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## Savvy seniors take course to upgrade their driving skills

How's your driving? As responsible road-users it's a question we should all be asking ourselves - especially as we age. StatsCan figures show that people aged 70 or older have a higher accident rate per kilometre driven than any other age group except young men. With that in mind, 15 seniors from the St Margaret's Bay area attended the [55 Alive Driver Refresher Course](#) at the Tantallon Sobey's. The course has been designed by the Canada Safety Council. It is designed to help mature drivers maintain their independence and driving privileges by keeping them mobile and safe. As drivers age, changes may be experienced in hearing, vision, flexibility, and reaction time.



*Some of the 15 enthusiastic participants in a 55 Alive Driver Refresher Course. Don't worry if you missed it - you can book now for our February session. (See below).*

The course helps drivers understand and cope with those challenges.

It provides advice on dealing with a variety of road and weather conditions, plus elements on road signs, pavement markings, alcohol and medications, and vehicle readiness. Participants received a workbook, packed with driving and safety tips, plus self-assessments to help identify potential problems.

The Seniors' Association is sponsoring a second session on February 8th.

The refresher is free for those over the age of 65 who have not taken the course previously. For more information, or to register, please contact Judy Beaton at [judy.beaton@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:judy.beaton@ns.sympatico.ca) or call 902-826-9175.

There are no exams and no risk of losing your licence by attending.

*The Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay is a not-for-profit registered society whose purpose is to provide housing and accommodation options and assistance for seniors, to represent interests of seniors in the greater St. Margaret's Bay area, and to share in development of wellness living for seniors in the area.*

# Why staying active is key to healthy aging

Did you know that physical inactivity is the primary cause of most chronic diseases? It is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, responsible for more than three million deaths every year.

That's the bad news, according to [Dr. Derek Rutherford](#) from Dalhousie School of Physiotherapy, the guest speaker at our January meeting.

But there is good news. Regular moderate intensity physical activity – such as walking, cycling, or participating in sports – has significant benefits for health. It can reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, colon and breast cancer, and depression. And physical activity can decrease the risk of a hip or vertebral fracture, and help control weight.



*Dr Rutherford addresses a packed house, and (right) with colleague Rebecca Moyer and students Sara Saleh and Michelle Jones*

Dr Rutherford's theme was managing osteoarthritis and mobility. Osteoarthritis can be identified when changes in the joints happen faster than is expected with regular aging. Osteoarthritis tends to start in one joint and then progress to both joints (hip or knee).

If you think that the only option is a hip or knee replacement, keep in mind that Nova Scotians can wait up to 800 days for a knee replacement, or 750 days for a hip replacement. In other



parts of the country wait lists are less than 200 days.

What can you do to avoid needing a joint replacement, or to manage pain related to osteoarthritis?

Physical activity is the most important thing. For example, you can make your daily tasks more active (and more fun). Consider grocery shopping – pick up a bag of potatoes, put them in your cart and walk around the store three times. Put the potatoes back (unless you need some for supper) and then continue with your regular shopping.

Pain and structural changes in your joints are not necessarily linked. Let pain guide you, but not control you and your physical activity. Being active through pain will not cause structural damage to your joints. And remember that extra weight puts extra strain on joints.

## CANADIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES (AGE 65+)

- For health benefits, do a total of at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more
- Add muscle and bone strengthening exercises using major muscle groups at least two days a week
- Anyone with poor mobility should perform physical activity to enhance balance and prevent falls
- More physical activity provides greater health benefits

For more information about any of the topics in this newsletter, visit our website [www.bayseniors.ca](http://www.bayseniors.ca) or contact the Seniors Information Centre: email [info@bayseniors.ca](mailto:info@bayseniors.ca) telephone 902-820-3334. The centre is inside The Doctors' Office at 5181 St Margaret's Bay Road, Upper Tantallon. It's open 10 - 2 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

## Upcoming Events

### Learn how to boost your heart health

**February meeting – Heart Health.** Do you know your top five numbers for heart health? The [Chebucto Community Health Team](#) will show you how to improve your heart health, and talk about the Heart Healthy Living program. February 16 at Shining Waters, 2 pm.

**Intro to pickleball.** The St. Margaret's Centre will host two workshops on February 1 and February 8. Each session is \$5 and you need to register with the St. Margaret's Centre at 902-826-2100.

**Sea level rise in the Bay.** Join [Transition Bay St. Margaret's](#) on February 12, from 2.15 - 4.45 at the Tantallon Library to learn about the issues facing our area regarding climate change and sea level rise. For more, check [this link](#).

**Advance notice** - Our March meeting is all about hobbies and interests. It's a chance to display examples of your arts and crafts, and learn about others. Contact Judy Beaton at [judy.beaton@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:judy.beaton@ns.sympatico.ca), or 902-826-9175, by February 28 to book a spot. This is not an expo where items will be sold. Only members who have paid their membership fee in advance of the meeting will be able to display items.



## Volunteers sought to help with Bay Expo '17

The Seniors Association is pleased to announce that the 2017 Bay Expo will be held on Saturday, May 27. And we are looking for helpers.

Bay Expo is a community event with something for everyone. Last year, visitors were entertained with music, a cafe, and Tai Chi demonstrations. Face painting was a popular attraction for children.

You can play a part in the success of this community venture. The organizers of Bay Expo 2017 are looking for volunteers to assist with planning, and to help on the day of the event. Contact Carol Evans at [caevas@bellaliant.net](mailto:caevas@bellaliant.net)

This year's Expo will take place at the Estabrooks Community Hall in Hubley. Stay tuned for more information and updates.

## News from our partners Looking for help? Try calling 211

Finding your way around the network of community and social services provided by government and the not-for-profit sector can be challenging.

Now one phone call - to 211 - gives you easy access to more than 4000 community and social services available across Nova Scotia.

[211](#) is a free, confidential information and referral service. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

A staff member will help you find the service you're looking for. If you prefer, you can search the database at [www.ns.211.ca](http://www.ns.211.ca).

Are you a member of an organization or service who should be listed on 211? Please check the database to see if you are listed, and if not, include your information. Make sure your community organizations and services are represented.

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