

Successful Aging Tips

Tip #1: Take care of your health.

Visit your doctor regularly. Ask about tests and immunizations that are right for your age group.

Eat a healthy diet. Your diet should be low in fat and high in fiber.

- Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits, beans and whole grains.
- Eat low fat proteins in the form of lean red meat, poultry and fish.
- Get enough calcium by drinking low fat milk and eating low fat yogurt and cheese.
- Eat a variety of foods to get enough vitamins and minerals in your diet.
- Drink lots of water.

Exercise to stay fit. Be active every day at your own level of comfort.

- Walk, dance, or swim to improve your endurance.
- Work out with weights to increase your strength.
- Stretch to maintain your flexibility.

Don't drink too much alcohol. People over the age of 65 should try not to have more than one drink per day. (A drink is one glass of wine, one bottle of beer, or one shot of liquor.) And remember: never drink alcohol with your medicines!

Don't use tobacco in any form. This means cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chew or snuff. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor.

Tip #2: Keep yourself safe.

Make your home a safe place.

- Keep your home, walkways and stairways well-lit and uncluttered.
- Keep a fire extinguisher and smoke detectors in your home. Make sure the batteries in your smoke detectors work.
- Adjust the thermostat on your hot water tank so that you don't burn yourself with hot water.

Prevent falls.

- Make sure all throw rugs have non-slip backs so they don't throw you!
- Slip-proof your bathtub with a rubber mat.

Stay safe in the car.

- Wear your safety belt—and wear it correctly. (It should go over your shoulder and across your lap.)
- Never drink and drive!
- Don't drive when you are angry, upset, sleepy or ill.
- If you have concerns about your driving safety, talk to your doctor.

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Tip #3: Take care of your emotional health.

Keep in touch with family and friends.

It's important to maintain your social life!

Exercise your mind. Keep your mind active by reading books, doing crossword puzzles, and taking classes.

Stay involved. Join community activities or volunteer projects. Somebody needs what you can offer!

Keep a positive attitude!

- Focus on the good things in your life, and don't dwell on the bad.
- Do the things that make you happy.
- If you've been feeling sad lately or no longer enjoy the things you used to, ask your doctor for help.

Tip #4: Plan for your future.

Keep track of your money. Even if someone else is helping you manage your bank accounts and investments, stay informed.

Know your own health. This is important for receiving good medical care.

- Know what medical conditions you have.
- Know the names of your medicines and how to take them.
- Make a list of your medical conditions, medicines, drug allergies (if any), and the names of your doctors. Keep this list in your wallet.

Make your health care wishes known to your family and doctors.

- Consider filling out an advance directives form. This form lets you state your health care choices or name someone to make these choices for you.
- Give your family and doctors a copy. This way, they have a written record of your choices in case you are unable to tell them yourself.
- If you need help with your advance directives, talk to your doctor.

Create a transportation plan. If you don't drive, know how to get around.

- Ask family and friends if they would be willing to give you a ride.
- Find out about buses, trains, and shuttles in your area.
- If you need help finding a ride, contact your local Area Agency on Aging.