

Adults – 40 Years and Beyond

The needs of people with physical disabilities vary depending on age.

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The age of 40 years and beyond is a time of balance – preventing tiredness and pain, a sense of burn out and having to stop doing activities you love, may be considerations. Home and community services and health professionals can assist in finding balance.

Adults with physical disabilities who are over 40 years of age have common experiences and needs: it has been found that people with physical disabilities experience the ageing process up to 20 years earlier than their peers. Many people find this confronting and can become frustrated with changing ability levels.

There are many factors that determine how the body ages. Seeking help as early as possible can slow progression and assist in maintaining an active and comfortable lifestyle for as long as possible.

Actions recommended...

- As needs change, continue planning for the supports needed – What is required to maintain good health? What is needed in the home, community and for work and recreation?
- Consult a GP on current health needs
- Consult the health professional team on future goals are and confirm the steps needed to maintain good health and activity levels, and remain pain free
- Consult a GP and physiotherapist yearly for monitoring regardless of abilities
- Consult a speech pathologist for a swallowing review at least every one to two years – seek advice on risk factors and how often reviews should be performed
- Consult an occupational therapist yearly to review daily activities and equipment and assistive technology needs
- Consult a dietitian if maintaining a healthy weight range is challenging
- Consult all other health professionals as often as recommended – request an assessment if unsure who to see or how often
- Pain and fatigue must be addressed – if either are experienced, seek support in understanding causes and treatment
- Consult a social worker and/or psychologist regarding any worries or concerns

Visit futurethinking.abilitycentre.com.au for more information.

Please note that this recommendation is a guide only and should not replace a thorough assessment completed by health professionals.