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VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ *Newsletter*

Because Making Smart Choices About Your Money Impacts The Quality of Your Life

Over the years, we have found that there are elements of your life that are more important than money. These elements - Physical Health, Relationship Health, Inner Health and Career Health - cannot be delegated.

We hope that you find these articles to be of value in improving the quality of your life.

“We ‘mind the gap’ between where you are now and where you dream to be.”



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“Spring work is going on with joyful enthusiasm.”

- John Muir

PHYSICAL HEALTH

8 Foods Older Adults Should Avoid Eating

By Sun Health Communities

Food plays a central role in all of our lives. Eating is both a way to sustain ourselves and an important part of our culture. People often mark major life events with a large feast—from wedding cakes to birthday cakes, beautiful holiday spreads with family to casual lunches with friends. Who doesn’t look forward to a great meal?

But as you age, your eating habits may change. Perhaps you are restricted to a special diet after developing an allergy or other condition. And over time, life changes may make it more challenging to shop for and prepare regular meals. But there’s one thing that will never change: the importance of healthy eating. You may already know foods you should include in a healthy diet, but do you know what you should avoid?

Here are eight foods that you should cut down on (or avoid eating altogether) as you get older, and why:

1. Raw or Undercooked Eggs, Meat, and Poultry

Undercooked foods such as eggs, meat, poultry, and sushi can cause food poisoning, which can trigger sepsis and septic shock. Although anyone can develop infection and sepsis, seniors are at higher risk.

2. Grapefruit

If you take certain medications to treat high blood pressure, anxiety, or insomnia, you may have been advised not to eat grapefruit. The reason is because

grapefruit and grapefruit juice can intensify the effects of some drugs, potentially making them dangerous. If your medication label says to avoid grapefruit, it is important to heed this warning.

3. High-Sodium Foods

Too much salt can be a problem for older adults, especially if you have a history of hypertension. If your food is lacking flavor, try adding different types of herbs and spices rather than loading up with table salt. Additionally, always review the sodium content on nutritional labels. According to experts from the National Academies of Sciences, Health and Medicine Division, seniors over 71 should limit their sodium intake to no more than 1.2 grams per day.

4. Caffeine

Caffeine not only keeps many people from getting a good night’s sleep, it may increase anxiety and make your heart beat more quickly or irregularly. This could be dangerous if you have a heart condition. Aside from coffee, caffeine is also found in many teas, some sodas, chocolate, and even some medications, including over-the-counter pain killers.

5. Sodas and Sugary Drinks

An ice-cold cola may seem tempting if you’re hot and thirsty, but sodas and many sports drinks contain a large

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RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

9 Ways to Meet New People in Your Neighborhood

By Lindsay Smith

Moving is a stressful life event in more ways than one, and making new friends is one of the scariest parts of a big relocation. When I moved across the country from Iowa to Oregon, my first big scare was when I realized I didn't have my best friends to lean on anymore – I was all alone (cue sad music).

What I came to realize, though, is that there really are a lot of easy ways to meet new people in your neighborhood, whether you've just moved or you're simply looking for some new friends to hang out with – it just takes courage, determination, and a few motivational pep talks in the mirror. Here's how to meet new people in your neighborhood:

1. Suggest After-Work Happy Hour

Some of the first people you'll meet after relocating are your co-workers, so try getting to know the people you'll be interacting with every day. Not only will this make work more fun, but you'll hopefully get to know some similarly-minded people who could end up being great friends.

Send out an email or suggest to a few close teammates that you should all go to a nearby happy hour after work. And if you enjoy each other's company, make it a weekly ritual.

2. Be a Friendly Neighbor

If you're moving into an apartment, there are dozens of people in your building who could potentially become friends. Say "hello" to anyone you pass in the hall, and introduce yourself personally to those in the apartments adjacent to yours.

Also, if your building hosts any get-togethers or events, make sure you try to take part – you'll be able to meet even more residents that way!

3. Use Your Dog

I know you love your dog like a child, but that doesn't mean you can't use him to meet new

people. Take Fido to the dog park and other dog-friendly neighborhood spots where you're likely to meet some other animal lovers.

If you make a connection, set up a play date. You can even try to connect with other dog owners who live in your building when you take Fido out for a bathroom break.

4. Take Advantage of That Friend of a Friend

Everybody knows somebody who knows somebody who "lives just a few blocks from you." Take advantage of that!

*"Count your age by friends,
not years. Count your life
by smiles, not tears."*

- John Lennon

People are almost always happy to make introductions, and the connection, however roundabout, will be a great icebreaker when you and that friend of a friend hang out for the first time.

5. Volunteer

If you have a cause you love, getting involved is one of the best ways to meet new people with similar values and interests – plus it feels great to spend time helping an organization you care about.

Look for volunteer opportunities in your neighborhood or city, and try to join in whenever you have some free time.

6. Get Online

While you shouldn't rely on only the Internet to make friends, there are a few good websites that can come in handy when you move to a new neighborhood. Try perusing Meetup.com,

which allows users to create groups that meet regularly around the city.

You'll find groups of singles, volunteers, yogis, photographers, and almost any other type of person you can think of. Look for a group of people doing something you're interested in, and sign up to get alerts whenever they're hosting a new meetup.

7. Take a Class or Join a Team

Classes and teams make meeting people easy, especially when they involve group discussions and activities. If you play a sport, look for a league in your neighborhood. If you've always wanted to be a comedian, take an improv class.

8. Become a Regular

Is there a coffee shop down the block you can work in or a dive bar that offers amazing drink specials? If there's a great neighborhood spot nearby, you can bet there will be plenty of neighborhood regulars who frequent the establishment.

Spend a little time there and start conversing with some of the familiar faces you see often – you'll have at least a few acquaintances in no time.

9. Never Turn Someone Down

Of all the ways to meet new people, the most important is this: Never turn down an invitation if you're free.

While cozying up in your apartment with Netflix and a pint of Ben & Jerry's may sound great, if you don't accept invitations, people may be a little less likely to continue extending them in the future.

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INNER HEALTH

7 Tips to Live a Happier Life

By Mayo Clinic Health System Staff

Do you wake up feeling sluggish most mornings? Have caffeinated beverages become a necessity to help power you through the day? If this sounds familiar, it's time to ditch the quick fixes you rely on, and develop an energy management plan. Getting started may seem daunting, but soon you'll be energized to keep going once you reap the benefits of a happier, healthier, and more productive lifestyle.

What Is Energy Management?

Think of your energy as a limited resource, like money in an account. You begin the day with a certain amount to spend, which varies from person to person based on factors, such as age, sleep, stress levels, medical conditions, and lifestyle. Throughout your day, multiple transactions (activities) occur as you withdraw energy from and deposit energy into your account. While you may not always have control over activities that deplete your energy, you can take steps to deposit more energy into your account.

Follow these 7 tips to increase your energy and live a happier, healthier, more productive life.

1. Eat Nourishing Food

We all know that wholesome food is the crux for well-being, but it's common to regard healthy eating primarily as a tool for weight loss. However, according to the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, a balanced diet high in fruits and vegetables, lean protein, low-fat dairy, and whole grains is what you need for optimal energy. After all, you really are what you eat to some extent. Consume a variety of foods from all the food groups to get a range of nutrients to energize you throughout the day. Opt for fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, especially nutrient-dense dark, leafy greens and broccoli, as well as orange vegetables, including carrots and sweet potatoes. There are many types of fish and legumes to choose from for healthy protein options. Aim to eat 3 ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, rice or pasta daily.

2. Sleep Seven to Eight Hours a Night

Getting more sleep seems to be a healthy habit many people need to improve on. We already know that we need at least seven hours of shut-eye each night, so what prevents us from getting it? Think about how you can improve your biggest sleep disruptors and know this: Sleep deprivation can perpetuate serious health conditions, as well as negatively affect your mood, motivation, and energy levels. Prioritizing sleep is one of the best things you can do to set yourself up for a successful, energized day.

3. Keep Company with Good People

Maximize the amount of time that you spend with people you enjoy being around.

"For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Connecting with others who radiate positivity and have similar interests will excite and energize you. On the flip side, people you don't relate to or who have negative outlooks, complain often, or make poor choices will only drain your energy account. Be selective in the company you keep.

4. Avoid News Overdose

The news is an important way to stay connected to what's happening in the world. It can be educational, entertaining and even uplifting. Unfortunately, the news too frequently is bombarded with stories of suffering. These stories can skew your view of the world and cause you to focus on your worst fears instead of recognizing the good that surrounds you. You can't avoid these stories altogether, but try to minimize your exposure when you can, especially during trying times.

5. Get Regular Exercise

Do you find yourself feeling lethargic halfway through the day? Have you ever gotten winded by simple everyday duties, such as grocery shopping or household chores? Contrary to what you might believe, getting the 150 minutes of weekly activity recommended by the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans can add to your energy account and not subtract from it. How? Exercise relieves stress and tension, strengthens muscles and boosts endurance, which helps your body to work more efficiently during other physical tasks or activities.

6. Do Something Meaningful Each Day

What do you feel passionate about? Do you have a special talent that you'd like to practice more often or share with others? Do something you enjoy every day, even if it's something as simple as cooking a healthy meal or listening to your favorite song. Putting effort into the things that matter most to you will help you utilize and reserve your energy in ways that will bring out the best in you.

7. Think Good Thoughts for Others

Maintaining a compassionate mindset is another way to conserve energy. One example of practicing this way of thinking is called *kind attention*. For example, try to make eye contact with a stranger and smile, while thinking "I wish you well." This positive act can, instead, keep you from judging that person. Judging others can cause us to place judgment on ourselves, and that type of negative internal dialogue can be exhausting.

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CAREER HEALTH

How to Make a Career Choice When You Are Undecided

By Dawn Rosenberg Mckay

With thousands of options, how will you choose a career that's right for you? If you don't have any idea what you want to do, the task may seem insurmountable. Fortunately, it isn't. Follow an organized process and you will increase your chances of making a good decision.

1. Assess Yourself

Before you can choose the right career, you must learn about yourself. Your values, interests, soft skills, and aptitudes, in combination with your personality type, make some occupations a good fit for you and others completely inappropriate.

Use self-assessment tools and career tests to gather information about your traits and subsequently, generate a list of occupations that are a good fit based on them. Some people choose to work with a career counselor or other career development professionals who can help them navigate this process.

2. Make a List of Occupations to Explore

You probably have multiple lists of occupations in front of you at this point—one generated by each of the self-assessment tools you used. To keep yourself organized, you should combine them into one master list.

First, look for careers that appear on multiple lists and copy them onto a blank page. Title it "Occupations to Explore." Your self-assessments indicated they are a good fit for you based on several of your traits, so they're definitely worth exploring.

Next, find any occupations on your lists that appeal to you. They may be careers you know a bit about and want to explore further. Also, include professions about which you don't know much. You might learn something unexpected.

3. Explore the Occupations on Your List

At this point, you'll be thrilled you managed to narrow your list down to only 10 to 20 options. Now you can get some basic information about each of the occupations on your list.

Find job descriptions, educational training, and licensing requirements in published sources. Learn about advancement opportunities. Use government-produced labor market information to get data about earnings and job outlook.

4. Create a "Short List"

Now you have more information, start to narrow down your list even further. Based on what you learned from your research so far, begin eliminating the careers you don't want to pursue any further. You should end up with two to five occupations on your "short list."

If your reasons for finding a career unacceptable

are non-negotiable, cross it off your list. Remove everything with duties that don't appeal to you. Eliminate careers that have weak job outlooks. Get rid of any occupation if you are unable or unwilling to fulfill the educational or other requirements, or if you lack some of the soft skills necessary to succeed in it.

5. Conduct Informational Interviews

When you have only a few occupations left on your list, start doing more in-depth research. Arrange to meet with people who work in the occupations in which you are interested. They can provide firsthand knowledge about the careers on your short list. Access your network, including LinkedIn, to find people with whom to have these informational interviews.

6. Make Your Career Choice

Finally, after doing all your research, you are probably ready to make your choice. Pick the occupation that you think will bring you the most satisfaction based on all the information you have gathered. Realize that you are allowed do-overs if you change your mind about your choice at any point in your life. Many people change their careers at least a few times.

7. Identify Your Goals

Once you make a decision, identify your long- and short-term goals. This helps to chart a course toward eventually landing work in your chosen field. Long-term goals typically take about three to five years to reach, while you can usually fulfill a short-term goal in six months to three years.

Let the research you did about required education and training be your guide. If you don't have all the details, do some more research. Once you have all the information you need, set your goals. An example of a long-term goal would be completing your education and training. Short-term goals include applying to college, apprenticeships, other training programs, and internships.

8. Write a Career Action Plan

Put together a career action plan, a written document that lays out all the steps you will have to take to reach your goals. Think of it as a road map that will take you from point A to B, then to C and D. Write down all your short- and long-term goals and the steps you will have to take to reach each one. Include any anticipated barriers that could get in the way of achieving your goals—and the ways you can overcome them.

This may sound like a lot of work—and it is. But it's much easier to forge a career path when you know what you want. Taking these steps early will save you a lot of struggle and uncertainty in the long run.

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8 Foods Older Adults Should Avoid...

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amount of sugar. A cola can contain 39 grams of sugar in one 12-ounce serving, the equivalent of almost 10 teaspoons of sugar! If you have prediabetes, regular consumption of these types of drinks may raise your blood sugar leading to a diagnosis of diabetes. Excess sugar also leads to obesity and other health issues.

6. "Sugar-Free" Drinks

At first glance, a drink or food product containing an artificial sweetener might seem to be a good alternative to products high in sugar, but they aren't. Research has shown that artificial sweeteners contribute to weight gain and cause other health problems. Although the calories may be lower, you may be tempted to consume more of these products to satisfy a sweet tooth.

7. Alcoholic Beverages

Enjoying an occasional alcoholic beverage is harmless for many people. However, if you live with a chronic illness, such as diabetes, or you take certain types of medications, such as antihistamines, painkillers (analgesics), and medications for hypertension (high blood pressure), alcohol should be avoided.

8. Foods with Empty Calories

Easy and fast foods, such as doughnuts and french fries, may satisfy your hunger pangs—but they won't provide you with much-needed nutrients. Because many seniors become naturally less active as they get older, it becomes much more difficult to work off extra calories.

Eating a healthy diet is always a good idea, but as you get older, it can be even more important. By reducing or avoiding your intake of these foods, you can feel better and make your doctor happy, too.

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