



Savings Fitness:

A Guide to Your Money and Your Financial Future – Easy Ways to Ensure Financial Security in Retirement

The economy is in a rough state and that is affecting everyone's future. As a result, you must take control of your own retirement to ensure that you'll stay above water when you're ready to put your feet up and relax.

Here are some things to consider when planning for your retirement:

- **Obtaining adequate assets before you stop working.** Do not rely on company pensions or benefits as your sole income in retirement.
- **On average, women live longer than men; many married women outlive their husbands by at least 15 years.** Economic decline often occurs after becoming a widow, so women need to prepare to be financially secure for their long lives.
- **Outliving your assets is a reality.** According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), life expectancy in 1952 was 68.6 years old. In 2006, that figure had risen to 77.85 years old. At this rate, this trend will continue because of lifestyle improvements and advances in medical care. It is wise to organize your portfolio so that a portion of your retirement assets cannot be outlived.
- **Contribute as much as possible to your 401(k) savings plan.**
- **Save early and diversify your assets to maximize the return on your investments.**
- **Be prepared for changes in retirement.** Remember to take inflation, a possible decline in your functional status, medical costs, the death of a spouse and other changes in your life into account when saving.
- **Decisions made before retirement will affect you in your golden years.** This includes taking a new job, getting married, getting divorced or having or adopting a child.
- **Maintain your job skills to protect your financial security.** Your benefits ultimately depend on your ability to make money. By keeping your skills up-to-date, you can better ensure that you are able to work and make money.