

Healthy Habits

That Help as You Age

When it comes to your overall well-being, regular maintenance is always important, but there are more things to monitor at age 50 than at 25, for instance.

Keys to a long life

A 2011 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of about 17,000 people found four keys to living a long life: exercising regularly, avoiding tobacco, eating a healthy diet, and drinking alcohol in moderation.

Here are a few tips on how to make the most of these healthy habits as you age.

- **Broaden your ideas about exercise.** Staying active as you age is what's most important. Can't run a fast mile these days? Take a brisk, half-hour walk four or five days a week. Adjust your expectations of the benefits of exercise. For example, even if it's too late to pump iron for bodybuilding, you still can use moderate weight training to improve your strength and balance, thus avoiding falls.
- **Eat healthy and eat less.** Your slowing metabolism and other changes as you age mean you're burning fewer calories. If you continue taking in the same amount, the unburned calories will be stored as fat. As you age, make every bite count by selecting foods that are high in nutrients and low in calories.

- **It's never too late to stop using nicotine.** From better blood flow to lung function, you can still improve aspects of your health when you quit. You may need help breaking a long-time nicotine addiction. Check with your health plan or Employee Assistance Program for help.
- **Monitor your alcohol intake.** According to the National Institutes of Health, older people (ages 65 and up) are more sensitive to alcohol than younger ones. Alcohol can also make certain age-related health problems worse. And, some medications don't mix with alcohol.

The CDC study found that if you adopt all four of these healthy habits, you'll have a 63 percent chance of living longer than those who ignore this sound advice. Like the car that's still running great after all those years and all those miles, the earlier you start taking care of yourself, the better your chances of staying healthy as you age.

Making adjustments
as we age helps
us live longer and
healthier.

Need help?

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seven days a week:**

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