

coming



age



*GETTING OLDER ISN'T ABOUT FIGHTING
TIME, BUT ENJOYING IT. IN HONOR OF
NATURAL HEALTH'S 40th ANNIVERSARY,
WE'VE COLLECTED 40 OF THE MOST
SURPRISING AND INSPIRING TIPS ON HOW TO
LIVE A LONGER, HEALTHIER LIFE. WHO SAYS
AGING HAS TO GET OLD?*



Prop styling: Jennifer Barguianena. Makeup: Wendy Osmundson. Hair: Christophe Saluzzo for Cloutier Remix using Rene Furterer. See Shopping Guide on pg. 95 for fashion and retail information.

01.

Think young Perspectives on Psychological Science recently published a study by Ellen Langer, Ph.D, a mind-body psychology professor at Harvard, about the correlation between how women look and feel after having their hair cut and colored. Salon subjects' before and after shots were assessed by volunteers only, and those women who believed having their hair dyed made them look younger actually *did* look younger after the salon visit. Those who didn't think they looked youthful with a new 'do didn't appear so. The take-away? "Feeling young makes you *look* younger," says Langer. "So act your inner age."



02. Meditate

Ancient Taoists used meditation techniques to help maintain emotional balance, and thus good health, into old age. Cut to 2010, and Blue Cross-Blue Shield found factors that typically increase with aging—such as blood pressure, susceptibility to stress, insomnia and heart failure—actually decreased among meditators. Another recent study found that meditators have a 30 percent higher level of telomerase—the enzyme responsible for repairing telomeres, structures on the ends of chromosomes that protect them from deterioration—than those who don't meditate. (Each time a cell reproduces, telomeres become shorter and less effective at protecting the chromosome, and this is a cause of aging.) So, hit your meditation pillow—even if it's just for a few minutes a day.

03. Loosen your neck

Nobody wants to become an old lady with a dowager hump, but this posture isn't just a vanity risk. "Neck tightness that leads to carrying one's head more forward than normal is associated with increased mortality," says Louise Hockley, D.C., a chiropractor in Wellington, New

Zealand. "This is a big problem for people who sit in front of a computer all day without breaks." To avoid a crooked fate, sit up straight at your desk and then slowly tilt your head backward until your forehead is parallel to the ceiling. Do this three times for every hour you're behind your computer.

04. Take your herbs Adaptogenic herbs help the body's ability to adapt to daily stresses, and are often included in Chinese and Western anti-aging medicines. "They help restore and maintain well-being," says Rosemary Gladstar, founder of the California School of Herbal Studies and a author of *Herbal Remedies for Radiant Well Being* (Story Book Publications). Start with herbs like rhodiola (which reduces stress and boosts energy), reishi (which protects the liver and heart and reduces cholesterol), and holy basil (which reduces anxiety and mental fog), and talk to a holistic doc about the right doses for you.

05. Be consistent in the kitchen Don't pay attention to your diet one minute, and then ditch your good-eating habits the next. "This can create a sugar imbalance, which causes confusion, headaches and fatigue—characteristic features of aging brain syndrome," says Naheed Ali, M.D., author of *Diabetes and You: A Comprehensive Holistic Approach* (Rowman & Littlefield).



Stop multitasking

Cramming a lot of to-dos into a limited amount of time gives us the false impression that we're über-efficient. But studies show chronic multitaskers have elevated cortisol levels, more incidences of depression and weaker immune systems—all of which can diminish cognitive prowess as we age. To reduce multitasking but still bang through your to-dos, jot down your tasks—but focus on three that have the biggest impact on your day or involve strategic thinking.



07. Choose antioxidant oils over creams Heavy night creams that contain paraffin or mineral oil can congest your skin and cause puffiness in the morning. “Instead, opt for an antioxidant oil, which protects skin from free radicals and repairs damage done by stress, pollution, aging and illness,” says Margo Marrone, homeopath and founder of London-based The Organic Pharmacy. Not only will your skin look supple, but studies show skin care with vitamins A, C, E and B₃ reverse signs of aging, particularly those caused by the sun.

08. Eat your antioxidants These free radical foragers help delay aging and reduce vulnerability to cancer, heart disease and diabetes, so don't just put them on your face. Keri Glassman, R.D., author of *The O2 Diet* (Rodale), calls these edible antioxidants “beauty foods”: dark chocolate (it contains cocoa flavanols that increase blood flow to the skin), salmon (its omega-3s prevent collagen breakdown and reduce skin-damaging inflammation) and green tea (it's loaded with polyphenols that boost cell turnover to improve skin tone).

09. Give for giving's sake “There's nothing more health-giving than feeling useful and knowing you've helped someone else,” says Christiane Northrup, M.D., and author of the newly revised *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom* (Bantam). “But far too many people give in order to get,

and don't know it. Giving out of a sense of obligation or because you feel as though it will earn you love or respect can be a health risk.” So, go ahead and do something nice for someone—without expectations of anything in return. And don't forget to notice how great it feels.

10. Pump some iron The typical American gains a pound of fat and loses a half pound of muscle yearly from the age of 30 to 60, says Desmond Ebanks, M.D., former assistant clinical professor of medicine at New York Medical College. “Loss of muscular strength is a major reason that elderly people lose mobility and independence,” he says. Ebanks suggests an interval-style resistance program for the most muscle-building benefits; brief but intense bouts of strength training, lasting 12 to 20 minutes, have also been shown to preserve telomeres.

11. Learn how to feel full Trimming calories can help reduce cellular inflammation, which drives the aging process by causing disturbances in hormonal signaling between cells, thus decreasing the efficacy of every organ in the body. “Reducing excess calories is only possible if you're not hungry between meals,” says Barry Sears, M.D., president of the Inflammation Research Foundation. Reach for at least 3 ounces of low-fat protein at breakfast, lunch and dinner, which increase the release of satiety hormones that stop hunger.

12. Confide in a friend

“We know regular social interaction has a significant effect on long-term brain health and function,” says Michael Roizen, M.D., a Cleveland-based internist and co-author of the best-selling *You* series (Rodale). “But you must also have friends with whom you can be intimate and vulnerable. You need to connect with your confidantes at least six times a month.” In a landmark Harvard University study of more than 56,000 women, the absence of a single confidante, as measured in physical decline, was equivalent to being in the highest category of obesity and being a heavy smoker.

13.

Snack your way to good sex

Sex is a powerful anti-aging tool: Some studies say it can prolong your life up to 20 years, and others insist gettin' busy reduces your mortality rate by half. So how can you get in the mood for more action? Eat strategically, says Eric R. Braverman, M.D., author of *Younger (Sexier) You* (Rodale). Foods with phytoestrogens, such as soy and fish, keep sex hormones at younger levels; lean proteins like turkey and duck contain tyrosine and phenylalanine, which boost desire; healthy fats like low-fat yogurt and eggs are packed with choline, a precursor to the brain chemical that controls arousal and lubrication; and high-fiber vegetables, fruits and whole grains are high in glutamine and inositol, which are precursors to the brain chemical that helps you relax so you can climax.



14.

Get a massage A good rubdown does more than lower stress and make you feel better. A study from the University of California, Los Angeles found that Swedish massage can improve immune function, helping



17. **Move it**

New research from The Center for BrainHealth at the University of Texas at Dallas claims that 30 minutes of aerobic exercise, three to four times a week, improves short-term memory by increasing blood flow to the medial temporal lobe—where memories are stored. Gettin' physical also lengthens our telomeres, says Sandra Bond Chapman, Ph.D., founder and chief director of the institute, and the sooner you start, the better: Researchers recently found that women older than 70 who regularly exercised during middle age were in better health than those who didn't.



18.

Think something nice

A recent study found that social exchanges characterized by conflict in mid-life were associated with poor decision-making later in life. Since you can't always avoid confrontational people, override your cranky thoughts with good ones. "Think of something positive about a person and your brain will latch on to those thoughts instead of negative ones," says Srini Pillay, M.D., assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard University.

15. **Replace your morning buzz**

Reach for that sweet morning latte and you'll pay for it later, says Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of *Beat Sugar Addiction Now* (Fair Winds Press). Excess sugar increases your risk of diabetes and autoimmune illnesses, which accelerate aging. Instead of coffee, make a smoothie with a good vitamin powder (like Enzymatic Therapy's Energy Revitalization System) and healthy sugar (D-ribose). In a recent study, D-ribose increased energy an average of 61 percent after three weeks.

16. **Read beauty product labels**

Suffering from a chronic condition such as diabetes? If you've started using an anti-aging skin-care product and notice improvement, it's important to continue to use it exactly as directed. "Don't skip days if the label says not to," warns Ali. "Chronic disease patients need to stay on schedule in their fight against aging, because their condition can multiply the effects of free radicals on their skin—and a lot of dermal products contain antioxidants to help fight these free radicals."

19. **Eat bitter** Humans recognize six distinct tastes—sweet, sour, salty, bitter, savory and astringent—and each plays a role in feeding your body and mind. In terms of longevity, however, bitter-tasting foods are the best because they balance sugar cravings, support digestion and metabolize fat, says Stephan Dorlandt, C.N., a clinical nutritionist and herbalist in Los Angeles. Tasty bitters include yellow and green vegetables, such as yellow peppers, broccoli rabe, collard greens, mustard greens, radicchio and chicory.

20. **Fight your traffic ticket** New research shows that being engaged in political activities—like appealing a decision made by a public authority, giving a speech at a meeting, or writing a letter to the editor—results in sharper thinking when you're older. "Political activities reflect self-efficacy, and there's a correlation between self-efficacy and cognition," says Pillay.



feel like a million bucks: A 2010 study at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles found that your body fight off everything from the common cold to cancer.



21. Eat like an Italian In a 2011 Rush University Medical Center study, researchers found that the Mediterranean diet, long known to be heart-healthy and reduce risk of certain cancers, is now also associated with a slower rate of cognitive decline in older people. This diet—rich in fruits and vegetables, legumes, olive oil, potatoes and fish—also helped prevent Alzheimer’s disease in subjects.

22. Take your magnesium Seventy-five percent of Americans don’t get their Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) of this important nutrient, which affects age-related conditions like bone, heart and brain health, says Carolyn Dean, M.D., N.D., author of *Magnesium Miracle* (Ballantine Books). One of the most affordable and absorbable options is powdered magnesium citrate, which you can take with hot or cold water. A serving a day of magnesium-rich cacao and kale can also help.

23. Teach what you know New research from The Center for BrainHealth shows that the brain develops stronger neural connections when we learn a skill well enough to teach it. So, test your ability to pass on info in new ways. “Start by teaching one person, then move to small groups, and then on to more public forums—each one places greater demands on the brain,” says Chapman.

24. Beware of calorie trends New studies show cutting calories leads to longevity, but be careful before subscribing to this trendy edict, says Ebanks. If insufficient calories are consumed, you won’t have the energy for necessary, vigorous exercise. “Do you want to live better for as many years as you can, or live longer irrespective of the quality?” he asks. The Calorie Restriction Society is a proponent of the “more years” philosophy, but it requires trimming calories by 30 percent to 40 percent—a level Ebanks says is not sustainable for most people.

25

Keep working

Can’t wait to quit your day job? Be careful what you wish for. **New data from the United States, England and 11 other European countries suggest that the earlier people retire, the more quickly their memories decline. Researchers found that the longer subjects kept working, the better they did on memory skills tests in their early 60s. Some experts say social and personality skills known to support a healthy aging brain—like getting up in the morning, dealing with others and knowing the importance of being prompt and trustworthy—may play a role here, because these factors are highly valued in the work environment.**

26. Relax your face It’s great stimulate circulation, creating Ph.D., N.D., R.Y.T., a naturo-

27. Take your Ls if you’re vegetarian L-glutamine and L-arginine are amino acids found mostly in protein-rich animal sources (chicken, turkey), seafood (halibut, lobster, salmon) and wild game (pheasant, quail). “A lack of L-glutamine and L-arginine in vegetarians can make them age faster,” says Michael Aziz, M.D., internist at Lenox Hill hospital in New York City and author of the *Perfect 10 Diet* (Cumberland House). To supplement, take 2 grams of L-glutamine and 1 gram a day of L-arginine at night. Studies show these supplements can tighten skin, increase fat loss and help build muscle as we age.

28. Eat your water To slow or reverse age-related cellular dehydration, aim to eat three or more fruits and five or more vegetables per day to obtain optimal cell hydration, says Howard Murad, M.D., board-certified dermatologist and associate clinical professor of dermatology at the University of California, Los Angeles. In fact, he suggests replacing at least one glass of water a day with a raw veggie or fruit: “Colorful, water-rich produce is the best form of water for your cells, as fruits and vegetables provide structured water and antioxidants, so hydration stays in your system long enough for your body to put it to good use.”

29. Tell your story Judith Kolva, Ph.D., a psychologist who focuses on aging, says adults who write down their life stories use skills highly valued by longevity experts. “Writing our memoirs helps us bestow knowledge, offer advice and give meaning to experiences—all components in aging well,” she says.

30. Get healthy, not skinny Alice D. Domar, Ph.D., executive director of the Domar Center for Mind/Body Health in Boston, says being thin doesn’t necessarily make you live longer. “Being in the middle zone of the BMI scale is actually associated with the longest life span,” she says. Just be sure to choose your calories wisely. A 2011 University of Maryland study found that eating lots of vegetables, fruit, whole grains and fish leads to better quality of life in older adults, but those who indulged in sweets had a 37 percent higher risk of death.

31. Prepare your body to sleep Logging eight hours of shut-eye can make you look as much as three years younger, says Amy Wechsler, M.D., a New York City-based

to book a massage for your body, but don't forget your face! Facial massages softer, suppler skin and a younger-looking complexion, says Lynn Anderson, pathic doctor and yoga and fitness instructor in Los Angeles.

dermatologist. But if you have trouble relaxing into a sound slumber, prepare for it with a series of bedtime rituals: Don't drink caffeine four to six hours before bed; eat a full meal three hours before hitting the hay; and turn off electronics an hour before sleep.

32. Brush your skin Using a soft, natural bristle brush, make short, quick sweeps on your body and face, starting at your feet and brushing toward your heart. "This exfoliates skin and increases circulation," says Debra Luftman, M.D., a Beverly Hills, Calif.-based dermatologist, which helps you glow.

33. Switch positions According to traditional Chinese medicine, specific areas of the genitals are linked to your internal organs. "This is one way Chinese medicine believes having regular sex affects overall health," says Jill Blakeway, L.Ac., an herbalist and co-director of Yin Ova Center in New York City. "To achieve inner balance, you must stimulate all of the genital organs and not just one bit of them, which might overstimulate one particular organ at the expense of others." Vary positions during sex to make sure all your parts get the attention they need.

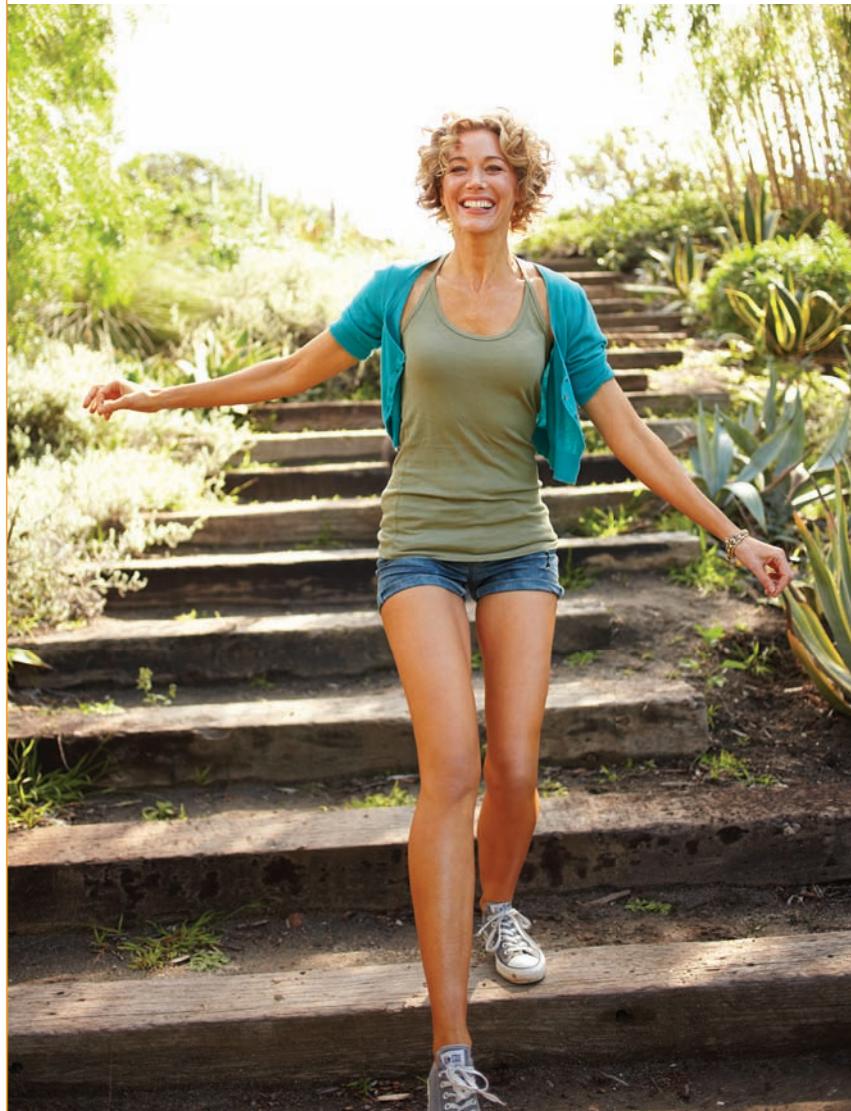
34. Take more naps "The brain gets slower as we age, in terms of reaction and processing time, but it rebounds when we sleep," says Chapman. "In the long run, sleep staves off those losses." Indeed, a 2009 University of California, Berkeley, study found that sleep helps the brain consolidate ideas. While naps don't count as part of your requisite seven to eight hours, they can help restore brain function if you didn't get your fill the night before.

35. Believe you're getting better with age Dilip Jeste, M.D., director of the University of California, San Diego's Stein Institute for Research on Aging, says people who think they're aging well aren't necessarily the healthiest physically. "Yet they generally possess a positive, yet realistic, attitude about their lives and an ability to adapt to change," he says. Tend to look at the glass as half empty? Try writing three positive things that happen each day in a journal to help redirect your thoughts.

36. Whittle your middle

A 2010 American Cancer Society study found that a large waist size doubled one's risk of dying from any cause. "Abdominal fat cells secrete compounds that increase inflammation and reduce sensitivity to insulin, thus increasing the storage of fat," says Andrew Weil, M.D., founder and director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine. So eat low-glycemic index foods (think whole, plant-based picks), and exercise regularly to fight fat.

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coming of age

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37. Don't be a buzz kill

A 2010 University of Texas study conducted over 28 years found that the way we explain the events in our lives can be a significant predictor of longevity. "Our thoughts and feelings and the way we respond to stress affect the way and rate at which we age," says Brenda Stockdale, director of mind-body medicine at RC Cancer Centers and Advanced Medicine in Atlanta. Good reason to be optimistic and choose to see the good in a situation—or at least talk about what went right along with what went wrong when you're sharing a story.

38. Develop your passion

For years, experts thought learning something new every year, like a language, would enhance brain health. However, the Center for BrainHealth recently discovered that we need to be a master of one or two skills, rather than be a jack of all trades, to strengthen our brains.

39. Be a social butterfly

A 2010 Brigham Young University study found that those with strong ties to family, friends or co-workers have a 50 percent lower risk of dying than those with fewer social connections. Getting the emotional and social support you need to manage stress and feel happy makes life meaningful, fun and stimulating. Research shows people with social support may also be more active, eat better and stress less.

40. Have a beer

Scientists at the University of California, Davis, found that beer is a substantial source of silicon, which stimulates the production of collagen to keep bones strong and joints healthy by maintaining flexibility in cartilage. The study found that most beer brands contain between 6 milligrams and 57 milligrams of silicon per liter, and those with high levels of malted barley and hops have the most. We say go organic and drink in moderation. If you're not down with a brew, silicon can also be found in foods like bananas and brown rice. ✘

Kristina Grish is a writer in New York City.

Shopping Guide

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