

Helping Men Age Positively

How long we can live “healthfully” is based on two major factors: genetics, and lifestyle choices. Contrary to popular belief, our genes are not the biggest determining factor towards living a long, healthy life! Long-term studies of twins in Denmark and the UK have estimated that approximately 20-30% of an individual's lifespan is related to their genes, the rest is due to individual lifestyle (including dietary) choices and behaviors, and environmental factors. These and many other recent studies suggest that our own choices determine as much as 70% or more of how healthfully we live.

Men Age Differently!

Not everyone ages in the same manner and there is a gender difference when it comes to longevity, health, and aging. Since the year 2000, world-wide stats indicate women outlive men. This is partially due to earlier onset of certain age-related diseases, especially cardiovascular disease (CVD), neurodegenerative diseases (dementia, Parkinson's disease) and prostate issues (prostate cancer & BPH) in men.

The earlier men start thinking about how they age, the better. Already by early middle-age, men can experience accelerated aging. It is now recommended by longevity experts for men to start protecting their heart, hormones, and other age-rated biomarkers early in life. Even in their 20's is not too early! Over the last few decades, there is significant research showing an alarming decline in sperm count and fertility rates for men.

What Can Happen to a Man's Virility?

Poor diet, heavy alcohol consumption, obesity, overexposure to environmental toxins, stress, lack of quality sleep and exercise take a toll on a man's virility. This means his strength, energy, fertility, and sex drive can be affected. These are all implicated in premature aging and are caused by low-grade inflammation and oxidative stress.

The Role of Testosterone (T) in Male Aging

Testosterone is considered a mainstay for a man's virility and low testosterone a potential risk factor for accelerated aging. It has been well established that a healthy level of testosterone provides much-needed energy and decreases fatigue. Recent studies show it is involved in the protection of neurons and brain cells by suppressing oxidative stress. As well, research indicates low T is a potential risk factor for type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, and age-related dementia. It has been discovered by studying type 2 diabetic men that testosterone

is necessary for proper function of the mitochondria and low levels of T are associated with higher oxidative stress, enhanced inflammation, and increased risk of cardiovascular events.

How Can Men Age Better - Naturally?

Use of herbal formulas and as well as key nutrients (i.e., Vitamin B6, and zinc) can support prostate health and balanced testosterone levels, without harmful side effects. For example, saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) extracts can help to preserve testosterone levels by decreasing the activity of the enzyme responsible for converting testosterone to another sex hormone called dihydrotestosterone (DHT). According to one study, saw palmetto supplementation may be useful for alleviating the symptoms of andropause by both direct and indirect regulation of testosterone production, leading to improved body composition, libido, and mood. Another study in rats with BPH, found that saw palmetto decreased inflammation and improved oxidative stress.

Saw palmetto is widely available in supplement form and is often combined with other ingredients that help enhance prostate health, such as pumpkin seed extract, stinging nettle root and pygeum extract. The most effective dose of is 320 mg daily of a saw palmetto extract taken with meals.

Bioavailability - the Key to an Effective Multi

Certain nutrients and metabolic cofactors can help increase mitochondrial ATP production, bypass cellular defects, or remove toxic free radicals. The key vitamins needed to support mitochondrial functions are optimized vitamin B's, vitamins C, E, K, and magnesium. A good men's multivitamin/mineral supplement can provide these nutrients without the addition of extra iron. Look for a men's multi with “optimized” bioactive forms of vitamin B6 and B12 (in the methyl form), and especially with the methylated form of vitamin B9 (folate) called 5-MTHF. This is the most bioavailable form of vitamin B9. It is particularly valuable for protecting the mitochondria and it is the only form of B9 which can cross the blood-brain barrier, helping with mood and cognitive wellness.

The human body has an amazing ability to repair and heal depending on the dietary and other choices we make. A man's commitment early in life to incorporate these healthy choices may prove a vital step toward promoting his longevity and quality of life.

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