; Ms Kausar Sheikh from Sahabhaav which is a premium Geriatric care facility and Ms Akanksha Hire, Graceful Living. The meeting was moderated by Mr Manoj Gursahani. Questions were asked on their (panelists) experiences of working with older adults and they also gave suggestions on how the inter-generational divide could be reduced. Thirty-five people attended the webinar which also went live on Facebook.



## AGEING WITH DIGNITY AND GRACE

**Tulsi Trust** was established by the Chanrai family in 1975 with an aim to fulfil basic needs of the poor and needy. At a deeper level, it's more than indulging in physical activities. Health care, skills development and education are top priorities. It envisages a fair world for all, working with partners to improve health care and opportunities for livelihood, and education. Add to this, the capacity to understand another's needs and do this with utmost integrity.

**Graceful Living (GL)** is an arm of Tulsi Trust which came out of a realization of a social need for elderly care. After three active years, GL is now a recognized organization for those in their twilight years and has created an awareness through its activities and talks for senior citizens. GL has a social presence viz. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

## ACTIVITIES OF GRACEFUL LIVING

### In Partnership...

- Intellectual companionship and special care programs – includes companionship, counselling and care-giving for Dementia, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's when required. These services are provided through our partners:  
**Echoing Healthy Ageing**  
**Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorder Society (PDMDS)**

- Physiotherapy sessions which help the elderly to improve their mobility and become more independent:  
**PRAJ-The Rehab Sphere** with Dr Pratha Mehta and Dr Rajshri Lad

- Training candidates in 'elder care' in order to have professionals for the same:  
**MMP Shah College** – elder companionship course for Sociology students  
**Aaji Care** – Geriatric counselling course for post-graduate Psychology students

- Activities for the elderly :  
**Mrs Manasi Golwalkar:** technology training

- Sensitization programs for school/college students to create an awareness of the needs and issues of the elderly.

### Direct Intervention by GL...

- Support Group Meetings
- Webinars (Mr Manoj Gursahani)
- Guest Lectures by professionals/experts – mainly on Zoom
- Graceful Living Monthly Newsletter carrying important information for the elderly plus articles by known doctors and other professionals
- Online interviews with senior achievers called 'Sitare'
- Co-ordination by GL to create platforms for senior citizen organizations in the city.



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## GUEST LECTURE

On 20 October, Graceful Living conducted a guest lecture on Zoom by Dr Shraddha Shah who has a private clinic, Synapsium. She is a Consultant Neuropsychologist. She explained the term Neuropsychology and talked about how seniors can change their perception and improve their mental health and resilience. A need for neuro-proactive lifestyle, she said, is a must. A total of 72 people attended the session.

## SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS OF GL

### Physical

- Dr Leena Kedare, HOD Marathi Department, Ruia College, Matunga, organised a Youth Sensitisation Program for its students on 18 October. Mr Damle gave a brief on Graceful Living and Ms Amruta Lovekar spoke about myths and conceptions of old age and its limitations. Total: 80 students attended.
- The first meeting with the seniors association at Vikhroli was conducted on 20 October. Mr Damle introduced Tulsi Trust and Graceful Living, Ms Amruta Lovekar talked about Gerontology. The attendees requested for morning meetings; 26 people attended the program.
- A revision of Brain Gym Exercises was done at the start as a session on brain gym had been conducted earlier. The main activity for this session was a quiz on the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Total 26 people attended the session. Prizes were given to those who gave correct answers. The audience got very involved and were enthusiastic.
- Ms Amruta Lovekar conducted 'Brain Gym Exercises' for the residents of Radhika Vrudhashram at Uttan on 28 October. A total of 30 men and women participated in the program. The audience sang songs and practised the exercises willingly.

## VIEWPOINT

December is our anniversary month, as Graceful Living was born four years ago. Big plans are on the anvil for BIG CELEBRATIONS. Last year, we had a stunning fashion show on the occasion which was held at MMP Shah College for and by senior citizens.

Our opening page in the December Newsletter explains six signs to recognise that your sleeping patterns are flawed. These are vital signs which show you are not getting enough sleep, the most apparent being not having enough energy, and concentration levels going southwards. Though men and women age at the same rate, age is perceived differently for men than women. If a woman has grey hair, she'll often dye it to keep looking young. The article says more. A new study shows that older people who felt younger than their age had a lower mortality rate than those who felt older! Further, does that mean that most of us will be obsessing over the wrinkles on our faces, bags under our eyes and silver streaks in our hair, or will we finally applaud our biological age? To do the latter, we need to focus less on halting how we change on the outside and pay more attention to healthy ageing from the inside.

On maintaining good health, we have an article on 'healthy ageing' by Pearl Savla, a nutritionist, who states that as you age, your dietary needs also change. The two primary patterns of the ageing body follow decreased levels of metabolism and overall activity. These include physical and sensory changes, gastronomical changes and malnutrition. A poem by Patricia A Fleming called '*I Still Matter*' has been printed with permission from the writer. The poem is very touching and so, so apt. As one gets older, you can totally identify with what she has to say. We have also listed some of GL's recent activities.

*Woe-be-tide:* The fervor of the cricket mania is down but not out as T-20 matches seem to be an ongoing process. Much of the enthusiasm has died down because we lost the semi-final against England. But isn't England a great team and surely deserved to win! They also played a wonderful innings against Pakistan and became world champions of 2022!

**Asha Gurnani Vohra**  
Editor