

Empower Minds.  
Strengthen Bodies.  
Inspire Creativity.™

### TASTE:

Detection of salty and bitter taste in foods eaten decreases more than the detection of sweet and sour. Overall, there is a slight decrease in the number of taste buds. Nutritional status may be affected by older people putting extra salt on their food to compensate for decreased salt taste, or by a decrease in the variety and types of food consumed as food simply does not seem to have any taste to them.

### HEARING:

Presbycusis is age-associated loss of hearing. The loss of higher frequency perception occurs and the loss of hearing tends to be more prevalent in men than in women. It is important to identify decreased hearing ability, which can be very insidious, as it may lead to diminished cognitive ability or inattention. As people age, they tend to have a more difficult time tuning out background noise.

### VISION:

Eyesight is the first sensory system to decrease as we age. These changes can result in the need for increased light brightness (lumens), increased contrast in material being looked at, and increased font size in text. As we age, the eyes require a longer period to acclimate to changes in lighting and distance. Macular degeneration, glaucoma, increased sensitivity to glare, and diabetic retinopathy occur most frequently with older age but are actually related to pathological conditions and are not a standard part of typical aging.

### BALANCE/POSTURAL CONTROL:

People age 65 and older have a 27% chance of falling at least once per year. After one fall, the risk of falling again increases, especially with age. Although muscle mass/strength loss can be part of the aging process, declining activity levels can dramatically increase this loss.

### OLFACTORY:

As we age, we tend to need higher concentrations of scents to be able to distinguish smells. The majority of people over age 80 have impaired olfaction, and the loss of smell generally affects men more than women. Anosmia is the loss of the sense of smell, hyposmia is a decreased sense of smell, and dysosmia is a distorted sense of smell. All of these conditions are extremely common among elders.