It seems like everyone is on a quest to delay the effects of aging. New medical research is released with rapid frequency and revised protocols for treating medical conditions are emerging. New correlations between health and aging are constantly being uncovered. Leveraging the scientific evidence provides you with an opportunity to influence how you age.
Chronic Conditions of Aging

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that nearly 80% of those over the age of 65 have at least one chronic medical condition. Aging is the leading risk factor for most chronic diseases, including heart disease, cancer, dementia, osteoporosis, arthritis, diabetes, stroke, metabolic syndrome, blindness and frailty.

Fortunately, scientific evidence demonstrates many of these conditions have modifiable risk factors. Research shows physical activity can prevent many age-related issues and poor dietary choices can accelerate the damaging effects of aging. This insight gives you the opportunity to influence, delay or manage these conditions. Understanding what drives your health gives you the power to influence how you age.

Leverage the scientific evidence into your daily life to manage and reduce your risks of aging poorly. Based on what we know today, your lifestyle behavior choices are key to your aging health. This includes focusing on diet, physical activity, as well as limiting alcohol and tobacco use.

Consider the Source

New studies are released nearly every day that claim to slow down the effects of aging or offer an outright cure for a chronic aging condition. These studies are widely quoted in mainstream media or go viral on social media. Unfortunately, these media outlets are not always the most reliable sources of evolving medical insight.

Access to emerging science is vital to being an advocate for your own health. Yet balancing evolving discoveries requires that you be able to believe its legitimacy. There is a wide range in disparity of how studies are constructed and conducted. This ultimately determines whether they are legitimate science or not. Before you implement the new medical discovery into your life, make sure the reported claims are reliable and based on established scientific facts.

Take time to investigate promising studies and evaluate their reliability with your personal physician to ensure you are receiving evidence-based care. This will help you better understand the validity of the medical advancement’s potential impact on your life and health status. Balance the hype and hope with credible options grounded in true scientific evidence.

Continuous Re-Evaluation

While the research on aging is rapidly evolving, much of it is not yet settled science. New and evolving medications and treatments may offer great promise; however, incorporating emerging research into your personal health plan for aging needs to be balanced with an understanding of what you can rely on and trust.

Put yourself in charge of making your decisions based on your own goals for living your life. Then work with your medical professionals to identify the options, resources and potential consequences of the available options and interventions to help you achieve your goals.

Successful aging incorporates the best medical insight into the daily actions you take in your lifestyle and your treatment(s) to enhance your quality of life. As the science is continually being updated, and research identifies additional keys to healthy aging, in the future, you will have even more options available to age well.

Final Thoughts

Today lifestyle interventions such as diet, exercise and improved sleep habits give us the power to impact how we age. Promising scientific studies are on the horizon to further influence the biology of aging. The future of aging may be significantly different for you than it was for your parents. Leverage the scientific evidence into your life to create new pathways for your healthy aging.
When we think about caring with scientific evidence, also called evidence-based medicine, we often only think of using the study results. Unfortunately, the work of being a patient is an enormous black hole in medicine and medical practice. It is not uncommon for a patient living with multiple chronic conditions to become overwhelmed by medical errands. The key to using evidence in daily life is to look through the prism of what fits in the life of each person. This requires a dynamic consideration of the available options with a clear understanding of the patient’s situation. We must account for adverse effects, the work a patient and their family must do to get care, afford it, and implement self-care tasks. When in the consultation with a clinician, patient and doctor must think through, talk through and feel through each person’s situation until a clear answer arises of what to do next. When we do that, we care with science and heart.

GOAL: Update your understanding of how you can make an impact on improving your health. Then implement it.

Take Action Now

- **Ask questions.** Ask your medical provider what new evidence-based options are available for you. New technologies and advanced treatments, combined with diet and exercise, can have a major impact on your quality of life.

- **Update your understanding.** Check reputable resources, such as the Mayo Clinic website, to read the latest medical description for your chronic condition(s). Talk with your physician about what you read.

- **Implement behaviors for prevention.** Focus on lifestyle activities which you can control. Being active, eating healthy food, and taking steps to reduce stress can aide in risk reduction or symptom management for existing chronic conditions.

- **Participate in activities to impact longevity.** Combine activities offering multiple positive impacts. Participate in a writing project where you interview someone else and then write their biography. Interviewing another person creates social connection and a stimulating interaction. Writing their story provides a creative outlet to stimulate your brain.


Expert Insight

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