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Healthy Aging

People in the U.S. are living longer, and the number of older adults in the population is growing. As we age, our minds and bodies change. Having a healthy lifestyle can help you deal with those changes. It may also prevent some health problems and help you to make the most of your life.

A healthy lifestyle for older adults includes:

- **Healthy eating** [<https://medlineplus.gov/nutritionforolderadults.html>] . As you age, your dietary needs may change. You may need fewer calories, but you still need to get enough nutrients. A healthy eating plan includes
 - Eating foods that give you lots of nutrients without a lot of extra calories. This includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, low-fat dairy, nuts, and seeds.
 - Avoiding empty calories, such as foods like chips, candy, baked goods, soda, and alcohol
 - Eating foods that are low in cholesterol and fat
 - Drinking enough liquids, so you don't get dehydrated [<https://medlineplus.gov/dehydration.html>]
- **Regular physical activity** [<https://medlineplus.gov/exerciseforolderadults.html>] . Being physically active may help you maintain a healthy weight and avoid chronic health problems. If you have not been active, you can start slowly and work up to your goal. How much exercise you need [<https://medlineplus.gov/howmuchexercisedoneed.html>] depends on your age and health. Check with your health care provider on what is right for you.
- **Staying at a healthy weight** [<https://medlineplus.gov/weightcontrol.html>] . Being either overweight or underweight can lead to health problems. Ask your health care professional what a healthy weight for you may be. Healthy eating and exercise can help you get to that weight.
- **Keeping your mind active.** Lots of activities can keep your mind active and improve your memory [<https://medlineplus.gov/memory.html>] , including learning new skills, reading, and playing games.
- **Making your mental health** [<https://medlineplus.gov/mentalhealth.html>] **a priority.** Work on improving your mental health [<https://medlineplus.gov/howtoimprovementalhealth.html>] , for example by practicing mediation, relaxation techniques, or gratitude. Know the warning signs of a problem and ask for help if you are struggling.
- **Participating in activities that you enjoy.** People who are involved in hobbies and social and leisure activities may be at lower risk for some health problems. Doing things that you enjoy may help you feel happier and improve your thinking abilities.
- **Playing an active role in your health care.** Make sure that you get regular checkups [<https://medlineplus.gov/healthcheckup.html>] and the health screenings [<https://medlineplus.gov/healthscreening.html>] that you need. You should know which medicines you are taking, why you need them, and how to take them properly [<https://medlineplus.gov/medicationerrors.html>] .
- **Not smoking.** If you are a smoker, quitting [<https://medlineplus.gov/quittingsmoking.html>] is one of the most important things that you can do for your health. It can lower your risk of several different types of cancer, certain lung diseases, and heart disease.
- **Taking steps to prevent falls** [<https://medlineplus.gov/falls.html>] . Older adults have a higher risk of falling. They are also more likely to fracture [<https://medlineplus.gov/fractures.html>] (break) a bone when they fall. Getting regular eye checkups [<https://medlineplus.gov/eyecare.html>] , getting regular physical activity, and making your house safer can lower your risk of falling.

Following these tips can help you to stay healthy as you age. Even if you have never done them before, it's never too late to start taking care of your health. If you have questions about these lifestyle changes or need help figuring out how to make them, ask your health care provider.

Start Here

- Health Tips for Older Adults [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/healthy-eating-physical-activity-for-life/health-tips-for-older-adults>]  **Easy-to-Read** (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/control-de-peso/alimentacion-saludable-actividad-fisica-vida/adultos-mayores>]
- Nutrition for Seniors: MedlinePlus Health Topic [<https://medlineplus.gov/nutritionforseniors.html>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/nutritionforseniors.html>]
- Protect Your Health as You Grow Older [<https://odphp.health.gov/myhealthfinder/healthy-living/physical-activity/protect-your-health-you-grow-older>] **Easy-to-Read** (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion)
Also in Spanish [<https://odphp.health.gov/espanol/myhealthfinder/viviendo-sanamente/actividad-fisica/protege-tu-salud-medida-envejeces>]
- What Do We Know about Healthy Aging? [<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/healthy-aging/what-do-we-know-about-healthy-aging>]  (National Institute on Aging)

Diagnosis and Tests

- Health Screening: MedlinePlus Health Topic [<https://medlineplus.gov/healthscreening.html>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/healthscreening.html>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- Prevention [<https://www.healthinaging.org/a-z-topic/prevention>] (AGS Health in Aging Foundation)

Related Issues

- Safety for Older Consumers: Home Safety Checklist [<https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/701.pdf>]
(Consumer Product Safety Commission) - **PDF**

Specifics

- Brain Health [<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/brain-health>]  (National Institute on Aging)
- Memory Loss: 7 Tips to Improve Your Memory [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/healthy-aging/in-depth/memory-loss/art-20046518?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/healthy-lifestyle/healthy-aging/in-depth/memory-loss/art-20046518?p=1>]
- Participating in Activities You Enjoy as You Age [<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/healthy-aging/participating-activities-you-enjoy-you-age>]  (National Institute on Aging)
- Well-Aged Mind: Maintaining Your Cognitive Health [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2019/10/well-aged-mind>] 
(National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/una-mente-bien-envejecida>]

Statistics and Research

- Setting Goals to Be More Active Slows Memory Decline in Older African Americans [<https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/setting-goals-be-more-active-slows-memory-decline-older-african-americans>]  (National Institute on Aging)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Addressing the Urgency for Healthy Aging in Sri Lanka: Policy Dialogues.
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40743422>]
- Article: Cultivating Well-Being: An Exploratory Analysis of the Integral Benefits of Urban...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40724125>]

- Article: Measuring and monitoring the quality of dying in the UN Decade... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40716442>]
- Healthy Aging -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Healthy+Aging%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+aged+%5Bmh%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Reference Desk

- Definitions of Health Terms: General Health [<https://medlineplus.gov/definitions/generalhealthdefinitions.html>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Find an Expert

- AAAs (Area Agencies on Aging) & Title VI Aging Programs [<https://www.usaging.org/aaastitlevi>] (USAging)
- AGS Health in Aging Foundation [<https://www.healthinaging.org/>]
- American Geriatrics Society [<https://www.americangeriatrics.org/>]
- Eldercare Locator [<https://www.usaging.org/eldercareloc>] (USAging)
- National Institute on Aging [<https://www.nia.nih.gov/>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nia.nih.gov/espanol>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Health screenings for men age 65 and older [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007466.htm>]

Health screenings for women age 65 and older [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007463.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Exercise for Older Adults [<https://medlineplus.gov/exerciseforolderadults.html>]

Nutrition for Older Adults [<https://medlineplus.gov/nutritionforolderadults.html>]

Older Adult Health [<https://medlineplus.gov/olderadulthealth.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Healthy Aging* is the National Institute on Aging [<https://www.nia.nih.gov/>]

Live Long, Be Well: Science-Based Tips for Healthy Aging [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/live-long-be-well-science-based-tips-for-healthy-aging>]

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