



# HEALTH NEWS



## Medication overused in Dementia

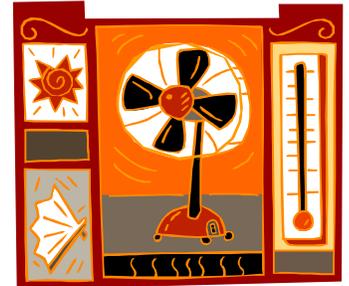
(Source: NY Times, 6-24-08) - The use of anti-psychotic drugs to reduce agitation, combative behavior and outbursts in dementia patients has soared. 2007 sales of newer anti-psychotics like **Risperdal, Seroquel and Zyprexa** have increased significantly since 2000, according to a health care information company. Part of this increase is due to prescriptions in nursing homes. It is estimated that about 33% of nursing home patients have been given anti-psychotic drugs.

Doctors say misuse of the drugs is widespread. Dr. William Smucker explained, "Many physicians are absent without leave in the nursing home and don't take an active role in the assessment of the patient." For families evaluating nursing homes for an aging parent, experts recommend seeking homes with a low staff turnover, a high ratio of staff members to patients, and programs with psychosocial components. These include activities to reduce boredom, provide intellectual and physical stimulation, exercise, calming music, pet therapy and good staff-patient communication.

**Go to full story:** [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)

## Hot Weather Safety Tips

(Source: AGS) - Hot weather is dangerous for seniors. Thanks to physical changes that happen as we age, older adults can't cool down as well and may not feel hot, though the temperature may be dangerously high. They are also less likely to feel thirsty, even in the face of dehydration.



Furthermore, conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes, and certain drugs can add to the problem. Temperatures don't have to be that high to cause health problems in older adults. Once they go over 90, seniors and their caregivers should beware.

*Experts suggest:*

1. Making sure the air conditioner is turned on and operating properly
2. Not walking long distances, lifting heavy objects or doing other strenuous things
3. Drinking plenty of water
4. Taking cool showers
5. Wearing light and loose-fitting clothing, and hats
6. Keeping on the lookout for signs of dehydration.



For more information, including what to do if dehydration is suspected,

**Go to full story online at:** [healthinaging.org](http://healthinaging.org)

## Remember the FIVE Simple Rules to be Happy!

1. Free your mind from worries - Most never happen.
2. Free your heart from hatred - Forgive.
3. Live simply and appreciate what you have.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less.

### This can be YOU!



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