

ANTI-AGING: CAN WE TURN BACK THE CLOCK?

Age: the entire concept fills many of us with dread. A slow decrease in function, increased susceptibility to debilitating disease, less energy for daily living, the list goes on. Unfortunately, our society, including much of the health care community, has bought into this paradigm lock, stock and barrel. How many times have you heard phrases like “it’s just your age,” “you have to expect that, you’re older,” “I can’t do that any more, I’m old”? More times than you’d care to count, I’ll bet!

Is all this an inevitable consequence of the aging process? Absolutely not! While no one can promise you a fountain of youth, much of what we believe about “getting old” is just not true. We all have to age, but we don’t have to get old.

The big question, though, is how to go about “aging gracefully.” Fortunately, there are some relatively straightforward answers to this question. There are some very important changes that people need to make in order to continue to enjoy their lives as they age.

The first is to optimize the digestive function and increase the body’s pH from acid to alkaline. The digestive process, to include assimilation and elimination, is the foundation of any successful anti-aging strategy. If your body cannot assimilate the nutrients you need to function, anything else you do will be fruitless. Simultaneously, an increase in alkalizing foods (primarily fruits and vegetables) can help shift the pH to the alkaline and in the process remove an important underlying cause of many disease conditions. Some people may need assistance with intelligent nutritional supplementation in the form of digestive enzymes (to increase the availability of nutrients from food one eats) and possibly even nutrients like beet root (to increase the availability of digestive acid in the stomach) or probiotics (like acidophilus, to maintain the proper floral balance in the gut track), but all this can be accomplished with little or no effort, just a willingness to change one’s habits.

The second change is to normalize the function of the endocrine system, i.e., the glands which produce the body’s hormones. In most cases, this means normalizing the function of the adrenals, those glands which permit the body to deal effectively with stress. Over time, continued stress to these important little organs can decrease the body’s ability to respond effectively to the stressors of daily life (work, illness, toxins, etc.) and, as a result, decrease its ability to fend off the effects of aging. The good news is that there are several very effective natural means available to allow one to address this issue. Using state-of-the-art assessment techniques, natural health practitioners can develop targeted, customized nutritional protocols which can help normalize the adrenals and, in the process, allow one’s own body to better normalize the entire endocrine system, as well. As a result, we can better cope with the demands of daily life without the debilitating effects of hormonal imbalances.

The third change involves something which becomes increasingly important as we age: we have to maintain our muscular strength. This cannot be accomplished by just “staying active.” The most straightforward way is to participate in resistance training exercise, usually in the form of weight training. This flies in the face of much of what we have been taught by the health care community and the popular media, i.e., that cardiovascular health is primary. Heart health is certainly important and should not be neglected, but look at it this way: it will do you no good, cardiovascularly speaking, to be

able to run the Boston Marathon if you can't get out of your own chair to do it. Strength training helps us not just tolerate aging, but ENJOY it!

Finally, one must replace the enzymes one loses over time. Between the ages of 27 and 35, our body's ability to produce enzymes decreases dramatically, and the decline continues thereafter at the rate of about ten additional percent a decade. Enzymes perform over 3,000 important functions in the body; from an anti-aging standpoint they are keys to the prevention of the buildup of fibrin in the organ systems of the body. As the fibrin continues to build, organ function continues to decline. While this is a long term strategy, it is doable, and can actually result in an improvement in organ function if followed conscientiously.

Obviously, our bodies are finite organisms, and will someday cease to function. But in the meantime, we can do some simple but critical things to permit them to function at as high a level as possible, and for as long as Nature intended. In the process, we will be able to enjoy longer, healthier, more active lives, fulfilling the promise of aging, but not growing old. Let us show you how!

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