

WELLNESS WORKS



September 2018

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September is Healthy Aging Month! This month is an opportunity for adults over 45 to take stock of their lives and habits, and make good choices for the future. Healthy aging is a matter of both physical and mental well-being, so it's important to take both into account when thinking of your future.

Healthy Habits for Healthy Aging Month

As you age, your risk for chronic illness or age-related health issues increases. It's hard to make a lot of big changes at once, but try tackling a few of these habits to decrease your risk factors. Each of these tips explains why they are important as you age, but each has short-term health benefits as well.

- **Eat Healthy:** Choosing healthy foods is smart, no matter your age. Make healthy choices like fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean meats, and low-fat dairy products. Eating right helps prevent, delay, and manage heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases. *Losing even 5% to 7% of your body weight can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.*
- **Get Regular Physical Activity:** Regular physical activity can help you prevent, delay, and manage chronic diseases. It also lessens your risk of falling, improves balance and stamina, reduces arthritis pain and disability, and helps your brain stay healthy. *Aim for moderate physical activity (like brisk walking or gardening) for at least 150 minutes a week.*
- **Quit Smoking:** Stopping smoking (or never starting) lowers the risk of serious health problems, such as heart disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes, and lung disease, as well as premature death—even for longtime smokers. *Take the first step and call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for FREE support.*
- **Get Regular Checkups:** *Visit your doctor for preventive services, not just when you're sick.* This can prevent disease or find it early, when treatment is more effective. These services can include screenings for chronic conditions, like cancer, high blood pressure, prediabetes or type 2 diabetes, and dementia, as well as immunizations and counseling to quit smoking.
- **Know Your Family History:** If you have a family history of a chronic disease, like cancer, heart disease, diabetes, or osteoporosis, you may be more likely to develop that disease yourself. *Share your family health history with your doctor, who can help you take steps to prevent these conditions or catch them early.*
- **Be Aware of Changes in Brain Health:** Everyone's brain changes as they age, but dementia is not a normal part of aging. *Some studies show that controlling high blood pressure, getting regular physical activity, and quitting smoking may reduce the risk of dementia or Alzheimer's disease.* See your doctor if you have questions about memory or brain health.



Do You See What I See? Healthy Vision Tips

Use these tips to take care of your eyes and vision.

- **Eat right.** Keep your eyes healthy by eating a well-balanced diet. Load up on different types of fruits and veggies, especially leafy greens like spinach, kale, and collard greens. Fish like salmon, tuna, and halibut have been shown to help your eyes, too.
- **Keep the germs away.** Always wash your hands before putting them close to your eyes, especially if you're putting in or taking out contact lenses.
- **Wear your shades.** The sun's rays can hurt your eyes. Choose sunglasses that block 99% or 100% of both UVA and UVB radiation from the sun.
- **Give your eyes a break.** Do you spend a lot of time looking at a computer, phone, or TV screen? Staring at any one thing for too long can tire your eyes. Give your eyes a rest with the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look about 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- **Wear protective eyewear.** Protective eyewear includes safety glasses and goggles, safety shields, and eye guards specially designed to provide protection for a certain activity or sport. Most protective lenses are made of polycarbonate, which is 10 times stronger than other plastics.
- **Have a comprehensive eye exam.** Many common eye diseases like glaucoma, diabetic eye disease and age-related macular degeneration often have no warning signs. A comprehensive dilated eye exam is the only way to detect these diseases in their early stages.

Adapted from [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

Adapted from <https://nei.nih.gov/healthyeyes>

7 Tips to Reinvent Yourself for a Happier Future

Healthy aging is about more than just physical health—it's also about being active, positive, and happy. Still, maintaining an active lifestyle can benefit your mental health, and vice versa. Try one of these tips and see if you feel a difference. When you've adopted that habit, move on to the next!

- 1. Be positive in your conversations and your actions every day.** When you catch yourself complaining, check yourself right there and change the conversation to something positive.
- 2. Walk like a vibrant, healthy person.** Come on. You can probably do it. Analyze your gait. Do you walk slowly because you have just become lazy or, perhaps, have a fear of falling? (Tip: Make a conscious effort to take big strides, walk with your heel first, and wear comfortable shoes.)
- 3. Stand up straight!** You can knock off the appearance of a few extra years with this trick your mother kept trying to tell you. Look at yourself in the mirror. Are you holding your stomach in, have your shoulders back, chin up? Check out how much better your neck looks! Fix your stance and practice it every day, all day until it is natural. You will look great and feel better. (Tip: Your waistline will look trimmer if you follow this advice.)
- 4. How's your smile?** Research shows people who smile more often are happier. Your teeth are just as important to your good health as the rest of your body. Not only is it the first thing people notice, but good oral health is a gateway to your overall well-being.
- 5. Lonely? Do something about it now.** Right this minute. Pick up the phone, landline, or cell and make a call to do one or more of the following: Volunteer your time, take a class, invite someone to meet for lunch, brunch, dinner, or coffee.
- 6. Start walking not only for your health but to see the neighbors.** Have a dog? You'll be amazed how the dog can be a conversation starter. (Tip: If you don't have time for a dog, go to your local animal shelter and volunteer. You will be thrilled by the puppy love!)
- 7. Find your inner artist.** Who says taking music lessons is for young school children? You may have an artist lurking inside you just waiting to be tapped. Have you always wanted to play the piano, violin, or tuba? Have you ever wondered if you could paint a portrait or scene in oil? What about working in wood? Sign up now for fall art or music classes and discover your inner artist!



Recipe of the Month:

Spaghetti Squash Shrimp Scampi

Tip: Spaghetti squash strands grow in circles around the width of the squash. When you cut the squash lengthwise, you cut each strand in half, which makes for shorter, and often soggy, “spaghetti.” Try this instead: Cut the squash into rings to preserve the length of the strands.

Ingredients

1 (2.5-lb.) spaghetti squash
Cooking spray
1-1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1-1/2 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
3 garlic cloves, minced
8 ounces large raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
5 ounces fresh baby spinach
3/8 teaspoon kosher salt

Instructions

Preheat oven to 375°F. Trim off squash ends. Cut remaining squash into 1-1/2 inch rings; scoop out and discard seeds and membranes. Arrange rings on a foil-lined baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Coat rings with cooking spray. Bake at 375°F for 45 minutes or until just tender. Cool slightly. Cut through each ring and open slightly to reach strands; carefully scrape out spaghetti-like squash strands.

Heat butter and oil in a medium skillet over medium-high. Add pepper and garlic; cook 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Add shrimp; sauté 2 minutes or until almost done. Add spinach, tossing until wilted. Add squash strands; sprinkle with salt. Toss gently to combine.

Nutrition per 2 cup serving (makes 2 servings):

Calories: 349; Fat: 21g; Saturated Fat: 7g; Unsaturated Fat 12g; Fiber: 6g; Carbohydrates: 24g; Protein: 20g; Sodium: 638mg; Sugars: 8g

Adapted from [Cooking Light](#)