



## The Doctor Will See You Now Tips on Avoiding Illness, Disease, Injury in Later Life

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New Mexico is on course to having among the oldest populations in the country within the decade, bringing a rise in illnesses and associated health care costs.

As of 2022, 18.5 percent of the New Mexico population was 65 or older, according to the U.S. Census. Projections are that by the year 2030, 32.5 percent of New Mexico's population will be age 60 or older and that our state will rank third in the nation for the percentage of its population in that age group. For perspective, the 65 and older demographic for the entire U.S. is expected to reach 25 percent by 2060. Nearly one-quarter of older

adults in the U.S. are members of a racial or ethnic minority group.

This information is critically important to residents in a state like New Mexico, which is already facing a crisis in terms of doctor shortages and patient access to care. Aging brings a higher risk of chronic diseases, such as dementias, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, arthritis, and cancer, which are the nation's leading drivers of illness, disability, deaths and health care costs. However, these challenges do not have to be a foregone conclusion for our community in years to come. There are steps each of us can take to help avoid illness and disease as we age.

For older adults, regular physical activity is one of the most important things an individual can do for good health. Older adults who are physically active (specifically including balance activities) on a regular basis are less likely to experience falls, and therefore reduce the likelihood of certain



injuries. It can also help improve balance and strengthen muscles so that older people can keep doing their day-to-day activities without becoming dependent on others. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), physical activity such as walking, bicycling, and swimming decreases arthritis pain and

improves function, mood, and quality of life. Getting at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week is recommended.

When older adults cannot do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week due to chronic conditions, they

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## Turning 65 soon?

### Or need more information about Medicare?

Learn about your options at a nearby class. We host monthly events at our Journal Center Clinic and Optum Community Center.



**Find a class near you.**

Scan the QR code with your smart device, or visit [optum.com/getmedicare](https://optum.com/getmedicare)

With 12 clinics in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho and Los Lunas, we are committed to keeping you healthy from Medicare annual wellness visits to primary and specialty care.

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