



7 Secrets to Living Longer & Better

From the day we take our first breath we are all aging. How we age is different for everyone. Some are dealt a good or bad genetic hand. Some life choices and experiences have impacted our health or function. But no matter where you find yourself of the spectrum of successful aging, incorporating these tips can help add healthier, happier years to your life. Small changes can have a big impact, no matter when you start.



1 Stay Social

Whether you are someone who enjoys being part of a group or just a close circle of friends, being part of a community (big or small) is key. Having good social support has been shown to reduce stress, ward off anxiety and depression, and reduce the risk of some physical and cognitive health concerns

Try This!

- Attend a County senior center. For a list of activities check out www.co.somerset.nj.us/senior
- Try Telephone Reassurance Programs. Call (908) 704-6346
- Investigate opportunities at your place of worship



2 Take Control of Your Health

According to the National Council on Aging, 80% of all seniors are living with at least one chronic health condition. Take control of your health by taking small, manageable steps. Small steps can add up to big changes in your health

Try This!

- Take a Chronic Disease or Diabetes Self-Management Workshop- a free course offered by the Somerset County Office on Aging & Disability Services
- Use Medicare's free and low cost preventative services to manage your health and avert common, preventable health concerns Call SHIP at 908-704-6319 for info

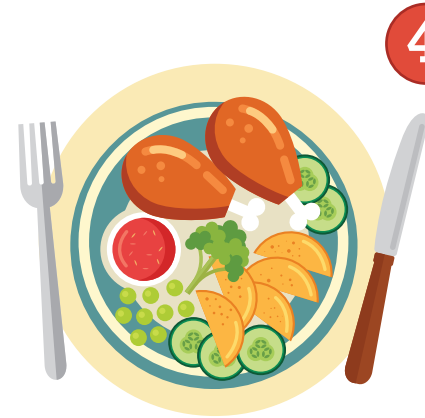


3 Be Thankful

Gratitude for things, big and small, affects how we see the world and has a huge impact on physical and psychological health as well as overall quality of life. According to Psychology Today, gratitude can result in experiencing less pain, reducing depression and improving sleep

Try This!

- Keep a gratefulness journal. Write down just two or three things each day for which you are thankful
- Try prayer or meditation. Gratitude meditations are a double-whammy for well-being. You are essentially performing two of the most impactful happiness practices at the same time



4 Eat a Healthy Diet

Eat a variety of foods. Try to make your plate "colorful." By eating a variety of colors, you will have a more nutrient rich diet. Try to eat less processed foods and more "whole" foods, like lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds

Try This!

- Shop at Farmers Markets during the season to inspire you to buy healthy whole foods
- Make sure you are meeting your daily nutrition goals by trying lunch at a local senior wellness center. Lunches there provide 1/3 of your daily nutritional needs
- Talk to your doctor or consult with a dietician to customize an eating plan



5 Manage Your Medications

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that between 20%-30% of prescriptions are never filled and 50% of those filled are not taken as prescribed. Further, this non-adherence causes up to 125,000 deaths per year

Try This!

- Take advantage of NJ's many prescription savings programs. Call (908) 704-6346 to find out which program is best for you
- Talk to your healthcare professional for solutions to any barriers that keep you from getting or taking your medications



6 Stay Active

Being physically active promotes brain health as well as physical health. Find what you like to do and try to work up to at least 30 minutes of activity 5 days per week. Daily activity should total 30 minutes but it can be done in just a few minutes at a time

Try This!

- While you are watching TV, march in place, conduct a pretend orchestra or lift light weights through the commercials
- Find a buddy to stay active with you and you will be more likely to stick with it
- Find out about free and low cost health promotion activities at your local senior wellness center. Call (908) 704-6339 or check our website: www.co.somerset.nj.us/senior



7 Have a Purpose

What do you look forward to when you get up in the morning? Participating in activities that are meaningful and productive is an essential part of mental and physical health. The National Institute on Aging reported it may lower the risk of dementia and other health problems in seniors

Try This!

- Contact RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) at (908) 704-6338
- Take free and low cost classes at local colleges
- Try something new like a painting, dancing or computer class at your local senior center

For details about the services and programs recommended contact The Somerset County Office on Aging & Disability Services at (908) 704-6346 or toll free at (888) 747-1122.