

Your quality of life

Quality of life will improve if you take steps to age gracefully and take care of your mind and body. Determine to do your best at slowing the aging process and you will feel better and continue to be able to more activities for a longer period of time.

<http://lifeskills.endlex.com/article/aging.html>

Deep breathe and meditate to counteract aging. Deep breathing and meditation slows your thinking and your body down. Aging is just a passage of time. If you suspend time, you will counteract the effects of aging. Check out the Staying Healthy article on this website to learn how to do deep breathing and meditation.

Exercise regularly to slow aging. Do the types of exercise that you enjoy. Do them regularly. Do not strain or injure yourself while doing them. Choose activities that are fun and safe. Even walking is excellent for your health. Do whatever is possible. Perhaps speak with a physician on the type of exercise program that you can engage in without overstraining yourself.

Relax. Learn how to relax at will. Doing deep breathing, meditating, and exercise, will aid in your state of relaxation. Sleep also helps. Relaxing all parts of your body all the time will definitely slow the aging process, and give you fewer diseases and illnesses. Listen to soothing music, watch soothing scenery, do whatever it takes to relax yourself.

Sleep well, and sleep often. Do some relaxation exercises before going to bed. Also, when going to bed, just sleep. Forget about everything else. It is not worthy of your attention. People who have difficulties sleeping often think about certain things when going to bed. Just stop thinking, and you will fall asleep. There is probably no need for sleeping pills. Certain foods also help people sleep. For example, drinking some milk before going to bed will likely help. Lotus beans also have a sedative effect. Conversely, do not drink or eat tea, coffee, or other types of stimulants four to five hours or more before going to bed. Those stimulate the body and reduce the sedative state of your body. It is also helpful to take an afternoon nap, as it is quite relaxing and is good for the body.

Apply lotion. Applying lotion after washing, such as Vaseline, is a good way to reduce your wrinkles. If you stop worrying, or frowning, or smiling so much, that will most likely reduce wrinkles on your face too. Be a kind person, forgive don't forget, and you will be happier, and have fewer wrinkles.

Stop worrying. If you stop worrying, you will also reduce how much you get ill and how much you age. Just calm down. Most things will work out if you just leave them the way they are without even doing anything.

Maintain schedules. Try to maintain the rhythm of your body by maintain schedules when you do certain activities. For example, try to eat and sleep and approximately the

same time each day. Of course, you can deviate from it mildly once in a while, but it would be good to generally follow the routine. The body enjoys a regular rhythm. Look at your heart, for instance - it beats at a regular rhythm.

Eat well. Eat nutritious foods such as vegetables and fruits. Talk to a dietitian to see what types of foods are recommended these days for your age group.

See the physician and dentist regularly. Regularly see your physician and dentist. Also see any other specialist you require such as the ophthalmologist for your eyes. Make sure you monitor your health regularly and follow their advice. If you wish, you may also consider getting a second opinion from other doctors.

Slow down. As you age, you may not be able to do or not as efficient as doing some of the things that you once did. Remember to slow down. Your body sometimes gives signs, but that may be too late. Just slow down. Try not to carry those heavy things, don't hurt yourself, don't strain. Relax, calm down, slow down.

Do not take anti-aging medicine. Sure, there may be some forms of medicine that you require. You may require vitamin pills, or calcium tablets. However, in general, anti-aging medicine does not exist. If it did, people would not need to die. Take some forms of whatever you feel makes sense. Drink a small amount of wine if you wish, but just use your common sense when you hear about miracle pills.

Doing all these things will definitely counter aging, and slow it down. It'll also allow you to enjoy life more.

In summary, to slow and counter aging, try to

- A. Deep breathe and meditate to counteract aging.
- B. Exercise regularly to slow aging.
- C. Relax.
- D. Sleep well, and sleep often.
- E. Apply lotion.
- F. Stop worrying.
- G. Maintain schedules.
- H. Eat well.

I. See the physician and dentist regularly.

J. Slow down.

K. Do not take anti-aging medicine.

Top 10 Tips for Growing Old Slowly and Gracefully

<http://www.hgh-facts.com/anti-aging-blog/top-10-tips-for-growing-old-slowly-and-gracefully/>

Anyone over 50 can probably remember what “old” people were 30 or 40 years ago. Usually they were people over 50! Most boomers no longer consider themselves old, which is quite possible with life expectancy going up year after year. But we need our health to assure us of a quality of life into our sixties, seventies and beyond.

Here are some really good tips to consider in order to grow old slowly, gracefully and healthfully.

1. Keep away from smoking. The most important general tip. We have all heard the many reasons not to smoke and to stay away from others’ smoke.
2. Keep the weight down. Leanness is high on the list because fat cells have several bad effects - weight, hardening of the arteries and a propensity to cause type 2 diabetes.
3. Take supplements. Particularly alpha-lipoic acid and acetyl-L-carnitine. These boost the energy output.
4. Skip a meal each day or fast a day each week. Eating less food appears to reduce tissue wear and tear from excess blood sugar, inflammation and free radicals. Drink plenty of water to replace the meal.
5. Get a pet. Pet owners tend to visit the doctor less, survive longer even after a heart attack, and suffer less from depression and high blood pressure.
6. Get medical help for chronic pain. If you are in pain, get it seen to. Chronic pain dampens the immune system, can cause depression and tends to elevate levels of the noxious stress hormone cortisol.
7. Get walking. Through age, blood vessel walls tend to harden and exercise keeps blood vessels pliable. Light exercise also reduces the likelihood of diabetes, cancer, depression, dementia and even aging of the skin.

8. Reduce arguments. Arguments and bickering increase the risk of clogged arteries. Rather than allow arguments to simmer, agree that it is OK to have differing points of view.

9. Live around plants. Having a garden or greenhouse to grow plants in is a wonderful way to decrease stress or recuperate from illness. Just being able to see plants in a room or through windows has been proven to be beneficial to bed-ridden patients.

10. Do some weight-training. Strength training is almost as important as cardio exercise to the aging body. This is because from 40 on the body can lose a quarter-pound of muscle each year which is replaced with fat. Lifting weights 3 times a week for a half-hour can easily replace that lost through natural aging.

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SUCCESSFUL AGING

http://www.drmcDougall.com/newsletter/jan_feb.99.1.html

Since antiquity, from ancient Egyptians to Ponce de Leon, people have sought ways to extend their life span. Even though there is no fountain of youth, you do have control over how you age. You can lengthen your life, preserve your function, and retain a glowing attractive appearance. Look around you at your friends and relatives -- can you see the difference in how people age? Some are crippled, wrinkled, and gray long before they should be. And then there are others who retain that sparkle of youth in the way they look, feel, and function into their eighties and nineties. The difference is not due to a stroke of luck, but rather in how they have taken care of their precious bodies over the years. Fortunately, it is never too late to start. Everyday I see broken bodies transformed into more radiant, active, agile, brighter people. The secret for successful aging is almost too simple to believe -- it is a healthy diet, moderate exercise, and clean habits. But the results are no less than a miracle.

The Aging Process

Chronologic and biologic aging begin at conception, however, declines in function become apparent shortly after sexual maturation. It makes sense that optimum health would be designed to occur at a time of maximum reproductive capacity, since this would optimize the chances of successful reproduction for our species. After those reproductive years we become less important to the species and with time, the body declines, health problems become increasingly more common, and survival is threatened. In spite of its

disadvantages to us as individuals, aging is beneficial, and even necessary, at the species level, for example, to prevent overcrowding.

Living Longer, But Not Successfully

As the average life expectancy has increased over time, the maximum life span has remained unchanged at about 120 years for humans. With more people living longer there has been a higher prevalence of disability. While some individuals get healthier, most are getting sicker as they age. The proportion of our population over the age of 65 has increased from 4 percent in 1900 to about 13 percent currently. Increases in life expectancy during the last century can be attributed to improved sanitation, greater availability of food and shelter, and other public measures that reduced infant and childhood mortality. The advent of antibiotics reduced death, especially in the young. Smoking, lack of exercise and poor diet have been linked to 700,000 deaths in 1990 (*JAMA* 270:2207, 1993). Since the 1960s, increases in life expectancy among middle aged and older individuals can be attributed to alterations in diet and lifestyle.

Aging Gracefully

The aging process cannot be stopped, but increasing chronologic age does not have to mean increasing disability, and loss of independence. While it is true that there is a reduction of height, mobility, muscle and bone mass, hearing, vision, and mental functions, as well as graying of the hair and wrinkling of the skin as the years pass, the loss can be mitigated. We know this because of the worldwide geographic variation in the incidence of these losses, which indicates that these losses are due to diet, physical inactivity, and bad habits (smoking). My years in Hawaii taught me this lesson well. Downtown Waikiki I would see thousands of elderly Japanese tourists looking young and fit with smooth skin and a full head of dark hair into their eighties. Yet the Japanese descendants born in Hawaii and raised on kalua pig and McDonald's Quarter Pounders were often fat, graying, bald, and wrinkled in their forties.

Diet and lifestyle changes to date have been shown to have the greatest effects on health, fitness, and life span. For example, exercise as simple as regular walking is associated with lower overall risk of dying. A study of 707 nonsmoking men found those who walked more than 2 miles per day had half the risk of dying as non walkers (*N Engl J Med* 338:94, 1998). People who exercise also tend to eat healthier diets higher in fruits and vegetables and smoke less often (*Med Sci Sports Exerc* 26:224, 1994).

Closing Down the Arteries

The high-fat, high-cholesterol diet enjoyed by most Americans closes down their arteries and robs them of their function through a disease process known as atherosclerosis. The resulting problems are named based upon the organ or tissue affected. The following are due to an insufficient blood supply that may develop gradually or suddenly.

- macular degeneration (retinal arteries)
- hearing loss (arteries of inner ear)
- strokes (cerebral arteries)
- heart attacks (coronary arteries)
- kidney failure (renal arteries)
- degenerative disk disease (lumbar arteries)
- intermittent claudication and gangrene (peripheral leg arteries)
- impotence (arteries of penis)

These conditions of "old age" are entirely preventable and largely reversible by a healthy diet and lifestyle. Sometimes the judicious use of cholesterol lowering medications can be helpful.

Mental Dysfunction

Loss of mental function is commonly seen among aging Americans. A diet high in fat and cholesterol has been shown to increase the risk for premature loss of mental function (*Ann Neurol* 42:776, 1997). This may be due to small strokes or more subtle decreases in blood supply to brain tissue. More severe and rapid loss of mental function occurs with Alzheimer's disease. Aluminum toxicity in susceptible people is the cause of this disease. (*Gerontology* 11:16, 1997). Much of the aluminum enters the body in our food from pots, pans, cans, and additives. The use of antiperspirants has been linked with the systemic accumulation of aluminium and an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease. (*Mol Med Today* 4:107, 1998). This occurs because the active ingredient in antiperspirants is aluminum chloride, which is inadvertently sprayed into the nose where it enters the brain through the olfactory lobes (stalks of the brain). (Plain deodorants do not contain aluminum chloride).

The best way to prevent and/or slow the progress of Alzheimer's dementia is to eat a healthy diet and avoid inhaling or ingesting Aluminum. Gingko biloba is an herb that has been shown to improve mental performance and the social functioning in people with Alzheimer's disease (*JAMA* 278:1327, 1997). Aluminum can be removed from the body by chelation with substances like desferrioxamine, preventing further damage to the brain and slowing the progress of the disease (*J Toxicol Environ Health* 48:667, 1996).

Weakening the Bones

The average American diet, which is high in protein and low in fruits and vegetables, generates a large amount of acid (mainly sulfuric and phosphoric acids) which must be buffered by active resorption of the bones (*J Nutr* 128:1051, 1998). The dissolved bone is then excreted by the kidney into the urine. Muscle foods (beef, chickens, fish, shrimp, etc.) and eggs are the highest generators of acid for the body. The addition of alkaline foods, which are fruits and vegetables reverses the loss of calcium and the dissolution of the bone. Bone may then be rebuilt, and eventually changes that lead to osteoporosis are reversed.

Crippling Arthritis

The most common form of arthritis is known as osteoarthritis, also referred to as degenerative arthritis, which is supposed to be a result of normal natural aging. In the United States, this form of crippling arthritis is seen in x-rays of the hands of over 70% of people age 65 years and older. However, this same disease is comparatively rare in African and Asian countries, where people physically labor to survive (*Br J Rheumatol* 24:321, 1985). How can that be? Osteoarthritis is said to be due to wear and tear on the joints, so why is it less common among hard working people of underdeveloped countries? Nor does it explain why with light use, the hands of women often become twisted and deformed with age.

Osteoarthritis develops when damage to the joints exceeds the capacity of the cartilage materials to make repairs; the result is the joint surfaces become eroded. The rich American diet lays the foundation for osteoarthritis. Toxins come from the foods we eat. Animal studies have shown that an unhealthy diet fails to provide adequate antioxidants to destroy the free radicals that form, that damage the joint tissues (*J Orthop Res* 8:731, 1990).

Poor circulation may play a major role in joint deterioration. The severity of osteoarthritis is found to correlate with risk factors for coronary artery disease in people (*J Cardiovasc Risk* 3:529, 1996). No surprise, the diet and lifestyle that leads to one degenerative disease also enhances the development of others. Cholesterol added to the diet of experimental animals increases the incidence of osteoarthritis (*Pathol Microbiol (Basel)* 43:265, 1975). This disturbance in circulation that affects the joints occurs at the level of small blood vessels such as the capillaries, and causes inflammation and destruction (*Sem Arthritis Rheum* 12:11, 1982).

Kidney Loss

The high protein content of the American diet places wear and tear on the kidney tissues. The result is that the average American loses about one-fourth of their kidney function by age of 70 years (*N Engl J Med* 307:652, 1982). This does not cause a problem for most people unless they have lost kidney tissue from other causes, because it only requires one-third of the kidney mass to clear all wastes from the body.

Outward Signs of Aging

Our skin and hair are among our most telling signs of aging. Poor circulation to the skin causes it to lose its normal elasticity and to become wrinkled. Cigarette smoking further compromises circulation and provides products toxic to the skin (*Ann Intern Med* 114:840, 1991). Heavy smokers are nearly five times more likely to be wrinkled than nonsmokers. Combined with heavy sun exposure, heavy smokers are 12 times more likely to be wrinkled. Aging of the skin by excess sun exposure results in coarseness, wrinkling, pigmentation, exposed blood vessels (telangiectasias), precancerous lesions (actinic keratosis) and cancers.

Gray hair, baldness, and wrinkles are reliable signs that a man is at increased risk of suffering from a heart attack (*Am Heart J* 130:1003, 1995). Gray hair indicates the susceptibility to heart attacks with a similar strength to that of smoking and the presence of diabetes. In women, graying showed a similar but weaker effect. The importance of baldness and graying is found in younger and older men. The male hormone, dihydrotestosterone, is the main agent responsible for baldness and may be an important reason men have more heart disease than women. The high-fat, low-fiber, meat-laden American diet is the cause of elevated dihydrotestosterone levels, and baldness in genetically susceptible men.

Not only is graying a sign of more heart disease, but it also is associated with more bone loss. When the majority of a person's hair was gray by the age of 40 years, then the bone density was reduced by 7% to 8% in the hip (femoral neck and trochanter), and 4% in the total body when compared with those not prematurely gray (*J Clin Endocrinol Metab* 82:3580, 1997). The common findings of bone loss, heart disease, graying, baldness, and premature wrinkling point to common denominators of a high-fat diet, lack of exercise, and unhealthy lifestyle (damage from excess sunlight and cigarette smoking). Stop these behaviors and you will slow, and reverse, the aging processes inside and outside. The occurrence of precancerous lesions, known as actinic keratosis, in sun damaged skin can be reduced by more than two-thirds when the fat in the diet is reduced from 40% to 21% (*N Engl J Med* 330:1272, 1994).

Calorie Restriction

Restricting the food intake of mice and rats of all ages to a level 20 to 40 percent below which the animals would voluntarily consume, markedly slows the aging processes. They live up to 50 % longer, have fewer diseases associated with aging, and their tissues are maintained in a more youthful state. Alterations in the way the body metabolizes carbohydrates may underlie this mechanism for anti-aging.

Prolonged life from calorie restriction has an adaptive advantage for species survival. When calorie intake is excessive, physiological priorities are set for body growth and reproduction rather than endurance and longevity. The converse occurs when food is in short supply in order to increase the probability that sufficient individuals will survive to restore the population when conditions improve. In other words, during famine or

drought, to avoid extinction, reproduction is curtailed and aging is slowed to postpone the end of reproductive years until food is again available. Overall the body improves its defenses from environmental stresses.

The effect of calorie intake in people may be the same. Ultimate height and weight of an individual is determined by their calorie intake. The amount of calories consumed during adolescent growth plays a determining role in eventual adult height, and a person's current calorie intake determines body fatness (weight). Men of a height of 5 ft. 9 in. (175.3 cm) or less live 7.46 years longer than men of at least 6 ft. (182.9 cm). Men weighing less than 140 lb. (63.6 kg) live 7.72 years longer than those weighing more than 200 lb. (90.9 kg) (*Bull World Health Organ* 70:259, 1992). So bigger is not necessarily better, as believed by most Americans.

Diet and Lifestyle are the Key to Successful Aging

The main problem with calorie restriction is that it hurts to be hungry and it can be accomplished for a long time by only a very few stoic people. There is a way to reduce your calorie intake and to avoid hunger and that is to eat a low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet of unprocessed plant foods. In a classic study published in 1987 in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, subjects were fed diets for 2 weeks, each containing 15-20%, 30-35%, or 45-50% fat. The diets were similar in appearance and palatability but differed in the amount of high-fat ingredients used. Spontaneous energy intake was 2087, 2353, and 2714 calories on the low-, medium-, and high-fat diets, respectively. Therefore, without being hungry and without any effort you can restrict your calories with a lower fat diet.

That very same diet, when based around starches with the addition of fresh fruits and vegetables, minimizes the intake of toxins such as fat, salt, animal protein, cholesterol and free radicals; and maximizes the intake of nutrients, antioxidants, and other phytochemicals that keep your body younger looking, feeling great, and fully functional. It is not unreasonable to expect that the average person's life can be expanded by 5-10 more useful years (*Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 78:7124, 1981). Now the average life expectancy for men is 72.5 years and for women 79.3 years in the United States. This would bring us over the present average life expectancy of Japanese men of 79.5 years and women of 82.5 years, as we switch more towards a plant-based, oriental-type diet.

Reversing Skin Aging:

Estrogen therapy (HRT) has been demonstrated in some studies to increase skin thickness, reduce dryness of skin and hair, and prevent atrophy (*Therapie* 51:67, 1996). This amounts to smoother, less wrinkled skin. HRT does not seem to do much for the wrinkled skin of smokers (*Maturitas* 29:75, 1998). HRT exerts a beneficial effect on the skin by slowing the process of skin slackness that follows menopause.

A **Vitamin A** derivative cream called tretinoin, and sold as Retin-A, is very effective at reversing skin aging with reduction in wrinkling and removal of dark, irregular skin

pigmentations (*J Am Acad Dermatol* 26:215, 1992). An effective and safe formula contains 0.05% tretinoin as a cream.

Alpha hydroxy acids, "wrinkle creams," improve facial skin tone and fine wrinkling with application to the skin, and can be bought without prescription in "anti-aging" moisturizing lotions and face creams.

Deep chemical peels can improve damage from sun exposure and changes with aging

Botulism toxin injections into the muscles under the wrinkled skin paralyzes the nerves to the skin causing the skin to relax and the wrinkles to disappear, and lasts about 6 months (*Plast Reconstr Surg* 94:94, 1994). This technique is especially useful for wrinkling of the forehead and crows feet about the eyes.

Precancerous and cancerous lesions can be removed by an anticancer drug (5-fluorouracil, **Efudex**), by **liquid nitrogen**, and by taking the top layers of the skin off by using **laser** energy.

Plastic surgery can smooth out wrinkled skin by mechanically stretching it across the skull. Buggy skin under the eyes and the chin can be cut away leaving a more attractive and youthful appearance.

ANTI-AGING POTIONS

Concoctions and mixtures of organic and inorganic origin have been offered to retard aging for hundreds of years. Normal aging is the sum of many mechanisms operating at the molecular, tissue, and organ levels. Several hundred genes are involved in the aging process. Therefore, it is extremely unlikely that a single intervention could reverse all aging processes, and substantially prolong life span.

Melatonin

Melatonin is involved in mood, sleep, sexual behavior, reproduction, immunological functions, and circadian rhythm. It also delays aging by acting as a free radical scavenger, cleaning up free radicals (*Biochem Pharmacol* 56:1265, 1998). Peak levels occur during normal sleep hours. With aging there is a definite decline in night time melatonin levels. Mice fed melatonin at night in their water bottles live significantly longer than controls (*Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 91:787 1994).

Garlic

Garlic has been shown in rats to prevent atrophy of the brain and thus may have an anti-aging effect (*Exp Gerontol* 32:149, 1997).

DHEA

DHEA is an abbreviation for dehydroepiandrosterone, a hormone made in the adrenal glands. Levels fall dramatically with age from 3470 ng/ml in men of age 20 to 24 to 670 ng/ml in men over 70 years. In women levels fall from 2470 ng/ml to 450 ng/ml (*J Clin Endocrinol Metab* 59:551, 1984). The hormone can have effects both like testosterone (androgenic) and estrogen (estrogenic). High levels may protect against breast cancer in premenopausal women, but may increase the risk in postmenopausal women (*Cancer Res* 55:4870, 1995). Muscle strength has been found to increase with DHEA (*Biol Psychiatry* 30:371, 1991). However, there is too little data to conclude DHEA will greatly effect the illnesses associated with aging. As monkeys age their levels of DHEA decrease. Calorie restriction, which extends the life span of rodents and retards aging in laboratory animals, slows the decline of DHEA levels.

Antioxidants

As we age we are exposed to oxidative damage from free radicals from our food and from the normal metabolism that sustains life. Free radicals are highly active substances that damage proteins and DNA. The body has several mechanisms for detoxifying free radicals including enzymes (superoxide dismutase, catalase, and glutathionine) and vitamins (E, C, and beta carotene). Many people interpret these findings to mean they should take supplements of antioxidants, but a safer and more effective approach would be foods. Increased consumption of fruits and vegetables has been proven to increase the antioxidant capacity of the human body (*Am J Clin Nutr* 68:1081, 1998).

How to Age Gracefully

http://www.ehow.com/how_2074919_age-gracefully.html

Tips & Warnings

- Keep an active lifestyle and maintain a daily exercise routine. This activity will help tremendously in keeping your vitality.
- Stretching is a great way to keep your ligaments and muscle tendons young and well. Stretch in the morning and evening to prevent muscle atrophy and knotting.
- If you are a woman, the older you get the less makeup you need to wear. Make sure that you don't clog it on and that you learn to take care of your skin. Covering your skin with lots of makeup is not aging gracefully but aging reluctantly.
- Do not spend thousands of dollars on gimmicky skin care and exercise equipment. It is not necessary nor do they generally do what they claim.