



Tips for successful aging, a happy retirement and making the most of what's next.

Brought to you by



Healthy Aging Relationships Retirement Senior Living Entertainment

Search

HOME > RELATIONSHIPS > SENIOR DATING: JUMPING BACK IN

RELATIONSHIPS

# Senior Dating: Jumping Back In

TERRI YABLONSKY STAT

Aa Aa Aa

Print Email

## Keeping your heart, mind and body safe

You're older and wiser. You've loved and lost and loved again. Staying engaged in life means you're meeting lots of new people. Medical and technological advancements can help you live longer (and stay active in the bedroom). The possibilities for your love life are endless.



"Society recognizes that older people continue to need romance and sex and companionship," says Pepper Schwartz, professor of sociology at the University of Washington, Seattle; love and relationship ambassador at AARP; and author of "Dating After 50 for Dummies." "It's the best time in history to be over 50 and dating."

But as you navigate the dating world—whether by choice or circumstance—you may find things have changed since you were last out there. Here's what to watch out for and how to protect yourself.

### Senior Dating: Staying Safe Online

Dating is easier than ever with the Internet. From the comfort of your home, you can connect with people and look for a partner. Some dating sites, like OurTime.com and SeniorPeopleMeet.com, are dedicated to people age 50 and older.

While most people on dating sites are genuinely looking for a spouse or companionship, some do have other motives. Maybe they're married or just looking for cyber sex. Rarely, but sometimes, they have ulterior motives like theft. Schwartz advises caution and the following steps:

1. Check them out. Google them. If they've shared a last name and say they had a certain job or attended a certain school, see if there's a record. Use your common sense and intuition. Do a Google image search. Does the photo on the site match, or look like, other pictures that pop up in the search?
2. Meet for coffee or lunch in a public place. Don't let anyone walk you to your car. And don't give out your home phone number or address early in the relationship.
3. If the relationship progresses, ask to meet their friends.

"I screen people out by insisting Saturday night is date night," says Sandy Reynolds, 66, a retiree who lives outside Tampa, Florida. "If they only want to meet mid-week, that's a red flag." Reynolds has been using online dating sites since 2008.

At the worst end of the spectrum are the scammers. Seniors—and their retirement money—are at risk for online dating fraud. According to the FBI, Americans of all ages lost \$82 million to online dating fraud in

Aa - Aa



Happily Every After



5 Great Senior Date Ideas

### Newsletter

Get news and tips on successful aging in your inbox.

Your Email Address

Sign Up

just the last six months of 2014.

Reynolds twice has been the target of online scammers. "You have to beware of the guys who become amorous too quickly," she says. "It's always a variation of 'I'm going overseas,' 'I'm in the import/export business,' 'I just love your profile,' 'You're the woman for me.' A week later a request for money comes up."

To avoid scams, consider the following:

- Don't give anyone access to your financial information.
- Don't wire money or send a check or money order to anyone.
- Don't give anyone money for travel, medical expenses, business setbacks, visas or other official documents.

### Sex and Senior Dating

Attitudes toward relationships and sexuality are much more open today, enabled by newer treatments for sexual dysfunction, says Dr. Marc Agronin, a geriatric psychiatrist at Miami Jewish Home & Hospital in Florida and author of "How We Age: A Doctor's Journey into the Heart of Growing Old."

Drugs such as Viagra have revolutionized late-life sexuality. And seniors are increasingly living in senior communities where there is greater opportunity to meet other like-minded singles.

But older daters may not be well-versed in safe sex practices, Agronin says. While pregnancy may no longer be an issue, sexually transmitted infections are on the rise for seniors.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that between 2005 and 2009, cases of syphilis and chlamydia increased 43 percent in adults age 55 and older. In geographic areas with large retirement communities, reported cases of these STIs increased twice as quickly as the national average. And with women often outnumbering men in many senior living communities, men may have multiple partners, increasing the overall risk for STIs in a population.

Both heterosexual and same-sex couples should use condoms to prevent STIs, Agronin says. Seniors must talk with partners about their HIV status, whether they've had an STI, or been with multiple partners. "For baby boomers this is old hat, but pre-baby boomers are reluctant to discuss these issues," Agronin says.

### Be Prepared—Then Go For It

Yes, talking about all that can go wrong—scams and STIs—can take some of the fun out of the idea of dating. But, like anything, arming yourself with knowledge before starting a new adventure is empowering. If you feel ready, don't let fear hold you back. There's no time like today.

Reynolds hasn't let a few bad experiences hold her back, and has hope for her dating future. "I know people who have met and married," says Reynolds. "It does happen, but you need to be careful."

PUBLICATION DATE: JANUARY 12, 2016

Print this Article

Keywords: [articles](#)

### More Articles:



Your Questions, Their Legacy: How To Approach the Past



Providing Compassionate Care: 5 Tips For Family Caregivers



Finding Balance as Single Seniors



Cruising for Multigenerational Travel Ideas

**More Information**

**Topics**

**Multimedia**

[About Us](#)

[Healthy Aging](#)

[Resource Library](#)

[Tell A Loved One](#)

[Relationships](#)

[Videos](#)

[Newsletter Sign-up](#)

[Retirement](#)

[Podcasts](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Senior Living](#)

[Slideshows](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Entertainment](#)

[Infographics](#)

Brought to you by

