

Aging in healthy ways is within your control

[Health & Medicine](#), [Healthy Lifestyle](#)



Living a healthier, fuller life well into our golden years requires some work on our part. Even though we'd like to blame our parents, studies show that genes only contribute 25% to aging factors, such as wrinkles and gray hair. The rest is due to stress, nutrition, lifestyle and the environment. This means that aging gracefully is something you can control by maintaining low cholesterol levels, managing your blood pressure levels, and maintaining a healthy weight. In addition, eating right, getting rid of bad habits such as smoking or excessive drinking, and exercising are two of the basic components of healthy living which translates to healthy aging as you grow older. With age comes the slowing down of metabolism as well as the digestive process as a whole.

Thus, you need to manage what you eat accordingly. Foods that are high in fiber, omega-3 fatty acids and lean protein help give you energy without weighing down on your digestive system. Fruits and vegetables are also crucial to maintaining a healthy diet. Water is also an essential part of a balanced diet because it keeps you hydrated which is very important for your entire body. Water lubricates your joints, ligaments, muscles, lowers your risk of blood clots, keeps your brain alert and functioning properly and your skin cells supple. Water also helps with the digestive process, lowering your risk of constipation or indigestion. Getting regular exercise is the main reason behind living longer. And the great news is that it's never too late to start. You can start with just 5 minutes of simple walking, then the next day make it 10 minutes, and the next day you can go up to 20, then back to 10 – it's all up to you. And exercising for just 10 minutes is definitely better than not exercising at all. You can, for example, do yoga, play some golf, walk

your pet, go swimming, or do some gardening. The point is to pick something you enjoy doing and just go for it.

Research shows that once you start exercising regularly, you'll reap a slew of benefits, such as:- lowers chronic pain and inflammations- prevents dementia- promotes the release of 'feel-good' hormones known as endorphins- regulates bowel movements- improves posture, flexibility and sense of balance- enhances quality sleep- boosts the immune system- prevents the loss of muscle mass Exercising also allows you to stay connected and become more socially active because you can exercise with a friend or family member. And if you're working out alone, it gives you the opportunity to meet new people with similar goals as yours. Your brain needs exercise too. And with the help of technology, you have your pick of your daily brain workout right at the tip of your fingertips. Good mental workouts, like crossword puzzles and Sudoku, can help slow down the mental decline that's attributed to aging. Studies even show that it can even reverse its effects. This takes us to our next point which is maintaining a purpose. Aging means you're probably not working, with all those long hours of work behind which is something you used to look forward to when you were younger, but now, it doesn't seem to be all that appealing. It's not the long hours and deadlines that you miss, it's the sense of having some kind of purpose to your day. When there's no goal to look forward to or strive towards, life can seem pretty empty. But that doesn't have to be the case. Give your life direction by making a list of all the things you wanted to do throughout the years, no matter how crazy it might seem. Start with the small things first and work your way from there, ticking off one by one. Doing volunteer work

is one example of something that can provide you with direction and meaning, especially since you have more free time now, and it'd be nice to give back to your community while connecting with people – both help promote the release of the 'feel-good' hormone, oxytocin, which prevents anxiety, depression, and aids the digestive process. No one can avoid growing older.

Our bodies aren't as nimble as they once were, and on the emotional level, we may seem wiser and more experienced, but we have to deal with the loss of loved ones, as well as careers and even a little bit of our independence. But it's also a privilege not many enjoy. The problems you had when you were younger no longer exist, as promotions at work, raising a family, financial stability. Life slows down and becomes about having fun and enjoying the little things life has to offer. By maintaining a positive attitude, you can truly live life to the fullest just as Dr. Christiane Northrup says, "Getting older is inevitable, aging is optional."