I Do Not Have a Disability
I am Just Getting Old

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Overview
- The Aging Process
- Why is Aging Important
- Why is Aging Important to AgrAbility
- The Signs of the Aging Farmer
- Assistive Technology for the Aging Farmer
- Ways to present to the Aging Farmer

What is Aging?
“The process of becoming older”
Aging represents the accumulation of changes in a human being over time, encompassing physical, psychological, and social changes. Reaction time, for example, may slow with age, while knowledge of world events and wisdom may expand.
What is Aging?

Aging is among the greatest known risk factors for most human diseases: of the roughly 150,000 people who die each day across the globe, about two thirds die from age-related causes.

Why is Aging Important?

• We all age.
• According to Purdue Ag Safety and Health Program 2016 Farm Fatality Summary – Nearly ½ of documented fatalities were incidents involving those over 60 years old (5 over 80 years).

Why is Aging Important?

• Approximately 1 out of every 9 farms experiences annually a farm-work-related injury requiring medical attention. In Indiana that is approximately 6,389 treated injuries. National Safety Council indicated 2% of reported farm injuries result in permanent disability (2016, 128 cases)
Why is it Important to AgrAbility

• Average age of AgrAbility clients 2015-2016 is 55 years old (range 3 to 94 years old)
• The origin of disability classification - Chronic or non-incident related = 55.3%

Age-Related Risk Factors

• Self employment
  – Work alone
  – Dissatisfaction
  – Depression
• Strength or Stamina
  – Lose muscle tissue
  – Muscles become rigid and less toned

Age-Related Risk Factors

• Memory loss
  – More trouble multi-tasking
  – Information processing slows
• Sensory perception
  – Hearing loss – muffled, high-pitched harder to understand
  – Vision loss – cataracts, less peripheral vision
Potential AT for the Aging Farmer
How do we make them aware of the possibilities

Assessing Senior Farmers’ Perceptions of Tractor and Machinery-related Hazards

S.D. Whitman, W.E. Field
Journal of Ag Safety and Health
1(3):199-214
@1995 ASAE 1074-7583/95/0103-199

Results from 295 “Senior” Farmers

• “Senior” is age 60 and older
• Mean age – 67 years old
• 60% full-time on farm
• 19% part-time operators
• 16% retired – 87% worked part-time on farm
• 62% experienced serious injury or close call on farm
Results from 295 “Senior” Farmers

- Enterprise distribution moved from labor intensive to less physically intensive
- Had less safety equipment on primary and secondary tractors
- Perceived risk level higher for seniors

Severity of Tractor Injuries

- 83% agreed that injuries resulting from tractor-related incidents are severe in nature
- 62% agreed it was possible they could be injured in a tractor-related incident within the next year but only 10% believed such an occurrence was likely.

Personal Efficacy

- 44% of the senior farmers agreed that they were at greater risk when operating a tractor than people 20 years younger than themselves.
- 56% agreed that their personal knowledge and experience compensated for any loss in physical ability due to age.
General Safety Beliefs

• 62% of senior farmers agree that people over the age of 75 are at greater risk than younger persons when operating tractors. However, 69% disagreed that farmers over age 60 should be required to pass fitness tests in order to operate tractors.

Safety Information Preferences

• Farm magazines were identified by 58% of responding farmer as the information format most often used in obtaining safety-related information. Farm television (24%), local newspapers (20%), farm radio broadcasts (18%).

• Operator manuals (49%), safety decals (40%), talking knowledgeable people one-on-one (33%), fair and machinery show exhibits (26%). Workshops, video tapes, national news media brochures, and books least often identified (15%).
Key Findings

- Farmers and ranchers most preferred receiving information via printed newsletters (71%) and printed publications (67%).
- AgrAbility staff preferred via internet (61%) and printed publications (60%)

Key Findings

- Many farmers and ranchers perceived that dissemination strategies moving toward the internet (53%) and AT information generally more available.
- Both AgrAbility staff and Barn Builders agree farmers still want to receive information in printed form and neither age or education strong indicator of internet use.
Factors Effecting Health and Safety-related Behaviors

• Beliefs regarding threats or personal vulnerability
• Perceptions of hazard severity
• Efficacy of preventative actions
• Desire to avoid negative consequences (injury, pain or financial loss)

How do we do it?

• Farm Shows, brochures and handouts, farm publication articles,
• Direct text toward “ways of making it easier to continue without costing a lot of money”
• Take advantage of time at shows to confront in a gentle way

Questions or Comments