

Wellness

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Experts On Aging Reveal The 10 Major Habits That Will Improve Your Longevity

As we age, remaining healthy and sharp becomes a top priority. While many people strive for this, there is a unique group of individuals known as "SuperAgers" who seem to have mastered the art of aging gracefully. SuperAgers, as defined by researchers at Northwestern University, are adults over the age of 80 who possess the memory capacity of individuals at least three decades younger. These exceptional individuals have brains that resemble those of much younger people, showing significantly less brain volume loss compared to those with good longevity.



So, what sets SuperAgers apart from the rest? Is there a secret formula to achieve healthy aging? While there is no direct roadmap to becoming a SuperAger, there are certain habits that SuperAgers tend to practice, which can help boost cognitive and physical functioning well into later years. In this article, we will explore these key habits and how you can adopt them to enhance your own well-being as you age.

1. Move Your Body Regularly

Physical activity is a crucial aspect of healthy aging. Research consistently shows that daily body movement is associated with both longevity and overall well-being. However, exercise doesn't necessarily mean hitting the gym or running marathons. SuperAgers engage in regular physical activities such as gardening, crafting, and working around the house. Even something as simple as walking can contribute to a healthier lifestyle. The key is to avoid sedentary behavior and maintain an active lifestyle throughout your life.

2. Engage in Social Activities

Social connections play a significant role in healthy aging. SuperAgers regularly socialize, whether it's spending time with friends and family, volunteering, or staying active in the workplace. Research indicates that people with strong social connections tend to live longer and have better cognitive and physical health. Cultivating a strong social network can be beneficial not only for your emotional well-being but also for your overall health as you age.

3. Reduce Controllable Stress

Stress is an inevitable part of life, but managing it effectively is crucial for maintaining a sharp mind and a healthy body. SuperAgers have often learned to avoid unnecessary stress by not getting involved in other people's drama and keeping their anger and stress levels in check. While it's impossible to eliminate all stressors, finding healthy coping mechanisms and minimizing self-created stress can significantly contribute to healthy aging.

5. Prioritize Enjoyment and Fulfillment

SuperAgers prioritize doing things that bring them joy and fulfillment. Research suggests that engaging in activities that make you feel happy and fulfilled is a key characteristic of healthy aging. Depending on your circumstances and preferences, this could involve pursuing hobbies, spending time with loved ones, or engaging in activities that motivate and inspire you. It's important to find a balance between responsibilities and personal fulfillment to promote overall well-being.

6. Maintain a Healthy Diet

A nutritious diet is essential for healthy aging. SuperAgers prioritize consuming a well-balanced diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. These foods provide essential nutrients that support brain health and overall well-being. Additionally, staying hydrated is crucial for maintaining optimal cognitive function and physical health. Remember to drink plenty of water throughout the day.

7. Get Sufficient Sleep

Adequate sleep is vital for overall health and cognitive functioning. SuperAgers prioritize getting enough restorative sleep each night. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep to support your brain and body's rejuvenation processes. Establish a bedtime routine that promotes relaxation and create a sleep-friendly environment to optimize your sleep quality.

8. Stay Mentally Active

Continued mental stimulation is key to maintaining cognitive vitality. SuperAgers challenge their brains through activities such as reading, puzzles, and learning new skills. Engaging in mentally stimulating activities on a regular basis keeps your brain active and can help stave off age-related cognitive decline. Find activities that you enjoy and that require mental effort to keep your mind sharp.

9. Cultivate a Positive Mindset

A positive mindset can significantly impact your overall well-being as you age. SuperAgers tend to have a positive outlook on life, focusing on gratitude and resilience. Cultivating a positive mindset involves practicing gratitude, reframing negative thoughts, and surrounding yourself with positivity. Embracing a positive perspective can enhance your mental and emotional well-being, contributing to healthy aging.

10. Maintain Strong Relationships

Nurturing meaningful relationships is essential for healthy aging. SuperAgers prioritize their connections with loved ones and maintain strong social bonds. Engage in open and honest communication, spend quality time with family and friends, and seek support when needed. Building and maintaining strong relationships can provide a sense of belonging, support, and fulfillment throughout your life.

In conclusion, while there is no guaranteed path to becoming a SuperAger, adopting certain habits can enhance your chances of healthy aging. By incorporating regular physical activity, maintaining strong social connections, managing stress, challenging your brain, prioritizing enjoyment, and adopting a positive mindset, you can promote your own well-being as you age. Remember to prioritize self-care, make healthy choices, and embrace lifelong learning to maximize your potential for healthy aging.



INGREDIENTS

Equipment

- Deep skillet

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup sundried tomatoes in oil, drained and chopped
- 2 8-ounce boneless skinless chicken breasts, halved lengthwise, 1 lb total
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup all purpose flour, or gluten-free flour mix
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, divided (I used oil from the sundried tomatoes)
- 1 small shallot, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon tomato paste
- 4 cups baby spinach, packed
- 1 1/2 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, (3 tablespoons) 3/4 cup chicken broth
- 3 tablespoons half-and-half
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- pinch of red pepper flakes, adjust to your taste
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

WHY LIGHTEN UP MARRY ME CHICKEN?

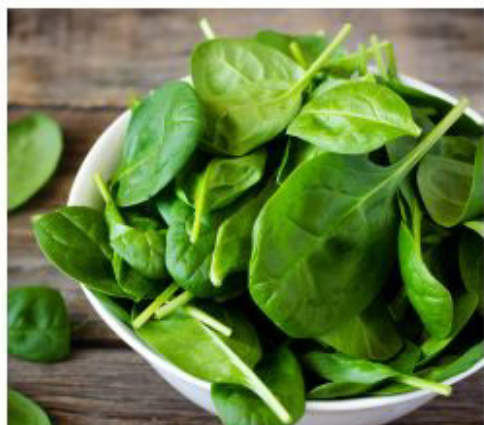
Marry Me Chicken has taken the internet by storm with its mouthwatering combination of tender chicken breasts and creamy tomato sauce. However, the original recipe can be a bit heavy on the calories and fat. In this article, we'll show you how to create a lighter version of this viral dish without sacrificing any flavor. By making a few simple substitutions and additions, you can enjoy all the deliciousness of Marry Me Chicken while keeping your health goals in check.

HEALTHIER TWIST WITH ADDED VEGETABLES

To make this dish healthier, we've made a few modifications. We've replaced heavy cream with reduced-fat cream cheese and half-and-half, reducing the overall fat content. Additionally, we've added spinach for an extra dose of vitamins, fiber, and calcium. These changes not only make the dish lighter, but they also add nutritional value.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 piece chicken with sauce, Calories: 286 kcal, Carbohydrates: 12 g, Protein: 30 g, Fat: 13 g, Saturated Fat: 4 g, Cholesterol: 96 mg, Sodium: 504.5 mg, Fiber: 1.5 g, Sugar: 2 g



INSTRUCTIONS



HOW TO MAKE IT

1. Begin by pounding the halved chicken breasts to an even thickness (about 1/2-inch thick). Season them with salt and black pepper. Dredge each chicken piece in flour, shaking off any excess.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil (or use from the sun dried tomatoes) in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook for about 4-5 minutes per side or until the chicken is cooked through and has a golden-brown crust. Remove the chicken from the skillet and set it aside.
3. In the same skillet, add the remaining 1/2 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the minced shallot and garlic and sauté for about 1-2 minutes until they become fragrant and translucent.
4. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for another 1-2 minutes.
5. Add the chopped sundried tomatoes and baby spinach to the skillet. Cook until the spinach wilts.
6. Reduce the heat to low, and then add the cream cheese, chicken broth, half-and-half, dried oregano, and red pepper flakes. Stir until the cream cheese is fully melted and the sauce is well combined.
7. Return the cooked chicken to the skillet and let it simmer in the sauce for a few minutes until heated through.
8. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese and serve.

FEATURED EXERCISE

Featured Exercise ► Chest Press



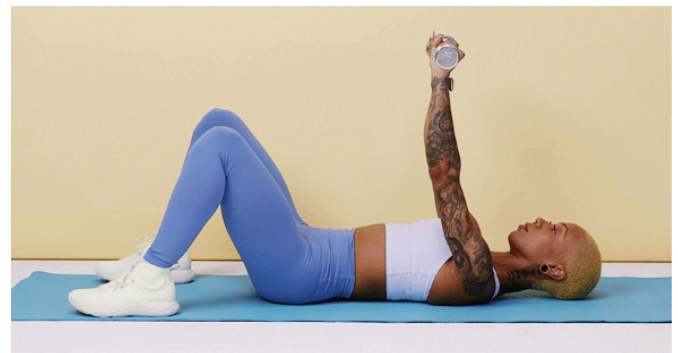
HOW TO DO IT:

1. Lie face up with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Hold a weight in each hand with your palms facing your legs and your elbows on the floor bent so that the weights are in the air. This is the starting position.
2. Press the weights toward the ceiling, straightening your elbows completely and keeping your palms facing your legs. Pause here for a second.
3. Slowly bend your elbows and lower them back down to the floor and out so that they are perpendicular to your torso. This is 1 rep.
4. Do 8-12 reps.

BENEFITS:

The chest press is a great upper-body burner that targets your pecs (chest muscles), triceps (back of your upper arms), mid traps, rhomboids, and a bit of the lats (all in the upper back).

Pectoralis Major: The pectoralis major is the main muscle worked during the bench press. It originates from the sternum, ribs, and collarbone, and attaches to the upper part of the arm bone. This muscle is responsible for flexing and internally rotating the arm at the shoulder.

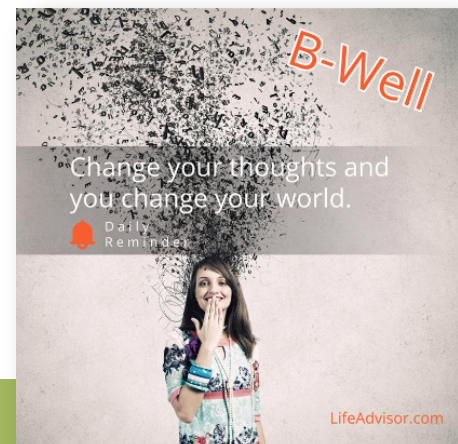


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Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



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