

Healthy Living Newsletter

Healthy Aging



September / October 2018

A MedWatch publication to keep you healthy and informed.

Nutrition Corner



HEALTHY EATING BEGINS WITH YOU!

Giving your body the right nutrients and maintaining a healthy weight helps you stay independent & active. You'll spend less time / money at the doctor, especially if you have chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease.

Drink plenty of liquids.

Don't get dehydrated. Drink fluids continually throughout the day. Water, tea or coffee are your best choices, and reduce beverages with sugar and salt.

Plan healthy meals.

Both the USDA and National Institute on Aging have useful nutrition information on their websites. Talk to your physician and/or get professional advice on what and how much to eat, and which foods to avoid.

Keep food safe.

Don't take a chance with your health. A food-related illness can be life threatening for an older person. Throw out food that might not be safe. Know the risks of undercooking foods such as eggs, fish, shellfish, meat, or poultry.

Read the Nutrition Facts label.

Make the right choices when shopping. Read the labels and try to avoid processed foods and foods high in calories, fats and sodium.

Vary your vegetables.

Most vegetables are a low-calorie source of nutrients and also a good source of fiber. Include a variety of vegetables in your diet.

Use herbs and spices.

Foods often seem to lose their flavor as you age. Medications may also change how foods taste. Use herbs and spices in your cooking to add flavor to your meals and help reduce the amount of salt you consume.

Taking Control of Your Health

REINVENT YOURSELF... for Healthier Aging

September is Healthy Aging Month, a national observance that brings attention to the positive aspects of growing older. Now in its second decade, this observance provides inspiration and practical ideas for adults, ages 50+, to improve their physical, mental, social, and financial well-being. To get you started on reinventing yourself, here are some ideas you might want to consider:

Grow up - or not! Age is only a number and should not be how you define yourself. Think back at your best year and picture yourself at that age, then be it. This kind of positive thinking goes a long way towards feeling better about yourself.

Walk like an Egyptian - only better! Do you walk slowly because you have become lazy or, perhaps, have a fear of falling? Make an effort to take big strides, walk heel to toe, in comfortable shoes, and put some life into it!

Say cheese! People who smile more often are happier. Your oral health and teeth are critical to staying young. See a dentist regularly and consider having those pearly whites brightened if it will make you feel better.

Reach out and touch someone! Contact your family and friends by phone, social media or in person often. Embrace technology so you can use email, Facetime and Facebook to stay in touch and be actively involved with those who are far away.

Fill up your dance card! Plan out your week and month with simple things that you can look forward to such as visiting family & friends, an afternoon at the library or museum, an escape to a movie, or personal enrichment classes, to name just a few. Take along a spouse, friend or meet someone new while you are out!

Be an optimist! No one wants to be around "Debbie Downer". Project a positive attitude in your actions and conversations. Surround yourself with happy, energetic, positive people of all ages. You'll be happier too.

Stand up straight! Your mother was right! (she was always right) Stand tall, hold your stomach in, pull your shoulders back and keep your chin-up. Fix your stance and practice until it's natural. You'll look and feel better.

Join in the fun! Becoming involved with clubs, church groups, and game/quiz nights is a great way to keep busy and meet new people. Volunteer your time for organizations that will keep you in contact with life.

Step by step! Step away from the car keys, and step out on foot! It's just simply good for you and enhances your mood . . . and it's a great opportunity to let everyone see how fabulous you are looking!

Let's get physical. Have you scheduled your annual physical this year? Don't be a slacker. What you don't know can be detrimental to your health.



For more information on nutrition, visit the following websites:

<https://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov>

<https://www.nia.nih.gov>



Exercise to Reduce the Effects of Aging

We all know that exercise is good for you. It helps manage weight, improves muscle strength and can even lift your spirits. But did you also know that exercise can slow the aging process? Research shows that regular exercise can have a significant effect on your health and longevity - even if you don't begin until after the age of 50! While committing to a lifestyle change may seem daunting, there are numerous ways to add exercise to your routine. Here are just a few things you can do to kick start your journey to reduce the effects of aging.

- ◆ **Try Tai Chi:** This ancient form of martial arts has proven to be an excellent source of exercise with anti-aging effects. This is because Tai Chi implements low-impact movements that put less pressure on joints and muscles than other workouts, and improves balance, which becomes important as you age. Tai Chi emphasizes focusing on your mind, which can relieve stress and help with sleep, both of which can make you look and feel younger.
- ◆ **Stay Young with Yoga:** Yoga provides a mind-body workout that combines strengthening and stretching poses with deep breathing and meditation or relaxation. Yoga improves joint health, balance, stability, flexibility, lower blood pressure, improved respiration and improved awareness of your body.

- ◆ **Walking Works:** While jogging is a highly effective way to maintain fitness, walking is an excellent alternative. This gentle, low-impact exercise addresses many of the health risks that come with aging. Experts claim that just 25 minutes of brisk walking a day can add up to seven years to your life!
- ◆ **Dive In:** Swimming is said to be the best low impact activity that burns calories, builds muscles and still prevents pressure on joints and muscles. For this reason swimming is highly recommended as an anti-aging exercise. Swimming improves heart health, lower blood pressure, improves circulation throughout the body and increases flexibility.
- ◆ **Ramp up with Resistance Training:** Building up your muscle is more important than ever as we grow older. Our muscles tend to weaken with age. This can eventually rob seniors of their active, independent lifestyles. Resistance or weight training has many additional benefits, including:
 - ⇒ Reduces fat & improves heart health
 - ⇒ Reduces the effects of osteoporosis
 - ⇒ Increases bone density
 - ⇒ Lowers the risk of diabetes
 - ⇒ Strengthens core muscles and improves balance
 - ⇒ Recharges your metabolism
 - ⇒ Enhances your mental health

Your MedWatch Total Lifestyle Coach (TLC) is your 'health advocate' and acts as your personal GPS to help navigate the complex healthcare roadmap.

Call your TLC at (800) 386-5475 for personalized tools and resources to help you maintain your health.