



Household Plant Cultivation and Its Relationship with Wellness in Older Adults

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DESCRIPTION

The demographic transformation occurring across many nations has increased interest in identifying practical approaches that support health and well-being during older adulthood. While medical advances have contributed substantially to longer lifespans, researchers increasingly recognize that everyday activities can also influence the aging experience. One area receiving growing attention is household plant cultivation, which involves the care and maintenance of indoor or small outdoor plants within residential environments. Although often viewed primarily as a leisure activity, plant cultivation may contribute to physical, psychological, social, and cognitive aspects of healthy aging.

Older adulthood frequently brings changes in daily routines, social roles, and living arrangements. Activities that provide structure and meaningful engagement can support adaptation to these transitions. Caring for plants offers a regular set of responsibilities that encourage observation, planning, and consistent participation. Watering schedules, monitoring growth, adjusting light exposure, and maintaining plant health create ongoing opportunities for engagement that may contribute positively to daily life. One of the most frequently discussed benefits of household plant cultivation is its association with psychological well-being. Contact with living plants can provide a sense of connection to natural processes. Observing growth, flowering, and seasonal changes may generate feelings of satisfaction and accomplishment. Many older adults describe plant care as a calming activity that encourages relaxation and reflection. Such experiences can contribute to emotional balance and overall life satisfaction.

Researchers have explored how indoor plants influence environmental perception. Living spaces that include vegetation are often perceived as more pleasant and welcoming than those without natural elements. Attractive surroundings may encourage positive emotional responses and increase satisfaction with home environments. Since many older adults spend substantial amounts of time indoors, the quality of residential spaces becomes particularly important for daily well-being. Plant

cultivation also involves physical activity, although usually at a moderate level. Tasks such as watering, pruning, repotting, cleaning leaves, and arranging containers require movement and coordination. These activities may support flexibility, hand function, and light physical exertion. For individuals with limited mobility, plant care can provide opportunities for regular movement without requiring extensive physical effort.

Fine motor skills play an important role in many gardening-related activities. Handling seeds, trimming stems, and managing small tools require precision and coordination. Continued engagement in such tasks may help maintain dexterity and hand strength. These abilities are relevant for many aspects of independent living and contribute to overall functional capacity.

Cognitive engagement represents another area of interest within healthy aging research. Plant cultivation requires attention to environmental conditions, growth patterns, and care requirements. Individuals often learn about different plant species, monitor changes over time, and solve practical problems related to plant health. These activities involve memory, observation, decision-making, and learning processes that may contribute to cognitive stimulation. Household plant cultivation may also influence daily routines in beneficial ways. Consistent plant care often encourages regular schedules and a sense of responsibility. Structured routines can provide stability, particularly for individuals adjusting to retirement or other life transitions. Daily interactions with plants may create purposeful activities that contribute to meaningful engagement.

Researchers have examined whether indoor plants affect stress levels. Although individual experiences vary, some studies suggest that interaction with plants may be associated with feelings of calmness and relaxation. Caring for living organisms can encourage focused attention on present activities, temporarily shifting attention away from worries or external pressures. Such experiences may contribute to emotional comfort and psychological resilience. Social interaction can emerge through plant-related activities as well. Community gardening clubs, plant exchange groups, educational workshops, and online discussion forums provide opportunities for communication and relationship building. Older adults who

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participate in such activities often develop friendships based on shared interests. These social connections may support emotional well-being and reduce feelings of isolation.

The aesthetic value of plants should not be overlooked. Flowers, foliage, and diverse plant forms can contribute visual interest and enjoyment within living environments. Creating attractive indoor spaces may strengthen personal satisfaction and encourage pride in one's home. Such effects can contribute positively to quality of life and emotional health. Housing environments influence the feasibility of household plant cultivation. Even individuals living in apartments or smaller residences can often maintain container plants, window gardens, or indoor greenery. Advances in indoor gardening systems have expanded possibilities for plant care in limited spaces. This accessibility makes plant cultivation relevant to a wide range of living situations.

CONCLUSION

As populations continue to age, identifying meaningful and practical activities that support well-being remains an important objective. Household plant cultivation offers opportunities for cognitive engagement, moderate physical activity, emotional satisfaction, social connection, and environmental appreciation. Through the simple act of caring for living plants, older adults may experience benefits that contribute to a more active, fulfilling, and healthy later life. Continued research in this field may further illuminate the role of plant cultivation within broader strategies designed to support successful aging .