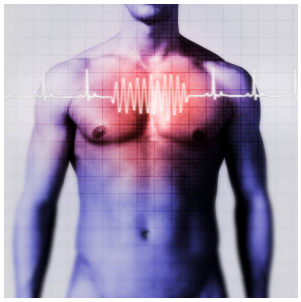


The oldest person in the world recently turned 117 years old. According to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, life expectancy in the United States currently stands at 77.5 years. That's a nearly 40-year gap. Hoping to inch closer to the supercentenarian end of the spectrum? While a lot of what determines how long we live is out of our control — genetics and plain dumb luck play their part too — there are some habits associated with living healthier, and by extension, longer lives. Below, some longevity experts share the lifestyle changes they recommend.

Get your zzzs

Quality sleep is regenerative for your body, supports cognitive function and regulates mood, according to Diogo Barardo, a longevity researcher and director of research and development at anti-aging supplement brand NOVOS. Conversely, poor sleep habits have been associated with increased risks of obesity, heart disease and diabetes. “Adults should aim for seven to nine hours of quality sleep per night to support health and longevity,” Barardo tells Yahoo Life. “Establishing a regular sleep schedule and creating a restful environment can improve sleep quality and contribute to a longer, healthier life.”

Eat more fermented foods

From kimchi to kombucha to yogurt to pickles, adding more fermented foods into your diet could bolster longevity. “Fermented foods are an excellent natural probiotic and great for digestion and immunity,” Maddy Dychtwald, co-founder of Age Wave and co-author of Ageless Aging: A Woman’s Guide to Increasing Healthspan, Brainspan and Lifespan, tells Yahoo Life. “More and more researchers agree that gut health and brain health are closely linked.” Plus, various cultures around the world rely on fermented foods as a staple of their diet, she says.

Avoid smoking and curb drinking

The experts Yahoo Life spoke to agree that avoiding smoking and limiting (or abstaining from) alcohol consumption can contribute to longevity. Avoiding both can reduce the risk of various diseases, from cancer to liver disease and heart disease, Barardo notes. “The adverse effects of smoking and excessive alcohol consumption on health are well-documented, and avoiding these habits can lead to a healthier life and increased life expectancy,” he says.

Make stress management a part of your routine

Easier said than done, but the fact of the matter is that long-term stress contributes to serious health issues, including heart attack, stroke, diabetes, depression, immune disorders, migraines, heartburn, nausea and more, says Nathan Price, chief scientific officer at Thorne HealthTech and co-author of The Age of Scientific Wellness: Why the Future of Medicine Is Personalized, Predictive, Data-Rich, and in Your Hands. “Although managing stress can be challenging, there are ways to control it, like meditating and prioritizing physical exercise,” he tells Yahoo Life. Barardo recommends practicing mindfulness and spending time with loved ones as ways to reduce stress and promote mental health.

Try research-backed workout strategies

Speaking of exercise, in order to make your workouts even more of a “silver bullet” for increasing your longevity, consider working out earlier in the day, says Dychtwald. A 2022 study published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology found that of 86,657 participants, those who exercised between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. had the lowest risk of coronary heart disease and stroke, and that women appeared to benefit even more than men. And if you figure a quickie workout doesn’t even count, think again. Even a short stretch of physical activity has

measurable benefits. According to another study published in the journal Nature Medicine, as little as three minutes a day of vigorous everyday activity was linked to a 40% lower risk of premature death. This was the case even when people didn’t exercise in any other way outside of those three minutes. (Yahoo)