

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S
Herbal Legacy Newsletter

Aging

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Being a botanist, I have a particular interest in herbs that can hold back the aging process. But I'm forced to admit that I think lifestyle changes are a whole lot more important than herbs.

Not being a doctor, I don't prescribe, but I would not hesitate to suggest the following to my 30-year-old daughter so she could hold on more tenaciously to her vibrant youth. Come to think of it, this is good advice for men and women of any age who are trying to hold back the clock.

Drink two antioxidant herb teas a day. Good research suggests that oregano, rosemary, bee balm, lemon balm (also known as melissa), peppermint, sage, spearmint, savory and thyme contain significant levels of antioxidants.

Eat at least one big salad a day. You can use both wild greens – things like purslane, if you have access to them – and a variety of domestic salad vegetables, such as spinach and chicory. Green leaves are chock full of antioxidant nutrients that help protect you from heart disease, cancer and other degenerative diseases that tend to come on as we age.

Eat one or two Brazil nuts a day. The average Brazil nut contains more than the Daily Value of the antioxidant mineral selenium – 70 micrograms.

Eat a handful of sunflower seeds a day, along with a sprinkling of other nuts. Among nuts and seeds, sunflower seeds are one of the better sources of Vitamin E. They're also cheap. One caution, however: If you're watching your waistline, don't eat more than an ounce of nuts a day. Nuts are high in fat.

Eat at least one broccoli spear, carrot and celery stalk a day. They're all high in fiber. Broccoli and carrots are also high in beta-carotene, the powerful antioxidant that the body transforms into vitamin A. Celery is high in apigenin, a chemical that expands (dilates) the blood vessels and may help prevent high blood pressure.

Drink a fruit smoothie every day. Take any fruits that appeal to you – apples, oranges, bananas, grapefruit, melons or berries – and run them through a blender.

Replace one meat course a day with a vegetarian dish. One of my favorites is guacamole – mashed avocado. You can lace your guacamole with onion, hot chili peppers, garlic and lemon juice and sprinkle it with chopped nuts such as hazelnuts, macadamias, pistachios, cashews, peanuts or Brazil nuts.

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Use olive oil. Corn oil and other vegetable oils are polyunsaturated oils. Olive oil is a monounsaturated oil. There is a complex chemical explanation for how these differ, but all you really need to know is that there's a good reason to believe that monounsaturated oils are a lot better for you. In salad dressings, replace polyunsaturated oils with olive oil.

Eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Also eat a good selection of herbs, legumes, nuts and spices. These are the foods that our ancestors consumed back in the days before the invention of burgers, hot dogs, pizza, ice cream and all the junk we eat today. They ate more nutritiously than we do.

Make love regularly with someone you love. There's no explanation needed here except that it's good for you.

Go for a walk every day. Weather permitting, get outdoors and take a vigorous half-hour walk. Use the time to unwind and commune with the natural world.

Don't smoke. This goes without saying.

Don't drink alcohol.

Don't sunbathe – ever. You probably get enough sun to produce a healthy amount of vitamin D with moderate outdoor activities that don't involve actively seeking the sun.

NOTE: Dr. Christopher felt it was healthy to get sun every day. For more information see this article: <http://articles.herballegacy.com/sun-exposure-how-much-is-too-much/>. The School of Natural Healing advocates Dr. Christopher's approach.

Don't take life or death too seriously. That can age or kill you.

Don't be a dietary faddist. It's never a good idea to base your diet on just a couple of foods, even fruits or carrots. Vary your diet, your food sources, your mode of preparation and even the company you keep when you dine.

Don't let industry outvote the environmentalists. If you do, we'll all pay the price eventually.

NOTE: The School of Natural Healing recommends you also take the 5 supplements every day that Dr. Christopher recommended. You can find those here:

<http://articles.herballegacy.com/supplements-for-maintaining-good-health/>.