



# Senior Series

A partnership between Ohio State University Extension  
and Ohio Aging Network professionals



For more information, visit the Ohio Department of Aging web site at: <http://www.goldenbuckeye.com>  
and Ohio State University Extension's "Aging in Ohio" web site at: <http://seniorseries.osu.edu>

## Predictors of Healthy Aging

*"We are happier in many ways  
when we are old than when we were  
young. The young sow wild oats. The  
old grow sage."*

*Winston Churchill*

We all have one attribute in common; we grow older every day. Although there is nothing specific we can do to stop this process, it might be possible to slow down our natural aging and eliminate some of the age-related disorders. It has been proven that we can, indeed, age gracefully. Let's look at some of the personal characteristics of healthy people approaching 100 years of age!

### Physical

Thin, daily exercisers, consume low-calorie, high-fruit and

vegetable diets, non-smokers, intake a moderate amount of alcohol, sleep well, infrequently ill, use preventive health services, have a positive outlook about their health.

### Intellectual

Kept minds active before and after retirement, which occurred in their 70s, learned something new each day, a passion for reading and discussing current events, often reflecting on the good things in life.

### Emotional

Optimistic, pleased with their lives, anger is short-lived, rarely hostile to others, cope well with stress and adapt to change, have a good sense of humor, many outlets for relaxation and recreation.

## Relational

Frequently help others, have successful marriages or have always been single, have many friends younger than themselves, feel support from a large social network, often attend social functions.

## Spiritual

Have multiple spiritual commitments that provide a sense of purpose and meaning to their lives, appreciate the beauty of nature, pray and/or meditate daily.

## Summary

It is never too late to set in motion positive changes in our lives. We are not guaranteed a certain amount of time on earth, but we can surely enhance the

quality of the time we are here. It only makes sense to enjoy the company of other people, to learn something new every day, to tell funny stories, and enjoy a good laugh. Cultivating a personal passion after retirement and helping those less fortunate than ourselves will also add life to our years!

## Source

The New England Centenarian Study, <http://www.bumc.bu.edu/Dept/Content.aspx?DepartmentID=361&PageID=5749> accessed June 24, 2008.

Malarkey, William B., M.D., *Take Control of Your Aging*, The Wooster Book Company, Wooster, Ohio 1999.

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