**Keys to Embracing Aging**

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**Radio Consumer Tips**

1. **Positive Attitude**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 second tip:**

The power of our mind over our body is amazing. Attitude is everything. You can sit around thinking about what does not work anymore, or dwell over the meaning of existence and how time is running out…but these scenarios are not going to allow you to age successfully.

Maintaining a positive attitude is necessary for optimal aging. A positive attitude gives you the strength of mind to put into action the adjustments that will be beneficial for coping with age-related changes.

In the past, successful aging was based on being disease and disability free. But today, we know that your own self-perception about aging and how you personally define health, or successful aging, is crucial to aging well.

Part of a good attitude, is accepting change…and this is not just the changes of old age…but accepting that life will not stay the same throughout your life course. The process of aging, which starts at conception, changes everyone! If you are inflexible in your thinking, you are more likely to feel stress and strain, which can lead to feeling overwhelmed. When you are overwhelmed, it is more difficult to manage change and you are more susceptible to becoming depressed.

A second key to having a good attitude starts with doing things that you make you happy. Life is too short to spend it doing things or with people who don’t make you happy.

**30 second tip:**

Maintaining a positive attitude is necessary for optimal aging. Your own self-perception about aging, aging stereotypes, and how you personally define health, or successful aging, is crucial to aging well.

Part of a good attitude includes the ability to accept the variety of changes that occur throughout your life course. A positive attitude also stems from doing things that you make you happy. Life is too short to spend it doing things or spending it with people who don’t make you happy.

1. **Eating Smart and Healthy**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 second tip:**

Diets high in saturated fat can lead to clogged arteries and are associated with higher risks for heart attacks, strokes, and even Alzheimer’s disease. To help cut back on fat and cholesterol, try to bake or grill food instead of frying. In addition, a diet high in unsaturated fats may help to protect your body from bad cholesterol. These better fats are found in fish, olive oil, and many nuts and seeds including almonds, pecans, and walnuts.

Eating foods high in antioxidants also helps to protect the brain and heart (Alzheimer’s Association, 2009). Antioxidants help prevent and repair damaged cells in the body and fight health problems including heart disease, macular degeneration, diabetes, and cancer. Foods high in antioxidants include: citrus and bright-colored fruits, dark-colored vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds, cold water fish and shellfish.

In addition to good nutrition, it is also important for seniors to be aware of their calories. Adults need fewer calories as they age. For example, a non-active female 51+ years and older, needs approximately 1,600 calories while a non-active 51+ year male requires approximately 2,000. Active females should consume 2000-2200 calories/day and active males 2400-2800 calories (American Heart Association, 2010).

Improving your diet as a senior may be as easy as including lots of color in the diet and lots of physical activity on a daily basis.

**30 second tip:**

A healthy diet is a prerequisite for optimal health throughout life and into old age. Two big factors that contribute toward a healthy aging diet is choosing foods lower in fat and cholesterol and foods higher in antioxidants.

In addition to good nutrition, it is also important for seniors to be aware of their calories. Older adults need fewer calories as they age. For example, an active female, 40-year old female needs about 2200 calories, but an active 60 year old female needs only about 2,000.

Improving your diet as a senior may be as easy as including lots of color in the diet and lots of physical activity on a daily basis.

**Resource/Reviewer:**

Sandra Bastin, PhD, RD, LD, CCE

Alzheimer’s Association (2009).

American Heart Association (2010) Retrieved from www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3040366

1. **Physical Activity**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 second tip:**

Adults and senior adults should strive for a minimum of 150 minutes of exercise per week in segments of at least 10 minutes in length. This may sound like a lot of exercise, but if you break it down, 150 minutes is equivalent to 20 minutes of exercise a day for 7 days a week, 30 minutes of exercise a day for 5 days a week, or 50 minutes of exercise a day for 3 days a week. When you think about achieving your exercise goal in short 10-minute bouts, exercise seems much easier to accomplish!

To achieve the full benefit of physical activity, there are four types of recommended exercise—BALANCE, ENDURANCE, STRENGTH TRAINING, and STRETCHING. Balance exercises build leg muscles and help adults focus on stability. Endurance exercises help increase breathing and heart rate. Strength training makes you stronger by building muscle and stretching keeps your body flexible by stretching the muscles and tissues that hold your bones together.

**Sources:**

Traywick, L. S. (2011). U of AR Cooperative Extension, Potty Points

A Matter of Balance

National Institute on Aging

1. **Brain Activity**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second tip:**

The brain plays a critical role in all that you do. But if you don’t use it, you lose it. This means that the health and function of the brain can improve with proper brain exercise (Swaab, et al., 2002). Brain exercise includes: mental stimulation, social and physical activity. Mental stimulation is about staying curious and involved. You can remain mentally active through reading, writing, playing games, attending events, and gardening. Social activity should stimulate the mind and body, provide emotional support and contribute to personal relationships. You can be socially active at school, in the work place or while volunteering. Clubs, cultural activities, and travel are also outlets for social activity. Exercise does not have to be strenuous for a healthy brain. But staying physically fit does help to maintain blood flow to the brain and encourages new brain cells. Exercise also protects against heart attack, stroke, diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

The combination of physical and mental activity with social engagement — and a brain-healthy diet — is more effective than any of these factors alone.

**30 second tip:**

The brain is an organ that thinks and grows by interacting with the world. Therefore it is just as important to keep your brain in shape as it is to keep your body fit. The brain plays a critical role in all that you do. It controls thinking, feeling, remembering, working, playing and sleeping. But if you don’t use it, you lose it. This means that the health and function of the brain can improve with proper brain exercise (Swaab, et al., 2002). It is easy and fun to maintain an active brain. Brain exercise includes: reading and writing, learning new things, and social, leisure, and physical activity. Maintaining an active brain can even provide some protection against diseases such as Alzheimer’s and other dementias.

References:

Swaab D.F., Dubelaar, E.J., Hofman, M.A., Scherder, E.J., van Someren, E.J., & Verwer, R.W. (2002). Brain aging and Alzheimer's disease; use it or lose it. *Prog Brain Res,138*, 343-73.

Hosier, Downer, Zanjani, & Watkins. (2012). Memory Banking.

1. **Social Activity**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second tip:**

Social activity makes physical and mental activity more fun. It also reduces stress levels. But did you know that social activity also helps to maintain a healthy brain and heart and can enhance your immune system to help fight infection and disease? According to the National Institute on Aging, people who maintain strong social connections with friends, loved ones and confidants also have lower risks of illness, including heart disease and Alzheimer’s disease. Older adults who lose meaningful relationships with people are at greater risk of becoming depressed, marginalized by society, losing their physical and mental vitality, and entering long term care.

Social connections are key to improved health and perceived well-being. In fact, lifestyles that include stimulating mental activity, especially in the terms of social interaction, are associated with successful aging (AARP: Engage you Brain, 2006).

Ways to seek social connections vary from close personal relationships and emotional support, to sports and cultural activities. Staying active through work or volunteering, participating in clubs and travel are also means that promote social activity (Alzheimer’s Association, 2011).

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References:

AARP (2006): Engage Your Brain

Alzheimer’s Association (2011). Remain socially active. Retrieved from www.alz.org/we\_can\_help\_remain\_socially\_active.asp

National Institute on Aging (2009). Participating in activities you enjoy – more than just fun and games. Retrieved from www.nia.nih.gov/NR/rdonlyres/63735317-0100-48DE-AABD-BA4F5344F633/13249/NIATipSheet\_PARTICIPATING\_09SEPT4FINAL.pdf

1. **Tuning-in to the times**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second tip:**

Can’t teach an old dog a new trick? Not so fast. Contrary to popular belief, many centenarians--people who are 100 years old and older—stay in tune to the times and love it. Increasing reports demonstrate that a key to successful aging is to tune in to trends and current events. In regards to entertainment, this may include watching reality television, playing interactive video games, or downloading music online. Many centenarians are savvy with the latest technology. They are able to surf the internet, Skype, or participate in social media. When it comes to the news and current events, older adults are turning to their televisions and even computers for on-line news. Keeping up with the times keeps you responsive and your mind sharp. It encourages social interaction and can help you better engage with younger, more technology-friendly generations.

iPods, smart phones, and the Wii?!? Such technology defines the current times in which we are living. And while immersing yourself in this world might seem overwhelming, it can also be a fun and exciting learning experience—an experience that can even help you embrace aging.

Reference:

Reuters (2007). Keeping up with the times key to successful aging. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/2007/04/03/us-centenarians-idUSL032236420070403

1. **Safety**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second tip:**

Seniors are a target for scams, whether it is for unbelievable investment returns, fraudulent sweepstakes prizes, or a call from who you think is a grandchild in distress. Unfortuneately, there’s no end to the creativity of scam artists. Senior scams can happen by phone, mail, in person, or, increasingly on the Internet. They happen to the wealthy as well as those with limited means. While scams can and do affect all age groups, seniors remain an attractive target, in part because they are trusting. By staying alert and becoming aware of common senior scam tricks, you can take action to help avoid scams.

To help protect yourself from scams, never give out personal information, such as your social security number or bank information to anyone who shows up at your door or calls on the phone. Never send money in the mail, even to a grandchild, before confirming that child’s whereabouts. To avoid funeral scams, avoid the emotional pressure to spend by pre-planning.

Be cautious of “free” deals where you must pay for taxes or shipping and handling. As a general rule, if you are receiving something for free, the company sponsoring the gift will pay the taxes/shipping.

To avoid health scams, always work with your doctor or other reputable health professional for any medications or equipment you are needing. Never give out your Medicare Health Insurer Claim Number and don’t allow anyone, except appropriate medical professionals review your records or recommend services.

For home repairs, use the services of reputable licensed contractors or those who were recommended vs. on-the-spot repairs.

Lastly, if you are feeling pressured by telemarketers, hang up! If they keep calling, tell them you are calling the police and then do so.

Reference:

National Council on Safety (2012).

1. **Know Your Health Numbers**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second Tip:**

As an aging adult, you can reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke while contributing to brain health by managing 3 numbers: your weight, blood pressure, and cholesterol (AARP—Tips for a Healthy Brain (2006); Alzheimer’s Association, 2009).

To stay healthy into old age, it is important to manage your weight by paying attention to your waist circumference, and Body Mass Index (BMI).

* Your BMI should fall between 18.5 and 24.9
* Waist Circumference should measure no more than 40” for men and 35” for women

You should also pay attention to Risk Factors for Diseases and Conditions Associated with Obesity.

Blood pressure is a key to heart health, but with few symptoms, high blood pressure is known as the “silent killer.” A healthy diet and weight, regular physical activity, managing stress, and not smoking can help reduce your risk for developing high blood pressure. Physicians can also prescribe medications.

High cholesterol leads to clogged arteries and a greater risk for heart attack, stroke, and even Alzheimer’s disease. To help cut back on bad cholesterol, try to bake or grill food instead of frying it. Eating unsaturated fats, found in fish, olive oil and many nuts and seeds may also help to protect your body.

All adults should have their blood pressure, cholesterol, and weight checked regularly. If you are at high risk for diabetes, it is also important to check your blood sugar.

Resources/Reviewers:

Alzheimer’s Association (2009).

AARP (2006): Tips for a Healthy Brain

Sandra Bastin, PhD, RD, LD, CCE

1. **Stress Management**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second Tip:**

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of life’s stressors. This is not as easy as it sounds as sometimes the sources of stress are not so obvious. We tend to overlook stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. For example, it might be your time management that causes stress—NOT the demands of your duty! To identify true sources of stress, it is important to look at your habits, attitude and excuses. Unhealthy coping strategies such as smoking, sleeping too much, over or under eating…even lashing out at people or withdrawing can compound problems. Healthier methods to manage and cope with stress require change. You can either change your reaction or change the situation.

In addition to a take-charge approach and positive attitude, you can reduce stress by nurturing yourself with a healthy lifestyle and by making time for fun and relaxation. This will help you be in a better place when life’s stressors come knocking.

**30 Second tip:**

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In addition to a take-charge approach and positive attitude, you can reduce stress by nurturing yourself with a healthy lifestyle and by making time for fun and relaxation.

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Mayo Clinic. (2012). Stress Management. Retrieved 8/26/12 from www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress/SR00001

# Smith. M., & Segal., M.A. (2012). Stress Management: How to Reduce, prevent, and Cope with Stress. Retrieved 8/1/12 from [www.helpguide.org/mental/stress\_management\_relief\_coping.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm)

1. **Financial Affairs**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second tip:**

**Financial planning across the life course is influenced by many expected and unexpected factors. Values, goals, personal choices, major life events, lifestyle conditions and needs will influence your financial plan. But for the most part, certain age groups tend to have the same life cycle needs. High school kids for example, are planning for independence and evaluating future financial needs and resources. Young adults are training for a career, earning financial independence, and developing a personal financial identity. With marriage and children comes education funds, career expansion, and increased need for credit. In middle age, people may be investing, updating retirement plans or creating estate plans. Finally, older adults will re-evaluate and adjust living conditions and spending as related to health and income.**

**Despite your life stage, it may likely seen that** there is never enough money in the bank. Therefore, you need to plan. Financial planning will help you be able to make large purchases without adding to the financial stress in your budget, help you protect your household against the unforeseen loss of income, and in the case of successful aging, help you retire with enough money to meet your expenses. Budget development, money management, wise credit use, and consumer protection can contribute to successful financial management.

References:

Connerly, L. (2010) “Build Your Savings” FSFCS43 University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service.

eXtension. (2010). Sizing up your financial situation. Retrieved Dec. 20, 2011 from [www.extension.org/pages/17955/sizing-up-your-financial-situation](http://www.extension.org/pages/17955/sizing-up-your-financial-situation%20%20)

eXtension. (2011). Credit Management. Retrieved Dec. 20, 2011 from

[www.extension.org/pages/11288/credit-management](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cltraywick%5CMy%20Documents%5CKeys%20to%20Aging%5CFinal%20Keys%5CPubs%5Cwww.extension.org%5Cpages%5C11288%5Ccredit-management)

1. **Sleep**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second tip:**

Sleep is important throughout the lifespan. Without enough sleep your brain has trouble committing new information to memory. Sleep deprivation may cause weight gain and affect the way your body processes and stores carbohydrates. Serious sleep disorders have been linked to hypertension, increased stress hormone levels, and irregular heartbeat. Lack of sleep alters immune function, including the ability of some cells to fight disease, like certain cancers. Sleep debt contributes to daytime sleepiness. Such lapses may cause falls, medication errors or vehicle accidents. Sleep loss causes irritability, moodiness, and an inability to concentrate. Too little sleep can leave you too tired to do the things you like to do.

The promotion of regular sleep is known as sleep hygiene. For healthy aging and simple sleep hygiene it is a good idea to go to bed at the same time each night, and rise at the same time each morning. It is important to sleep in a quiet, dark, and relaxing environment, which is neither too hot nor too cold. For good sleep, your bed should be comfortable and used only for sleeping--not for other activities, such as watching TV or working. While physical activity and healthy nutrition is good for you, exercise and large meals should be avoided within a few hours of bedtime.

References:

National Institute on Aging. Senior Health: Sleep and Aging. Retrieved 6/18/10 from: http://nihseniorhealth.gov/sleepandaging/faq/faqlist.html

Traywick, LaVona. University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

1. **Taking Time for You**

My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County

**60 Second tip:**

One of the keys to living a long and healthy life is to take time for yourself. The American Heart Association recommends making a conscious decision to do something every day that you enjoy. Whether it is reading a book, listening to music, crafts, gardening, or testing new recipes-- taking time for yourself, even if it’s for just 10 minutes a day, can reduce stress and help you feel more energized. It can also increase productivity, enhance relationships, and contribute to positive self-esteem (AHA, 2011).

To take time for you, it is important to identify things that are important to you in addition to things that you value or feel passionate about. It can be helpful to write down your values and long- and short-term goals. Identifying what you value and feel passionate about, helps you prioritize setting aside time for those things.

Sometimes a bucket list—a list of life goals, can act as a road map for “me time” today and into the future. Bucket lists can be more than skydiving and traveling the world. A bucket list can and should encourage a range of aspirations.

Today’s world is busy and sometimes taking time for yourself is hard to do. But you are worth it. You are important. …and you deserve at least 10-15 minutes of “me time” daily for your own well-being.

Reference:

American Heart Association (AHA) (2011). Top 10 tips to refresh yourself. Retrieved from www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Caregiver/Refresh/Top10TipstoRefreshYourself/Top-10-Tips- to-Refresh-Yourself\_UCM\_301810\_Article.jspa