

Healthy aging

Tips for healthy aging

Think about aging in a new way

References

Tips for healthy aging

Seven Healthy Aging Tips:

1 Eat Right

Eat the right foods in the right balance. Eating well is important at every age. Eating the right amount of healthy foods can help reduce your risk of many diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and certain types of cancers.^{1-3,5}

Tips¹⁻⁵

- ✓ Reduce your salt intake
- ✓ Eat foods rich in nutrients such as potassium, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin B12, minerals, and dietary fiber every day
- ✓ You can look up the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommendations for healthy eating in older adults, called Choose My Plate



2 Keep Moving

It may be difficult for some people to go to the gym regularly or maintain an exercise routine. There are many other easy ways to keep you moving, such as going for a walk, using the stairs instead of an elevator, or standing up and sitting down; these activities will keep your blood flowing, your muscles moving, and your joints healthy. Any kind of movement can help you reduce stress and help manage and improve diseases. Also, the more you keep your balance and keep your muscles active, the more you may be able to avoid falling and getting injured. What you do depends on your situation and your motivation. Start small, but start!¹⁻³

Tips^{1-3,6}

- ✓ Incorporate movement and exercise in your daily life.
- ✓ Try chair exercises, yoga, and stretching
- ✓ Play with your grandchildren or learn to knit so your hands stay nimble
- ✓ Find a friend to go for a walk with



3 Regular checkups

The key to healthy aging is to see your doctor and stay up to date with your health screenings. It is essential that you see your doctor as recommended and follow through on preventive testing and general checkups, such as for your blood pressure, cholesterol, bone health, weight management, and other screenings (e.g., prostate, breasts, cervix, colon). Be sure to get all the recommended vaccines, which are not just for children. Follow your doctor's suggestions for healthier living, for instance, quit smoking and avoid excessive alcohol.^{1,3,7-9}

Tips^{1,9}

- ✓ Open channels of communication with your doctor
- ✓ Before visiting your doctor, prepare a list of questions for your doctor and also a list of current medications you are taking
- ✓ Take your medicines only as prescribed and keep your doctor updated on the medications you take, including over-the-counter therapies, and supplements



4 Get enough sleep

Healthy sleeping habits are key to our vitality, function, and independence, but many of us seem to get less sleep than we need. If you have difficulty sleeping, speak with your doctor. Your healthcare team may be able to treat the sleep disorders or explore other medical considerations that can help you get sufficient hours of sleep at night.^{2,10-12}

Tips^{2,10-12}

- ✓ Have a wind-down routine every night before going to bed (e.g., try turning off electronic devices like computer and TV, read a book, take a warm bath, change into comfortable sleep clothes)
- ✓ Try calming exercises such as meditation to relax the mind
- ✓ Avoid alcohol



5 Get out & Socialize

In their later years, some people may find themselves more isolated from others. Older people may find it difficult to go out and do the things that they used to love to do, like lunching with a friend, or other daily activities. After a period of feeling blue, older people usually recover; however, if you're feeling down for more than 2 weeks, tell your doctor or someone about it. Contrary to belief, feeling blue for prolonged period is not a normal part of aging. Losing interest in doing the activities you used to enjoy can be a sign of depression and you may need treatment for depression and/or anxiety. Keeping up a lively connection with your community, family, and friends is a great way to help keep your mind healthy and your spirits up.^{1,13,14}

Tips^{1,14}

- ✓ Volunteer somewhere where you can make a valuable contribution
- ✓ Learn computer skills
- ✓ Try a new hobby
- ✓ Explore new places on your own or with friends



6 Quit smoking

If you smoke, it is never too late to quit. Smoking is associated with a number of diseases and conditions, including heart disease, lung disease, and even some cancers. Speak with your doctor for help and support. There are many resources and tools available to help you give up smoking.¹⁻³

Tips¹⁻³

- ✓ Involve your family or friends to help you quit
- ✓ Socialize with people who do not smoke
- ✓ Fitness activities can you help you combat smoking cravings and withdrawal activities; schedule exercise for the time of day you are most likely to crave smoking
- ✓ Try online tools and resources that can help support a quit attempt



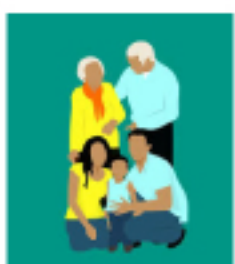
7 Stay mentally fit

Keeping the brain active is as important as keeping the body fit. Working on crossword puzzles and computer games is a great way to keep your brain in motion. You may also work or volunteer and find ways to make a contribution with the skills learned during your lifetime. Trying new things such as traveling to new places, reading books and magazines, or taking classes to learn new skills will keep your mind active, fit and prevent memory loss.^{1-2,14}

Tips^{1,2,14}

- ✓ Let your children and grandchildren teach you computer games you might enjoy
- ✓ Join reading clubs or take a drawing class

Think about aging in a new way



- People today are living longer than ever before. Therefore, you need to prepare for the extra decades being added to your lifespan.¹⁵
- For most people rather than living long, the goal is to increase the number of healthy years in the future. Adopting a healthy lifestyle now can help you enjoy what you have enjoyed in life for longer.
- Innovations in medicine and technology — from personalized medicine to personal care robots — are already showing promise to help live independently into late life.
- Several factors such as smoking, stressful lifestyle, obesity, lack of exercise, poor diet, and toxic environment can accelerate the symptoms and hallmarks of aging.
- Practicing the above recommendations may help you age well with confidence and help you stay independent longer, whether that is living at home, in your community, or with your family.

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