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10 Tips on How to Enjoy “Healthy Aging Month”

September is healthy aging month. For those with graying hair and creaky joints, it’s hard to imagine there are ways to “enjoy” aging. But here are 10 tips anyone can use to maintain youthful vibrancy and energy. According to Dr. Nathan Wei, “one of the most important tasks physicians have has nothing to do with medicines. It’s teaching people how to take care of themselves.”

- Be grateful. Saying thanks for what you have rather than moaning about what you don’t have is the first step to enjoying life. As Dr. Wei says, “Every morning when you wake up, the first thing you should say is, “Thank you.”
- Learn to laugh. A good sense of humor will lift the spirits of people around you. And laughter has been shown to actually stimulate the immune system. Watch comedies and let yourself go.
- Travel. Experience different cultures. See new things. This will not only broaden your horizons but also allow you to be thankful for what you have (see number 1). It’s also a great way to get out of a rut!
- Eat healthy. You only have one body and you should take care of it. “I’m struck by how people will take better care of their pets than they do of themselves,” exclaims Dr. Wei. Eat less fat and more fruits, vegetables, and fish. Pitch the junk!
- Exercise. This is the true fountain of youth. A regular exercise program will help lessen fatigue, keep you stronger, and live longer.
- Find a new hobby. Nothing helps the mind to stay young than to find a new activity to focus on. Learn something new! Spend less time in front of the TV and more time on self-education and self-improvement. The detrimental effects of TV exposure have been well-documented.
- Get regular checkups. Just like taking your car in for routine maintenance, it’s important to do the same for your body. See your physician and dentist regularly. Take your medicines as prescribed.
- Avoid the poisons. Stop smoking. This is the most common cause of preventable death. Also make sure your alcohol intake isn’t excessive.
- Protect your body. Use your seatbelt when you get in your car. Put sunscreen on when you are going to spend a lot of time outdoors. Stay indoor on code red days. Dress appropriately for the heat or the cold. Safety-proof your environment. Keep your home well-lit. Check your smoke detectors. Avoid clutter.
- Stay in touch with family and friends. No one is an island. A good support system is more important as one gets older. Tell your loved ones how much you love them. It’ll make both them and you feel a lot better. Ask forgiveness. We aren’t perfect and sometimes we make mistakes. And occasionally they’re big ones. You’d be surprised though how forgiving your loved ones can be. Talk to them And don’t forget to forgive yourself.

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