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## this month

May 6  
National Nurses' Day

May 11-17  
Brain Injury Awareness Week



## STILL GOING STRONG

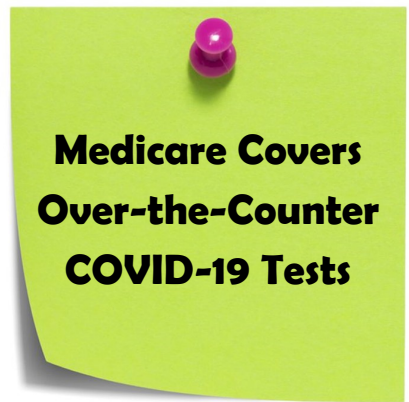
### Learn How You Can Age Without Injury

*Still Going Strong* is a new campaign to educate adults age 65 and older, and those that care for them, about common injuries that can be prevented as they age and specific steps they can take to reduce their risk of injury. The campaign was designed by CDC's Center for Injury Prevention and Control. *Still Going Strong* empowers older adults to stay safe without sacrificing their favorite hobbies and activities. It is possible to age without injury and maintain a good quality of life. This campaign has two goals: to educate about common risk factors for falls and motor vehicle crashes, as well as traumatic brain injuries that happen from falls and motor vehicle crashes and to empower older adults and their caregivers to take simple steps that will help them maintain their independence and age without injury. Getting older doesn't have to mean giving up the activities you enjoy! Visit [www.cdc.gov/stillgoingstrong](http://www.cdc.gov/stillgoingstrong) to learn more about *Still Going Strong*.

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**Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month**  
**Older Americans Awareness Month**  
**Mental Health Awareness Month**  
**American Stroke Month**





## Medicare Covers Over-the-Counter COVID-19 Tests

Medicare has a new initiative that will cover up to eight over-the-counter COVID-19 tests each calendar month, at no cost to you. Medicare will cover these tests if you have Part B, including those enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan. If you are in a Medicare Advantage plan, the tests covered under this initiative will be covered outside of your existing plan's coverage, and in addition to any over-the-counter tests that may be covered under the plan as a supplemental benefit. People with Medicare Part B can get up to eight free over-the-counter tests during each month through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

You can get over-the-counter COVID-19 tests at any pharmacy or health care provider that participates in this initiative. Check with your pharmacy or health care provider to see if they are participating. If so, they can provide your tests and will bill Medicare on your behalf. A partial list of participating pharmacies can be found at <https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-coronavirus>. You should bring your red, white, and blue Medicare card to get your free tests (even if you have a Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicare Part D plan), but the pharmacy may be able to get the information it needs to bill Medicare without the card.

Source: <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicare-covers-over-counter-covid-19-tests>

## Still Going Strong Common Injuries as We Age — Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Unintentional injuries have traditionally been the 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death among adults age 65 and over. **Falls** and **motor vehicle crashes** result in the majority of **TBI-related** hospitalizations and deaths among older adults. **TBI** is a major cause of death and disability in the U.S. In 2019, there were about 61,000 **TBI-related** deaths in the United States. Older adults who get a **TBI** may face health problems that last a few days or the rest of their lives, depending on the severity of the injury.

A traumatic brain injury, or TBI, is an injury that affects how the brain works.

It may be caused by a:

- Bump, blow, or jolt to the head
- Penetrating head injury (such as when an object enters the skull and harms the brain)

Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI. The severity of a TBI may range from mild, moderate, to severe. Most TBIs that occur in older adults are mild and are commonly called concussions.

TBIs have also increased 30% in the last 10 years.



Effects of TBI can include short- or long-term problems with:

- Thinking and memory
- Movement
- Sleep
- Sensations such as vision or hearing
- Emotional functioning such as personality changes or depression



TBI is a special health concern for older adults. They have the highest rates of TBI-related hospitalizations and death. Older adults can also take longer to recover from a TBI.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/stillgoingstrong/about/common-injuries-as-we-age.html>

## OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



AGE MY WAY: MAY 2022

Older adults play vital, positive roles in our communities – as family members, friends, mentors, volunteers, civic leaders, members of the workforce, and more. Just as every person is unique, so too is how they age and how they choose to do it – and there is no “right” way. That’s why the theme for Older Americans Month (OAM) 2022 is *Age My Way*.

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the celebration of OAM. This year’s theme focuses on how older adults can age in their communities, living independently for as long as possible and participating in ways they choose.

While *Age My Way* will look different for each person, here are common things everyone can consider:

- **Planning:** Think about what you will need and want in the future, from home and community-based services to community activities that interest you.
- **Engagement:** Remain involved and contribute to your community through work, volunteer, and/or civic participation opportunities.
- **Access:** Make home improvements and modifications, use assistive technologies, and customize supports to help you better age in place.
- **Connection:** Maintain social activities and relationships to combat social isolation and stay connected to your community.

For more information, visit the official [OAM website](#), follow ACL on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and join the conversation using [#OlderAmericansMonth](#).

Source: <https://acl.gov/oam/2022/older-americans-month-2022>

## National Stroke Awareness Month



Stroke is a disease that affects the arteries leading to and within the brain. It is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts (or ruptures). When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so it and brain cells die.

**80 percent of strokes are preventable.**

By learning and sharing the **F.A.S.T.** warning signs, you just might save a life from stroke.

**Use the letters in F.A.S.T to spot a Stroke**

### **F = Face Drooping**

Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?

### **A = Arm Weakness**

Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

### **S = Speech Difficulty**

Is speech slurred?

### **T = Time to call 911**



## **Other Stroke Symptoms**

**Watch for Sudden:**

**NUMBNESS** or weakness of face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body

**CONFUSION**, trouble speaking or understanding speech

**TROUBLE SEEING** in one or both eyes

**TROUBLE WALKING**, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination

**SEVERE HEADACHE** with no known cause

Source: <https://www.stroke.org/>

COMING SOON

988

**Starting July 16, 2022:** New Number to Call for People Facing Mental Health Crises

Calling 988 will connect you directly to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

The line will be staffed with trained crisis counselors who know what callers are going through and know what local resources might make a difference. The phone line is staffed 24/7, and is free and confidential.

988 will not be available until July 16, 2022. In the meantime, if you or someone you know is in crisis, please continue to contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or the Crisis Text Line by texting MHA to 741741.

Source: <https://mhanational.org/>



## MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

- While 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime, everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health.
- Addressing mental health symptoms early is critically important for overall health.
- The average delay between symptom onset and treatment is 11 years, meaning a lot of people spend months or years facing mental health challenges before getting a diagnosis. It is never too early to seek treatment for your mental health. Intervening effectively during early stages can save lives and is critically important for people living with mental health conditions.
- The delays in treatment for mental health conditions are longer than for many other health conditions. **Getting screened** increases the chances of getting treatment. Mental Health America has free, anonymous, and scientifically validated mental health screens at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org).
- Your screening results can be used to start a conversation with your primary care provider or a trusted friend or family member, and you can begin to plan a course of action for addressing your mental health.

Source: <https://mhanational.org/>



### MISSION STATEMENT

To establish, expand, protect, and enforce the human and civil rights of persons with disabilities through administrative, legal, and other appropriate remedies.

### CONTACT US

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