



"We want to positively impact people's lives through the power and appreciation of art."

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In This Issue: Benefits of Art on the Health of Older Adults

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Selecting Appropriate Art for Your Health Care Facility visit
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Upcoming Events:

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Livonia, MI 48152

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Painting in the Park, Rochester, New York

NEA study: Get involved in the arts, it will benefit your health

This article was originally published on 9/8/17 By Gary Rotstein / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

If the National Endowment for the Arts puts out a report about the relationship between participation in the arts and the health of older adults, you might not be shocked by what it says.

But we will tell you anyway.

["Staying Engaged: Health Patterns of Older Americans Who Engage in the Arts"](#) points to new findings of benefits for not only those who create art — that's a connection that had been made in prior studies — but also for those who simply attend arts-related events. The benefits are reported to be best of all for those who try to be artists themselves in some manner and who also show up as spectators.

"Notably, older adults who both created art and attended arts events reported higher cognitive functioning and lower rates of both hypertension and limitations to their physical functioning than did older adults who neither created nor attended art," said a report summary from the National Endowment for the Arts. "In fact, among older adults who both created and attended, cognitive functioning scores were seven-fold higher than for adults who neither created nor attended."

The findings were based on national data from the Health and Retirement Study, a national longitudinal survey of thousands of people 55 and older that has been assessing their behavior for decades. Only in 2014, however, did the survey begin asking people about their connection to the arts.

Arts creation was defined primarily by activities such as making visual arts, dancing, singing, playing an instrument, acting, and creative writing. Arts attendance meant respondents had been to films, concerts, museums or similar activities.

The report said that in 2014 64 percent of people created their own art, 68.7 percent attended arts events and 48.6 percent both created and attended, bringing them the biggest physical and health benefits compared to non-artistic types.

"Given how prevalent conditions such as poor cognitive health, limited physical function and high levels of hypertension are among older adults, the possibility that arts participation can improve health should interest anyone charged with designing or implementing strategies to promote well-being among this population," the NEA summary suggested.