



Strategies for Healthy Aging

It may be true that “you’re as young as you feel.” However, feeling young sometimes takes some planning.

Healthy aging is about taking care of yourself. People who are successful at aging are physically and mentally active, while also being active in their communities. Smart lifestyle choices can lead to robust health, and a positive attitude and good health habits can ensure continued well-being as we age.

Get moving

We tend to think of people slowing down and being less active as they get older. Yet, for better health, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recommends that older adults engage in at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderately intense aerobic activity a week. That’s a minimum of 30 minutes for 5 days out of the week.

In addition, HHS recommends 30 minutes of muscle-strengthening exercises (like resistance-band, weightlifting, or bodyweight-bearing exercises) at least two days a week. As one gains aerobic capacity and strength, the time periods above can be increased for even greater health benefits.

Be mentally active

- Reading
- Taking a continuing education class
- Enjoying a hobby
- Learning new skills, such as a new language
- Attending lecture series at your library or a local museum
- Enjoying puzzles, word games, and brain exercises

Stay connected

- Volunteer
- Visit friends
- Write letters
- Telephone someone you’re close with
- Stay connected through the Internet

Other keys to successful aging

- Eating well
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Going in regularly for checkups and screenings
- Keeping up with your vaccinations (flu, pneumonia, etc.)
- Avoiding things that are detrimental to your health such as:
 - Smoking and other tobacco use
 - Too much salt/sodium
 - Fatty foods
 - Excess alcohol
 - Added sugars
 - Elevated stress levels



No matter what your age, healthy lifestyle choices can bring more vibrancy to each day—so begin to be an active participant in your health. The goal is to stay healthy, productive, and engaged—enjoying every minute of life.

Recovering from “Slip Ups”

Staying motivated and focused on healthy lifestyle goals can become challenging over time

What is a “slip up”?

A slip up is a mistake or momentary setback from your plan or goal. For example, missing your workout for a few days or consuming more calories than you planned are slip ups. Remember that a slip up can be a one-time experience and does not signal an inevitable downward spiral.

Prevent slips

The first step in preventing slip ups is to identify situations in which you expect to have difficulty maintaining your new habits. Think back and identify situations in which you remember having a particularly difficult time coping. Then, list each situation on a sheet of paper.

For each high-risk situation you list, develop strategies that could help you cope with that same situation in the future.

The cornerstone of behavior change—and a good way to prevent slip ups—is self-monitoring (e.g., journaling, tracking, or writing). Keep track of the foods you eat, how much exercise you do, and the triggers that trip you up.

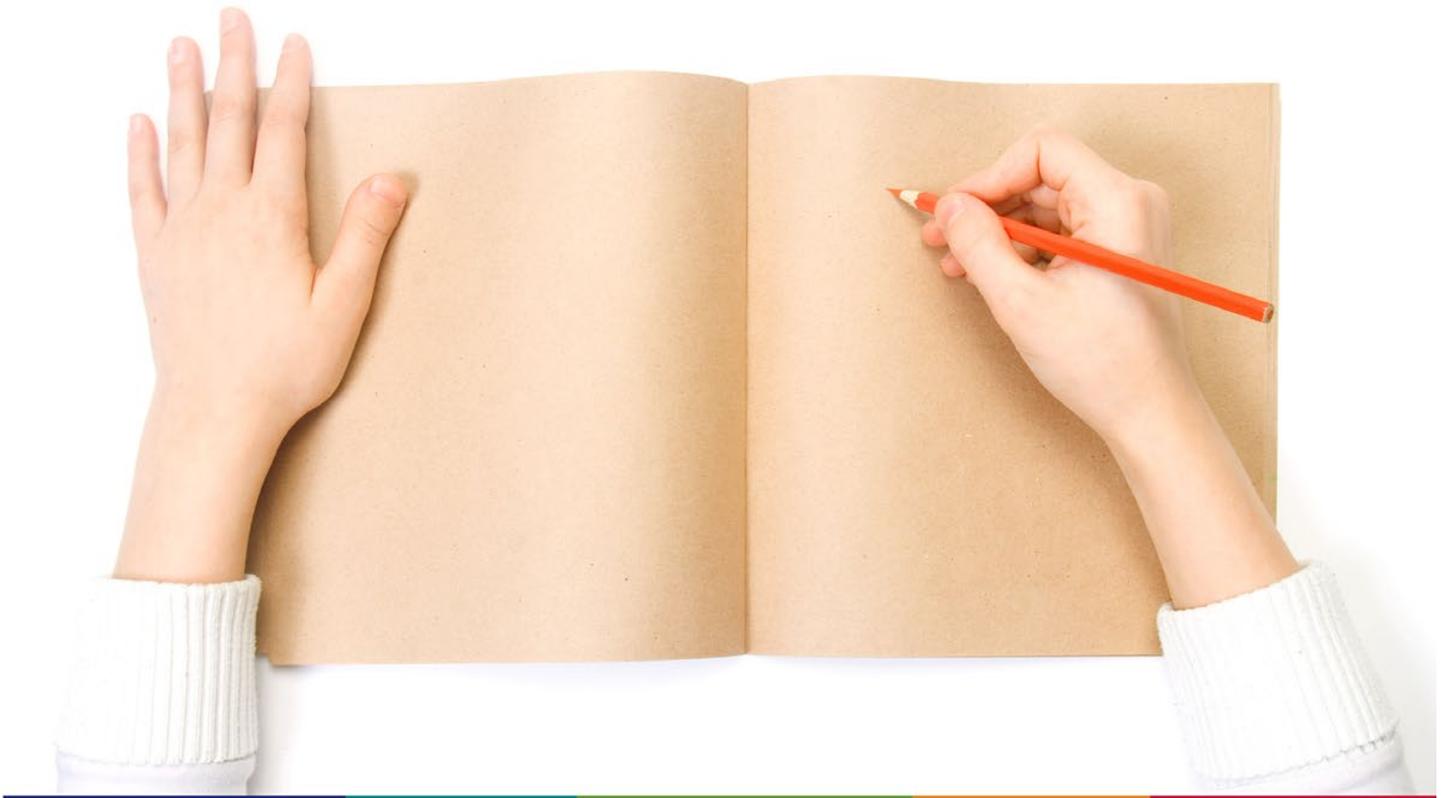
Writing something down keeps you accountable and allows you to discover subtle roadblocks that can hinder your efforts to change—it can also give you reason to celebrate when you see how well you're doing.

Control your response to slips

While you can prevent many slip ups by planning ahead, you cannot prevent them all. Although you will have slip ups, it doesn't need to mean failure. While there will always be times when you don't do as well as you'd like, your response to a slip up is critical to sustaining your behavior change.

If you view the slip as a total return to old habits, you are more likely to give up on your goal. It is better to view a slip up productively, as an opportunity for learning, and as a signal for more careful planning to avoid future slip ups.

An old Japanese proverb says, “Fall seven times; stand up eight.” Obstacles and relapses are perfectly normal and should be expected during the process of making behavior changes. The most important thing is learning that if you slip up, you *can* get back on track.



7 Ways to Be More Resilient

Resilience is about thriving, not just surviving. It's a tool for participating as fully as possible in life—getting back on your feet even after life has thrown you a curveball.

1. Build up your reserves

Having good resilience is often about having good reserves—of energy, patience, nutrition, sleep, etc. These reserves can be built up by:

- Getting quality sleep on a regular basis
- Eating well – choose nutrient-rich foods that add to your health reserves
- Having occasional downtime – taking five minutes to yourself here or there (without activity or electronics)
- Training your mind and emotions – practicing deep relaxation and meditation can help you naturally become less reactive and more patient
- Connecting with others – spending quality time with friends and loved ones can be beneficial to your psychological and physical health

2. Create space

Having resilience doesn't mean, however, taking it on the chin or keeping a stiff upper lip. You may become overwhelmed. These are the times when you may need to back away, regroup, and reassess.

3. Get the help you need

Sometimes, you need outside help. It could be anything from asking your spouse to take care of the kids, to seeking professional help to work out emotional or psychological issues.

4. Choose wisely

While it's important to connect with others, it's equally important to cultivate those relationships that make you feel good about yourself. This may mean spending less time with those that don't promote your emotional and mental health.

5. Take a creative and flexible approach

Instead of using your usual tactics for solving a problem, try a totally new strategy—you may be surprised when it works out better.

6. Checking your ego at the door

Not taking things personally can often help lessen the impact of an event—such as bumping into someone. If you look at the situation objectively, for example, you may see that the other person collided with you accidentally. Giving yourself distance from the situation can help you get a clearer picture.

7. Play the hand you've been dealt

Of course, things could be better. But, situations that look like a “losing hand” can turn around if “played” skillfully. Stay in the game.



Going Gluten-Free

Gluten-free eating can help many people who must deal daily with the complications of celiac disease.

Gluten-free items are popping up in bakeries, grocery store aisles, and even on the menus in many restaurants. These new dining choices can make life easier for the approximately two million Americans coping with celiac disease.

What is celiac disease?

Celiac disease is an autoimmune disorder that typically occurs in people genetically predisposed to the disease. With celiac disease, the digestive system has an immune response to the gluten found in wheat, rye, and barley. The body's reaction to the gluten causes discomfort in the gastrointestinal tract and can lead to damage of the mucus membranes of the small intestines. This damage can lead to poor absorption of some key nutrients, including iron.

Some of the common symptoms of celiac disease are:

- Abdominal pain or bloating
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Weight loss
- Bone or joint pain
- Fatigue
- Depression or anxiety

People with celiac disease may have one or many of the symptoms above. The symptoms associated with celiac disease may also be caused by other diseases or disorders, you and your health care provider can explore the cause of your current symptoms and hopefully get to their root cause.

Things to avoid

If you're having an immune response to gluten, stay away from foods and products that contain:

- Wheat
- Rye
- Barley

If you're highly sensitive to gluten, be careful of cross-contamination. Even though the listed ingredients of what you're eating may not explicitly contain gluten, the facility where the product was processed may have handled food products that have gluten in them.

Reading labels

Wheat is now regularly listed as an allergen—along with milk, eggs, peanuts, soy, and tree nuts. Nonetheless, it makes sense to carefully read the label of anything that you buy to ensure wheat, rye, or barley are not listed among the ingredients.

Do your homework

Depending on your level of sensitivity to gluten, you may have to also be cautious of other products you consume—like vitamins and supplements, or even lipsticks and lip balms—that might have gluten in them.

