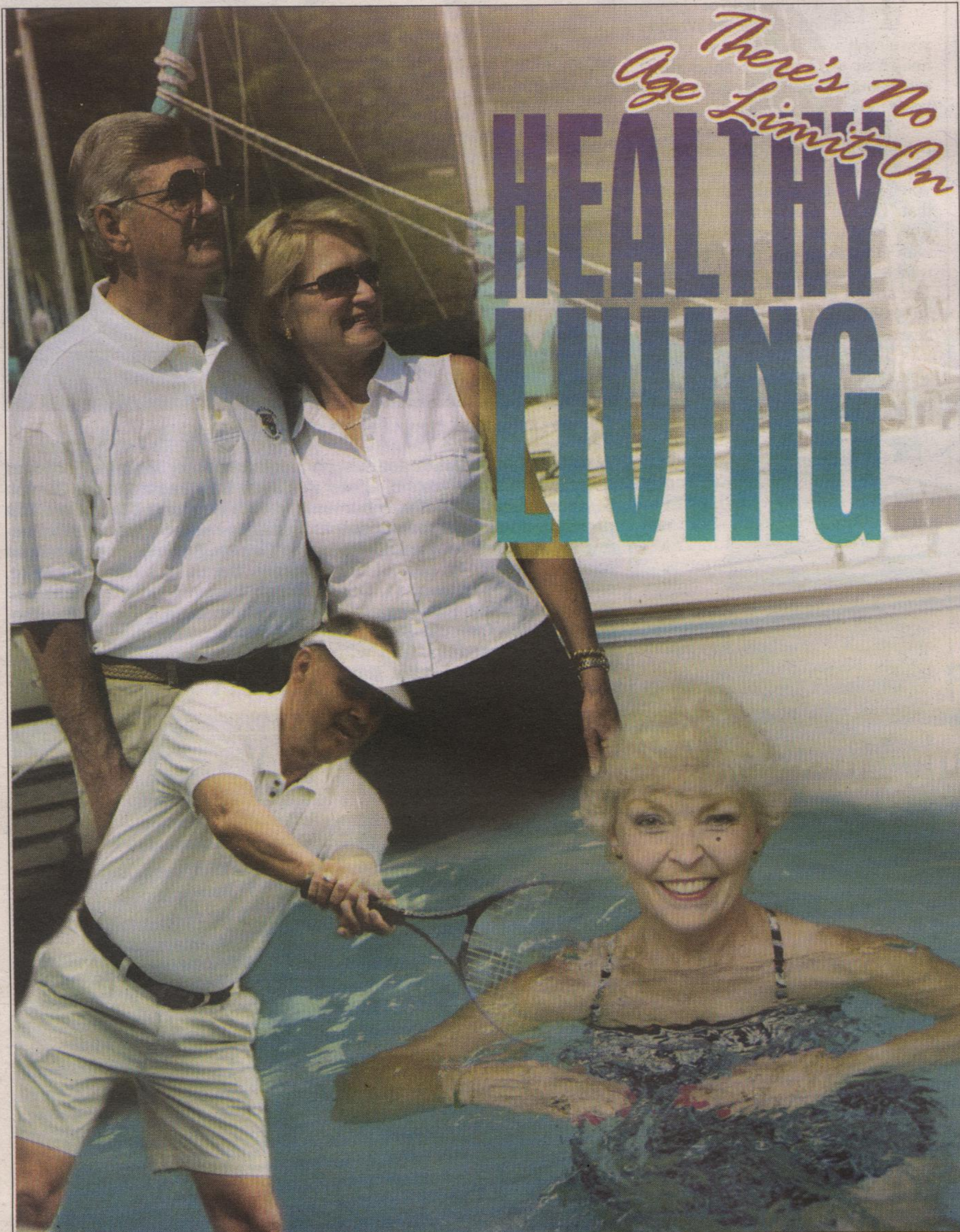


HEALTH

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There's No Age Limit On

HEALTHY LIVING

Older adults are more vulnerable to problems with their medication

As you grow older, it's more common for you to suffer from illnesses such as arthritis, diabetes and heart disease, or medical ailments such as pain and indigestion. These conditions and others may result in you having to take several medications at the same time, including prescription and over-the-counter products, alternative medicines and supplements.

If you're taking multiple medications you should ensure your physician(s) and pharmacist are aware of all medications you're taking. Otherwise, you could end up being overmedicated which can lead to negative drug and drug-disease interactions.

Knowing your medicines and keeping your health-care providers informed about what you're taking is key.

For example, older adults are large consumers of over-the-counter medications, be them antacids, pain relievers, cold remedies, laxatives and more. These products can be very helpful when used properly, but also can create problems if used incorrectly. In fact, pain relievers are one of the most consumed nonprescription medications. But not all pain relievers are safe for older adults.

ASA and ibuprofen are widely used for relieving pain and inflammation, but precautions are needed before using them. For example, ASA can irritate the stomach lining, causing bleeding or ulcers. And a recent study published in The British Medical Journal found that aspirin and ibuprofen could bring on an attack in patients with asthma.

But acetaminophen, the active ingredient in **TYLENOL***, has a superior safety profile and is deemed the safest choice, even for people most at risk such as older adults who suffer from multiple conditions such as asthma or diabetes and are on multiple medications.

Knowing which medicines are safe (based on your age and medical conditions) and keeping your doctor(s) and pharmacist up-to-date on the drugs you're taking will help you avoid unwanted drug interactions.

—News Canada

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