

How can you make sure you REACH



In 2010 the Census bureau reported 53,364 centenarians in the United States and there are about 300,000 in the world. Did you know that a supercentenarian is someone who has lived to or passed their 110th birthday? The person with the longest confirmed human lifespan in history is Jeanne Louise Calment from France who lived to the age of 122 years, 164 days. She lived in Arles, France and became especially well known from the age of 113, when the centenary of Vincent van Gogh brought reporters to Arles. Her secret? She told reporters that she poured olive oil on all her food, ate 2 lbs of chocolate every week and drank a glass of red wine every day.

Although there is no conclusive research proving these to be beneficial, here are 24 simple and often surprising tricks that might help you reach that 100 year mark:

1. Have a cup of tea

Tea is packed with antioxidants called polyphenols that can help your body fight heart disease, cancer and premature aging. Give it a good stir before removing the tea bag, as research shows this releases 15% more of the age-resisting ingredients.

2. Every morning balance on one leg

While you dress in the morning stand on alternative legs, this forces your body to balance, strengthening your back, pelvic and stomach muscles which support your spine.

3. Nuts? Eat three walnuts a day

Walnuts are the healthiest nut of all because they contain the most disease-fighting and anti-aging antioxidants, according to recent research from the University of Scranton. Eating just three walnuts a day is enough to reap the full benefits.

4. Get just enough sun

Deficiency in vitamin D, the nutrient made by the action of sunlight on our skin, increases our risk of a host of potentially fatal conditions including heart disease, osteoporosis and cancer. But make sure you don't burn, or you'll wipe out any health benefits. Guidelines are that 10-15 minutes of sun exposure on the hands, arms, and face prior to 10 a.m. or after 3 p.m., 3-4 times a week should give you enough vitamin D if you're fair-skinned. After that, be sure to wear your sunblock.

5. Make good friends you can always count on

Friends provide emotional support, which helps us deal with stress, and feeling loved boosts production of feel-good chemicals dopamine and oxytocin, which promote brain growth, combating aging.

6. Stop eating before you are full

Eating less means the metabolism has less work to do, putting less stress on the body. Japanese culture, known for their longevity, emphasizes small portions of low-fat, high-protein foods. They have one of the world's lowest rates of obesity, as well as the highest percentage of people living beyond 100. Their secret? At every meal, they stop eating when they feel about 80% satisfied, happily leaving any excess food on their plate.

7. Sleep better – Sleep longer

Lack of sleep can put you at greater risk of health conditions such as depression and heart disease. Going to bed one hour earlier seems to have a beneficial effect on heart health and strokes. A small change makes a big difference.

8. Make sure you floss every night

Healthy teeth and gums make it easy for you to eat well and

enjoy good food so make sure you floss every night. And it's not just your teeth that will thank you. Studies show that gum diseases are linked to an increased risk of other conditions including heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers.

9. Get organized and pay attention to the little things

People who are detail-oriented and like order tend to live longer. They may produce more serotonin, a feel-good brain chemical, which improves their sleep and avoids comfort-eating.

10. Get a dog!

People who own a dog are less stressed, less depressed and can live longer than those who don't, according to research. Walking your dog every day can lengthen your life seven years compared to non-dog owners. Owning a pet has a calming effect on blood pressure and reduces your risk of a heart attack, according to University of Minnesota researchers.

11. Don't put fruit in the fridge

Studies show that chilled fruit contains fewer health-boosting nutrients than fruit kept at room temperature. For example, tomatoes and peppers stored in a bowl rather than the fridge can contain double the betacarotene and up to 20 times more lycopene. Which is good news, as high intakes of both of these antioxidants have been linked to better heart health and lower rates of certain cancers.

12. Make a difference in the lives of others

Helping others feels good! A long-term US study found that people who volunteered regularly over a lifetime lived significantly longer than those who didn't. Volunteers experience less depression, fewer pains and better general health.

13. Sing a tune

Singing regularly could be a better health insurance policy than taking vitamins, according to the findings of a joint Harvard and Yale University study. They found that being a choir member eased stress promoting a healthy heart and helping with depression. Maybe too shy to join a choir? Start singing in your car or in the shower!

14. Eat your fruit and veggies

Splurge with colorful, wonderful fruits and vegetables: every single portion is packed with vitamins and antioxidants, which boost the immune system and fight the damage that leads to premature aging. Research shows they may reduce the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases, and don't forget that most fruits and vegetables, while filling, are naturally low in fat and calories.

15. Try to stop moaning so much!

Optimists live 12 years longer than pessimists, according to researchers at Mayo Clinic. Pessimists are also more prone to viral illnesses and are less likely to carry out essential self-examinations that detect breast or skin cancer.

16. Drink plenty of apple juice

Apple juice could help keep your brain young, according to a recent study in the Journal Of Alzheimer's Disease. Researchers found just two glasses a day reduced the formation of the sticky plaques found in the brains of dementia patients.

17. Draw your family tree and learn your history

Finding out your family health history could help predict your own health future, as many conditions have a genetic link. By identifying conditions that run in your family you can be sure to look out for symptoms so problems are picked up early.

18. Watch an hour less TV a night

The National Cancer Institute says that after the age of 25, every hour of TV you watch could knock around 20 minutes off your lifespan. The more TV you watch, the longer your body sits around doing nothing, muscles aren't exercised and calories aren't burned off – raising your risk of illness and early death.

19. Annual physical: prevention is the best medicine

You might wonder if a yearly checkup is really necessary, particularly if you are healthy. Specific tests and examinations are beneficial for monitoring your health. They can save lives by catching diseases early when they are still treatable. Do not wait!

20. Measure your waist – not your weight

Scientists have discovered that waist measurement is a better predictor of heart disease than either weight or BMI (body mass index) because it can point to the existence of visceral fat, the dangerous fat that sit around the vital organs. A healthy waistline for a woman should measure below 33 inches. For a man, no more than 35 inches.

21. Get hitched – it's good for your health

Married men are three times less likely to die from heart disease than men who have never tied the knot, while marriage halves the risk of cardiac death for women.

22. Laugh at least 20 times a day

Laughter boosts the immune system, slashes stress hormones and stimulates killer T-cells, which fight cancer. But as adults we only laugh an average of five to fifteen times a day, while children can easily clock over a hundred daily giggle bouts.

23. Give up smoking

According to a long-term Finnish study, smoking not only shortens your life by around 10 years, but it also lowers your quality of life in old age, as smokers are more likely to suffer from debilitating illnesses.

24. Try to believe... in something

More than 1,000 studies have found a link between faith and living longer. It's thought that having strong beliefs helps people deal with stress and emotional problems, and also seems to offer protection against heart, respiratory and digestive problems.

DID YOU GET YOUR ANNUAL PHYSICAL YET?

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