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## Healthy Aging. VOL.1

As people age, the importance of taking care of their physical and mental health becomes increasingly apparent. Age-related changes and potential health challenges can be minimized through adopting healthy habits, adopting preventive measures, and regular medical check-ups. Aging will likely cause wrinkles and gray hair.

But do you know how aging will affect your teeth, heart, and sexuality? Find out what changes to expect as you continue aging and how to promote good health at any age.

### Cardiovascular System with Aging

The most common change in the cardiovascular system is the stiffening of the blood vessels and arteries, causing your heart to work harder to pump blood through them. The heart muscles change to adjust to the increased workload. The heart rate at rest will stay about the same, but it won't increase during activities as much as it used to. These changes increase the risk of high blood pressure (hypertension) and other cardiovascular problems.

### What you can do to promote heart health:

- Include physical activity in your daily routine.** Try walking, swimming, or other activities you enjoy. Regular moderate physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower your heart disease risk.
- Eat a healthy diet.** Choose vegetables, fruits, whole grains, high-fiber foods, and lean sources of protein, such as fish. Limit foods high in saturated fat and salt.
- Don't smoke.** Smoking contributes to the hardening of the arteries and increases blood pressure and heart rate. If you smoke or use other tobacco products, ask your doctor to help you quit.

- Manage stress.** Stress can take a toll on your heart. Take steps to reduce stress, such as meditation, exercise, or talk therapy.

- Get enough sleep.** Quality sleep plays an important role in the healing and repair of your heart and blood vessels. Aim for seven to nine hours a night.

### Bones, Joints, and Muscles with Aging

With age, bones tend to shrink in size and density, weakening them and making them more susceptible to fracture. You might even become a bit shorter. Muscles generally lose strength, endurance, and flexibility — factors that can affect your coordination, stability, and balance.

### To promote bone, joint, and muscle health:

1. **Get adequate amounts of calcium.** The National Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine recommends at least 1,000 milligrams (mg) of calcium daily for adults.
2. The recommendation increases to 1,200 mg daily for women aged 51 and older and men aged 71 and older.
3. Dietary sources of calcium include dairy products, broccoli, kale, salmon, and tofu.
4. If you find it difficult to get enough calcium from your diet, ask your doctor about calcium supplements.
5. **Get adequate amounts of vitamin D.** The recommended daily intake of vitamin D is 600 international units for adults up to age 70 and 800 IU for adults over 70.
6. Many people get adequate amounts of vitamin D from sunlight. Other sources include tuna, salmon, eggs, vitamin D-fortified milk, and vitamin D supplements.
7. **Include physical activity in your daily routine.** Weight-bearing exercises, such as walking, jogging, tennis, climbing stairs, and weight training can help you build strong bones and slow bone loss.
8. **Avoid substance abuse.** Avoid smoking and limit alcoholic drinks. Ask your doctor about how much alcohol might be safe for your age, sex, and general health.