



“Many boomers have a desire to stay involved and connected; they’re not going to give in to the dictates of age and accept the older model. They’re going to find ways to stay socially, intellectually and physically active.”

--Boomer Nation author and historian Steve Gillon

- Baby Boomers are defined as those born between 1946 and 1964.
- One in four Americans currently age 65 years old will live to at least age 90. (Social Security Administration)
- An estimated 7,600 Americans turned 65 years old each day in 2011. By 2029, an estimated 11,400 Americans will turn 65 years old each day. (Government Accountability Office)
- At 78 million strong, baby boomers are one of the largest and most powerful generations in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau)
- According to a 2011 AARP Bulletin Survey on Exercise, approximately seven in 10 adults ages 45 and older (71%) are physically active.
- The most popular physical activity for Americans 45 and older is walking. (2011 AARP Bulletin Survey on Exercise)
- One in 20 Americans older than 50 —or roughly 4.5 million Americans — have artificial joints. (Lorisa et. al, 2012 “The dramatic increase in total knee replacement utilization rates in the United States cannot be fully explained by growth in population size and the obesity epidemic.”)
- Thirty-four percent of American workers age 60 to 69 believe that their greatest financial risk during their retirement years is a catastrophic out-of-pocket expense associated with a major health event. (Hartford Financial Services Group)
- By 2030, when the last of the Baby Boomers will have turned 65, 18% of the nation's population will be 65 or older, according to [Pew Research Center population projections](#).
- By 2030, hospital admissions are expected to double and an estimated six out of every 10 Boomers will be managing a chronic condition. (Andrew Wilcutt, “*Picking from the Tree: Marketing to Generations.*” February 2008)
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, almost 2.5 million baby boomers go to emergency rooms for "over-exercising" every year.
- According to a 2012 poll by *USA Today*, UnitedHealthcare, and the National Council on Aging, 75% of people in their 60s expect their quality of life to get better or stay the same over the next five to 10 years.
- The above poll also found that more than two-thirds of people age 60 and older are confident their finances will last through their retirement years, but almost one-third are not confident in their ability to afford long-term care. The poll also found that staying active and engaged in the community was a top priority for this age group.
- Research from the [MRC National Survey of Health and Development](#) found that the average baby boomer had two medical conditions at retirement age, the most common being hypertension (half of participants), obesity (a third), high cholesterol (a quarter) and diabetes or 'pre-diabetes' (also a quarter).
- The above research also indicated that 1 in 5 had a number of cardiovascular and metabolic disorders, and these individuals were twice as likely as others to have been in poor health at age 36.

Physical therapists can help active boomers prevent common injuries, such as:

- Tendinitis, painful inflamed tendons in the elbow, shoulder, or knee. The condition is often caused by lack of preparation before an activity or by repetitive action, such as swinging a golf club or tennis racket, especially when not using the proper form. Boomers should seek medical attention early if they experience an injury and consider practicing regular range of motion movement and exercise to protect joints. They should also consider using assistive devices, and bracing, and splinting techniques.



- Tears to the [meniscus](#), cartilage that cushions the knee but that becomes more brittle with age and prone to injury, especially from sudden twisting. Tears often cause a "pop" sensation and a feeling like the knee is catching while walking. Improper footwear can contribute to meniscus tears.
- [Back pain](#), often from arthritis or aging discs in the lower spine. Impact exercise including running, and using the back instead of leg muscles to lift objects can contribute. (Lindsay Tanner, "Injured boomers beware: Know when to see doctor" *USA Today*, February 13, 2012.)
- Broken bones and fractures that may have various causes such as osteoporosis, poor posture, or falls due to balance problems.
- Adhesive capsulitis or "[frozen shoulder](#)," more common among older adults and sometimes due to previous tendinitis and rotator cuff injuries that have not healed completely.

Risk factors for the common injuries mentioned above include:

- Arthritis
- Assistive device use
- Cardiovascular deficits
- Cognitive impairment
- Depression
- Falls history
- Footwear (improper)
- Medications
- Menopause
- Muscle weakness
- Sitting (for long periods)
- Visual deficits

It is important for people age 50+ to know what it takes to prevent these types of injuries and to seek medical attention quickly if an injury occurs. Learn more about how physical therapists can help and find one at www.moveforwardpt.com.