

Why a Geriatrician?

People often associate age with disease. Yet, aging does not cause diseases. While many seniors believe that the reason they're not always feeling well is because they're getting older, this is not always the case. The problems they are experiencing may be related to an illness or injury not caused by age at all. This is why it is important to seek the helpful knowledge of an experienced geriatrician.

A geriatrician is a physician who has completed a residency in either Internal Medicine or Family Medicine with an additional 1-2 years training fellowship in the medical, social and psychological issues that concern older adults. They're equipped to deal with problems such as memory loss, dementia, pressure sores, falls, weight loss and polypharmacy (multiple prescription medication needs). A geriatrician focuses on quality of life issues, such as preserving or improving the physical and mental function of older adults. Geriatricians develop a plan of care that considers the whole person—incorporating each person's unique characteristics, medical conditions, medications, values and preferences. This specialty is increasing in importance as the population ages. It's no longer a rarity for people to live to be one hundred.

A geriatrician may be indicated if some of the following criteria are met:

- * Decline in daily functioning
- * Difficulty completing activities of daily living such as:
 - using the telephone
 - balancing a checkbook
 - preparing food
 - showering and dressing.
- * Depression complicating medical illnesses