

WHEN IS THE RIGHT
TIME TO PLAN FOR
OLD AGE?
HINT: NOT WHEN
YOU'RE OLD.

Planning for your senior years is important. And it's a mistake to wait until your 60 to start thinking about it. Americans are living longer. And that means we need to think about those years when we will need more care.

At Mensh Insurance you will find an insurance agent you can trust to help you make a solid plan. We've helped thousands of customers find the right insurance mix: to protect their income, to safeguard their family and to have peace of mind now and long into the future.

WE ARE LONG
TERM CARE
SPECIALISTS.

*If you have
questions, just
ask.*

Planning for Life as a Senior (when you're not even close to being one) *A 10-Step Planning Guide*

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If you're between 40 and 50+, believe it or not it's time to start planning for your future. Americans are living longer -- so you need to think about retirement and your senior years long in advance.

1 START SAVING EARLY, SAVE MONTHLY, SAVE SYSTEMATICALLY.

The key to having enough money for retirement is saving money, starting early and being systematic about it. Lots of financial planners will tell you to decide on an amount you can contribute every single month and put it straight into your retirement fund. Have it taken out of your paycheck automatically so that you never miss it. You can find lots of "retirement calculators" online that are simple enough to use -- and they will give you an idea of how much money you may need for retirement and what your spending levels can be.

2 BUY LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG(ISH) TO SAVE MONEY.

If you buy Long Term Care Insurance (the type of insurance that pays for home care or assisted living) when you're in your mid-40s, your premiums are going to be a lot less than if you wait to buy it when you're 65. And here's an important point: if you try to buy LTC insurance in your 50s or 60s and you're not healthy -- you could be turned down altogether.

The truth is, about half of the people that will read this article are going to need some type of Long Term Care Insurance - and many of them before they're 65! And LTC services

are not going to get any cheaper. Expect to pay about \$1500 a year if you're in your 40's for moderate coverage.

Studies show that by 2010, there will be nearly half a million new cases of Alzheimer's. And many of us now already have a parent, neighbor, friend or relative who is dealing with Alzheimer's or other crippling disease. You can only imagine how expensive and exhausting it is to care for a loved one with Alzheimer's. The rate of depression among caregivers alone is staggering.

Spending \$1500 per year might cost \$30,000 over a 20 year period, however, if it provides \$60,000 per year in benefits and the peace of mind to know that care providers are available, it is well worth the money.

3 CREATE A RETIREMENT PLAN AND TALK ABOUT IT WITH YOUR FAMILY.

Instead of "your children" ultimately deciding where you want to go to receive care when you're elderly, plan now and YOU will get to decide.

- Would you prefer to go to an assisted living facility?
- Would you like to have help in your home?
- Where is the money for your care going to come from?
- Are you planning for your kids to take care of you? Can they carry the financial strain of this? What happens when you need help with bathing and other every day activities?

Did you know the average assisted living facility now costs anywhere from \$2,500 to \$5,000 a month? And that is per person, *before* medical bills, prescription drugs and other costs of living. Many people tell me that the government will help pay for their medical needs. Well, what if you're wrong?

Give yourself a good night's sleep by buying a Long Term Health Care policy.

4 BUY LIFE INSURANCE. Buying the right Life Insurance policy will protect the family members who depend on you when you die. Life insurance policies can also have cash values that could be used to help pay for long term care if necessary, or, to pass on as part of the overall plan for heirs.

5 MAXIMIZE YOUR 401K PLAN WHILE YOU CAN. This won't be the first time you've read advice to put as much into your 401(k) plan as you can. But it just makes good financial sense. 401(k) plans allow you to put away pre-tax dollars through your employer -- so more of your money eventually goes to you and not to the government. In 2008, employees were allowed to put in up to \$15,500. And for employees older than 50, there is an additional \$5,000 "catch up" allowance. So before you buy that plasma tv for your bedroom, make sure you've saved for your retirement first.

6 IF YOU ARE THE DAUGHTER OR SON OF AN AGING PARENT, START ASKING SOME QUESTIONS.

If you have aging parents, it just makes sense to start asking questions about their future care. If they're not planning properly, your parents' medical, housing and care needs can have a devastating impact on *your* finances. What if *you* are the person who eventually has to pay for your parents' nursing facility. Do you have \$3,000 - \$5,000 per month to spend on that? What if your siblings aren't pulling their fair share?

The reality is that the emotional and family expense associated with long term care for one, let alone two parents, reaches far further than just your bank account -- it can tear a family apart. Long range planning can make a huge difference.

7 CREATE A TIDY FINANCIAL PICTURE. If you have financial debt, it's time to work to start clearing it up. As you enter retirement you'll need to know where your income is coming from and how much you can spend to

live comfortably without going into debt. With recent negative returns in the market and almost certainly decreased retirement income or pension distributions, how many people are truly prepared for the costs associated with long term care? Review your family's intentions; don't be afraid to confront the naturally uncomfortable topic before it is too late -- and make sure you go ahead and purchase Long Term Care insurance.

8 CREATE A WILL. UPDATE YOUR WILL WHEN YOU HAVE MAJOR CHANGES. According to some reports, nearly half of Americans don't have a will. And that's a mistake. If you die and you haven't prepared a will, the court system will get to decide what happens to all of your assets. Without a will, your finances can become a tangled mess and leave your family in legal battles over your hard earned money. Your will also indicates a guardian for your children in case you die, so if you are a parent -- this is an absolute must. If you already have a will, don't forget to update it as necessary.

9 ASK A ZILLION QUESTIONS. Planning a successful retirement can mean asking a lot of questions about your parents' financial picture -- and your own. Having a trusted insurance agent, estate lawyer and financial planner is so important. At Mensh Insurance, we've helped thousands of our customers create custom plans that have seen them through their 40s, 50s and on into retirement.

10 PLAN AHEAD TO MAKE YOUR SENIOR YEARS SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO. If you plan ahead, start saving for retirement early and get the advice of a great insurance agent and a financial planner -- you'll be well on your way to a successful, happy retirement.

Danny Mensh, CLTC, is President of Mensh Insurance and has fulfilled the industry requirements to be Certified in Long Term Care insurance planning.

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