The Alliance Update

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Alliance Chiropractic & Wellness Clinic
Chiropractic-Massage-Naturopathic Medicine

Health Newsletter

Squaring the Geriatric Curve: Living Better as We Age

Source: Dr. Donald DeFabio; Dynamic Chiropractic

As people age, their health often slowly declines. This decline is sometimes called the geriatric curve, which shows decreases in strength, posture, mental ability, and overall health over time. Factors such as muscle loss (sarcopenia), poor posture, frailty, and chronic diseases all contribute to this downward trend. While aging itself cannot be stopped, the goal is to slow this decline and keep people healthy and active for as long as possible. This idea is known as "squaring the geriatric curve."

Squaring the curve does not mean living longer. Instead, it means living *better*—staying active, independent, and engaged for most of life, followed by a shorter period of decline near the end. According to the article, this approach has long been part of chiropractic care, which focuses on improving movement, posture, and overall lifestyle habits.

A major factor is diet and nutrition. A healthy, anti-inflammatory diet can lower inflammation, which is linked to many diseases. This type of diet includes fruits, vegetables, fish, lean meats, nuts, and healthy fats like olive oil, while avoiding processed foods and unhealthy oils. Getting enough protein is also important to prevent muscle loss, especially for adults over 55. Supplements may help, but only after good eating habits are in place.

Exercise is critical for squaring the geriatric curve. Aerobic exercise protects heart health, while resistance training helps maintain muscle and bone strength. Flexibility and balance exercises help prevent stiffness and falls. All types of movement work best when combined and performed with good posture.

Rest and sleep are also essential for healthy aging. Rest means changing activities, not just sitting still, and recovery helps the body prepare for the next task. Sleep allows the body and brain to heal. Good sleep habits include getting 6–8 hours of sleep, limiting screen time before bed, and keeping the bedroom quiet and cool.

Mental agility plays a big role in aging well. The brain needs exercise just like the body. Learning new skills, staying socially active, and performing mentally challenging activities can help keep the mind sharp. Since brain health is linked to inflammation and physical activity, exercise and healthy eating also support mental function.

Finally, chiropractic care that focuses on proper joint movement helps reduce wear and tear on the body and supports better posture and movement patterns. Good posture is especially important because gravity slowly pulls the body into weaker positions over time. Teaching people how to move and stand correctly helps protect the body as it ages.

In summary, squaring the geriatric curve requires a whole-body approach. Chiropractic care, good nutrition, quality sleep, mental engagement, and regular exercise work together to help people age with strength, independence, and a better quality of life.

Health Humour

Source: https://www.rd.com/article/doctor-jokes/

- Patient: "Doctor, I think I need glasses. "Teller: "You certainly do! This is a bank."
- Patient: "Doctor, I broke my arm in two places. "Doctor: "Stop going to those places."
- Patient: "Doctor, Doctor! My son just swallowed a roll of film! "Doctor: "Let's hope nothing develops."

A Practical Step-by-Step Behavior Change Framework For Healthy Eating & Regular Exercise

Source: Dr. Gavin Morphet

STEP 1: Clarify Your "Why" (Weeks 0–1)
The goal is to build intrinsic motivation so the habits last. Write down three reasons you personally care about eating better and exercising. Focus on values, not outcomes. Example - "Have energy to play with my kids" or "Stay independent as I age". Research shows intrinsic motivation predicts long-term adherence better than external goals.

STEP 2: Choose "Minimum Effective Habits" (Weeks 1–2)
To maximize adherence, make only one or two changes. Example for diet add one serving of protein at breakfast and/or eat one fruit or vegetable at every meal. For exercise, add walk 10 minutes/day and/or strength train 2×/week for 20 minutes. Use the rule that if you are not 90% confident you can do it, it's too big. Research shows small, achievable behaviours dramatically increase success and habit formation.

STEP 3: Anchor Habits to Existing Routines (Weeks 2–4)
Work at making habits automatic using cues. A simple formula is: After I _____, I will _____. For example: After I make coffee → I will eat protein; After I brush my teeth → I will stretch for five minutes, etc. Research shows context-based repetition is key to habit formation.

STEP 4: Plan for Friction (Weeks 3–5)
Reduce effort and decision fatigue. For changes in diet, this can include: pre-cut vegetables; keep protein options visible; repeat meals. For exercise this can include: keep running shoes visible; train at the same time daily; use the same simple exercise routine. The rule is to make the healthy choice the easy choice. Research shows setting up your environment for success is far more effective than relying on willpower.

STEP 5: Track the Behaviour, Not the Outcome (Weeks 4–8)
The goal is to reinforce consistency, not perfection. Track only "Did I do the habit?" Example: exercised today? Ate vegetables at lunch. Avoid initially tracking things like calories, weight, and body fat. Research indicates self-monitoring improves adherence, but outcome focus often undermines motivation early in behaviour change.

STEP 6: Use the 'Never Miss Twice' Rule (Weeks 6–12)
The goal is to prevent relapse without guilt. Missing exercise once = normal, but missing twice = habit breakdown. If you miss a day, shrink the habit the next day to something more attainable. Example: instead of a 20 minute workout, do a 10 minute block. The research shows flexible recovery prevents all-or-nothing thinking.

STEP 7: Gradually Increase the Dose (After 4–6 Weeks)
The goal is to progress without breaking consistency. Example: for exercise, you can add one set to an exercise, or an extra five minutes to an exercise session. For diet, you can add another vegetable or improve one meal/day. The rule is to increase only one variable at a time.

STEP 8: Add Identity-based Reinforcement (Weeks 8–12)
The goal is to shift from 'performing habits' to 'being that person.' For example, it is a change in language from 'I'm trying to eat better' to 'I am someone who prioritizes health'. Ask yourself 'What would a person who values health do next?' Research shows identity-based habits are more resilient than outcome-based goals.

STEP 9: Build Social & Accountability Support
The goal is to help increase the likelihood of follow-through on your new habits. Options can include: having a workout partner; signing up for a group class; or planning weekly healthy family meals.

STEP 10: Review & Adjust Every 2–4 Weeks
The goal is to optimize, not to judge. Ask: 'what's working?', 'what feels hard?', or 'what can I simplify?' Based on answers to these types of questions, adjust your environment or expectations, not your self-worth.

In conclusion, successful behavior change is not about motivation or discipline. Successful behaviour change is about small steps, stable routines, supportive environments, and flexible persistence.

Exercise Matches Therapy in Easing Depression Symptoms

Source: Medscape; Megan Brooks; January 08, 2026

Depression is a serious mental health condition that affects more than 280 million people around the world. Common treatments include antidepressant medications and psychological therapies such as counselling. While these treatments can help many people, they may also have limits, including side effects, high costs, or difficulty accessing care. Because of this, researchers have been studying exercise as another way to help manage depression.

An updated review of recent research looked closely at how exercise affects depression in adults. This review analyzed results from 73 high-quality studies involving nearly 5,000 adults with depression. The researchers compared exercise to no treatment, as well as to therapy and antidepressant medication.

Overall, the review found that exercise can reduce symptoms of depression to a moderate degree when compared with no treatment. In many cases, exercise worked about as well as psychological therapy or antidepressant medication in reducing symptoms by the end of treatment. This suggests that exercise may be a helpful and safe option for some people with depression, especially since it is low cost and widely available.

The researchers also looked at what kinds of exercise worked best. They found that light to moderate exercise often helped more than very intense exercise. No single type of exercise stood out as the best, but programs that combined aerobic exercise (like walking or cycling) with strength training appeared to be more helpful than aerobic exercise alone.

Exercise was also found to be generally safe. Side effects were uncommon and usually mild, such as muscle or joint soreness. In comparison, people taking antidepressant medications more often reported side effects like stomach problems, tiredness, or sexual difficulties.

In conclusion, the evidence shows that exercise can be a useful option for managing depression and may offer similar benefits to therapy or medication for some people.

Chocolate and Health: What the Science Says

Source: Medscape; Minh Nguyen, MD; June 11, 2025

Chocolate is often seen as a treat, but its main ingredient, cocoa, has gained attention for possible health benefits—especially for the heart. Researchers have been studying cocoa because it is rich in natural plant compounds called polyphenols. These compounds act as antioxidants and may help reduce inflammation and support healthy blood vessels. As a result, cocoa is now being explored as part of heart-healthy eating patterns.

One of the largest studies on cocoa and heart health is the *Cocoa Supplement and Multivitamin Outcomes Study*. This long-term study followed older adults for about 3.6 years. People who took a daily cocoa extract had a 10% lower rate of total heart-related events such as heart attacks and strokes. While this result was not strong enough to be considered statistically certain, there was a clear and meaningful benefit in other areas. Cocoa supplementation led to a 27% lower risk of death from heart disease. For participants who regularly took the supplement as directed, major heart events were reduced by 16% compared to those taking a placebo. These findings suggest cocoa may play a helpful role in protecting heart health, especially when consumed consistently.

Dark chocolate, which contains more cocoa than milk chocolate, has also been shown to support healthy blood vessels. When combined with physical activity, dark chocolate can improve the function of the endothelium, the thin lining inside blood vessels. This happens mainly by increasing nitric oxide, a substance that helps blood vessels relax and widen. Better blood flow allows more oxygen to reach tissues and reduces stress on blood vessels. While dark chocolate does not directly remove plaque from arteries or control insulin levels, its effect on nitric oxide is one of its strongest and most well-supported benefits.

Finally, cocoa contains different types of fats. Oleic acid, a healthy fat also found in olive oil, may help protect blood vessels and reduce heart risk. Other fats in cocoa such as palmitic and stearic acid, do not provide the same benefits.

In summary, cocoa and dark chocolate can support heart health when eaten in moderation. Their biggest benefits come from improving blood vessel function and providing helpful nutrients, not from being a cure-all.

Head Injuries Tied to Increased Risk for Future Suicide Attempts

Source: Medscape; Deborah Brauser; January 02, 2026

This article explains the results of a large study that looked at whether head injuries increase the risk of suicide attempts. Researchers studied the health records of more than 1.8 million adults over a period of 20 years. They found that people who had any type of head injury were more likely to attempt suicide in the future than people who did not have a head injury. On average, those with head injuries were 21% more likely to attempt suicide within about five years after the injury.

The study is important because it focussed on all types of brain injuries and not just serious brain injuries. In fact, only about 20% of head injuries are classified as Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs). This research was the first to examine all types of head injuries, including ones often considered "minor." The results showed that even less serious head injuries were linked to a higher risk of suicide attempts.

Researchers found that the risk was highest in the first few months after the injury, but it remained elevated for many people. Those with existing mental health conditions such as depression or substance use disorders had an even higher risk. However, the increased risk was also seen in people who had no history of mental health problems. This shows that head injuries can affect mental health in ways that are not always obvious.

Experts say these findings suggest doctors should pay closer attention to mental health after any head injury. Even a small blow to the head may affect brain areas that control mood, decision-making, and impulse control. The article concludes that head injuries should be taken seriously, and mental health support should be considered to help protect patients and reduce future risk.

Clinic Services

1. Chiropractic Care
2. Laser Therapy
3. Electrical Therapy
4. Sports Injury Care
5. Custom Foot Orthotics
6. Massage Therapy[1]
7. Naturopathic Medicine
8. Acupuncture
9. Kinesiology Services

Monday	8:00am— 12:00pm	3:30pm - 7:30pm
Tuesday	8:00am— 12:00pm	
Wednesday	8:00am— 12:00pm	3:30pm –7:30pm
Thursday		3:30pm –7:30pm
Friday	8:00am – 12:00pm	

Clinic Hours
Please note:
1. Massage therapy is available outside

Announcements

- All appointment requests should be made by calling the clinic at 905-648-0661. We do not accept appointment cancellations, bookings, or reschedules via our web site. Please note we need to know what you are being seen for to book the appropriate duration of time.
- Check us out on *Facebook* and Instagram for the latest in health news, research, updates, and announcements.
- If you want to see a topic covered in an upcoming newsletter, blog, or social media post, email *info@alliancechiroandwellness.com*
- Did you know we publish a weekly blog? We source trends and tips to help our patients make informed decisions about their health. Find it on our website!

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