



What you do today will affect your future. Nowhere is this as true as it is in issues regarding aging. The way in which you take care of yourself through the years, both physically and mentally, will affect the natural process of aging.

No one knows this better than centenarians, people who are 100 years old and older. Centenarian studies demonstrate that life does not diminish with aging. In fact, 100-year-olds show how the acceptance of aging can be positive, joyful, and exciting. They demonstrate that aging brings new experiences, knowledge, wisdom, and a greater ability to engineer a positive approach to the aging process. Many centenarians contribute their longevity to the following:

Positive Attitude

A positive attitude affects overall happiness, health, and well-being. A positive attitude can also help you better manage life's transitions and challenges.

Eating Smart and Healthy

Eating right can help prevent illness and chronic disease. It can also provide you with more energy so you can be alert and a better decision-maker. Eating healthy includes a well-balanced diet and a healthy relationship with food.

Physical Activity

Regular exercise is associated with decreased death and disability from diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and cancer. It is also associated with positive psychological benefits, such as improved

quality of life. The most important thing to remember about exercise is to do it. Make exercise a habit.

Brain Activity

A healthy brain is crucial to survival, growth, and everyday successes. Similar to the rest of the body, the brain needs exercise and maintenance to optimize and protect its current and future health. In particular, the brain needs socialization, mental stimulation, physical activity, nutrition, and sleep.

Social Activity

Engaged people are often healthier, happier, less depressed, and demonstrate enhanced brain vitality. Social activity also improves academic performance, inspires a positive attitude, enhances self-esteem, connects you to family and peers, and reduces the risk of illnesses and disease.

Tuning-in to the Times

Staying in tune to the times throughout life promotes lifelong learning, which increases knowledge, problem-solving skills, and decision-making. Staying on top of the latest technology and keeping up with the news also enhances brain stimulation and helps broaden social opportunities and networks.



Safety

Practicing safety is important because it helps keep you out of harm's way. From locking doors to learning how to swim, it is important to be safe in the various realms of life including home, transportation, health, recreation, and emergency preparedness.

Know Your Health Numbers

Certain health numbers can save and extend your life. These numbers are associated with cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure, blood sugar, body mass index (BMI), and waist circumference. A lifestyle including regular visits to a health-care provider, proper nutrition, and physical activity promote these numbers and contribute to healthy aging throughout the lifespan.

Stress Management

Appropriate stress is healthy and useful, but when stress overwhelms you, it can become distress, causing anxiety, tension, irritability, and a number of health problems. Learning what causes stress and how to manage it in positive ways helps you cope and live a more balanced, healthy life.

Financial Affairs

Good financial management is important whether you earn minimum wage or are a millionaire. The first step to healthy financial management is balancing

income with expenses. With a money management and spending plan in place, you are more likely to meet your financial goals.

Sleep

Sleep has a major impact on overall health and quality of life, including the way you look, feel, and perform on a daily basis. Your bodies need sleep to repair muscles, consolidate memories, and regulate hormones and appetite. When you sleep well, you wake up feeling refreshed and alert for daily activities. Sleep prepares you to concentrate, make decisions, and fully engage in school, work, and social activities.

Taking Time for You

In today's busy world, you juggle multiple priorities and responsibilities and likely make time for others before making time for yourself. But you are important too. Taking time for you is to take care of you, which makes you a better family member, friend, co-worker, caregiver, or leader. Even if it is just for 10 minutes a day, a time out is good for your mind, body, and soul.

Conclusion

Since there is no magic potion to stop the aging process, it is important to take care of your body, mind, and spirit throughout your whole life. These 12 keys, and many additional healthy behavior practices, encourage optimal aging throughout the life span.



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