



Pharmacists Serving Older Adults

Pre-Pharmacy Society at UC Irvine

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M2: Pharmacist Services



Who are Older Americans?

Myths

Seniors & Health

Seniors & Medications

Senior Care Pharmacists

What Senior Care Pharmacists Do

Who Are Older Americans?

Profile Highlights

- In 2019, the population age 65+ was 54.1 million—30 million women and 24.1 million men.

16% (2019)

21.6% (2040)

PEOPLE AGE 65+ REPRESENTED 16% OF THE POPULATION IN 2019. THAT IS EXPECTED TO BE 21.6% BY 2040.

Population Changes By Age Group 2009 – 2019

Age Group	Range Increase	# Increase	% Increase
>65 (1:7 Americans) Women:Men 2019 30 M : 24.1 M (125:100) (178:100 for 85+)	39.7 M – 54.1 M	14.4 M	36%
Under 65			3%
45 – 64 (65 in next 20 y)	80.3 M – 83.3 M	3 M	4%
60 +	55.7 M – 74.6 M	18.9 M	34%
65+ (1900 – 2019)	4.1% - 16%	3.1 M – 54.1 M	400%

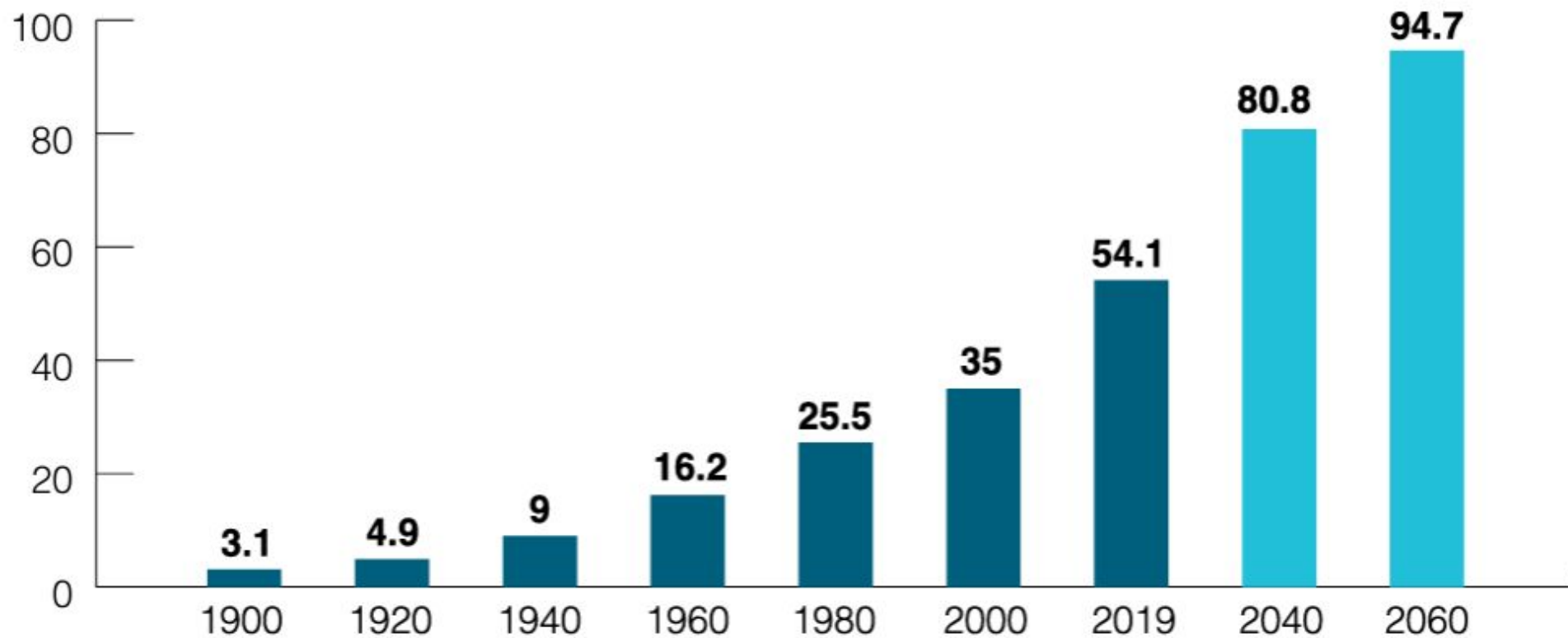
Who Are Older Americans?

GROWTH OF OLDER POPULATION 1900 - 2019			
Group	1900	2019	Growth Factor
65 – 74	2,186,767	31.5 M	14X
74 – 84	771,369	16 M	20X
85+	122,362	6.6 M	53X

Life Expectancy 2019

In 2019, persons reaching age 65 had an average life expectancy of an added 19.6 years (20.8 years for women and 18.2 years for men). A child born in 2019 could expect to live 78.8 years, more than 30 years longer than a child born in 1900 (47.3 years).¹

Number of Persons Age 65 and Older, 1900 - 2060 (numbers in millions)



Note: Increments in years are uneven. Lighter bars (2040 and 2060) indicate projections.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates and Projections



10 Myths About Aging

Seniors & Health – 10 Myths

1. Depression & Loneliness are normal in older adults.
2. The older I get, the less sleep I need.
3. Older adults can't learn new things.
4. It is inevitable that older people will get dementia.
5. Older adults should take it easy and avoid exercise so they don't get injured.
6. If a family member has Alzheimer's Disease, I will have it, too.
7. Now that I'm older I will have to give up driving.
8. Only women need to worry about osteoporosis.
9. I'm "too old" to quit smoking.
10. My blood pressure has lowered or returned to normal so I can stop taking my blood pressure medicine.



Seniors & Medications

- People aged 65 and older make up 12 percent of the U.S. population, but account for 34 percent of all prescription medication use and 30 percent of all over-the-counter medication use.^[2]
- Because older adults often take numerous medications prescribed by multiple health care providers, their risk of having an adverse reaction is greater than that of younger adults.^[3]
- Among older adults, adverse reactions due to medication can be very serious, including falls, depression, confusion, hallucinations and malnutrition.^[4]
- Nearly one in four older adults skips doses of medication or does not fill prescriptions because of cost.^[5]
- Memory impairment and sensory changes such as vision loss that often occur among older adults can create challenges for correctly adhering to complex medication regimens.^[6]
- According to researchers, about 60 percent of older adults take their prescriptions improperly, and approximately 140,000 die each year as a result.^[7]
- Research shows that older adults who fail to take prescribed medications were 76 percent more likely to experience a significant decline in their overall health than those who took all medications as prescribed.^[8]

Seniors & Medications

- A given dose of a given medication produces a different, and sometimes unexpected response in an older adult compared to a younger patient of the same gender and similar body weight.
- As adults age, medication use increases
 - 75% of those 50-64 fill an average of 13 Rxs/yr
 - 87% of those 65-79 fill an average of 20 Rxs/yr¹

¹ <https://hpi.georgetown.edu/agingsociety/pubhtml/rxdrugs/rxdrugs.html>

Seniors & Medications

Older Adults:

- May have developed (more) illnesses
- May have greater severity of disease
- Are predominantly female/have smaller body size
- May have altered nutritional status
- May have had previous drug reactions
- May be taking drugs with a narrow therapeutic index
- Have a lifetime of developing bad medication management habits
- Have a lifelong history of developing health beliefs



Seniors & Medications

“Any symptom in an elderly patient should be considered a drug side effect until proven otherwise.”

Gurwitz, J. MD

Professor, Primary Care Medicine

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Worcester, Massachusetts

Geriatric Syndromes

- The term “geriatric syndrome” is used to capture those clinical conditions in older persons that do not fit into discrete disease categories. Some Examples:
 - Delirium
 - Falls
 - Frailty
 - Dizziness/Syncope
 - Sleep Disorders
 - Urinary incontinence
 - Pressure Ulcers
 - Elder abuse/neglect
 - Dementia
 - Parkinson’s Disease



Senior Care Pharmacists

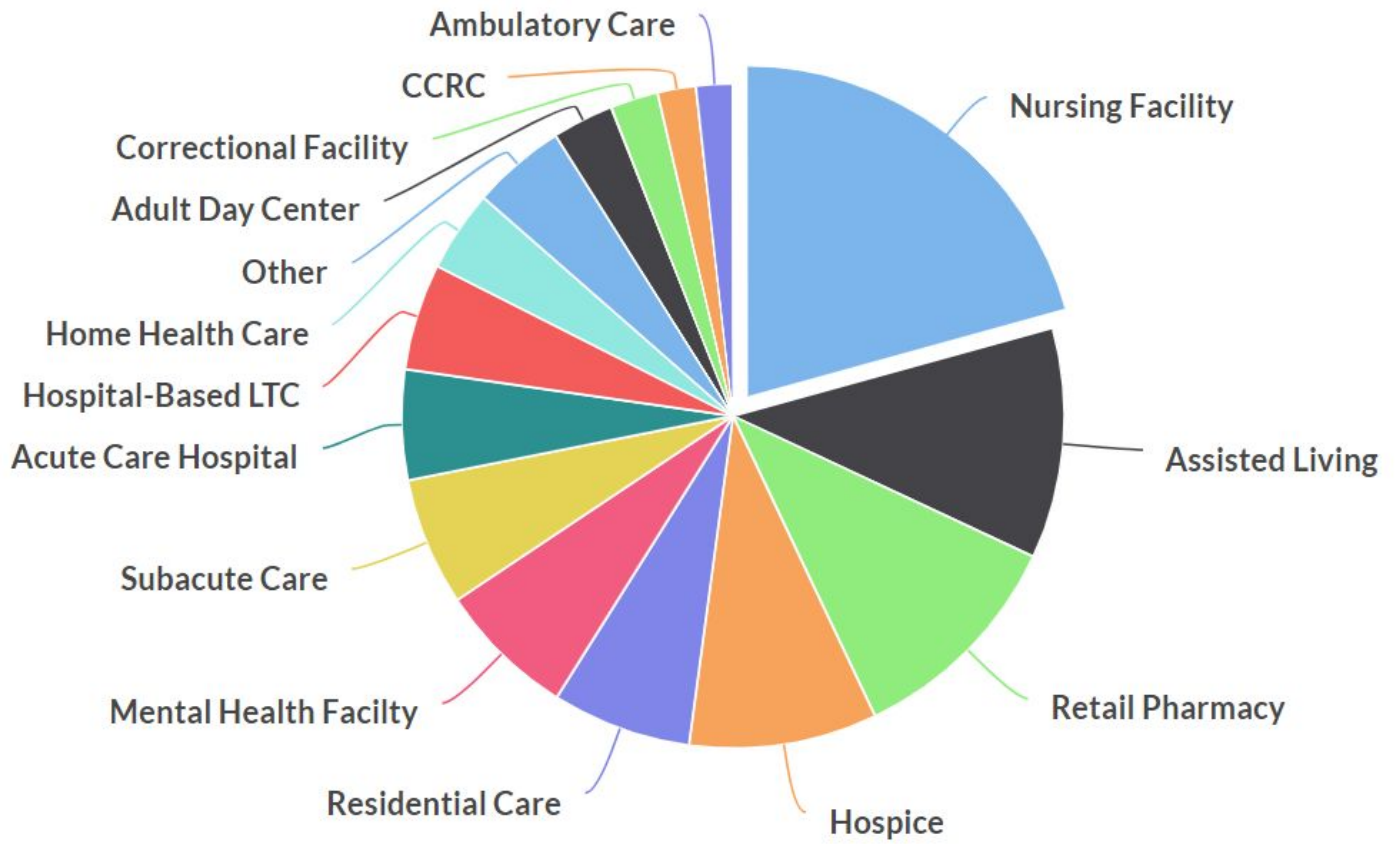
Senior care pharmacists : counsel patients, provide information and recommendations to prescribers and caregivers, review patients' medication regimens, present in-service educational programs, and oversee medication distribution services. While a senior care pharmacist may provide this type of clinical expertise to any age group, senior care pharmacists focus on the special pharmacotherapeutic challenges of the senior citizen.



Board Certification – Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties

**Board Certified Geriatric
Pharmacist (BCGP)**

Where Do Senior Care Pharmacists Work?





On Being A Pharmacist

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- Scope of Practice is growing
 - Immunizations
 - Smoking cessation
 - PEP & PrEP
 - Collaborative Practice
 - Ambulatory Care (Clinic)
 - Pharmacy Informatics
 - Specialization (BPS)
 - Advanced Practice
 - More...

Questions??

