



Practice Healthy-Aging Habits



CHALLENGE

Make smart lifestyle choices to live longer

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Practice Healthy Aging Habits."
2. Create a plan to practice healthy aging habits daily.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



Put on your mask, sweetie. It's what 8-year-old Ruthie Tompson's mother said when they saw a large crowd.

But it wasn't 2020 during the peak of COVID-19. It was 1918.

The Spanish flu pandemic was spreading rapidly, infecting 500 million people. World War I came to an end. That was more than 100 years ago.

At 110 years old, Tompson has experienced a lot, including a long career as an animator and artist for The Walt Disney Company. She worked for Disney for 40 years on projects like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Mary Poppins*, and many others.

Her secret to living a long and healthy life: "Have fun. Try to do as much as you can for yourself. Remember all the good things in life."

Ever wonder what it takes to live longer and enjoy life as you age? It's actually not a secret. Take the month-long health challenge to Practice Healthy-Aging Habits.

How much do you know about aging well? Take the quiz to find out.

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1. The average life expectancy in the U.S. is 98.6 years old.
2. An optimistic outlook can help you live longer.
3. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S., but it's largely preventable with healthy lifestyle habits.
4. Even if you smoke for years, then quit for good, your risk for dying of lung cancer is still high
5. Sleeping less than 6 hours a night can triple your risk of dying early from heart disease and cancer.

How did you do? The average life expectancy in the United States is 78.6. After you quit smoking for 15-plus years, your risk of dying early is the same as a non-smoker.

Answers: 1. False 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. True

9 Health-Aging Habits to Live Longer

Want to live longer and improve your quality of life as you age? Here are some things you can do:

In a recent Harvard study, researchers found that adopting these five healthy habits can help you live up to 10 years longer.

1. Eat a healthy diet. Most of your food and snacks should come from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds. Eat fresh food, and drink plenty of water.

2. Exercise regularly. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day. It's as simple as going for a walk. Exercises to strengthen your bones and muscles will help, too.

6 tips for healthy aging
<https://tinyurl.com/yyc47trx>

9 Health-Aging Habits to Live Longer (Continuation)

3. Maintain a healthy weight, or lose weight if you need to.



Worried about the number on the scale? Keep it simple. You can lose 1 to 2 pounds a week by making small changes to your diet and exercise habits.

4. Avoid or limit alcohol.

No more than 2 drinks per day for men. No more than 1 drink per day for women, zero if pregnant. Or don't drink at all.

5. Don't smoke, or quit if you do.

Health benefits of quitting begin as soon as you stop.



More Healthy Lifestyle Habits for Longevity

While these five habits appear to have the biggest impact on health and longevity, there's more you can do to age well.

6. Manage stress in healthy ways.

Try yoga, meditation, or deep breathing. Keep a journal. Talk to a counselor or therapist. Make time for a hobby. Stress less.²



7. Get your Zzz's. The optimal amount...



8 hours per night. Too little sleep, and even too much sleep, raises the risk for early death.³

8. Be positive. You might roll your eyes at the eternal optimist. But research shows people who see the "glass half full" manage stress better, have a lower risk for chronic disease, and live longer.⁴

9. Develop healthy relationships.

Spend time with family and friends. Make a phone call, text, or plan a video chat. Write a letter. Be part of a social group. Research shows that people with healthy relationships and a strong social network are healthier, feel happier and live longer.⁵



Quiz: Nutrition for healthy aging
<https://tinyurl.com/y63uv59s>

Everybody Wants to Live Long & Prosper



Star Trek actor Leonard Nimoy (Captain Spock) read the script. The U.S.S. Enterprise starship and crew would land on a distant planet and greet a friendly colony of people. But something was missing.

"I think we should have some kind of a special greeting," Nimoy told the director. "Asian people bow to each other. Military people salute each other. I think Vulcans should have some kind of greeting." And the director asked, "What would you like to do?"

Raise your hand. Extend your thumb. And part your middle finger and ring finger. That's how the iconic Vulcan greeting and farewell was born.

And it's kind of what everybody wants, right? Live long and prosper.

But if you're concerned about your health and aging well, you're not alone. For example:

- **Heart disease** is the leading cause of death in the U.S., claiming the lives of an estimated 647,000 people a year. But it's largely preventable.
- **The average life expectancy** in the U.S. is 78.6. But in 37 other countries it's 79 to 84 years old.
- **Tipping the scale.** An estimated 72 percent of all adults in the U.S. are overweight or obese. It's a major risk factor for chronic diseases and early death.
- **Lack of exercise.** Only 53 percent of adults are active more than 30 minutes a day. Only 23 percent do activities to strengthen bones and muscles.
- **Sugar rush.** An estimated 30 million people have type 2 diabetes. Left unchecked, it can cause nerve damage, poor circulation, vision loss, kidney disease, heart disease, and death. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Exercise and aging
<https://tinyurl.com/ytyt2ukl>

References

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Practice Healthy-Aging Habits



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Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you practice healthy-aging habits.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you practice healthy-aging habits..
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you take steps to Practice Healthy-Aging Habits. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™ ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	
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_____ Number of days this month I practiced healthy-aging habits
 _____ Number of days this month I was physically active for at least 30 minutes

Other wellness projects completed this month:

 Name _____ Date _____