

MYTHS ON AGING

UNICITY

A CARE MANAGEMENT COMPANY

ABOUT UNICITY

At Unicity Care Management, we specialize in guiding individuals and families through the complexities of aging, health challenges, and long-term care planning.

Our team of experienced Nurses and Social Workers provides compassionate, personalized support to help clients maintain independence, dignity, and quality of life.

We serve as trusted advocates — coordinating care, navigating healthcare systems, and connecting families with the right resources at the right time. Whether facing a new diagnosis, hospital discharge, or long-term planning, Unicity is here to help.

Our mission is simple:
To bring clarity, comfort, and confidence to those we serve — when it matters most.

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DEMYSTIFYING COMMON MYTHS OF AGING

- The term “ageism” was first coined by Dr. Robert Butler in 1968.
- It refers to prejudice or discrimination based solely on a person’s age.
- Ageism involves prejudging individuals, groups, or conditions based on preconceived notions about aging.
- Our society has developed myths, stereotypes, and misunderstandings about older adults that often lead to bias and exclusion.

Today’s Goal

We’ll explore the myths vs. realities of aging — separating fact from fiction — and learn how to recognize and challenge ageist attitudes.



COMMON MYTHS ABOUT AGING

- Dementia is an inevitable part of aging
- Confusion and delirium are normal aspects of aging
- Older adults cannot learn anything new
- All older adults will develop arthritis
- All older adults will become hard of hearing
- Bones always become weak and brittle with age
- Falling is a normal part of aging
- All older adults experience urinary incontinence
- Older adults should limit their physical activity
- You don’t need as much sleep as you age
- After age 65, it’s too late to start a healthy lifestyle



MYTH #1 - DEMENTIA IS AN INEVITABLE PART OF AGING

- The term “senile” is often misused — it refers to poor cognitive ability due to aging, but this is not an accurate or appropriate term today.
- Dementia is not a normal part of aging. It is a disease that affects the brain and nervous system.
- Alzheimer’s Disease is the most common type of dementia.
- While some cognitive changes are common with age, most older adults do not experience significant memory loss that interferes with daily life or requires a dementia diagnosis.
- Example of normal aging: Misplacing your keys but remembering their location after some thought.



MYTH #1 - DEMENTIA IS AN INEVITABLE PART OF AGING

Ways to Support Brain Health

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet
- Stay physically active
- Keep your brain engaged (reading, puzzles, learning new skills)
- Maintain regular social interaction
- Manage health conditions and medications carefully



MYTH #2 - CONFUSION & DELIRIUM ARE NORMAL PARTS OF AGING

Mental Status Changes in Older Adults

- Any change in mental status in an older adult should always be investigated.
- Confusion and delirium are not normal parts of aging and often signal an underlying medical issue.

Common Causes of Confusion & Delirium

- Multiple drug interactions
- Adverse drug reactions
- Dehydration
- Infections (especially Urinary Tract Infections)
- Metabolic imbalances
- High or low blood sugar
- Neurologic events (TIA, stroke, brain bleed)



MYTH #3 – OLDER PEOPLE CAN NOT LEARN

“You Can’t Teach an Old Dog New Tricks”

- False! Older adults can absolutely learn new information — they may just do so at a slower pace.
- The ability to learn does not disappear with age.
- Older individuals can still retain and apply new knowledge effectively.
- Learning may be impacted only if a medical condition affects brain or neurological function.



MYTH #4 – ALL OLDER PEOPLE WILL GET ARTHRITIS

- While arthritis is more common with age, aging itself does not cause arthritis.
- Most arthritis results from wear and tear on the joints over time.
- Previous joint injuries — like sprains, fractures, or dislocations — can increase the risk.
- Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune condition, not age-related.

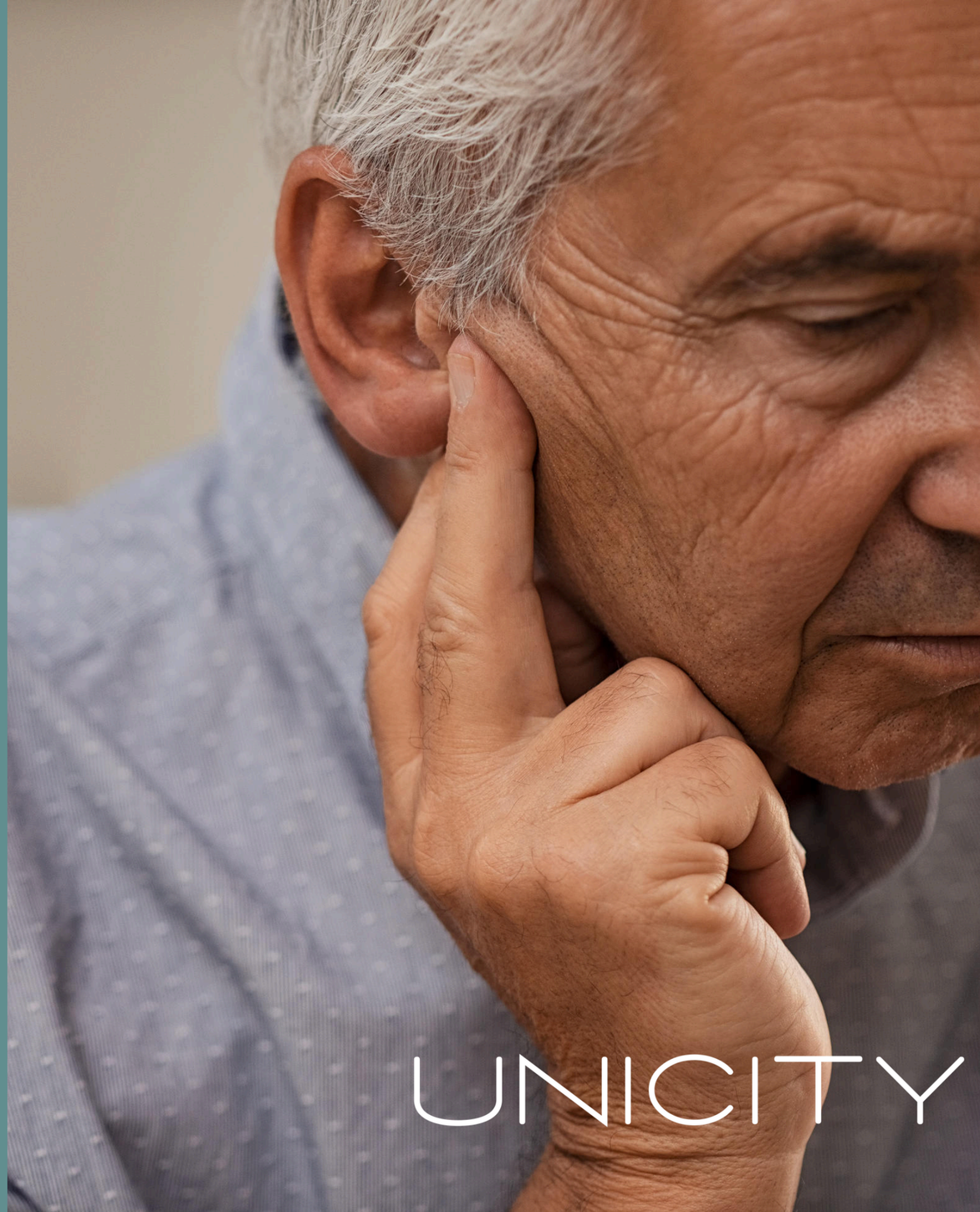
Managing Arthritis

- Medications (both prescription and over-the-counter)
- Exercise and staying physically active
- Maintaining a healthy weight to reduce joint stress



MYTH #5 – HEARING LOSS

- Some hearing loss is common with age and considered part of the normal aging process.
- About 60% of older adults experience hearing loss significant enough to benefit from a hearing aid.
- However, only 35% of 80-year-olds actually use hearing aids.
- It's important to note that not all older adults experience hearing loss — some individuals in their 90s still have perfect hearing.



MYTH #6 – AS YOU AGE, YOUR BONES WILL GET WEAK AND BRITTLE

- Osteoporosis is a medical condition where bones become weak and brittle, increasing the risk of fractures.
- It is not an inevitable part of aging — there are many ways to prevent and manage it.
- How to Fight Osteoporosis
- Eat a calcium and vitamin D-rich diet
- Take vitamin supplements if needed
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Engage in weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercise
- Avoid smoking
- Limit alcohol use
- Talk to your healthcare provider about medication options



MYTH #7 – FALLING IS A NORMAL PART OF AGING

- While the risk of falling increases with age, falls are not a normal or expected part of aging.
- Every fall should be taken seriously — even if no injury occurs — and the cause should be investigated.
- Fall Prevention Strategies
- Engage in regular exercise to build strength and balance
- Consider Physical and Occupational Therapy for targeted exercises
- Wear appropriate, supportive footwear
- Make home modifications (e.g., install grab bars, remove loose rugs, add hand railings)
- Review medications for side effects that may increase fall risk
- Schedule a physical exam to rule out underlying causes
- Use mobility aids such as a cane, walker, or rollator as needed



MYTH #8 – OLDER PEOPLE ALL EXPERIENCE URINARY INCONTINENCE

- While urinary incontinence is more common in older adults, it is not a normal part of aging.
- It is often highly treatable, so it’s important to consult your Primary Care Provider or a Urologist.
- Common Causes of Incontinence
- Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs)
- Mobility limitations
- Side effects of medications
- Electrolyte imbalances
- Neurological conditions (e.g., MS, Parkinson’s, stroke)



MYTH #9 – OLDER PEOPLE LIMIT THEIR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- If you're generally fit and healthy, the CDC places no activity restrictions for adults over 65.
- It’s never too late to start exercising — regular movement can greatly improve heart health, mobility, and quality of life.
- Always check with your primary care provider before beginning new or high-intensity workouts.
- CDC Exercise Recommendations
- 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week
- (Even in 10-minute sessions — it still counts!)
- 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity per week
- 2+ strength training sessions weekly



MYTH #10 – YOU DON'T NEED AS MUCH SLEEP WHEN YOU ARE OLDER

- Most older adults maintain similar sleep patterns to when they were younger.
- (If you were an early riser, you likely still are!)
- However, many report more interrupted sleep due to aging-related issues like pain or frequent bathroom trips.
- Excessive daytime sleep can disrupt nighttime sleep quality.

Tips for Better Sleep

- Aim for 7–9 hours of sleep each night
- Practice good sleep hygiene:
- Establish a consistent bedtime routine
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol before bed
- Consider lifestyle changes:
- Limit daytime naps
- Increase physical activity
- Review medications with your provider that may affect sleep



MYTH 11 – ONCE YOU TURN 65, IT IS REALLY TOO LATE TO START FOLLOWING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

- It is never too late to make positive lifestyle changes
- Regular exercise and a balanced diet are key to maintaining health and independence

Tips for a Healthier Life

- Exercise 3–5 times a week — or daily, if possible
- Eat a balanced diet:
- Include protein, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated
- Maintain a positive mindset — practice gratitude and stay mentally engaged



REALITIES OF AGING – THE TRUTH IS:

- Everyone ages differently — there is no one-size-fits-all experience
- Occasional memory lapses can be normal, but acute confusion is not
- It’s never too late to adopt healthy lifestyle changes
- Falls, urinary incontinence, and osteoporosis are not normal parts of aging — they can be prevented and managed
- You play a vital role in managing arthritis and maintaining bone health
- Staying physically active is essential at any age
- Older adults need just as much sleep as younger people
- Hydration matters — drink plenty of water daily



Unicity Care Management is here to help you age safely and confidently.

Our team of experienced Nurses and Social Workers provides personalized care planning, coordination, and advocacy — ensuring you have the support, resources, and guidance you need every step of the way. Whether you're navigating a new diagnosis, managing chronic conditions, or planning for the future,

Unicity is your trusted partner in aging well.

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Call us today for a free consultation and let us help you navigate aging with confidence

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