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HEALTH BRIEFS

Getting older Attention, aging Americans! Every year, about 50,000 people in New Jersey turn 60, and they are living longer than ever while facing new challenges.

Lorraine Spiotta, an expert in long-term-care insurance, says there are three things older citizens can do to help themselves retain control over their lives and remain active and independent:

- * Evaluate your lifestyle. Make any necessary behavioral changes to reduce your risk of disease, disability or injury. Small changes in diet, exercise and preventive measures can make a huge difference.
- * Learn about health care and long-term care options when you are healthy. Explore all of your choices before you need to make a decision.
- * Keep all vital information organized and in one place. That makes it easier for you and your loved ones if they need access to the information. Designate a point person in the event you become unable to care for yourself.

Spiotta is president of Senior Long Term Care Insurance Brokerage in East Brunswick and author of "The Caregiver's Handbook: A Helpful Planning Guide" (Itcareinsurance.com).

Women and muscles Women who want to build muscle strength and endurance shouldn't rely on low-velocity routines, which are workouts performed much more slowly than more traditional strength-training methods, according to a recent study.

The Ohio University study examined whether low-velocity resistance training is a more effective workout than conventional routines, as some experts maintain. The team studied 34 healthy, college-age females who performed three different training methods over six weeks.

The methods were a traditional strength-training routine, a traditional muscle-endurance training routine and a low-velocity regimen. The traditional strength group lifted a heavier weight load with fewer repetitions, while the traditional endurance group lifted a lighter weight load with more repetitions. The low-velocity group also lifted a lighter weight load but did their workouts significantly more slowly than the other groups and did fewer repetitions.

Researchers found that the traditional strength group gained the most strength in two of three workouts performed. The endurance group and the low-velocity group improved strength but to a much lesser degree.

Want to minimize your weight gain this summer and still have fun? Here are some tips from Alan Borushek, author of "**The 2008 Calorie King Calorie, Fat & Carbohydrate Counter**," and Pat Fiducia, weight-loss expert for calorieking.com:

- * Start the season with a plan. Know what you want to look and feel like now and by the end of the summer.
- * Set goals. They need to be very specific and reasonable so you don't set yourself up for failure. Put them in writing and let at least one friend or family member know about your commitment.
- * Keep track to stay on track. Without keeping track of calories, you are likely to underestimate the amount you eat by up to 30 percent. Eating just 350 extra calories a day will add a pound every 10 days. Conversely, if you eat 350 fewer calories per day, you will lose a pound every 10 days.
- * Pay attention to fullness. Don't eat just because the food is there. If you eat until you feel like you've overdone it, you've eaten too much. Eat more slowly to give your stomach time to send you the "I'm full" signal.
- * Be portion wise. There's no need to deny yourself the foods you enjoy if you limit the amount and the frequency. Also, studies show we eat less when we use a smaller plate.
- * Create diversion. The more activities and entertainment you have to distract you from food, the less likely you will overeat. At summer parties, focus on the fun, not the food.- Compiled by Meg Nugent