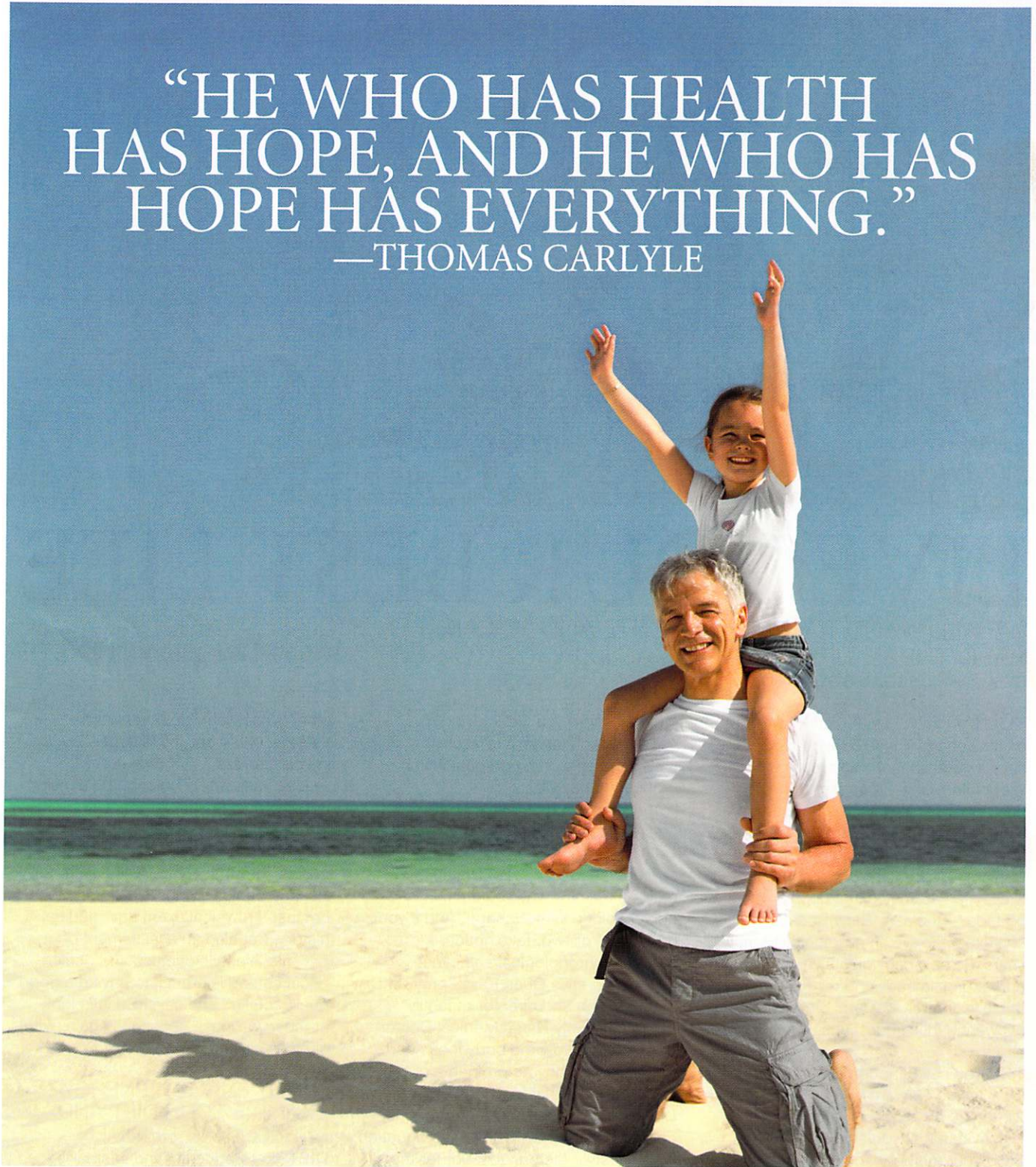


IN GOOD HEALTH

YOUR BEST YEARS? + BEAT BURNOUT + WHAT'S UP WITH FEET

“HE WHO HAS HEALTH
HAS HOPE, AND HE WHO HAS
HOPE HAS EVERYTHING.”

—THOMAS CARLYLE



ISTOCK



LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE

WE ALL WANT TO STAY HEALTHY AND YOUNG-FEELING AS WE AGE. HEED THESE TIPS FROM LOCAL EXPERTS TO KEEP THAT SPRING IN YOUR STEP
 BY AUDREY REGAN SOLARINO

YOUTH IS NO LONGER “WASTED

on the young.” These days, most of us have a good shot at a second youth in our later years—if we play our cards right. Sixty-five years ago, the average life expectancy in the U.S. was 64 years for men, 70 for women. Not anymore. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that people who are 65 today—the early Baby Boomers—can expect to live an average of 18 more years. So how can you stay healthy and strong, in body and mind, to make these years truly golden? Start by answering these questions:

- 1 Do you have enough energy to do what you want?
- 2 Are you physically able to do activities that you enjoy?
- 3 Do your memory and mental

clarity serve you well?

- 4 Do you look forward to each day and enjoy the companionship of caring people?
- 5 Are you up-to-date with medical screenings and immunizations?

If you answered “yes” five times, read on to learn why you’re in good “golden years” shape. And if you had a “no” or two, take notice.

“Your chronological age is not important,” says Ohan Karatoprak, M.D., a geriatrician and director of family practice at Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck. “How the body looks and functions and how to prolong a good quality of life—that is what’s important.” Dr. Karatoprak believes that our genes control 25 percent of the health equation, while lifestyle factors account for the

other 75 percent. “In other words,” he says, “your destiny is largely in your hands.”

Lisa Tank, M.D., chief of the Division of Geriatrics at Hackensack University Medical Center (HUMC), agrees that patients have power. That’s why she makes sure that at HUMC’s Center for Healthy Senior Living, a well visit includes not just a physical exam and medical history, but also an assessment of patients’ lifestyle choices and goals. “Goal setting is crucial to having a good quality of life,” she says. So let’s look at those wellness questions again, with choices and goals in mind.

1 NOT ENOUGH ENERGY? EXAMINE YOUR DIET AND SUPPLEMENT REGIMEN.
DIET “Eat frequently and in small

amounts," says Dr. Karatoprak. "Try to consume lots of fresh fruits and vegetables." Protein, found in lean meats and fish, is especially important for maintaining our muscles. "The chance of falls increases as we age, so we need protein to fight muscle loss," says the doctor. (For more on diet, see "10 Foods To Grow Old With" at right.)

SUPPLEMENTS "When we age, our intestines do not absorb nutrients as well as they used to," says Dr. Karatoprak. He recommends taking calcium and vitamins B₁₂ and D. "Ninety-nine percent of the patients who come to see me are low in Vitamin D," he says, so he puts them on a prescription-level dose until their levels normalize, then maintains them on 2,000 I.U. a day. A multi containing calcium and B₁₂ is good, as long as it does not contain iron. "Fish oil is also helpful. It prevents inflammation and is particularly good at staving off dementia," says Dr. Karatoprak, who recommends 1,000 to 1,200 milligrams of any brand, twice a day.

2 PHYSICAL SHAPE HAMPERING YOUR LIFE? EXERCISE, EXERCISE, EXERCISE. IT'S DOABLE!

"Exercise is very important in slowing down the aging process," says Dr. Karatoprak. "Even the elderly can build muscle." He recommends 30 minutes of low-impact cardiovascular exercise such as brisk walking five times a week and 10–30 minutes of strength-training exercises (gym machines or light weight routines) two to three times a week. His tip? Consume protein 15–20 minutes after a workout to help build muscle. He recommends a protein shake or skim milk, egg whites—any type of lean protein will do.

According to the National Institutes of Health, older adults should work to increase strength, balance, endurance and range of motion (stretching). One form of exercise, Pilates, works all four of those areas. Natalie Bray and Julie Tafuri, co-owners of Pilates Place in Franklin Lakes, help seniors increase their strength and mobility slowly—even those who have had hip, shoulder or knee replacements. "Pilates builds muscle progressively," says Bray. "It is low-impact and safe for joints." Pilates strengthens your core (abdomen and back) and supports the spine while keeping it supple. "This keeps you from getting stiff, helps maintain posture and gets you to bend, stretch and flex," says Bray.

3 CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT THIS QUESTION EVEN WAS? KEEP PLAYING THOSE MIND GAMES.

Multiple studies have shown that the more physical exercise one gets, the more blood flows to the brain, and the more new brain cells grow. In a study by the National Institute on Aging, older adults who exercised at least three times a week were less likely to develop dementia.

For mental acuity, Dr. Tank also suggests brain-stimulating exercises to patients. "As for the brain, if you don't use it you lose it, so keep socially active, do puzzles, go to book clubs, do Sudoku, play Nintendo. Challenge yourself without getting frustrated," she says.

To strengthen your short-term memory, try to "store" a memory so you can recall it later. For example, when you put down your keys, focus on where you put them. Rhymes work: "I'm hanging them on a hook so I can start to cook."

4 DREADING THE DAY AHEAD AND FEELING LONELY? MAKE AN EFFORT TO SOCIALIZE AND PURSUE INTERESTS.

"Depression is common in the elderly," says Dr. Karatoprak. A host of factors can make one depressed: vision and hearing loss, age-related illness, immobility, loss of friends and loved ones. He encourages patients to spend time with young people and stay connected to family.

"It's what brings you joy that translates into healthy aging," says Dr. Tank, who especially advocates volunteering: "It has many benefits for both mental and physical health."

5 NOT SURE OF YOUR STATUS WITH MEDICAL SCREENINGS AND IMMUNIZATIONS? GET YOUR MEDICAL HOUSE IN ORDER.

"You are never too old for immunizations," says Dr. Karatoprak. Both he and Dr. Tank maintain that prevention and spotting disease early are keys to aging well. See your doctor regularly and ask about:

- immunizations for the flu, pneumonia, tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis, hepatitis and shingles
- screenings for diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, coronary artery disease, cancer (colonoscopy, Pap smear, mammogram, prostate exam),

vision and hearing loss

- blood tests for vitamins B₁₂ and D, folic acid, thyroid hormone and cholesterol levels
- blood pressure checkups



10 FOODS TO GROW OLD WITH

Researchers keep finding links between diet and aging, especially between diet and inflammation, which is believed to be the cause of many maladies, including cancer. Incorporate these 10 powerhouses into your diet regularly (organic if possible) and add fresh herbs and spices such as turmeric and cinnamon for an antioxidant kick:

» **HEALTHY GREENS** are high in calcium, folate and vitamin D. They combat memory loss, bone loss and cancer. Think broccoli, cabbage, kale, spinach, artichokes and asparagus. »

» **WHOLE GRAINS** keep blood sugar stable, reducing the risk for diabetes. Try quinoa, barley, oatmeal, whole-wheat pasta and wild rice.

» **LEGUMES** are rich in folic acid and B vitamins. A recent Oxford University study found that people who took supplements of folic acid and vitamins B₆ and B₁₂ lowered homocysteine levels, thought to be linked to dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Try lentils and kidney beans.

» **BERRIES** contain antioxidants that have been shown to slow the growth of certain cancers as well as to improve muscle tone, balance and cognitive function. Blueberries are the stars here, but all berries are good.

» **OLIVE OIL** acts as an anti-inflammatory that combats cardiovascular disease. A study published in the journal *Neurology* found that among healthy people 65 and older, the higher the saturated and trans fat intake, the greater the cognitive decline.

» **NUTS** contain healthy fats, vitamins and protein. They are also an inflammation fighter. *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* reported that stroke risk was lowered in women who ate foods rich in vitamin E, including nuts.

» **RED GRAPES** and **RED WINE** contain resveratrol, a compound that has been found to reduce inflammation. It is also an anticoagulant, good for helping to keep arteries clear.

» **FISH**, especially oily fish like salmon, provides omega-3 fatty acids that help combat inflammation. People who eat fish a few times a week have a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease and stroke.

» **TEAS** contain EGCG, a very powerful antioxidant. Several studies have linked tea consumption to lower rates of heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer's.

» **DARK CHOCOLATE** lovers, "flavonoids" is your favorite word. Eat one glorious ounce of dark chocolate a day. It has enough of those beneficial plant-derived compounds to decrease bad cholesterol, reduce risk for blood clots and improve mood.

THREE BERGENITES SHARE HOW THEY LIVE THEIR BEST LIFE



» ANNETTE RAI

70, Franklin Lakes

Homemaker

HEALTHY BODY "I've been exercising for more than 30 years. I used to do aerobics. Now I do Pilates."

HEALTHY MIND "I regularly read books and newspapers and watch the news."

JOY "My children and grandchildren, going to the theater, traveling and dining with my husband"

ON WHAT REALLY MATTERS "Being over 65 is fabulous. I made it to this point without any major setbacks or illnesses. Family and my husband and being healthy are what truly count at this point."



» CAROL D. SCHAEFER

70, Franklin Lakes, *Retired psychotherapist, currently on the executive council of the Associates of the Yale Child Study Center; board member, Perceptual Development Learning Institute in New York City*

HEALTHY BODY "I walk when the weather is good, and I've done Pilates three times a week for the past 20 years. I've gained a lot of insight into our health and well-being by going to a spa resort called Canyon Ranch."

HEALTHY MIND "I read and am involved in board activities. I took a French immersion course with my

husband; it was good stimulation for my brain. I like the stimulation of living near New York City."

JOY "My grandchildren, for one. I love travel, classical music and the opera, as well as going to lectures. It makes me feel good when I'm using my energy to make a difference. Recently I discovered that I love to paint—I never thought I could."

ON WHAT REALLY MATTERS "Having lost my 44-year-old daughter Betsy Fitzmaurice last year, I most value relationships, spending time with those I love and being in good health. I want to make the most of each day. It's not what happens to you; it's how you handle it. I want to stay positive—even though life has dealt us this tragedy. That is my challenge right now."



» THEODORE M. DAVID, ESQ.

65, Ramsey, *Tax lawyer, professor of law and taxation at Fairleigh Dickinson University, former Internal Revenue Service agent*

HEALTHY BODY "I go to the gym twice a week. Plus, I actually *do* things: I cut my own lawn, paint my own house, wash and wax my own cars and motorcycles. I bicycle, kayak, hike, garden, swim and scuba. I take my health seriously and am not overweight. I don't smoke."

HEALTHY MIND "I speak French, Spanish and Italian. I study languages like taking vitamins—I do it every day just for a few minutes. As a university professor, I'm in the company of young people who have young ideas. I rarely watch TV."

JOY "I love learning. I don't count on others to make me happy."

ON WHAT REALLY MATTERS "I am lucky to have a wonderful woman at my side and a great daughter, son-in-law and two darling grandkids. My advice to people who are afraid to live is that time is a-wastin'! Get going, and turn off the TV and all the screens. I do not watch life. I live it." +

BERGEN

health & life

NJ'S TRUE
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TEQUILA
DRINKS

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FORECAST:
COLORFUL
DENIM,
HOT
SWIMWEAR,
ZODIAC
JEWELRY

THERE'S
MAGIC IN
MIDLAND
PARK

9 GARDEN
STATE
GETAWAYS
FOR
SUMMER
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WIN IT!
A SPA
DAY WITH
FRIENDS!
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