

15 Ways to Stay Healthy After Age 50

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When you reach 50, you may feel healthy and young. However, your body needs extra care to protect it from the effects of aging.

Some familiar things take on more importance, like avoiding empty calories and getting adequate sleep. Other things like regular hearing tests may be brand new.

With a healthy lifestyle and appropriate medical care, you can lower your risk for many serious medical conditions associated with aging. Start with these 15 suggestions that will help you to stay active and strong in your 50s and beyond.

Staying Physically Healthy After Age 50:

- 1. Protect your joints.** As you age, your joints become stiffer and more brittle. You can slow the process down by losing weight, staying hydrated, and choosing exercises that are safe for your body.
- 2. Check your eyes and ears.** Most adults experience age-related hearing loss and vision changes. If you're over 50, **experts recommend eye exams at least every 2 years and hearing tests at least every 3 years.**
- 3. Mind your feet.** You may think you've stopped growing, but your feet will probably become flatter and longer at midlife. Wearing correctly fitted shoes can help keep you comfortable and active.
- 4. Schedule screenings.** Your doctor can recommend the tests you need based on your individual and family history. For adults over 50, that usually includes

blood pressure, colorectal cancer, cholesterol, and blood sugar.

5. **Deal with menopause.** The average age for menopause is 51. If hot flashes and other symptoms are disrupting your life, you may find relief through natural remedies or your doctor may recommend treatments such as hormone therapy.
6. **Build strength.** If you're inactive, you may have lost up to 5% of your muscle mass each decade since you were 30. **Fortunately, you can build new muscle by lifting weights or doing other kinds of resistance training.**
7. **Work on balance.** Preventing falls is a major part of aging safely. Doing yoga or just standing on one foot while you make coffee can train you to stay steady on your feet.
8. **Eat healthy. Choose nutrient dense foods and avoid added sugar and excess salt.** Try the Mediterranean diet or similar plans that have proven benefits for your heart and overall wellbeing.
9. **Limit alcohol.** Alcohol affects you more as you grow older. If you do drink, keep it to one drink or less daily if you're a woman and two if you're a man.
10. **Lose weight.** More than 40% of adults over 40 are clinically obese. If you're unable to reduce on your own, talk with your doctor about finding a safe strategy for you.

Staying Mentally Healthy After Age 50:

1. **Fight depression.** Midlife crisis may be a myth, but menopause and other conditions can contribute to depression. In addition to medication and talk therapy, **regular exercise may help you to feel more positive.**

2. **Prevent dementia.** Many causes of dementia are unknown, but healthy choices, like quitting smoking, provide some protection. One study found that smoking more than 40 cigarettes a day in your 50s could double your risk for Alzheimer's disease.

3. **Manage stress.** Many adults develop less resilience as they age. **You can boost your powers of recovery with physical exercise, meditation, and relaxation practices.**

4. **Connect with others.** Maybe you're single or dealing with an empty nest now that your children have moved away. Stay engaged by keeping in touch with old friends and making new contacts who share your interests.

5. **Keep learning.** Continuing your education can slow cognitive aging too. Take courses online or visit the adult education center at your local college. Travel and hobbies can also be enriching.

You may have many happy and rewarding years ahead of you if you take care of your body and mind. **Celebrate midlife by making choices that help you to thrive.**