



Loving Arms  
Elder Care

# THE SPIRIT OF GARDENING

It is hardly surprising that many elderly people enjoy gardening as it's a healthy way of maintaining fitness and is an activity which can be strenuous or gentle depending on your capabilities. New growth, beautiful colors and delicious scents also boost our spirits and build memories. Even if you have some kind of disability, there are many things you can do, adaptations you can make and special equipment you can buy to make gardening accessible.

## Benefits

- reduces stress levels
- produces a happier, calmer state of mind
- provides stimulation
- introduces social interaction
- encourages physical exercise
- maintains mobility and flexibility
- improves endurance and strength
- provides nutritious home-grown produce

## Considerations

- mobility - assure that access to the gardening area is safe
- eye-sight - use bright and colorful plants and flowers
- scent - can be enhanced with strong pleasant smells
- accessibility - flower beds/pots can be chair height to reduce bending



## Precautions

- sun - use plenty of sun screen, long sleeves and hats - senior are more sensitive to sunburn  
- garden in early morning or late afternoon - consider a shade garden
- skin - fragile, thinning skin makes the elderly susceptible to bumps, bruises and bites
- body temperature - dehydration and heat exhaustion are common concerns  
- provide lots of water and limit time in the sun
- skeletal - falls are more common because balance is often not as good - provide places to sit

## Plant selection

- flowers that are bright and attract birds and butterflies and bloom at different times of the season
- an edible garden that contains plants, herbs, seeds, and/or berries that you can eat
- plants that have sensory and textural qualities including those that have special smell, taste, touch and sight qualities

The love for gardening spans generations. Just about anyone can dig, plant, and pull up weeds, and the rewards sprout and blossom before your eyes. Gardening's benefits extend beyond baskets of veggies or flowers nestled in a vase. Gardening enriches your body, your mind, and your spirit.