



Master the Art of Living

Elim Park Place Newsletter
Volume 12 Issue 12 December 2016

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Ten Tips for Aging Successfully

1. **USE IT OR LOSE IT.** Your grandmother was right! We must challenge and grow our physical, mental and social abilities. As we age we can't just coast – we must continue moving, learning and staying engaged with life ... or we rust.
2. **KEEP MOVING.** Physical activity is the closest thing to a fountain of youth. Staying active – even just 30 minutes a day – can prevent heart disease, diabetes, cancer, osteoporosis and dementia. The best results come from a commitment to strength training, endurance, flexibility and balance.
3. **CHALLENGE YOUR MIND.** Most mental ability lost with age is due to lack of use, but by continuing to learn throughout life, we can grow new connections in our brains. The trick? Learn **NEW** things.
4. **STAY CONNECTED.** Cherish family, rebuild old friendships, join clubs and be open to meeting new people. We need human interaction to thrive and to build resilience.
5. **LOWER YOUR RISKS.** By knowing your health risks and working with your doctor to lower them, you can function at very high levels for decades. Don't skip on regular physicals and be proactive about your health.
6. **NEVER ACT YOUR AGE!** Age is an attitude – not a number. Following your heart and acting how you feel will keep you dynamic, creative and living life to the fullest.
7. **WHEREVER YOU ARE ... BE THERE.** Don't let your chattering mind take you from this moment, which is the pure joy of life. Find pursuits like music, art, writing, meditation, or just enjoying nature. Keep your mind from the negative thoughts that lead to stress and higher risk for disease.
8. **FIND YOUR PURPOSE.** We never stop needing meaning, passion, or just a reason to get out of bed in the morning. Life without purpose is merely existing.

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Exercise Schedule Changes

No Green Class
Thursday, December 8th
Due to the Staff Christmas Party

No Exercise Classes
Mondays, December 26th & January 2nd

No Zumba Gold or Mind/Body
Tuesday, December 27th

National Cookie Day

To celebrate the December 4th observance, Wellness staff will once again bake cookies for those who exercise on Monday, December 5th and Tuesday, December 6th.

Experiences Better Than Gifts

What will you be giving or receiving for Christmas this year? You may want to toss the list and give or receive an experience that will create a memory. Research shows that experiences make people happier than getting stuff. Concert tickets, dinner out, a spa day or a day spent at a museum are gift ideas that can be more satisfying because of the connection with others. You feel a greater kinship with someone if you have shared a meal or a day with them.

It can be great fun to anticipate an experience because it usually causes excitement whereas waiting for a 'thing' can cause impatience. Stuff we have grows old and becomes outdated whereas memories last and burnish over time. We remember the best parts of an experience and tend to forget the negative parts if there were any.

The experience does not have to be a trip to somewhere exotic. It can be a picnic in a local park, a hike on a trail close by, or an affordable dinner out with friends. When the family asks what they can get you for Christmas, consider a gift card or dollars toward an experience you'll fondly remember rather than another sweater or tie!

Tips for Keeping Your Diet on Track During the Holidays

- 1. Don't beat yourself up.** You can't take back the overindulging that happened at last night's dessert table. Treat the day after as just another day of eating healthy and staying active.
- 2. Stock up on healthy foods.** Your fridge contains half a pecan pie and enough petit fours to feed an army. While it might sound crazy to buy more food, a fridge full of tempting treats won't help you get back on track. Go for high-fiber veggies to fill you up, and lean protein to keep you satisfied.
- 3. Put food away.** Those holiday cookies are more likely to tempt you if you can see them. Your best bet is to keep food in the cupboard or fridge below eye level, so you don't see treats every time you walk by the kitchen or swing open the fridge door for a snack.
- 4. Organize your fridge strategically.** Put leftovers in the fridge towards the back and keep fruit and veggies in front. This way you'll have to work to get the good stuff, and have easy access to the healthiest foods.
- 5. Use silver foil instead of plastic containers.** Again, when you can't see the delicious pie, it won't tempt you until you crack into it with a fork.
- 6. Eat leftovers sitting down.** If you sneak a few bites out of the fridge your body won't register it as a meal. That's because it's hard to process how much you eat when you mindlessly down food. If you crave Christmas leftovers, put your portion on a plate, and take that plate to the table so you can really be mindful of every bite.
- 7. When you do eat those leftovers, use smaller plates.** Overeating on a holiday won't kill you or drastically tip the scale. But feast like that every day for a week, and you *will* notice a difference.
- 8. Don't try to lose weight.** It's just not realistic. Set out to maintain your pre-holiday season weight through the New Year, so you can enjoy the holidays without deprivation and guilt.

Ten Tips continued

- 9. HAVE CHILDREN IN YOUR LIFE.** They bring a sense of meaning, wonder and renewal. Dostoyevsky said "The soul is healed by being with children."
- 10. LAUGH.** In studies on centenarians, the most commonly displayed traits by these individuals are humor and optimism. Laughter stimulates the immune system, protects us from disease and definitely makes the journey more fun.

Live Long, Die Short by Roger Landry, MD, MPH

Emily the Intern

Emily Newhard will wrap up her internship in the Wellness Department this month. Many of you have had the pleasure of spending time with her and know that she is a natural with older adults. What you may not know is that she has decided to pursue a career working with seniors because of her positive experience at Elim Park. Thanks to those who took the time to encourage her and get to know her. She will be missed!!

Emily at the Western CT State University Internship Fair.



Brain Health

Brain health is dependent on three key factors: maintaining an optimal weight, continued learning, and exercise. Of the three, exercise has the most robust results. Exercise causes an increase in BDNF (Brain Derived Neurotropic Factor) – a protein which influences brain function. Think of it as Miracle Gro® for the brain. There is no pill to increase BDNF, but a walk, an exercise class, or a bike ride will do the trick.