



## EPID 600 - Introduction to Public Health Introduction to Aging : Jason A. Rachel Ph.D.

### Objectives

#### Students will be able to

- describe the role of public health in dealing with a special population, the senior citizens
- describe the criteria for labeling a person aged
- describe the elements of aging
- describe governmental agencies responsible for assisting/ measuring aging
- describe non governmental agencies who assist aging persons.
- describe how ageing can be expected to affect public health services over the next 25 years.

#### Key Words

*Aging, aged, seniors, nursing homes, homes for the aged, retirement centers, senior citizens advocacy, home visiting, senior centers, mental health and aging, Alzheimer's diseases, Parkinson's disease, Osteoporosis.*

#### Concept:

*Aging starts at birth. Getting older is not necessarily accompanied by significant declines in either physical or mental function. There are many resources available to assist people as they age. Misunderstanding and lack of knowledge is the greatest detriment to health maintenance while aging.*

#### References:

Schneider 1st Edn: Introduction to Public Health - Scan Chapters 14 & 16 for relevant material.

Schneider 2nd Edn: Introduction to Public Health - Chapter 28

Data from the US Census Bureau, March 2006: People in the United States are living longer and healthier lives than ever before. Average life expectancy at birth rose from 47.3 in 1900 to 76.9 in 2000.

#### Future Implications

- The social and economic implications of the aging of the Baby Boom generation will be a significant concern for policy makers, the private sector, and individuals. The size and longevity of this group will trigger debate about possible modifications to Social Security, Medicare, and disability and retirement benefits, among other issues. What is happening to the [population pyramid](#). Look at how longevity has changed [since 1900](#).
- The changing marital and family composition that is occurring in the United States is likely to change the types of familial support that are available to people at older ages.
- The future older population is likely to be better educated than the current older population, especially when Baby Boomers start reaching age 65. Their increased levels of education may accompany better health, higher incomes, and more wealth, and consequently higher

standards of living in retirement.

- Older women will be increasingly more likely to have been in the labor force long enough to have their own retirement income, although their lower median earnings may translate into lower incomes in retirement.
- Research on genetic, biological, and physiological aspects of aging is likely to change the future for the older population. In the medical and public health arenas, research to understand chronic diseases, such as diabetes and Alzheimer's disease, may produce significant improvements for treatment and prevention.

Think about the [changing use of health services](#) as the population ages and its ramifications.

Review Jason's [Slides](#)  
([pdf handouts](#)).

Review the .pdf file CDC's [State of Aging](#) Report with particular attention to the discussion starting page 26. You may also want to review [the report](#) from the National Association of State Units on Aging and compare its comments with those in the CDC report, A recent concern of the AMA has been with [increased driving injury past 70 years of age](#). Take a look at the [Older Driver Safety](#) web site

[Dr Cotter's Links](#)

[2005 Links](#)

For those interested in pursuing this topic further "The Epidemiology of Aging", William A Satariano. [James & Bartlett](#), 2006