THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH AND ANTI-AGING THROUGH SUPPLEMENTS AND SUPER FOODS

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Scientific Look at Aging & How to Slow It Down

Welcome to this guide to better health, better living, and better aging. Simply by reading this eBook, you'll learn how to live your life more fully and with greater health—by eating healthy foods (and supplementing those foods, when necessary). There will also be a bit about health and exercise, but we'll discuss the need-to-know info in an easygoing, sensible way.

First, know that there are two main paradigms or models in science about aging:

- One has to do with the random accumulation of genetic mutations: for example, the ends (telomeres) of chromosomes getting shorter every time they divide—combined with the accumulation of damage from normal processes such as oxidative stress.
- The other main model is that we—or more precisely, our cells—are programmed to age, turn off certain genes, turn on others, and eventually die off.

Involved in one or both of these models are the processes of oxidative stress; inflammation; genetics (including family history, telomere length, and proteins called sirtuins); the amount of calories we consume; and changes in our overall metabolism (see methylation and glycation below).[1] All of these processes are involved to some extent in aging.

Oxidative Stress

During normal cellular functions, products containing oxygen (reactive oxygen species, or ROS) and nitrogen (reactive nitrogen species, or RNS) are routinely created. These are also known as **free radicals**.

These products are extremely reactive and can combine with all sorts of substances within the cells, thus damaging them permanently. Free radicals are normally used by

the immune system to destroy infectious organisms, and there are mechanisms in our cells that can take care of the normal, relatively low levels of ROS and RNS.

However, in nearly all chronic diseases, during aging and because of increasing environmental pollution, the normal processes that limit the damage of the free radicals are just plain overwhelmed, causing oxidative stress. The result is cell damage and increased signs of wear and tear—what we recognize as the signs of aging.

- The skin cells begin to lose their structure, and the skin begins to thin and wrinkle.
- Muscle cells weaken and begin to lose strength.
- Bones and joints get weaker, and the joints begin to lose flexibility.
- Many of our senses—hearing, vision, sensitivity to changes in temperature—begin to lose their sharpness, and we turn up the TV, wear glasses to read those road signs, and never seem to have enough sweaters or socks!

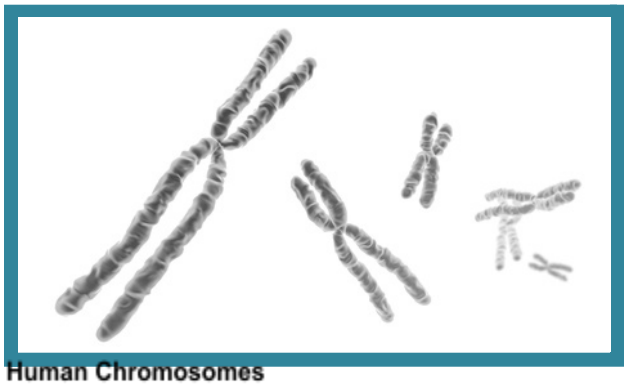
Inflammation

Inflammation is a normal process that is essential for repairing wounds; destroying bacteria, viruses, and other infectious organisms; and proper functioning of the immune system. The classic signs of inflammation are heat, redness, pain or tenderness, and swelling. Also, most if not all, chronic diseases have inflammation as a major component.

Chronic inflammation, which results in organ damage and pain, is also associated with the signs of aging.[2–4] Arthritis pain and stiff joints, for example, both involve inflammation. We tend to think of those stiff, swollen, and painful joints as a sign of aging, but there's a lot more than that going on below the surface.

Genetics

Many cells in the body are continually dividing, although there is a limit, it seems, to the total number of divisions each cell can undergo. Each time a skin cell, blood cell, or liver cell reproduces itself by dividing, the DNA and genes have to be duplicated, and errors can easily occur. Genetic theories about aging are essentially describing the accumulation of these errors in various ways.



Human Chromosomes

- **Telomeres:** Telomeres are at the tips of the arms of the chromosomes. The telomere is like the plastic tips of sneaker or shoelaces, preventing fraying or damage at the end of the chromosomes. However, every time the DNA is duplicated during cell reproduction, the telomeres get shorter and shorter—and eventually, the chromosomes can't be copied because they are too short. This is believed to be one of the reasons each cell has a limit to how often it can divide—once this limit is reached, the cell dies.[5–6]

- **Sirtuins:** The sirtuins are the protein products of the Sir2 genes, which are thought to be important regulators of aging. Resveratrol, the substance found in grape skins and red wine, activates one of these proteins, SIRT1. It is believed that this may be how resveratrol may prove beneficial in reducing the signs and effects of aging.[7–8]
- **Family history:** While your genetic background is not the only factor in aging, it is an important one. Everyone inherits their genes from their parents—and if your parents lived a long and healthy life, your chances of living a long and healthy life are increased—assuming that you take good care of yourself!

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On the other hand, if your parents did not live a long and healthy life—well, you still can . . . IF you take good care of yourself! This is part of the reason you are reading this guide.

Caloric Restriction (CR)

Several studies have indicated that restricting the number of calories you eat while maintaining a well-balanced nutritional diet, has many positive effects on the heart, the vascular system, memory, cognitive abilities and longevity.[9–11]

There is some conflicting data regarding CR done in a long-term study of rhesus monkeys. But, data from places like Okinawa—where residents have the longest average life expectancy in the world and eat a diet that's considered the model for CR—indicates that CR is a solid approach for those who want to live a longer and healthier life.

It's common knowledge that those who are overweight or obese tend to have a more chronic disease and die from conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and stroke at a younger age. So, while it has not been definitively proven by science that caloric reduction increases life span, there are enough examples to indicate that it does a body good!

Methylation

Before briefly talking about methylation—which is essentially a chemical change to the DNA that affects your genes—we first need to talk about a very, VERY important new field in the human biology of aging. This is the field of **epigenetics**, where it has been shown that diet, exercise, and other lifestyle modifications can change which genes are turned on and which are turned off at any given time. This theory accounts for the subtle differences between identical twins, whose overall genetic structure is exactly the same.

Methylation is one of the switches that can turn genes on or off. In Alzheimer's disease, for example, low levels of methylation are associated with an increased risk of the disease.[12–15] As we will see later, methylation can be increased by diet. Therefore, the effect of what you eat is epigenetics in action!

Glycation

Glycation is a bit different than methylation; it's the chemical addition of sugar molecules to proteins and fats. This can be done by cooking sugars along with foods at temperatures over 120°F (49°C). This produces substances aptly known as advanced glycation end-products (AGEs).

But, AGEs can be formed in the body as well; when that happens, they interfere with normal biological processes and are associated with cancer, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, and nerve damage. All the simple sugars such as glucose and fructose can cause glycation, but fructose (as in high fructose corn syrup) is about 10 times more potent than glucose at forming these destructive substances.[16–20]

The Stages of Life

There are a number of ways to divide the stages of life. Multivitamins with minerals taken regularly throughout life can make sure you get all the extras you may need. Your body's needs will change over time from birth to your golden years, but these general guidelines can be followed at all stages of life:

- Eat a diet of whole foods, which means avoiding processed foods. (If it's pre-cooked or prepared, stay away!)
- Minimize animal products, especially red meats. When you do eat meat, stick to grass-fed, hormone-free beef; free-range poultry; lean pork; and lamb. Eat a serving of 3 ounces, which is about the size of a deck of cards.
- Increase the amount of fruits and vegetables you eat. Increase the variety as well—you can jazz up vegetables with all sorts of sauces and herbs (best prepared yourself to control the ingredients and calorie content).
- Start using nuts (almonds, walnuts, cashews, hazelnuts, pine nuts, and pistachios) and seeds (sesame, chia, pumpkin, sunflower, and poppy) in your cooking. Many can also be eaten as healthy power snacks.

Avoid:

- Fried foods and fast foods
- Processed foods
- Soft drinks or prepared drinks with high levels of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS)

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Fetal Life, Birth & Maternal Health

Everyone's heard the old saying about pregnancy, "You are eating for two now." Well, not exactly—when a woman is pregnant, she's providing the nutritional needs for two, but that doesn't mean she'll need anywhere near the calories of two people. What's most important is to enjoy a balanced, nutritional diet, with plenty of fresh, whole foods. The brighter and fresher the food, the more nutrients it contains.

For a woman with normal weight before pregnancy, the recommended weight gain is between 25–35 pounds. During the last 6 months of pregnancy, 300–600 extra calories per day are recommended for extra energy. To discern individual needs, the USDA has recommendations for specific servings and proportions.

However, because expecting moms are providing the nutritional needs for two (or more!), there are some nutrients that you should consider supplementing. The most important are:

- **Folic acid/folate:** This is one of the B-complex vitamins that pregnant woman—or even a woman who is thinking of getting pregnant—should start taking 400 mcg/day of as soon as possible. Vitamin B9 can help prevent health concerns such as spina bifida, a defect in the spinal cord and vertebrae. For those with a family history of neural tube defects, up to 4000 mcg/day of folic acid can be taken.
- **Calcium:** To make sure both the mom's bones are strong, and the baby's skeletal structure normally develops, 1200 mg/day of calcium is recommended.
- **Iron:** A critically important nutrient for blood cells, iron is part of the hemoglobin molecule that carries oxygen throughout your body. Iron intake needs to increase during pregnancy, so a 30 mg/day supplement is recommended. Iron can cause constipation, but if you are eating about 25–30 grams of fiber (including whole

grains and plenty of vegetables at every meal) AND drinking lots of pure water, this side effect won't become a problem.

- **Foods to avoid:** Make sure eggs and meat are fully cooked, and wash all vegetables and fruit completely in warm, soapy water—make sure you rinse well! This will help avoid any food-borne illness and parasites. Avoid deep sea fish that may contain high levels of mercury. Avoid alcohol and smoking, of course, and minimize coffee or non-herbal teas to 2–3 cups per day.

Infancy

The ideal food for infants is breast milk. If at all possible, breastfeeding should continue for at least six months, preferably for the first year of life. In order to provide the best nutrition for your new baby, breastfeeding moms have to continue providing the vitamins, minerals, and nutritional needs for two! It's best to continue the same type of diet as recommended for pregnancy: whole foods, including lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, lean fish, meat, grains, and nuts. Pre-natal vitamins can still be taken as well.

Breast milk contains proteins such as whey and casein, as well as special ingredients such as lactoferrin and lysozyme, which inhibit certain bacteria and yeast; and Bifidus Factor, which helps good gut bacteria, is needed for proper digestion and aids various immune factors that train the baby's immune system to react appropriately. Human breast milk also contains the best fats for children's developing brains and nervous systems, plus vitamins such as D, E, A, and K.

If you need to use a formula, make sure it is high quality—and keep an eye out for sensitivity reactions like rashes, diarrhea, constipation or persistent crying.

Childhood

In childhood, solid nutrition is critical both for the physical and mental growth of the child as well as for establishing healthy eating habits that'll last a lifetime. Childhood obesity is a growing problem, and it can set an otherwise healthy child up for a lifetime of chronic diseases such as continued obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and osteoporosis.

It is not always easy to maintain a child on a nutritious, whole-food diet with lots and lots of fruits and vegetables, fish, and whole grains. Challenges include social pressures, fast food joints on every corner, and soda offered with every meal. Also, in many if not most families, both parents are working. In single-parent families, the situation may be even tougher because it's difficult to control what children eat at daycare or after-school programs.

What can parents do? First, hang tough with your children. Perhaps allow them to have the occasional French fries or ice cream as a rare treat—but truly rare! Find healthier ways to satisfy their everyday cravings. When they want pizza with cheese and pepperoni, treat them to whole-grain pita topped with part-skim mozzarella, organic pasta sauce, and fresh bell peppers. Or, top it with feta, hummus and black olives for a Mediterranean twist.

A slow cooker can be especially helpful for the busy working family. There's nothing quite like coming home after a long day, opening that door, and smelling the nearly finished grass-fed beef stew, free-range chicken soup or veggie chili! And it can be so easy you'll hardly feel like you cooked. In the morning, add water, your ingredients, and an assortment of spices. Turn the dial, put the lid on, and you are off to work.

For snacks, make sure you keep fruits such as oranges, apples, bananas, grapes, plums, and anything else in season handy. Plain Greek yogurt with honey, or cheese and whole-wheat crackers also make great snacks. Keep kids away from chips, soda, cakes, brownies, and candy as much as possible. High fructose corn syrup (HFCS) has

been associated with obesity and diabetes, as well as other chronic diseases. Even the sugar-free varieties of junk foods have been linked to obesity and weight problems.

For young children, here are some of the vitamins and minerals most important for healthy development:

- **Vitamin A** is essential for vision, strong bones, and a strong immune system.
- **Vitamin C** is important for healing all those scrapes, cuts, and bruises. It is also needed to fight off infections and support normal growth.
- **Vitamin D** is best obtained by moderate exposure to sunlight but is also found in many dairy products. It is needed for a strong immune system and strong bones.
- **B vitamins** help kids keep their energy going . . . and going . . . and going!
- **Calcium** is needed for strong, healthy bones and teeth.
- **Iron** is required so that the red blood cells can carry oxygen efficiently, and it's also needed for muscle development.
- **Potassium** is important for heart and kidney health.
- **Zinc** helps fight off infections and maintains a healthy immune system.
- **Magnesium** is needed for over 300 reactions that go on in the body all day and every day—and many kids don't get enough!

Adolescence

Adolescence can be a difficult time for nutrition. Although concerns still include staying away from junk and fast food, there are greater issues to attend to like ensuring teens don't develop an eating disorder. Multivitamins with minerals can be especially handy during these years, making sure that kids get sufficient amounts of necessary nutrients. Some of the most important vitamins and minerals for adolescents and teens are:

- **Iron** is especially important for girls who are beginning their menstrual cycles. This mineral is also important for healthy blood and muscle cells.
- **Calcium** is very important for healthy bones.

- **Vitamin A** is critical for healthy skin, a responsive immune system, and good eyesight.
- **Vitamin D** promotes a healthy immune response and helps calcium to keep bones and teeth strong.
- **B-complex vitamins** are required for energy production and a healthy nervous system.
- **Vitamin C** is required for healing cuts and bruises, as well as for strong muscles and good skin.

Adulthood

As an adult, good nutritional habits are still at risk. We have busy schedules and are juggling many different responsibilities and jobs. The temptation is always there to swing through a fast food drive-thru, skip a meal or two only to binge later, or have that extra snack from the vending machine. It can be difficult to maintain a focus on healthy eating when commercials and other ads are telling you how easy it is to feed yourself and your family with processed food.

We all fall off the wagon from time to time, and there's no need to feel shame over it. The best thing to do is to keep moving forward! Most of all, maintain a mindset that one bad decision doesn't wreck your healthy eating for the rest of the day. If you can't resist a quick trip through the drive-thru at lunch, get back on track by having a low-calorie dinner of lean protein and vegetables.

Tools like a slow cooker can be put to good use, and even a reusable container filled with wholesome snacks is a big help when stashed in your car or purse. But the best weapon in your arsenal against empty calories is a solid plan.

Thinking ahead will save you time and stress in the long run. Cook legumes or grains such as rice when you have the time—freeze the extras, and pull them out for a quick stir fry or side dish. Pre-sliced chicken or pork cook faster than a big cut, and you can

prep them on a day off to ensure that for the next few days, dinner just has to be tossed in the pan. Don't forget to dice onions, peppers, and garlic to use throughout the week!

Stock up on fresh fruits and vegetables, so there's always something healthy to eat on hand. An apple, orange, banana, or your favorite fruit will fill you up for a couple of hours with no time invested. A salad is quick to throw together and can easily be a full meal—especially with some nuts and seeds on top.

No matter what you work into your plan, the same general rules apply: Focus on whole foods that are nutrient dense, including a right mix of complex carbohydrates, high-quality protein, fresh vegetables, and fruits, plus nuts and seeds. Limit the meat to one or two meals a day, and increase the portion sizes of the vegetables, fruit, and other superfoods.

Supplementation with multi-vitamins and minerals is fine, but you want to use those pills and powders as a complement to what you're getting in healthy foods. Vitamin capsules can't replace a nutritious diet!

Elder Years

As people age, their protein needs increase, but their energy and potentially their requirement for fats decrease. (There is some uncertainty regarding the fats, but as a rule of thumb, minimize the animal fats, and eat foods high in the omega-3 fats).[21, 22] Older people also tend to have less of an appetite, which can lead to protein, vitamin, and mineral deficiencies. Finally, it is imperative to maintain water intake—older adults are more susceptible to the effects of dehydration. Specific nutrients that the elderly may be deficient in are:

- **Protein** deficiency in the elderly often causes loss of muscle mass, which can lead to more chronic disease, weakness, fatigue, and increased rate of falls and

bone loss. The elderly tend to be protein deficient for several reasons, including chronic disease, lack of exercise, and loss of appetite.

- **B-complex vitamins**—particularly B_{12}, $B_{6,}$ and folate—should be supplemented.
- **Vitamin D** should also be supplemented. The main source of Vitamin D is exposure to sunlight, and when an individual has limited mobility and is relatively housebound, this can lead to deficiencies.
- **Zinc**, **potassium & magnesium** deficiencies can be significant in the elderly, disrupting their immune system and causing other problems. These minerals should be supplemented as well.

The elderly may benefit from some cooking experiments—using different herbs and spices to change the flavors of the foods subtly will not only keep a more restrictive diet satisfying but can have health benefits as well. For tummy troubles, the use of digestive enzymes may be of benefit.

Don't forget: Regardless of which stage you're at in life, superfoods can help you live a fuller, healthier life and help you age as gracefully as possible.

The Best Superfoods for Aging

Superfoods contain a large amount of the nutrients that humans need to survive and thrive. They are always whole foods and are always unprocessed. They never need to be fortified by manufacturers because they come fortified by nature! Saying an ingredient is nutrient-dense is essentially the same as calling it a superfood.

How Superfoods Minimize the Signs of Aging

Some of these superfoods are super-antioxidants; some have high levels of healthy omega-3 fats. Fiber-rich superfoods help the heart and vascular system by eliminating extra cholesterol, whereas other superfoods boost your immune system, build and maintain strong bones, detoxify your life, or prevent cancer.

Keep a variety of superfoods as a mainstay of your diet, and you will experience some if not all of the following benefits:

- Weight loss
- Increased levels of energy and vitality
- More regular sleep patterns
- Better heart and vascular health
- Increased protection against cancer
- Reduced signs of aging:
    - Better, softer skin
    - Decreased joint pain and stiffness
    - Improved memory and cognition (you may finally find those car keys!)
    - More easily control chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure

Antioxidants

During normal biochemical reactions in the body, the highly reactive and potentially damaging substances ROS and RNS are formed. These free radicals are thought to be responsible for a good deal of the damage to skin, joints, bones and the cardiovascular system that is associated with aging—and with chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, obesity, and arthritis. Antioxidants neutralize these damaging substances, removing them from your body—that is how superfoods can make you look and feel healthier and even younger.

- Examples of foods high in antioxidants are berries (blueberries, cranberries, blackberries, raspberries, and other brightly colored berries); beans (red, black and pinto); and fruits such as oranges, pineapple, papaya, peppers, tomatoes, and cantaloupe. Vegetables that are high in antioxidants include dark and leafy green vegetables (spinach, collard, mustard, and Swiss chard), asparagus, artichokes, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts.

Anti-inflammatory Foods

Inflammation lies at the route of all chronic disease, but it is important to understand that it can be part of a healthy immune response. The inflammatory response gets rid of infections, cleans wounds, and heals injuries. When inflammation becomes chronic and uncontrolled, however, your whole body can be damaged.

We usually recognize inflammation by its classic signs: redness, tenderness, heat, and swelling. That works fine on the outside, but we often don't know when the inflammation is internal.

It is believed that pre-chronic diseases are characterized by local inflammation in an organ. For example, if the arteries around the heart have hardened due to plaque

buildup, you likely won't know they are inflamed until a heart attack strikes. If you are lucky, you'll find out when a medical professional tests for it.

Another example of an inflammatory issue is when joints become stiff and tender over time. Obesity is characterized by a whole-body inflammatory process, which may be one of the reasons high body fat percentage is associated with so many other chronic disorders such as diabetes, metabolic syndrome, heart disease, and joint damage.

Can what you eat help reduce inflammation? Thanks to a big helping of nutrients, superfoods can! Here are some of the most effective anti-inflammatory foods due to the high concentration of omega-3 fatty acids:

- Fish such as salmon, sardines, mackerel, trout, halibut, bass, sole, and cod, as well as shellfish like oysters and shrimp
- Seeds including flax, chia, sunflower, pumpkin, pine nuts, and breadfruit, plus sprouted radish and alfalfa
- Walnuts, butternuts, beechnuts, hickory nuts, pecans, and pine nuts
- Herbs and spices including basil, oregano, cloves, marjoram, tarragon, and mustard seed
- Vegetables including broccoli, spinach, cauliflower, and leafy greens
- Fruits including peppers and squash
- Beans and other legumes

High-Fiber Foods

There are two kinds of fiber found in foods—soluble and insoluble—and both are recognized as being very important for health. For example, soluble fiber helps lower cholesterol levels, while insoluble fiber prevents constipation.[23–26] Some health benefits of a high-fiber diet are:

- The prevention of constipation, hemorrhoids, and diverticulosis

- Decreased blood cholesterol levels
- Protection against colon cancer
- Weight loss (since fiber helps you feel fuller, longer)
- Improved immune function

The best sources of fiber are:

- Bran (from oats, wheat, corn, and rice)
- Beans
- Berries
- Whole grains
- Leafy, greens (turnips, mustard, collard, beets, spinach, and Swiss chard)
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Other vegetables such as kale, cauliflower, cabbage, kohlrabi, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts
- Fruits, especially citrus and those with edible skin (pears, apples, plums, prunes, grapes, and peaches)

Probiotics and Prebiotics

Prebiotics and probiotics support normal bacteria that live in our intestines—right along with us, keeping our bodies strong. The intestinal bacteria are essential in building a healthy immune system. They can be thought of as the teachers of our internal protection agents, and they are VERY good teachers!

- **Prebiotics** are substances found in foods that support the normal bacteria in the gut. These prebiotics are found in whole grains, the skin of many fruits, honey, garlic, and onions. Examples of prebiotics are the fructooligosaccharides (FOS), inulin, and galactooligosaccharides (GOS).

- **Probiotic** foods actually contain healthy bacteria, such as lactobacilli and bifidobacteria. Good sources are active-culture yogurt and kefir, as well as fermented foods like sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, tempeh, and miso.

Anti-Aging Superfood Supplements

We've discussed the best anti-aging supplements, but how do you know where to get them and whether they are of high quality? This can be a real problem, especially with so many new companies pushing their products.

The best advice is to find a naturopath, a nutritionist, or a physician who is able to get the professional grade supplements. This will be a bit more expensive, but you really don't want to pay for fillers or for supplements that are poorly absorbed or poorly used, do you? Then you'll just be throwing money down the drain instead of investing in your long-term health.

Superfoods for Specific Health Concerns

High Cholesterol

- High-fiber foods such as oatmeal, bran cereals, whole grains
- Foods high in omega-3 fats, such as fish and nuts
- Use olive oil—especially the extra virgin—for cooking and for salads

High Blood Pressure

- Low-sodium foods, which means NO processed or prepared foods. Even the low-salt prepared foods may have too much so check the labels. Remember if you control the cooking, you control the ingredients, including salt.
- Foods rich in magnesium and potassium have been shown to help control blood pressure even better than taking supplements.[27–29]
    - Spinach contains lots of magnesium, potassium, and B vitamins along with fiber.
    - Beans also contain lots of magnesium and fiber.
    - Sunflower seeds contain magnesium and zinc, and other minerals thought to help control blood pressure.
    - Bananas are rich in potassium.
    - Soybeans (edamame) are a great source of potassium and magnesium.
    - Dark chocolate (70% or more cocoa) contains antioxidants. Just keep in mind that chocolate does have significant calories, so it's best limited to an ounce a day.

Diabetes

In diabetes, one of the main goals is to maintain steady (and lower) levels of blood sugar and to avoid spikes. One of the best ways to do this is by eating complex

carbohydrates. The complex part means that the chemical structure is more complicated than sugar and therefore takes longer to break down, thus releasing glucose into the bloodstream at a slower rate. It's also recommended to stick with lean proteins, such as fish.

Foods that make up the ideal diet for diabetes are:

- Beans like black, white, navy, lima, pinto, and kidney
- Whole grains like oatmeal, quinoa, millet, brown rice, rye, wheat, buckwheat, spelt, and amaranth
- Low-starch vegetables like broccoli, spinach, peppers, Brussels sprouts, and leafy greens
- Magnesium-rich foods like spinach, beans, sunflower seeds, soybeans and nuts
- Healthy omega-3 fats in fish, avocados, flaxseed, sunflower oil, etc.

Arthritis

Arthritis—whether osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis—is an inflammatory condition. It is often associated with aging, although it can occur in early adulthood as well. If you're suffering from stiff joints, concentrate on foods that can help reduce the inflammation and pain.

- Foods (and drinks) rich in antioxidants include green and black teas, mushrooms, leafy vegetables, nuts, and seeds. Berries contain substances called anthocyanins, which are among the most powerful antioxidants, fighting heart disease and cancer while preventing weight gain.
- Don't forget to spice up your meals with the anti-inflammatory herbs and spices, including basil, turmeric, cinnamon, cayenne pepper, and curry. Garlic and onion are also great ways to flavor a meal while adding anti-inflammatory properties.

- Foods high in the anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats are salmon, mackerel, sardines, herring, oysters, and trout. Plant sources include chia seeds, flaxseeds, and walnuts.
- Use olive oil in cooking. It contains a different type of omega fat, plus it contains oleocanthal, which acts a lot like ibuprofen.
- Foods high in carotenes—the yellow pigments in foods—contain another kind of antioxidants. High levels can be found in cantaloupes, pumpkin, carrots, kale, butternut squash, and sweet potatoes.
- Foods high in vitamin C support the immune system in several ways, including being a powerful antioxidant. Vitamin C can be found in high levels in oranges, lemons, pineapple, kiwi, broccoli, and cauliflower.

Superfoods for Healthy Aging

There are a number of reasons why healthy eating throughout your life is important for healthy aging. Eating nutrient-dense, whole foods provides a strong foundation for you to enjoy a vital, worry-free life.

The healthier you are throughout your life, the healthier you will be as you age; for example, you'll be able to fend off any infection or injury that comes your way. The older you get, the harder it is to treat and heal those chronic ailments and weaknesses, but if you ensure your body is strong inside and out, you'll slow the onset of signs of aging.

Collect Years, Not Wrinkles

Remember the scientific theories of aging? They all, in one way or another, have to do with an accumulation of damage. Sometimes the damage that builds up throughout our lives is affecting our very genetics due to the processes of oxidation, inflammation, methylation, and glycation. Other times, the damage is to cells, tissues, and organs—again, due to the processes of oxidation, inflammation, methylation, and glycation.

The superfoods described in this guide can prevent, stop, and even reverse those processes! By getting the optimal vitamins, minerals, and mix of other nutrients your body needs, it will be better prepared to fend off or even fix the damage.

Many of the more visible and distressing signs of aging have to do with the damaging effects of oxidation and inflammation. This includes thinning and wrinkled skin, joint pain and stiffness, prostate problems, muscle weakness, and decreased efficiency of your whole body! Superfoods can minimize that damage and help your joints, muscles, skin, and all your organs function at their peak efficiency.

Energy for Years to Come

These superfoods will help you do something else that is VERY important to minimize the signs of aging—engage in regular physical activity! But don't worry. That doesn't necessarily mean eating a well-balanced diet will suddenly spur you to take up rock climbing or windsurfing.

You'll feel more motivated to weed your garden once a week, park your car farther away from stores, and walk up the stairs rather than take the elevator. How you stay fit can be as simple as walking the dog a few extra blocks (to sniff that last bush or chase that pesky squirrel!).

If you are into sports or want to recapture the team glory of your youth, go for it! But, you don't have to do a triathlon to get the benefits of regular movement—remember, your body needs moderate physical activity, not strenuous bodybuilding or endurance training.

The exercise you choose can include:

- Practicing Tai Chi or yoga every day for 10–30 minutes
- Getting a stability ball to do exercises in front of the TV, or sitting on one instead of a desk chair at work
- Signing up at the local swimming pool to do morning laps
- Circuit training at home with simple equipment like dumbbells, a treadmill, a jump rope, resistance bands or just your body weight
- Sweating it out in a community class like Zumba, Pilates, or kettlebells
- Playing tennis with a friend, coworker or neighbor

Do whatever you will stick with. You know yourself better than anyone—the exercise your friends Sue and Bob rave about may not excite you. What worked when you were a teenager may not work for you as an adult! If you keep an open mind and try new

things, you will soon find a fun activity that will keep you moving without the need to pencil “get exercise” into your busy schedule.

Do you often feel wiped out? Watch this video to identify the culprit and learn to regain energy and vitality!

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The Secret to Superfoods

All the superfoods have an effect that we haven't talked much about—until now. Aging isn't just about what you can see, like wrinkles or weight gain, but what goes on in your body's control center: your brain.

One of the most ominous signs of aging is memory and cognitive issues. Many of us get frustrated because we can't remember where we put our keys, can't think of that perfect word, and can't put our finger on what we just walked into the room to do! These little memory hiccups are dismissed—and often seen as expected signs of growing older. But, with superfoods and moderate exercise, they no longer have to be a normal part of aging.

The most important nutrients for memory and cognition are found in high levels in a variety of superfoods. The most important nutrients for anti-aging and mental alertness are:

- **B-complex vitamins** (especially **folic acid, vitamin B_6 and vitamin B_{12}**)**:** Folic acid, aka folate, helps prevent some of the DNA damage associated with aging as well as memory and cognitive problems. Vitamin B_9 (folic acid) and vitamin B_{12} reduce levels of homocysteine, a substance that is associated with heart disease. Vitamin B_6 helps balance estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone; when these hormones are deficient or unbalanced, accelerated aging can result.[22, 30–35]
- **Omega-3 fats:** These anti-inflammatory fats have been linked to increased memory and cognitive ability. They also appear to limit the damage to the telomeres on the ends of chromosomes.[36]
- **Resveratrol:** This substance deserves a special mention in any discussion of healthy aging. Resveratrol is found in grape skins, grape seed, and dark

chocolate. It activates a group of gene products called sirtuins and has been found to be protective of brain cells and cognitive functioning.[7–8, 37–38]

- **L-Carnosine:** Carnosine can reverse the damage caused by AGEs—those damaging glycation products. Carnosine also appears to protect against cancer and act as an antioxidant.[39–40]
- **CoQ10:** CoQ10, also known as ubiquinone, is used by the mitochondria in every cell of the body—remember those biology classes when mitochondria were called the powerhouse of cells? CoQ10 is their fuel. Food sources include superfoods like salmon, meat, soybeans, and nuts.
- **Acetyl-L-Carnitine (ALCAR):** Acetyl-L-Carnitine is important for energy production (those mitochondria again!) and can improve brain function by feeding into the synthesis of the major brain neurotransmitter, acetylcholine.
- **Fiber-rich foods:** Our intestines help us to eliminate those substances we cannot use for health—environmental toxins, waste products, and metabolic byproducts that can cause damage. Now tell me, wouldn't you want to get those out of your body as quickly as possible? Thought so . . . and that's where the high-fiber superfoods come into play.
- **Royal jelly:** Royal jelly is produced by worker bees. When bees are fed royal jelly, well, they become royalty! Although it won't make you the queen bee, the remarkable substance has positive effects on humans too. That's because it contains high levels of minerals; vitamins A, B C, D and E; various enzymes and hormones; and 18 amino acids, the building blocks of proteins. Studies have shown that royal jelly helps detoxify and lowers cholesterol levels. One study in healthy volunteers showed that royal jelly improved the production of red blood cells, glucose tolerance, and overall mental health. One bit of caution, however—don't use this if you have asthma or allergies to bee stings or pollen.[41–43]

Do you often feel wiped out? Watch this video to identify the culprit and learn to regain energy and vitality!

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Food Sensitivities

The most common food sensitivities are to gluten, casein, eggs, peanuts, and shellfish. Some of these are immunity-based allergies with typical allergic reactions, whereas others are more subtle immune responses to these foods.

Gluten is found in wheat, barley, and rye, but can be found in smaller amounts in other grains. Casein is a milk protein present in many dairy products. If you have one of these food sensitivities, what you're experiencing is the result of an increased inflammatory reaction. Symptoms vary and can range from an upset stomach and abdominal discomfort to headaches and serious neurological damage.

One of the simplest ways to test for these food sensitivities is to eliminate them from your diet for 3 to 4 weeks, testing one ingredient (e.g., gluten) or food group (e.g., dairy) at a time. If you feel your overall health has improved—with more energy, better sleep, regular digestion, fewer headaches, and other decreased symptoms—there's a good chance that you are sensitive to that particular food item.

If you believe you have a dietary concern, it's best to talk to a health care professional or nutritionist about proper testing and menu planning.

Anti-Aging Recipes

Broccoli and Red Quinoa Salad with Seeds and Nuts

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup red quinoa
- 1–2 bunch broccoli crowns
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp. each:
    - Chopped oregano
    - Chopped basil
    - Any herbs you want!
    - 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup crumbled goat cheese or feta
- Juice of one lemon (2 Tbsp.)
- Sesame seeds
- Almond slivers

Directions

1. Bring 1 cup of water to a boil. Add quinoa, and cook until most of the water has been absorbed. Add broccoli crowns, turn down heat, cover, and allow the broccoli to steam.

2. Heat olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add garlic, and stir. Add oregano, basil (and other herbs), pepper, broccoli, and quinoa. Cook briefly until all ingredients are heated through, about two minutes. Remove from heat.

3. Toss in the feta cheese, and squeeze lemon juice over the top. Sprinkle sesame seeds and almond slivers over salad, and serve.

Baked Salmon with Spinach, Mushrooms, and Tomatoes

Ingredients

- 2 salmon fillets, with skins
- 2 cups fresh spinach leaves, chopped
- 1 cup fresh Portobello mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup Roma tomatoes, diced
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- Lemon juice
- Herbs of choice (fresh dill, basil, oregano, etc.)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375ºF (190ºC).
2. Place salmon on a dish, and coat with about 1 Tbsp. Olive oil.
3. Brush the salmon with the lemon juice, and sprinkle with dill. Bake for 20 minutes total; the topping will be added about halfway through.
4. In a separate pan, heat remaining olive oil over medium heat, and add mushrooms. Once the mushrooms have slightly softened, add spinach to cook for about one minute. Stir in tomatoes. Cook for another minute, and cover the baking salmon with the mixture.
5. Serve, and enjoy!

Simple Vegetarian Stew

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup beans (mixed beans, lentils, split pea, navy beans, adzuki beans, or any beans you want to try)
- 1 1/2 cup vegetable broth
- Herbs and spices to taste: garlic, onions, cumin, mustard seeds, basil, oregano, thyme, etc.
- Your choice of vegetables: Chinese broccoli, mustard greens, bell peppers, carrots, zucchini, spinach—whatever you have on hand. Frozen is fine, too!

Directions

1. Put dry beans in a large slow cooker, and add the vegetable broth along with your choice of herbs and spices.
2. Turn it on low, and go through your day.
3. About 20 minutes before serving, add your choice of vegetables, and stir. Turn up the slow cooker to high.

Additions: If you want to make a meat stew, add grass-fed chuck beef or free-range poultry with the beans.

Sweet Potato Soup with Peanuts

Ingredients

- 2 large sweet potatoes
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tsp. fresh ginger, minced
- 1 tsp. ground allspice
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup creamy natural peanut butter
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- Fresh cilantro, roughly chopped for garnish

Directions

1. Bake sweet potatoes in the oven at 350°F (175°C) until slightly softened.
2. Heat the olive oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onions and garlic, and stir while cooking, until just beginning to brown. Add ginger and allspice. Lower the heat and cook for about 5–8 minutes.
3. While the herbs are cooking, peel and mash the sweet potatoes, leaving some bite-size pieces. Add to the Dutch oven. While stirring, add half the peanut butter, followed by half the vegetable broth. Stir well, and then add the remaining peanut butter and broth.
4. Garnish with cilantro, if desired. Serve, and enjoy!

Eating for Energy

Have you ever heard of the raw food diet? Followers describe it as being better than Red Bull because it gives you all-day, sustained energy. Can you imagine what it would be like to wake up feeling alert? You could get through your entire day without feeling exhausted and drained when you come home from work in the evening.

Imagine how much more you could enjoy life and how much more you could achieve if you just had more energy? You can feel truly alive, not just like a robot following a programmed schedule.

And, that's exactly what the raw food diet offers.

If you're like me the very words "raw food" and "diet" sound off-putting. But the truth is, the raw food diet is actually pretty easy to follow. Millions of people are already doing it all over the world.

Even if you don't want to commit to a totally raw food diet right now (though you might, once you discover just how amazing it is, I highly recommend that you check out this free video presentation by Yuri Elkaim. He highlights three essential components of a raw food diet that will transform your body (and your life) forever.

Yuri is very passionate about the power of "living nutrition," and if you are eager to take your life to a whole new level, then I would strongly recommend putting aside a few minutes right now to watch it for yourself . . .

I know you'll find his journey very inspiring. After all, Yuri had a big health scare when he was just 17 because of the "dead" food diet he had been eating all his life!

Watch this recommended video to learn more now:

http://www.optimalhealingremedies.com/go/eatforenergyvideo

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