

# Live Well, Retire Well and Be Happy

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*By Mr. Mark Stibich, Ph.D. Healthy Ageing Expert*

Your 60s are a big decade. You may be putting your work life behind you and retiring. You may have more time to spend on yourself. This is a great time to create a "new you." This "new you" is focused on being healthy and feeling great. Make your retirement not about "resting" but about reaching your maximum health.

## **1. Not Too Late for a Healthy Lifestyle**

Don't think that just because you are in your 60s, all your cards have been dealt when it comes to health. Changes you make now can significantly improve your health and, in some cases, reverse the damage that has been done in your younger years. One of the biggest longevity mistakes that people make is thinking it is "too late" for them. Getting your weight under control, eating lots of fruits and vegetables, exercising at least 2.5 hours a week and not smoking will improve your health and longevity at any age.

## **2. Sex in Your Sixties**

Sex is an important part of life, and of health. You can have an active, rewarding sex life your entire life. Some even say that a healthy sex life can increase your life expectancy (as if you needed a reason). Learn about some of the issues around sex for men and women in their 60s, and take action to maintain a healthy, rewarding sex life.

## **3. Plan Your Brain's Retirement**

Brains like problems. They like something to puzzle over and figure out. Brains love making new connections and learning. It keeps them healthy. Be sure to make your brain happy in retirement. Avoid routine and keep the brain supplied with new and challenging thoughts. From puzzles to learning new skills, more and more research shows that brain aging depends on constant intellectual stimulation for the brain. Take some courses, learn new things and stay smart.

## **4. Think Positively About Aging**

If you can develop a positive attitude toward aging, you could add 7.5 years to your life according to some researchers. Having a positive attitude affects how your body deals with stress impacts your behaviors. Spend some time thinking about the positive aspects of age like wisdom and having more time for your own spiritual growth. See how many positive things about aging you can think up.

## **5. Master Medical Care**

Not understanding your medications and treatments can increase your risk of death. Research has found that patients who do not ask questions or do not understand their medical conditions are at an increased risk of complications and death. Increase your chances of having a good outcome by asking your questions and taking the time to research your medical conditions until you fully understand them. It could save your life.

## **6. Screenings for Your 60s**

By now you should be used to screenings -- make sure you keep going and getting everything checked in your 60s. It will start to seem like a lot of exams and tests, but those doctors' appointments can help detect illness early, when it can be treated easily. Make a commitment to keep up with the screening plan you develop with your doctor. Be find some way to make screenings fun -- bring a good book or give yourself a reward afterward. Adding just a little bit of something to look forward will make it a lot easier to keep those appointments.

## **7. Plan Your Body's Retirement**

Don't let your body retire when you do. Now that you have moved on from work and the kids have moved out, it is time to focus on your health. Sure, before you were busy and didn't have time to exercise and cook healthy, but you should have more control of time now. Use that time to undo some of the unhealthy things that you have done to your body. Lose weight, exercise and eat fruits and vegetables (it really can be that simple). Make a plan for your body during retirement. Keep your body busy and active. You'll feel better and live longer.

## **8. Hormones and Aging**

Your hormones change as you age. Some people believe that these changes in hormones are what causes aging. The truth is more complicated. Before you look into hormone therapies, take some time to learn the facts about hormones and aging -- and be sure to talk to a doctor (who isn't selling anything) about how hormone supplements might be able to help you. »

## **9. Use Your Time (and Not By Watching TV)**

Retirement is about time -- having time to do what you want. Once you stop working, you gain at least 40 hours a week. Fantastic. But there is a danger -- TV. The average retired person watches over 4 hours of TV a day. That is time that could be spent exercising, socializing, cooking healthy foods and doing other things that you love. TV can become a habit in a matter of days. Take control of your time in retirement and use it to make yourself healthier and happier.

## **10. Retirement for Your Social Life**

You've planned financially for retirement, but have you planned socially? Going from an active working environment to being home can be a tremendous social change. Make a plan for getting out and being with people on a regular basis. Social contact can improve health because interacting with people helps you manage emotions, stress, and helps you maintain good habits. Make a plan for how you want your social life to be in retirement -- and then act on it.

*(Source : [http://longevity.about.com/od/inyour20s30s\\_and40s/tp/Longevity-To-Dos-for-Your-60s.htm](http://longevity.about.com/od/inyour20s30s_and40s/tp/Longevity-To-Dos-for-Your-60s.htm))*

