

Old age

Late Adulthood

Cognitive & Physical Development



Old age....

- **Official definitions**
- Old age comprises "the later part of life; the period of life after youth and middle age . . . , usually with reference to deterioration
- When old age begins cannot be universally defined because it shifts according to the context.
- The United Nations has agreed that 60+ years may be usually denotes
- Senior citizen is a common [euphemism](#) for an old person used in [American English](#), and sometimes in [British English](#). It implies or means that the person being referred to is retired. ted as old age,

Marks of old age

- **Physical marks of old age**
- **Bone and joint.** Old bones are marked by “thinning and shrinkage.” This results in a loss of height (about two inches by age 80), a stooping posture in many people, and a greater susceptibility to bone and joint diseases such as [osteoarthritis](#) and [osteoporosis](#).
- **Chronic diseases.** Most older persons have at least one [chronic condition](#) and many have multiple conditions. In 2007-2009, the most frequently occurring conditions like [hypertension](#) arthritis , heart disease .

Physical marks of old age

- **Dental problems.** Less saliva and less ability for oral hygiene in old age increases the chance of tooth decay and infection.
- **Digestive system.** About 40% of the time, old age is marked by digestive disorders such as difficulty in swallowing, inability to eat enough and to absorb nutrition, constipation and bleeding.

Physical marks of old age

- **Eyesight.** Diminished eyesight makes it more difficult to read in low lighting and in smaller print. Speed with which an individual reads and the ability to locate objects may also be impaired.
- **Falls.** Old age spells risk for injury from falls that might not cause injury to a younger person.
- Every year, about one-third of those 65 years old and over half of those 80 years old fall. Falls are the leading cause of injury and death for old people.

Physical marks of old age

- **Hair** usually becomes thinner and grayer.
- **Hearing.** By age 75 and older, 48% of men and 37% of women encounter impairments in hearing.
- **Hearts** are less efficient in old age with a resulting loss of stamina. In addition, atherosclerosis can constrict blood flow.

Physical marks of old age

- **Immune function.** Less efficient immune function ([Immunosenescence](#)) is a mark of old age.
- **Lungs** expand less well; thus, they provide less oxygen.
- **Pain** afflicts old people at least 25% of the time, increasing with age up to 80% for those in nursing homes. Most pains are [rheumatological](#) or [malignant](#).
- **Sexual activity** decreases significantly with age, especially after age 60, for both women and men.
- Sexual drive in both men and women decreases as they age.
- **Skin** loses elasticity, becomes drier, and more lined and wrinkled.

- **Sleep** trouble holds a chronic prevalence of over 50% in old age and results in daytime sleepiness.
- **Taste buds** diminish so that by age 80 taste buds are down to 50% of normal. Food becomes less appealing and nutrition can suffer.
- **Urinary incontinence** is often found in old age.
- **Voice.** In old age, vocal cords weaken and vibrate more slowly. This results in a weakened, breathy voice that is sometimes called an “old person’s voice.”

Mental marks of old age

- **Adaptable** describes most people in their old age. In spite the stressfulness of old age, they are described as “agreeable” and “accepting.” However, old age dependence induces feelings of incompetence and worthlessness in a minority.
- **Caution** marks old age. This antipathy toward “risk-taking” stems from the fact that old people have less to gain and more to lose by taking risks than younger people.

Mental marks of old age

- **Depressed mood.** People with more negative age stereotypes will likely have higher rates of depression as they get older.
- Old age depression results in the over-65 population having the highest suicide rate.
- **Fear** of crime in old age, especially among the frail, sometimes weighs more heavily than concerns about finances or health and restricts what they do.
- The fear persists in spite of the fact that old people are victims of crime less often than younger people.

Mental marks of old age

- **Mental disorders** afflict about 15% of people aged 60+ according to estimates by the World Health Organization.¹
- Another survey taken in 15 countries reported that mental disorders of adults interfered with their daily activities more than physical problems.
- **Reduced mental and cognitive ability** afflicts old age. [Memory loss](#) is common in old age due to the decrease in speed of information being encoded, stored, and retrieved. It takes more time to learn new information.
- Dementia is a general term for memory loss and other intellectual abilities serious enough to interfere with daily life. Its prevalence increases in old age from about 10% at age 65 to about 50% over age 85.

Mental.....

- [Alzheimer's disease](#) accounts for 50 to 80 percent of dementia cases. Demented behavior can include wandering, physical aggression, verbal outbursts, depression, and psychosis.
- **Set in one's ways** describes a mind set of old age. A study of over 400 distinguished men and women in old age found a “preference for the routine.”
- Explanations include old age's toll on the “fluid intelligence” and the “more deeply entrenched” ways of the old.