

Growing Younger

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Introduction

The science of growing younger may seem like a fairy-tale or snake oil. The truth is that a growing body of research is pointing to the causes of aging. By knowing the causes, we can prevent the damage that these processes do to our body, and in some cases, even reverse it. By making smarter lifestyle choices, we can also preserve a youthful mind, body and spirit well into our senior years. Age really can become just a number once you've discovered the science of growing younger.

So, let's start first with the main area of our body that can give away our chronological age if we don't take proper care of it, our skin.

Chapter 1 - How to Look 45 At 60

The skin is the largest organ of your body. It protects our inner organs and musculoskeletal system from injury. It allows nutrients in and stops essential fluids from leaking out.

It's easy to take our skin for granted-until something goes wrong with it. The most obvious example when we are young is acne. As we age, the big concern becomes wrinkles.

However, an even bigger concern is aging the skin through poor lifestyle choices, which in some cases can culminate in skin cancer. The most common type is melanoma.

Melanoma is caused primarily by the harmful effects UV rays of the sun. Those who spend a lot of time out in the sun without sunscreen or sunblock are at increased risk. So too are those who:

- spend a lot of time at a beach or pool;
- work on the water, where the sun's rays are reflected;
- go to tanning salons often
- work outdoors and don't cover up against the sun.

Any unprotected exposure to the sun carries risks. The most common location of melanoma is the left forearm in men. Researchers attribute this to men leaning their left elbows on the edge of their car doors as they are driving.

If you've ever seen the skin of people who spend a lot of time out in the elements, such as fishermen, you will notice their weather-beaten look. Sun, wind, salt, and sea spray dry the skin while the rays of the sun darken it, causing a craggy, darkened complexion.

As people age, they also develop 'liver spots' on their face and particularly their hands. Even if you are smart enough to use an SPF (Sun Protection Factor)

sunscreen/moisturizer of 30 or more each day, do you also think to put it on the back of your hands? If not, it's time to start.

What about your neck? As we age, it starts to look slack and pouch. So does the skin under our eyes. This is gravity at work, it is true, but it also signals a loss of skin tone and collagen that can be prevented with a good beauty routine and healthful diet.

The first thing people see when they meet us is our face. What does yours say about your age? If you look old beyond your years and want to appear younger without spending a fortune, the best place to start is your daily skin care routine.

Caring for your skin regularly

There are a few steps to this to keep it looking youthful, including washing, toning and moisturizing. Let's look at the most important aspects of each.

Washing Your Face

You would think that most people would know how to wash their faces. After all, we do it every day. Cats make it look easy too, don't they?

The truth is that especially if we live in a large city with a high-level of pollutants, it can be tricky to keep your face clean and blemish-free.

Every day, we get a build-up of impurities on our face that can clog the pores and give us a washed-out complexion, which makes us look older than we really are.

Some personal care products can make the situation worse. Studies have shown that women are exposed to up to 100 chemicals each day through the personal products they use. For men, the average is about 40. The first step, therefore, is to strip down your products to the basics, all-natural ones that can be used for a range of purposes.

The most basic is pure Castile soap and warm water. Soap is best in its liquid form because no chemicals have been added to turn it into a solid bar of soap. Castile or vegetable glycerine soaps are mild enough even for sensitive skin. Wash your face and neck, rinse well, and pat dry.

Toner

Many people choose a toner based on skin type. One good choice for a natural toner is pure witch hazel which is mainly alcohol-free. Some women use lemon juice, but it can cause photosensitivity, that is, sensitivity to sunlight, and make skin darker, sometimes permanently.

If your skin is very dry, add a couple of drops of a soothing essential oil such as myrrh to the pure witch hazel.

Toner removes impurities that soap alone can't reach, and refines the pores, making your skin smooth. It helps keep down blackheads and whiteheads and lessens your risk of breakouts.

Moisturizer

Once you have toned, putting on moisturizer helps keep moisture in. Even people with oily skin need moisturizer. A daily moisturizer with an SPF of 30 will protect you from the aging effects of the sun. Look for one that is oil free.

At night, when applying before bed, SPF is not important, but you could use a heavier cream than you would use if you were going out in public, or applying before you put on your makeup if you are a woman.

If you are a man, moisturizer can help keep down the irritating effects of shaving and the raw look it can give around your face and neck. Shaving will, however, offer one benefit in addition to hair removal, and that is exfoliating.

Exfoliating

Exfoliating is the process of removing dead skin cells from the upper layer of your skin, the epidermis. Dead skin cells can make your complexion look dull and weathered instead of youthful and radiant. Soap and a washcloth will work well, Scrub lightly in small circles over every part of your face, taking care in the eye area.

A mild scrub made from ground almonds or apricot kernels can also help. A homemade sugar scrub can serve as a fruit peel as well. However, it can redden skin for up to 2 hours afterwards, so if you wish to use it, apply it only at night.

Exfoliating 1 to 2 times per week should be more than enough to keep the fresh young skin cells shining through.

Applying makeup

Use fresh, oil-free makeup and keep it only 6 months so it will go stale and harm your skin. Some foundation makeup will also have SPF, for double protection if you apply it over your moisturizer.

Removing makeup

To remove your makeup, use soap and water, or pure apricot kernel oil. Avoid any products with a lot of chemicals and fragrance. It is important that all traces of makeup are removed before you retire for the night, because sleeping with your makeup can clog your pores overnight and cause breakouts.

Lips

Protect your lips with lip balm as to stop them from drying out and becoming chapped. It should have an SPF as well.

Other delicate areas

Wear sunglasses or Transitions lenses with a UV coating. Use eye cream at least once a day to hydrate and protect the delicate skin around your eyes to avoid wrinkles.

Some people recommend silk pillowcases, so you do not cause lines and wrinkles from snuggling your face into the pillow.

Whole body skin care

After showering or bathing, pat your skin dry, and finish off with moisturizer suitable for your skin type.

If you have dry skin, create your own nourishing cream with [shea butter](#), apricot kernel or olive oil, and a few drops of rosemary essential oil.

Wear clothing in natural, breathable fabrics, cotton, linen, silk and wool, to avoid the irritation caused by synthetics. Always wear a hat when going out in the sun. Wear light-coloured, long-sleeved tops, and long skirts or pants if you plan to be in the sun a long time and know you are not likely to keep re-applying your [sunscreen](#) every 30 to 120 minutes.

Re-apply to your face often-a [sunscreen stick](#) can help. Look for high SPF and low fragrance. Don't forget the back of your neck and your ears.

Avoid any products high in alcohol. These are the kind that sting. Alcohol dries out the skin a great deal. Hand sanitizers are one good example. They are great for quick clean ups if you have no soap and water, but avoid using too often, because dry, cracked skin on your hands will leave you open to infection.

If you do love the tan look, apply [self-tanner](#). Steer clear of tanning beds.

If you smoke, stop. It dries the skin and leads to wrinkling around the lips and eyes.

Now that you understand the basics of proper skin care, you'll be glad of your investment of a few minutes each day and night all adding up to younger-looking skin no matter what your age.

It is important to keep in mind that it is never too early to start to care for your skin. Pass on this information to people of all ages to help prevent skin cancer and signs of premature aging.

However, these are only external treatments for the skin. Since we are what we eat, diet has its part to play in beautiful skin and overall good health. Let's look in the next couple of chapters at this issue.

Chapter 2 - The Role of Enzymes in The Aging Process

Enzymes are used in a variety of ways in the body to maintain overall health. In relation to the aging process, there are 4 aspects that scientists are examining in the effort to help people stay younger no matter what their chronological age.

The 4 aspects are:

- The role of chronic inflammation in the body
- The thickening of the blood
- The formation of fibrous tissues
- The weakening of the immune system

The first 2 can contribute to heart disease, heart attack, and stroke. The third is related to fibromyalgia, cystic fibrosis, and other structural disorders of the musculoskeletal system as we age. The fourth affects our ability to ward off diseases, such as colds and flu, or more serious conditions such as diabetes and even cancer.

When we're younger, we produce many enzymes, which stimulate and regulate processes such as:

- Metabolism, burning the food we eat as fuel □ Healing, such as cell regeneration and repair
- Cleansing, with the enzymes consuming or flushing out toxins in our bodies

- Balancing and organization, with the enzymes acting as on and off switches in some cases, and boosting power in others, to keep all systems running at peak efficiency.

However, as we age, our enzyme production decreases at an average rate of about 10% per year, which means that by the time we are 75, our enzyme production is a fraction of what it once was. This can result in poor digestion, and therefore poor absorption of essential nutrients.

We can take enzyme supplements, of course, but we can also care for our bodies and lower the wear and tear on them that is caused by the aging process, known as oxidative stress.

Oxidative stress, or oxidation, is the result of the activity of what are known as free radicals in the body. Antioxidants can help combat free radicals to keep you youthful no matter what your chronological age.

What are free radicals?

The name sounds like a left-wing group of people at a peace rally, but in fact, these little chemical elements are less than peaceful. They radically change our bodies for the worse.

Some free radicals are the by-products of our cellular metabolism. On the microscopic level, our cells replenish themselves and produce energy to run all the processes of the body. When the cells produce energy in this way, certain molecules are left behind, including free radicals.

Free radicals are missing an electron in their outer ring and will therefore go looking for another one to steal in order to complete their molecule.

Free radicals steal electrons from cells, enzymes, cell membranes, and even your DNA and RNA. Stealing the electron will usually damage or weaken the object it has been stolen from. Once the object is damaged, it will not be able to function normally.

In the case of enzymes, they won't be able to do the jobs properly as the catalysts for cellular reactions. Altering DNA and RNA can lead to all sorts of cellular abnormalities; some of these are commonly termed cancer. Compromising the integrity of cellular membranes leaves them vulnerable to attack by viruses, bacteria and other invaders, weakening your immune system.

In relation to RNA, new research is pointing to [telomeres](#), a certain type of enzyme, as a possible key to getting younger. They stop RNA strands from unravelling as a result of free radicals attacking them, thus maintaining the strength of your cells.

Free radicals all around us

Free radicals are not just by-products of cellular processes. They can be introduced into our bodies from a variety of sources, including:

- cigarette or cigar smoke, and the 400 or so chemicals you are exposed to if you smoke tobacco
- radiation
- drinking alcohol
- air pollution
- water pollution
- eating artificial products such as colourings, flavourings, sweeteners, or preservatives.

Certain gases and even sunlight can affect the free radical levels in our bodies.

Scientists have investigated the idea that free radicals are responsible for many diseases in the body that affect us as we get older. Conditions like cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, heart disease and autoimmune disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis have been shown to originate at least in part as a result of free radical damage.

The hottest health trends these days are trying to cure cancer and trying to develop anti-aging regimens. Taming the effects of free radicals on the body could lead to an end to the diseases we commonly accept as a natural part of growing old.

Combating oxidative stress

Cellular damage is repaired by the body in several ways. If a person has a healthy lifestyle and does not expose their body to too many health stressors, then the body can maintain a state of balance and well-being.

Most of the repair will be performed on the body in the night-time hours when a person normally sleeps. Sleep is therefore essential for overall health.

Leading a natural lifestyle by not exposing yourself to a lot of harsh chemicals, such as in toiletries, or pesticides in your food (go organic) can also help. Making smart food choices is the best way to combat free radicals. The best foods are ones rich in antioxidants.

As the name suggests, antioxidants combat oxidative stress. If you've ever wondered why some people age better than others, chances are it is because they are not smoking and drinking, sun worshipping, and above all, they're eating a better diet.

What are antioxidants?

Antioxidants neutralize free radicals in the body. They are molecules that have an extra electron or two in their outer ring, which they can share with the roaming free radicals without being damaged or weakened in any significant way.

The free radicals are lured by the 'easy pickings' of the antioxidants and stop wandering once they steal the extra electron they are looking for. Everything goes back to being stable and in balance. This means your enzymes, DNA, RNA and cells are all a great deal safer, and can remain so if you don't expose yourself to a lot of free radicals.

Antioxidants help the internal environment of our bodies to stay in great working order on the metabolic level. You can change the outside with surgery and chemicals, but if the inside is not functioning well, disease will set in and affect

both appearance and longevity. The right vitamins will preserve your immune system and help you fight disease.

So, what should you eat in order to add antioxidants to your diet?

- Phytochemicals
- Anthocyanins
- Carotenoids and Vitamin A □ Trace minerals.

The first 2 are present in plants. Anthocyanins are present in blue and purple foods such as blueberries and grapes. Carotenoids and Vitamin A are found in orange and red foods, and leafy green vegetables. Two of note are lutein, linked with eye health, and lycopene, linked with prostate health in men.

What's the best diet to follow?

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables with small amounts of healthy protein such as tofu, nuts and fish is ideal. If you don't have time to spend ages planning menus, here are a couple of shortcuts.

Eat a rainbow every day. Try to eat a variety of differently coloured foods to get as many types of antioxidants as possible.

In terms of trace elements, eating a Mediterranean diet with high-quality fish and olive oil can help you preserve your health and vitality long into your senior years and is protective against heart disease.

Add a couple of cups of decaffeinated green tea to your daily routine. It offers a range of health benefits, including improving your dental health.

There are also several foods that have been described as anti-aging. Let's look at the top ones in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Top 7 Anti-Aging Foods

Since we are what we eat, it makes sense that the food we consume has a major role to play in maintaining our health and youthfulness. There are some foods, however, that researchers have labelled as 'anti-aging foods'. Here are the top 7:

- Leafy Greens
- Broccoli
- Berries
- Olive oil
- Nuts
- Sweet potatoes
- Garlic

Let's discuss each of these briefly.

1-Leafy Greens

Spinach is considered a super-food because it is so packed with health benefits. Consider also adding kale, collard greens, Romaine lettuce and arugula to your diet as well.

2-Broccoli

Broccoli is full of nutrients and balances blood sugar, making it an ideal food for anyone with pre-diabetes or diabetes.

3-Berries, such as blueberries

All berries are rich in antioxidants. The darker blue and purple berries have a different range of antioxidants, so aim for a mixture. Tart cherry is also good for both its antioxidants, and anti-inflammatory properties, especially if you have arthritis.

4-Olive oil

Olive oil lowers cholesterol naturally and keeps skin smooth and supple when used both internally and externally. If you're worried about your heart health, switch from butter and polyunsaturated oils to monounsaturated olive oil. **5-Nuts**

Nuts may be high in fat, but they are also high in fibre, and offer a range of health benefits, including Omega-3 fatty acids and many vitamins and minerals. The fat and fibre will help you feel full. The fat in the nuts also will nourish your skin. As few as 10 almonds a day have been shown to lower cholesterol by 4%. As few as 8 walnuts per day will produce similar results.

6-Sweet potatoes (orange and purple)

The Okinawan diet is primarily made up of orange or purple sweet potatoes, both rich in antioxidants and Vitamin A for a healthy immune system. They are filling, tasty, full of fibre, and very versatile in a range of dishes.

7-Garlic

Garlic may not smell great after you have eaten it, but it is tasty and full of disease-fighting phytochemicals protective against cancer. It stimulates circulation and has anti-bacterial properties, which can help keep your digestive tract healthy.

Now that you know the top 7 foods to eat each day to help maintain a healthy and youthful body, you can come up with a range of recipes that incorporate them. A stir-fry is ideal for all the healthy veggies listed. A berry crumble with oats (also great for lowering cholesterol) and some chopped nuts on top is the perfect healthy dessert.

If you are still worrying that you need more help with achieving a healthy lifestyle that will also prevent premature aging, let's look next at some herbs and spices that might help.

Chapter 4 Herbal Approaches to Turning Back the Years

There are several herbs and spices that have been associated with delaying or even reversing many of the common signs of aging. Here are a few suggestions that will offer protection in general, and for certain issues.

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Bilberry

Bilberry is full of antioxidants and is helpful for preserving vision and warding off degenerative eye issues such as macular degeneration.

Ginkgo

Ginkgo increases blood flow to the brain and has been shown to benefit even those who already have Alzheimer's.

Ginseng (*Panax ginseng*)

According to traditional Chinese medicine, ginseng is the Fountain of Youth. It tones skin and muscles, improves appetite and digestion, and boosts sexual energy.

Gotu Kola

This is used as an herbal tea in traditional Indian medicine (Ayurvedic medicine) to improve memory and extend lifespan.

Horsetail

Horsetail contains silicon, key to maintaining the health of arteries, skin, bones, cartilage and connective tissues. Try it as a tea.

Milk Thistle

This is ideal for liver health and detoxification. It can even help regenerate damaged liver tissue. Since your liver performs more than 500 functions in your body, protect it as much as you can, and see what a difference it can make to your health.

Peppermint

Peppermint is an ideal aid for digestion and gastrointestinal problems. It also contains antioxidants that can help prevent cancer, heart disease, and other age-related disorders. It freshens breath and maintains oral health as we age.

Turmeric

Turmeric is a tasty spice commonly found in Indian rice dishes and curries. It has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for centuries to reduce pain and inflammation.

Add one of these herbs or spices at a time to your diet, and journal about the differences you notice. If it works well, keep eating it. Then add another, to enhance all aspects of your body that are commonly affected by the ravages of aging.

Chapter 5 Keeping Memory Sharp

So far in this guide, we have been focusing on a more youthful body. In the next 2 chapters, let's look at gaining a younger mind and spirit as well.

With Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia on the increase in the US and around the world, researchers are eagerly searching for the causes of these conditions, which trigger rapid mental decline and eventual death.

For most people, the idea of losing their memory of who they once were, and of all their loved ones, is a scary one. However, most people don't realize that Alzheimer's also results in loss of life. The average life expectancy from the time someone is diagnosed is only 5 to 7 years. That being the case, anything you can do to keep your memory sharp and boost your brain health is a step in the right direction.

The first cornerstone is diet, of course, as part of an overall healthy lifestyle. Studies have shown that those with Alzheimer's tend to also have many of the chronic conditions associated with aging, including

- coronary heart disease
- hardening of the arteries
- high cholesterol
- high blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes

A growing body of research is also starting to show that diets high in carbohydrates such as unrefined white sugar and white flour not only contributes to Type 2 diabetes, but Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia as well. In fact, some scientists have started to label white sugar 'white death' because of its damaging impact upon brain health.

A Mediterranean diet is not just protective in terms of heart health, but brain health as well. Fish is known to be 'brain food' due to its vitamins and minerals. Omega-3 fatty acids help both heart and brain health.

The [Okinawan diet](#) is another good diet to follow for anyone interested not just in long life, but also continuing mental sharpness. Their diet is predominantly made up of sweet potatoes, including purple ones, and small amounts of protein from fish, tofu and nuts.

An organic diet will reduce your exposure to brain-damaging chemicals. A glutenfree diet, and one rich in fresh, natural foods has also been shown to improve memory.

In terms of one's overall lifestyle, there are a number of ways to keep your mind young no matter what your age. These include:

- Get high-quality sleep
- Exercise regularly
- Avoid mercury
- Avoid aluminum
- Steer clear of statins
- Watch out for OTCs and Rx drugs
- Avoid antacids

Get high-quality sleep

Everyone needs enough sleep each night to refresh both body and mind. Eight hours, and no more than 9, is optimal. High-quality sleep is sleep where one feels refreshed afterwards, not tired any more.

Exercise regularly

Regular exercise, such as taking 10,000 steps per day, about 3.5 to 5 miles, will keep you fit, but with little chance of injury. Exercise also enhances mood, lowers stress, and gets you out in the sun (put on sunscreen), which increases the production of Vitamin D in your body/ Vitamin D is a building block for your hormones and other key substances in your body that help maintain your overall health.

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Avoid mercury

Mercury is commonly found in silver amalgam dental fillings. It is also high in canned tuna, so eat no more than 2 servings per week, 3 days apart.

Avoid aluminum

If you have any old pots with a whitish-looking film on the inside, get rid of them at once. Also steer clear of non-stick cookware, which can contain chlorine as well.

Try cast iron, stainless steel, or enamel on steel cookware such as the [Le Creuset](#) brand of products. Yes, they are expensive, but consider them an investment in your kitchen and your health. “Treat” each pan you buy according to the manufacturer’s instructions, and it should give you decades of use from oven or stovetop to table.

Steer clear of statins

Statin drugs are the #1 most commonly prescribed class of drugs in the world, and affect the liver and the way your body processes the food you eat and therefore the way nutrients are absorbed. These include vital Omega-3s and the enzyme Co-Q10, essential for heart health and the transmission of important signals in the brain.

Watch out for OTCs and Rx drugs

Avoid many of the common [over the counter medications](#) and certain prescription drugs. Many of them can impair memory, including:

- nighttime pain relievers
- antihistamines
- sleep aids
- certain antidepressants
- incontinence medications
- narcotic pain relievers
- high blood pressure medications
- drugs used to treat Parkinson’s disease

Avoid antacids

Steer clear of antacids such as Pepto-Bismal. They not only rob memory, they can also disguise the symptoms of a heart attack until it is too late.

These are just a few of the many ways you can maintain your brain health in order to keep your brain sharp well into your senior years. Another way to keep your mind and spirit healthy is to combat the stress in your life that is making you old before your time. Let's look at this topic in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: De-Stress Your Way To A Younger Self

Stress is all around us in the modern world. From happy occasions like a wedding or the birth of a child, to negative stressors such as moving house or experiencing a death in the family, stress will catch up with us sooner or later if we don't take steps to identify it and deal with it effectively.

We may not be able to control the stressors in our lives, but we can control how we react to them. Spotting your stressors and being pro-active in using a range of strategies to reduce your stress can keep you healthy in body, mind and spirit.

The most common signs and symptoms of stress include:

- Headaches
- Irritability/moodiness
- Low productivity
- Low energy
- Memory loss
- Appetite change, less, or more
- Insomnia, lack of quality sleep
- Frequent colds, flu and so on
- Poor time management/procrastination

There are a number of stress-busters you can try in order to minimize the impact of stress on your daily life. These include:

Journaling

Dump your annoyances on the page rather than keep them bottled up, or take them out on others.

Meditation

Do a simple breathing meditation each morning and night in which you empty your mind of all thoughts and just focus on your breath in and out. It can be difficult at first to silence all the mind chatter, but the result will be a

‘minivacation’ from all the things bothering you. In this way you can feel more refreshed and ready to tackle them.

Exercising

Exercise enhances mood and gives you more energy, to lower stress and help keep you mentally as well as physically healthy.

Eat balanced meals

Pay attention to protein, and steer clear of comfort foods that are high in carbs or sugar. Take healthy snacks with you everywhere, such as some homemade trail mix, so you won’t be tempted to grab something like a donut as you gallop through your busy day.

Stay hydrated

Eight 8-ounce glasses of fresh water per day will help power all of your essential bodily processes and detox your body. Hate the taste of plain water? Add a dash of 100% fruit juice, such as HeartSmart from Minute Maid, rich in Omega-3s.

Do something you enjoy every day

This could be solving puzzles, playing a computer game, and so on.

Set aside some time to relax

If we were intended to work all the time, we would never have evolved into a being that needs 8 hours of rest per night. Even if you have to take work home with you, make a date with yourself on your calendar to do something relaxing, like soaking in a tub, praying, gardening, whatever you like. Then do more work.

Chat with friends and loved ones

This will help you feel more connected and less isolated.

Avoid alcohol or drugs

Many people reach for these in an effort to cope. Alcohol is a depressant. A growing body of literature now shows just how much damage it can do to the body and brain.

In terms of drugs, we are talking about both illicit and licit ones. Caffeine, tobacco, and over the counter medications, can all have a serious impact on our brain health and our overall ability to deal with stress in a healthy way.

Help others

Assisting others through charity work or helping out in the community can boost your self-esteem and help relieve stress.

Get a massage

Many insurance companies now offer complementary and alternative therapies (CAM), including therapeutic massage. Check your coverage and make the most of it. Or, swap massages with your spouse or friend.

Counseling services

Your insurance company might also offer a mental health component, including free seminars and employee assistance programs and counselling, online or over the phone. Check out what's available and use as needed.

Listen to music

This can calm and soothe, to help you feel more refreshed.

Go for a walk

A change of scenery can often be one of the best ways to relax and unwind.

There are many ways to relieve stress once you've spotted it. Take some time to tune into what's causing your stress, and the best ways to handle your stressors. Be pro-active in reducing your stress through using the above methods, or others that you find helpful, to manage your stress every day so it doesn't age you prematurely.

Conclusion

The Fountain of Youth has been a long-cherished goal for people throughout the ages. Thanks to the latest scientific research about the process of aging on the

body, we are getting closer than ever to maintaining optimal health and wellness, and a youthful biological age until well into our chronological 'senior years'. We hope this guide has shown you how easy it can be to stay young-looking and feeling no matter what your age with just a few sensible self-care steps.