

# 50+ HealthConnection

2019  
Fall | Winter

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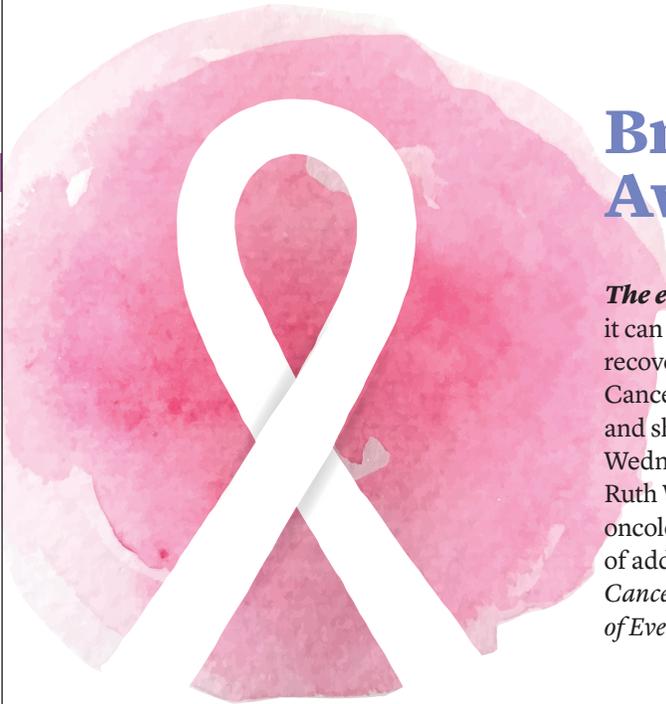
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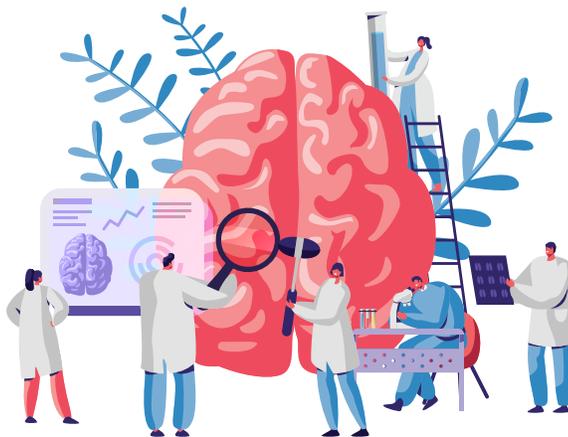


## Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

*The earlier breast cancer is detected*, the earlier it can be treated — leading to a better chance for recovery. Every October, we celebrate Breast Cancer Awareness Month by educating the public and sharing information that can save lives. On Wednesday, October 9, 2019, at 12:30 p.m., join Ruth Williamson, MD, medical director of radiation oncology at Huntington Hospital, along with a panel of additional experts, for a discussion about *Breast Cancer Treatment and Genetic Testing*. See *Calendar of Events* for details.

## Researching Alzheimer's disease.

**A**lzheimer's disease affects 5.8 million people across the nation. New scientific breakthroughs could change the way we approach this and other types of dementia. In November, as part of our recognition of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, research physician Michael Harrington, MB, ChB, will provide information about the latest research in the field. Join us on Wednesday, November 13, 2019, at 12:30 p.m., for *Ongoing Dementia Research*. See *Calendar of Events* for details.



## Surgery for sarcoma.

*Cancer can occur in every part of your body.* On Wednesday, October 23, 2019, orthopedic surgeon Joseph Dominic Femino, MD, will discuss surgical treatment for patients diagnosed with sarcoma — a rare type of cancer that begins in the bones and soft tissues. Join us at 12:30 p.m., for *Surgical Treatment for Sarcoma*. See *Calendar of Events* for details.

# Mindfulness matters.

**Y**ou may have heard that mindfulness techniques can help in ways that are important for older

adults. Studies — which show that these techniques can help reduce stress, improve mood and memory, enhance sleep, and lower blood pressure — may have further piqued your interest. At the same time, you have some questions. Isn't this a religious thing? Does it involve a lot of strenuous exercise? Do you need to go to a gym, or a yoga studio? How would you even start?

Actually, it's quite simple: Mindfulness involves taking a quiet moment to observe your thoughts and feelings without judgment. That's it. You don't need any special equipment or skills and it doesn't involve extensive movement. There's no religious component. You can practice it anywhere, at any time, for any amount of time.

Here are a few ways to get started:

**Just breathe.** One of the easiest ways to practice mindfulness is through mindful breathing. Focus your attention on your breath as you inhale and exhale. Try mentally counting to five as you inhale, and counting back down to one as you exhale. If you find your mind wandering from your breathing, that's OK! Everyone gets distracted sometimes. Simply refocus on breathing in and out. It gets easier the more you do it.

**Scan your body.** Sitting in a comfortable position, close your eyes and focus your attention on how each part of your body feels. Start with your head, and slowly work your way down to your shoulders, arms, torso, legs and feet. Notice any sensations as you move down? Is there pain or tension in certain areas? Do you feel relaxed in others? When you become aware of each sensation, acknowledge it, sit with it for a moment and move to the next area.

You can also add mindful breathing to your body scan by paus-

ing as you focus attention on each body part and softening or relaxing that area as you exhale.

**Visualize.** Again, start by sitting comfortably and closing your eyes. Think of a place that you associate with joy, peace and/or relaxation. It might be a favorite vacation spot, for example. Imagine yourself there, soaking in the sights, the smells, and the sounds. Can you smell salt air, or hear the crackle of a fireplace? Is anyone there with you? How do you feel being there? Visualize any details you can that help transport you to that special place — and remain there for a few minutes before opening your eyes.

There are many additional ways to practice mindfulness. If you'd like to learn more, we encourage you to explore some of the many websites and smart phone applications that are designed to guide you and help keep you on track. Try Calm, Headspace or Brightmind, for example, and enjoy living a more mindful life.

Source: [mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org)



# Especially for caregivers

## Caregiving from a distance.

**An estimated 11 percent of family caregivers live at least an hour away from their loved one.** These long-distance caregivers may have all the same concerns and pressures local caregivers have — and then some. Among other things, they tend to spend more of their own money on caregiving, because they're more likely to need to hire help, take time off work and pay for travel. If you find yourself caregiving from a distance, here are a few things to keep in mind.

### **Establish access.**

Having proper access to information, and the legal authority to make decisions, is important for all primary caregivers, and perhaps especially for those handling care from a distance. Among other things, you'll need signed documents that permit doctors, hospitals and health insurance companies to share information about your loved one with you. In addition, if you need to take charge of any financial matters for your loved one, including making payments, don't forget to set up appropriate access to banks, utilities companies and the like. Consider making needed arrangements during an in-person visit, when you can work with your loved one to locate, organize and fill out any necessary paperwork.

### **Create a team.**

While there are plenty of important tasks that can be handled remotely, such as paying bills and ordering prescriptions, you'll need help from others when it comes to certain tasks. Some long-distance caregivers delay reaching out for help because they feel guilty about delegating, but — especially when trying to manage more serious or complicated health problems — you simply can't do it all alone. Identify your team and ask what tasks each team member is willing and able to help with. A neighbor might be happy to cut the lawn, while a family member who lives nearby might volunteer to drive your loved one to medical appointments, for example. Compile a list of contact information for everyone on the care team, keep it close at hand, and be sure that everyone on the list knows how to reach you, too.

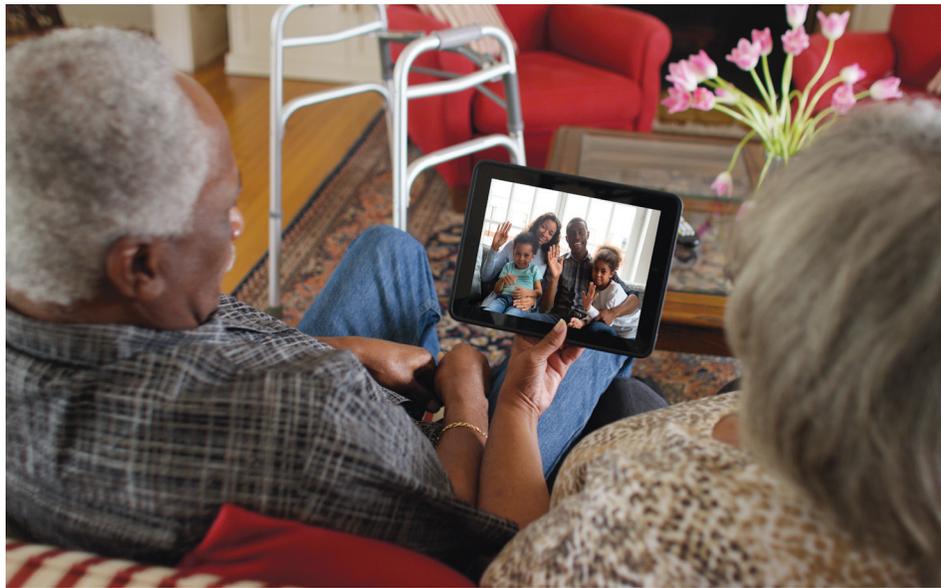
### **Make the most of visits.**

There are times when you'll still want and need to make an in-person visit. Prepare in advance by making a list of things you need to know or discuss. A visit also allows you to spend quality time with your loved one, who may feel isolated, especially if they have physical or cognitive limitations. It can also be helpful to schedule face-to-face appointments related to your loved one's well-being while you're in town. Sitting down to chat in person can sometimes provide a level of information that is more difficult to obtain over the phone.

*Source: AARP*

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Are you a family caregiver? Huntington Senior Care Network is here to help. We offer professional assistance; referrals to additional, important resources; and support and educational groups specifically designed for family caregivers. For more information, call us at (626) 397-3110 or (800) 664-4664.



# Ask the doctor

## Q&A with Norman Chien, MD.



Norman Chien, MD, is a board-certified geriatrician and a member of Huntington Hospital's medical staff.

### **Q.** I'm having trouble sleeping well at night. What's the problem?

**A.** Sleep is crucial for you to feel rested and ready to take on the day, and not sleeping well can lead to a number of other problems: Older adults who don't sleep well are more likely to suffer from depression, as well as to experience attention and memory problems, increased daytime sleepiness, and nighttime falls. In general, poor sleep is associated with an overall decrease in quality of life. But there's hope! Many sleep problems can be effectively addressed.

If you find it hard to fall asleep or stay asleep during the night, you may have a sleep disorder. The following are the most common sleep disorders among older adults:

1. Sleep-disordered breathing, such as snoring and sleep apnea.
2. Movement disorders, such as restless legs syndrome.

Some drugs, including over-the-counter medications, can impact your ability to sleep, and alter the quality of your sleep. So, too, can consuming caffeinated drinks or alcohol.

If you wake up not feeling rested or are more tired than you expect during the day, discuss these issues with your doctor or other healthcare provider. Many primary care doctors are qualified to diagnose sleep disorders and can order appropriate tests, offer suggestions and work with you to determine the best plan to help improve your sleep.

Before you make an appointment with your doctor, it may be helpful for you to keep a sleep diary for a week or more. A sleep diary will give you and your doctor a better idea of your sleep habits and schedules and help determine what's affecting your ability to sleep. Getting restful, restorative sleep is too important to ignore.

### **Q.** I'm a man who just turned 50 years old. Do I need to be screened for prostate cancer?

**A.** All men are at risk of developing prostate cancer — and the risk of developing prostate cancer increases with age.

In general, screening for prostate cancer should begin when you're in your 40s or 50s. Certain populations, however, are at increased risk for developing this form of cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends that screening take place at:

- **Age 50 for men who are at average risk** of developing prostate cancer and are expected to live at least 10 more years.
- **Age 45 for men at high risk** of developing prostate cancer. This includes African Americans and men who have a first-degree relative (father, brother or son) diagnosed with prostate cancer at an early age (younger than age 65).

- **Age 40 for men at even higher risk** of developing prostate cancer (i.e. those with more than one first-degree relative who was diagnosed with prostate cancer at an early age).

There are two primary ways to screen for prostate cancer: a digital rectal exam and a prostate specific antigen (PSA) blood test. A PSA test can help catch prostate cancer at an early stage — when treatment is considered more effective. Your doctor may recommend either or both screening tests.

PSA is a protein produced by the prostate and found mostly in semen, with very small amounts released into the bloodstream. When there's a problem with the prostate — such as prostate cancer — more PSA is released.

If your doctor is concerned that you might have prostate cancer based on the results of your rectal exam or PSA test, a biopsy will likely be the next step. Sometimes, for example, a slightly elevated PSA is not related to cancer and a biopsy is the only way to positively identify the presence of cancer.

Despite the benefits, it's important to note that prostate cancer screening is not for every man and the pros/cons should be discussed with a primary care provider and/or urologist. Talk to your doctor during your next visit to review your personal risk factors.

Sources: American Cancer Society; webmd.com

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*This column is for information only. Please discuss any treatment options with your doctor.*

## *On the younger side*

# Navigating the brain fog of menopause.

**If you're a woman in your 40s or 50s**, you may be going through menopause (the ending of your menstrual cycles), or perimenopause (a hormonal transition period that comes before menopause). Some women don't experience any symptoms at these times. Others may experience night sweats, weight gain and/or thinning hair, for example.

Many women also report feeling forgetful or having a general "brain fog" that makes it hard to concentrate. You may find yourself in the middle aisle of the grocery store, wondering what item you wanted to pick up. Or you may forget the story that your friend just told you over lunch, and need her to jog your memory.

While menopause-related "brain fog" is generally mild and goes away on its own with time, there are some lifestyle changes that may ease your symptoms — and improve your memory overall:

### **1. Exercise.**

Getting regular physical activity is recommended for all people, including women going through menopause. Researchers believe that exercise helps with symptoms of menopause including memory issues.

### **2. Keep your mind active.**

Your brain also needs regular workouts as you age. Try doing crossword puzzles or starting a new hobby, like playing an instrument. Socializing with friends may help as well. In addition, simply keeping a list of the things you need to do on any given day can help keep you organized when your mind is feeling foggy.

### **3. Follow a brain-boosting diet.**

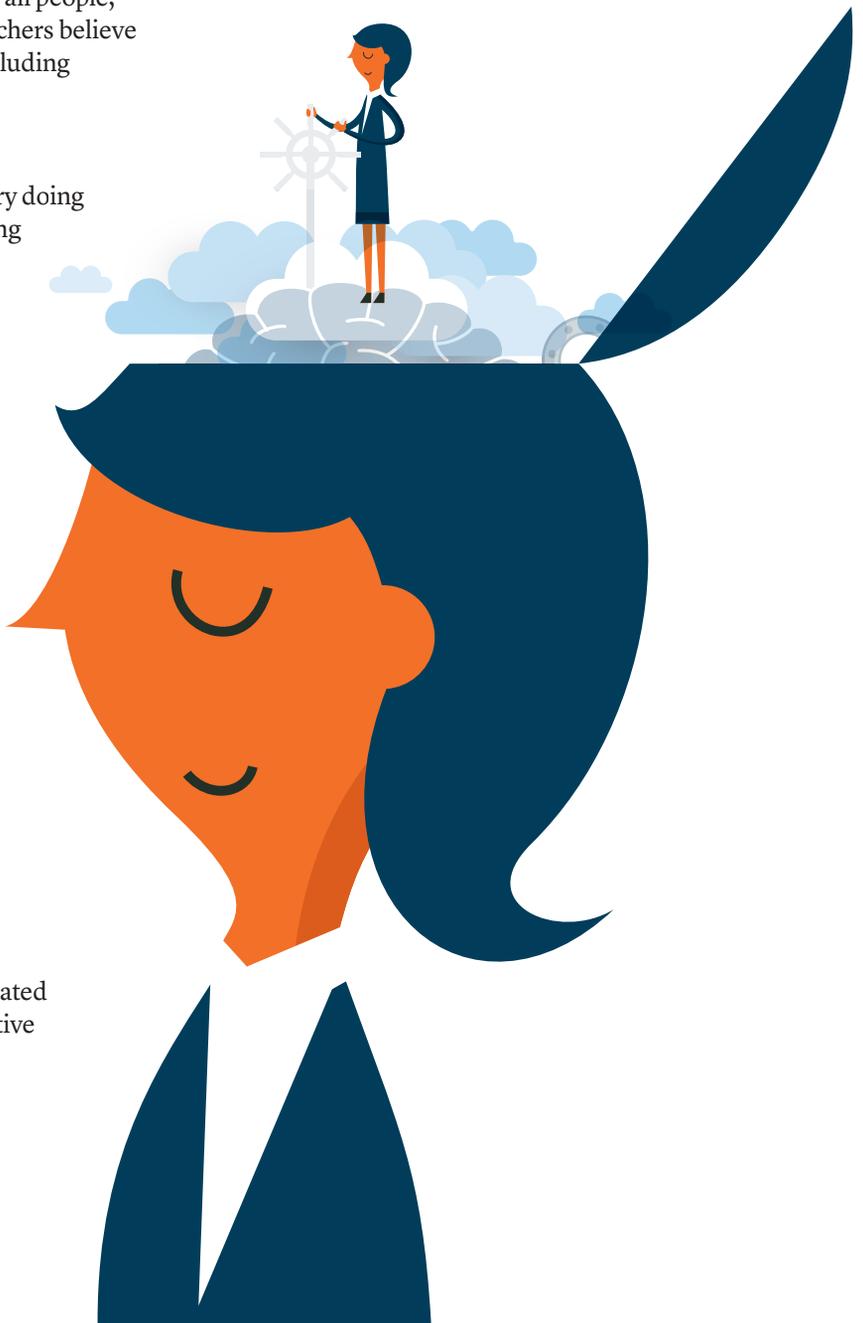
A diet that's high in cholesterol and fat may be bad for both your heart and your brain. Instead, try filling up on whole foods and healthy fats. In particular, the Mediterranean diet is believed to help with brain health because it's rich in omega-3 fatty acids and other unsaturated fats.

### **4. Consider hormone therapy.**

You may also want to explore hormone replacement therapy, which involves either low-dose estrogen or a combination of estrogen and progestin. These hormones, available via prescription, may help with the many symptoms of menopause. Be sure to discuss the benefits and risks involved, with your doctor.

It can be reassuring just to know that brain fog associated with menopause is completely normal — but if cognitive issues are negatively impacting your daily life, we encourage you to talk to your doctor.

Sources: AARP; [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com)



**We speak your language.** We are committed to providing you with compassionate care regardless of the language you speak. ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (626) 397-5211. 注意:如果您使用繁體中文,您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 (626) 397-5211。



## Supporting seniors.

Huntington Collection is an upscale resale store that provides shoppers with high-quality goods, including vintage and designer items, at attractive prices. Proceeds from the Collection help support Huntington Senior Care Network (SCN). In 2018, the Collection generated \$300,000 toward SCN's important work.

**50+ members** receive three informative publications produced by Huntington Senior Care Network, annually, including two issues of *50+ HealthConnection* and a separate events calendar.

If you received this newsletter and are not yet a 50+ member, you can sign up by visiting [www.huntingtonhospital.org/newsletters](http://www.huntingtonhospital.org/newsletters). Simply enter your information and check the *50+ HealthConnection* box. If you prefer, you can leave a message on our membership line at (626) 397-3147 or (800) 664-4664 and a member of our staff will be in touch to sign you up by phone. In addition to sending our future publications, we'll also provide you with a membership card so you can begin enjoying all 50+ member benefits.

Eileen Koons, MSW  
*Director*

Patty Watson-Swan, RN  
*Supervisor of Community Nursing*

**Since 1984, Huntington Senior Care Network** has worked to positively impact the health and well-being of older adults, adults with disabilities and their families in our community. Reaching thousands of individuals each year, we educate on aging; link to in-home and community services; and increase the skills of caregivers, service providers and others. Our models of eldercare have earned us a national reputation for excellence and innovation.

(626) 397-3110 or (800) 664-4664 | Fax (626) 397-2982 | [www.huntingtonhospital.org/SCN](http://www.huntingtonhospital.org/SCN)



**FRIDAYS, SEPTEMBER 20 through NOVEMBER 8**  
**Alzheimer's Los Angeles Memory Club at Huntington Hospital.**  
**9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.**  
**Huntington Hospital**

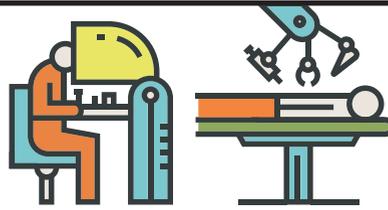
An eight-session program for individuals diagnosed with early-stage dementia and their care partners, Memory Club provides valuable information and resources to help cope with memory loss. Expert staff from Huntington Senior Care Network — accompanied by respected guest speakers — lead program sessions. The small group size facilitates meaningful discussion in a supportive environment. A pre-screening interview is required. Please call our membership line, at (626) 397-3147 to schedule this. Cost: Free. Fee for parking.

### Noon Hour.

A stimulating series featuring hospital physicians, staff and community experts, *Noon Hour* provides information you can use to help you pursue good health and age well. The programs are free and offered from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. on the dates listed.

**Please note that Noon Hour sessions have been temporarily moved to the Huntington Medical Research Institutes (HMRI) building.** HMRI is located across the street from Huntington Hospital, at 686 South Fair Oaks Ave., Pasadena, CA 91105. These educational events are held in the first-floor conference room. Free parking is available in the HMRI parking lot on Pico St., accessible via Edmondson Alley.

**Reservations are required for all events. To make a reservation, call Huntington Senior Care Network's membership line at (626) 397-3147.** You may order an optional box lunch when you call to reserve your attendance. Lunch is served starting at noon and costs \$8 (cash or check only).



**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11**  
**Highlight on prostate cancer and robotic surgery.**

In recognition of Prostate Health and Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, urological surgeon **Armen Dikranian, MD**, will share the latest information on prostate cancer prevention and treatment options, including robotic surgery.

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**  
**Staying safe from falls.**

Physical therapist **W. Julia Masulis, PT, DPT**, together with **Wendell Eaton**, battalion chief and deputy fire marshal with the Pasadena Fire Department, will explain the causes of falls and what you can do to reduce your risk.

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9**  
**Breast cancer treatment and genetic testing.**

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month, get the latest information about genetic testing for and treatment of breast cancer. Join our panel of experts: **Ruth Williamson, MD**, medical director of radiation oncology at Huntington Hospital; **Jeannie Shen, MD**, breast surgeon at UCLA; and **Richard Frieder, MD**, medical director of Intelegene Cancer Genetics.



**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23**  
**Surgical treatment for sarcoma.**

Hear from orthopedic surgeon **Joseph Dominic Femino, MD**, about surgical treatment for patients diagnosed with sarcoma — a rare type of cancer that begins in the bones and soft tissues.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13**  
**Ongoing dementia research.**

During this session, research physician **Michael Harrington, MB, ChB**, will review the traits of different dementias, how each dementia is recognized and how the latest research could help those impacted.



**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11**  
**Nutritional strategies for Type 2 diabetes.**

Do you have Type 2 diabetes and want to improve your blood glucose levels? Join registered dietitian **Crystal Kwan** to learn how to balance your meals and snacks, improve your energy levels, and explore what it means to nourish your body from the inside out.





**Huntington**  
Senior Care Network

## Ongoing programs

### Around the campus

## New enhancements to serve our community.



If you've visited Huntington Hospital's campus in recent months, you may have noticed that we're undergoing important facilities improvements to expand our care capacity and strengthen care delivery. We feel a particularly strong responsibility in this regard, given our role as the leading provider of medical services for our region.

To meet the continued care needs of our area's expanding population, we must take steps now. Among these, we will be creating a new cardiac center and expanding surgical facilities, directly above our Nan and Howard Schow Emergency & Trauma Center.

We're also in the process of upgrading various aspects of our overall campus infrastructure: Seismic retrofitting of older buildings will ensure we meet the new standards for hospitals. Additional enhancements are helping to strengthen efficiency, sustainability and safety.

We look forward to providing additional updates as work proceeds.

### Huntington Senior Care Network Resource Center

If you're caring for an older adult or an adult with a disability, need information on community resources for seniors, or have questions about aging, the professionals in our Resource Center can help. We also provide referrals to care management providers throughout the United States, as needed. Call (626) 397-3110 or (800) 664-4664 to learn more. Cost: Free.

### AARP Smart Driver Course (Insurance Discount)

Co-sponsored with AARP, this refresher course is designed especially for drivers age 50 and over. Topics include age-related physical changes, the rules of the road and local driving challenges. Auto insurance companies are mandated to provide a premium discount to graduates age 55+. Call the membership line at (626) 397-3147 for a schedule. Cost: \$15 for AARP members; \$20 for all others.

### Fun and Fitness Network

Want referrals to local, low-cost, high-quality exercise options that are appropriate for seniors — and that cover conditioning, strength training and flexibility? Learn about classes that include folk dancing, yoga, low-impact aerobics and more. Call the membership line at (626) 397-3147 for a listing.



### Support groups for caregivers.

When caring for an aging relative or close friend, participating in a support group can make a difference. Daytime and evening groups are available, offering opportunities to share feelings and exchange information and ideas. Call the Resource Center at (626) 397-3110 (option 1), for a referral to a group in your area.

### Huntington Collection

Look for great buys at the hospital's 12,000-square-foot resale and consignment shop, located at 766 S. Fair Oaks Avenue in Pasadena. Donations are welcome (and tax deductible). Proceeds from the Collection help support Huntington Senior Care Network. A special sale takes place the last Thursday of each month. Call (626) 535-2468 or visit [www.huntingtoncollection.org](http://www.huntingtoncollection.org) to learn more.



### Huntington Collection Price & Pack

If you're moving, consider this comprehensive service for the removal and sale of personal property. Price & Pack includes appraisal, pricing, packing, and removal of items, which are placed for sale at Huntington Collection. The service is particularly helpful for those downsizing or moving. Some items can be placed on consignment to generate income for the donor. Proceeds from the Collection help support Huntington Senior Care Network. For more information, call (626) 535-2468.

Visit us at [www.huntingtonhospital.org/SCN](http://www.huntingtonhospital.org/SCN) to learn more about Huntington Senior Care Network.