



# Healthy Aging

Your guide to aging well

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Like a good wine, age is wonderful in many ways. I have more gratitude and appreciation of the world. At age 54, I've come to realize what is important. Not to be doom and gloom, but I've



reached the mile marker, the midpoint of life, and I want the rest of my years to be happy. While I've always been a get-it-done, "check it off the list" kind of person, when it comes to balancing my work and my personal life, I am acutely aware that I want to spend more time on the things that matter, the people that matter, and leave my mark on the world, however small, by making it a better place.

I hope this guide helps you feel more beautiful, more healthy and more fit than ever before, no matter your age!

# Why I Love My Age – Chris Freytag

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## **I love that age brings wisdom**

I tell my kids all the time: wisdom is a gift and it happens over time. At my age and place in life, I feel less worried about what people think of me, more confident in my decisions and more understanding of myself. I am more tolerant of the differences of others' opinions and lifestyles, and I have less need to prove anything to the world. I notice the beauty in so many more things as I've aged and I love that feeling.

## **I love that age can bring better health**

Yes, my back has a few issues and there are certain things I can't do physically anymore, but in many ways I'm in better shape now than I was in my twenties. There weren't the fitness and health options back in the '80s and '90s like there are today. I watch younger moms with little kids at the gym carting their kids into childcare—getting 10 minutes into a workout and being called back to childcare for a diaper change—and I love that now I can exercise uninterrupted. The only bummer is that my three kids all have moved out of home (believe me, you will miss them)! I love that women my age are conquering fitness feats like races, marathons, boot camps, and fitness goals while feeling great about their bodies and taking care of both their physical and mental health.

## **I love that age brings confidence**

Okay, so I don't love the grey hairs, wrinkles and sagging skin, but I love and appreciate my body more now than in the past. I am okay with my imperfections and feel good about who I am. I am aware of my strengths and accepting of my weaknesses, and I am always willing to work on them. Age makes people more attractive in so many ways, not just regarding their outer appearance, but more specifically how they have developed on the inside.

## **I love that age brings freedom**

After spending a couple of decades racing through each day to meet the demands of raising a family, I now have a little more freedom. I can get more sleep (sometimes) and take more “me” time. And even though I preach to younger women to make time for themselves, it gets a little easier when you have fewer mouths to feed, kids to drive around and schedules to organize.

## **I love that age brings more time for friends**

I saw a funny cartoon with a mom holding a briefcase in one hand, kid on the other hip, and was talking on the phone to a friend, as she said “Can I call you back in five years?” Right??? We've all felt that way, but I love that I have more time now for friends. By this time in life, I have a handful of faithful friends that have been with me over the years, some of my adolescent years,

my college years and many from my married and mothering years. We have shared good times and sad times and have shared life-changing moments, love and laughter. At this point, I know which friends I want to stay connected with and I love that even after five days, five years or a few decades, I could call them and start off where we last left off.

## **I love appreciating my family**

It's satisfying to have been married for 30 years and know that we have that many and more ahead of us. It's really hard to describe how wonderful it feels to see your kids turn into amazing, thoughtful, kind adults. I love being able to focus on each one of them separately. It's great when they start to enjoy you as an adult and actually want your advice. I love being able to enjoy family time together, which is now more about fun, adult activities, and less chaos! (Most parents remember vacations with little kids and the word "exhausting" comes to mind.)

# Dealing with Menopause

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Alright, so now that we've talked about all the wonderful things about aging, I feel safe to complain about a couple not-so-wonderful things. Particularly, menopause! Most women in the United States hit menopause around age 51. Peri-menopause is the years leading up to menopause when symptoms start to appear. Menopause is the day you have gone for a full year without a period. And then it's technically post-menopause after that but no need to be super technical. A smaller number can reach it as early as 40 or as late as their late 50s. For me, I hit it around 50 and it's been 3-4 years of no period for me. If you are in your 40s, maybe you are starting to forget where you left your keys and your face turns beet red for no apparent reason. Ahhhh, menopause, here we come. We can burst into tears and blame it on the hormones or we can be prepared by knowing the signs and symptoms of menopause. (Or, a little of both.) Let's proactively try and reduce some of the symptoms with these 10 menopause solutions.



### **1. The not-so-hot-HOT FLASH.**

More than half of women experience hot flashes. Without warning, your skin gets warm and you feel a rush of heat spread over your body. You get flushed or red and it shows up on your face. You can have a hot flash that is mild or one where you feel like your body is on fire. Good times. It's your body's way of reacting to a decreased supply of the hormone estrogen, which naturally occurs when women approach menopause. If you decline in estrogen gradually, you may be lucky enough to escape hot flashes, but if your ovaries stop estrogen more abruptly, hot flashes may be more intense. I had an experience in the airport on a below zero day where I went into hot flash overdrive.

Stripped down to my cami top, I was getting stares from everyone around me wearing their down jackets. Truth be told, I'm always cold so sometimes I'm okay with being a little warmer, but Murphy's Law means your hot flashes will happen at the most inopportune time.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** If you are going to get hot flashes, you probably can't avoid them altogether, but you can try to avoid the triggers that bring them on. To prevent hot flashes, avoid stress, caffeine, alcohol, spicy foods, tight clothing, heat and cigarette smoke. Need more helpful hints? Keep a cool bedroom, meditate or practice deep breathing during the onset of hot flashes, exercise daily and consider buying a chill pillow to lay your head on at night. A friend tipped me off to these [Hot Girl Pearls](#). She warned me they are large (like Wilma Flintstone size), but they work.

## 2. The not-how-you-like-to-sweat, NIGHT SWEATS.

If you haven't had a night sweat, think of it as a hot flash over-achiever. Night sweats are more intense hot flashes that come with bouts of sweating. Night sweats happen because of a hormonal imbalance, but a hot bedroom or bedding can make them worse. Night sweats vary in severity but can disrupt sleep. I used to go to bed in the winter wearing long underwear and socks! Now, even on the coldest evenings I want a fan on me and I'm wearing a tank top and shorts. And, those nights when you wake up in a pool of sweat and have to change are no fun for anyone.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** First, talk to your doctor to make sure there isn't another underlying medical cause of your night sweats. If it's all menopause, treat night sweats with regular exercise, a cool bedroom (use a fan or ceiling fan), wear wicking pajamas (same material as your hiking attire) or consider a natural course with herbs and supplements such as black cohosh (talk to your naturopath—there are varying opinions on black cohosh.) For me, a fan at night helps. And when I keep my body alkaline by drinking [lemon water](#) throughout the day I just seem to do better hormonally. No science here, just trial and error. Again, another friend tipped me off to this little gadget, [Lady Care](#). LadyCare is a small device that simply attaches discreetly and comfortably to your underwear. It's a drug-free product designed to help reduce the symptoms of menopause. If you are saying "WHAT?" just check it out. I have not tried it personally but my friend loves it.



## 3. The “Are you serious?” HAIR LOSS moment.

It takes the blue ribbon for the most obvious menopause symptom and the blue ribbon for hard-to-ignore: hair loss. It's caused by estrogen deficiency because hair follicles need estrogen to sustain hair growth. Hair loss may be sudden, gradual or hair just gets dry, thinner, and more brittle. And what I've noticed is the

gray hair (I've got lots of it!) is a different texture and more wiry. I know some of you can agree with me going grey and getting thinner hair all at once is a blast. NOT!

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** You can help prevent hair loss by keeping your stress level in check, eating lots of fish and healthy fats, taking your multivitamin, exercising, drinking lots of water and avoiding heat treatments (like blow drying, flat irons and coloring) that can lead to dryness and breakage. As a 54-year-old woman with 70 percent gray hair, I do use bleach to keep my hair blonde. So I choose to do a deep conditioner once a week and avoid headbands and hats that have elastic in them that pull at my hair. I found a great product at Ulta to touch up my roots in-between colors. WOW is a powder that just brushes on easy unlike some of those hair mascaras that are sticky. I am just way more careful with my hair than I used to be.

#### **4. The “I am on top of the world”; “I am so irritated” MOOD SWINGS.**

Call it what you will: Mood swings, irritability, agitation, anxiety. Menopausal mood swings are common and can be hard to deal with because your mood can change so rapidly. One minute you are bursting with joy and the next you are cursing the dog or sobbing at a sappy commercial. The severity and frequency of mood swings varies woman to woman, but they are caused by those darn hormonal imbalances. And if you aren't sleeping well (cue night sweats or hot flashes), that can exacerbate the swinging of your moods.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** To treat those menopausal mood swings, make sure you get enough vitamin B-12, including shellfish, (clams, mussels and crab) salmon, lean beef, low-fat or fat-free milk and eggs. A daily multivitamin also provides the recommended amount of B-12. In addition, I don't have to tell you that a CLEAN diet will help. Try to avoid lots of added sugars, chemicals, preservatives, food coloring and yes, fake sugars are also a problem. A crappy diet will not help mood swings but a lot of women aren't aware of what actually is in some of their favorite foods. Become a label reader and make good choices. Try out the [Fooducate app](#) to learn more about what is in your packaged foods.

#### **5. The “I am dragging” SENSE OF FATIGUE.**

Fatigue is one of the most common peri-menopause symptoms and it's often described with words like: weak, dragging and low energy more so than sleepy. You also may notice that your attention span isn't what it used to be (lack of concentration can be a symptom of its own). You won't be surprised to hear fatigue is also caused by drops in estrogen levels and it can have a big impact on your life. You may no longer be a productivity goddess or Ms. Energy.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** Plan your attack to beat menopause-related fatigue by eating healthy, establishing a regular wake up and bedtime routine, sleeping on a comfy mattress, keeping your bedroom dark and cool, using your bed for only sleep and sex, refraining from eating two hours before bedtime, exercising regularly and avoiding caffeine, nicotine and alcohol. Phew! That's a tall order, I know.

## 6. The “Why am I in this room?” MEMORY LOSS moment.

So, you used to retain everything in your head, huh? And now you can't. Yep, it happened to me. Women sneaking up on menopause often experience memory loss, lapses and an inability to focus. If you drive yourself bananas by entering a room and forgetting why you are there, or not remembering your last discussion with someone, you may be experiencing a normal symptom of menopause. If you have low levels of estrogen and high stress, memory loss is even more likely. My girlfriends and I laugh about helping each other finish our sentences.



**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** While there is no clear cure to fight menopause-related memory loss, you can take on new and interesting challenges. Use your mind in different ways: solve a crossword puzzle, learn a musical instrument or play a new sport. Play chess, read more books, or just challenge your brain in a new way. PS - I tell my exercise classes that the brain to body connection is enhanced with regular exercise. Moving in all planes of motion and getting our bodies to do what our brain is telling them to do is great for brain health!

## 7. The “I could take it or leave it,” LOSS OF LIBIDO.

Every person experiences natural ebbs and flows in desire, but if your sex drives takes a nose dive, the sudden drop may be due to menopause. Hormonal imbalances—mainly androgen deficiency—can cause a loss of libido. Other factors can contribute like vaginal dryness, depression, prescription medication and relationship issues. Some of the other symptoms of menopause like hot flashes and insomnia can hinder desire too.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** Evaluate any medications you are taking with your doctor to see if they are contributing to a decreased libido. Treat vaginal dryness if that's an issue. Take time for intimacy by scheduling time together away from daily stressors. Seek couples therapy if there are underlying marital or relationship issues you think are contributing to your loss of desire. I find that it's important to step away from stress every once in a while and just spend happy time with your spouse or S.O!

## 8. The wait a minute ... is a MISSED PERIOD a bad thing?

Oh, great, you just got your period after not having it for two months—right before a special event. Ugh. Irregular periods can happen at any time due to stress, weight fluctuations and a host of other factors. During perimenopause, irregular periods are quite common. If you are between 40 and 50, you may experience shorter or longer periods and irregular cycles. You may even miss a period. (Is that really a bad thing- lol?) Hormonal imbalance might cause

lighter or heavier than usual bleeding. Spotting between periods is normal too. Decreased levels of estrogen and progesterone cause the irregularities. I went eight months without a period and thought I was in the clear and then, HELLO, it showed up again! Remember what I said earlier - this is normal towards the end of our reproductive cycle and it can go on for years. Menopause is defined by going a full year without a period.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** Well, you can't command your body to stay on a schedule. So, just don't worry. If you are between the ages of 40-50 your irregular cycle and period is likely due to perimenopause, and there isn't a lot to do about it. You could, if you choose, decide to be excited for the no-more-period hassle ahead.

### **9. The “Where did my abs go?” WEIGHT CREEP.**

Weight gain, specifically around your waist, is another sign of changing hormone levels during menopause. Those shifting levels may influence weight gain and redistribution of fat. Low testosterone levels can contribute to a decreased metabolic rate, so that in turn can cause weight gain.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** Keep your metabolism revved by strength training—the more muscle you have, the more calories you burn at rest. Embrace a healthy lifestyle by eating clean, exercising regularly, moving more and drinking plenty of water. Try [Pilates workouts](#) that focus on the core. I also think a fierce determination to fight the fat can help big time!

### **10. The not you again—HEADACHE.**

Maybe you are one of those women who glances at the calendar to see when your period is coming so you can avoid red wine, aged cheese and stress to prevent getting a debilitating migraine with your period. The reason migraines and headaches are so common during our monthly cycles is due to estrogen levels plunging before our menstrual cycle. So when menopause hits and your estrogen production slows down, you may experience headaches once again.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT:** If you get migraines or they run in your family, talk to your doctor about avoiding triggers or possible medications. If you are trying to prevent headaches, make sure you always drink enough water, find healthy ways to reduce your stress and avoid any known triggers like not getting enough sleep. Also, there's some good news: once you go through menopause and your hormonal levels get more consistent and remain low, your headaches may go away. It's the rapid fluctuation of hormones that typically cause headaches.

Yes, menopause is just one of those things we can't avoid. You can, however, champion through it like the empowered woman you are—full of knowledge and taking action to reduce its impact on your life. And look at it this way: you sure aren't alone!



# Your Anti-Aging Arm Routine

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Ask any trainer to create the ultimate arm-toning routine, and it's basically a guarantee that the workout will include at least one version of a push-up or plank. But when you're just getting back to exercise or are dealing with achy wrists, trying to master these go-to upper-body toners is akin to running a mile completely uphill. Instead, work your arms with these easier but oh-so-effective arm toners that sculpt and build strength quickly and are anti-aging!

**The workout:** Aim to do two or three sets of 12 to 15 reps of each exercise. Between each toning move, you'll be adding 30 seconds of fat-burning "air punches" to increase your heart rate. Don't be afraid of using heavy dumbbells, which will help tone, strengthen, and define the muscles in your biceps, shoulders, and triceps even faster. We recommend starting with 8-or 10-pound dumbbells, but, as always: listen to your body!

## Tricep Skull Crushers



**Target area:** Triceps

Lie on the floor with your knees bent and your feet flat. Hold the weights straight up over your chest, with your palms facing each other. Bend your elbows and lower the dumbbells to the tops of your shoulders. Do 12 reps.

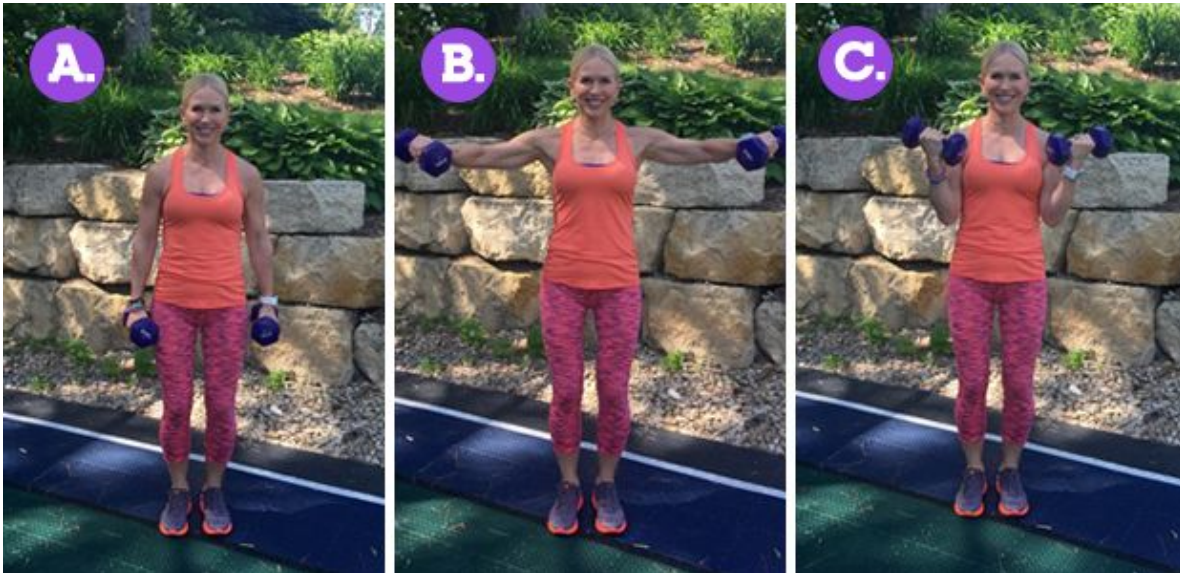
## Air Punches



**Target areas:** Arms, Back, Shoulders

This is the one exercise where you're not using weights and going for speed instead. Stand with your feet apart so they equal the width of your hips. Keep your arms bent, with the elbows in near your body. Tighten your abs and punch the air with the strength of your shoulders and back, not your wrists and elbows. Alternate between right then left. Continue for 30 seconds.

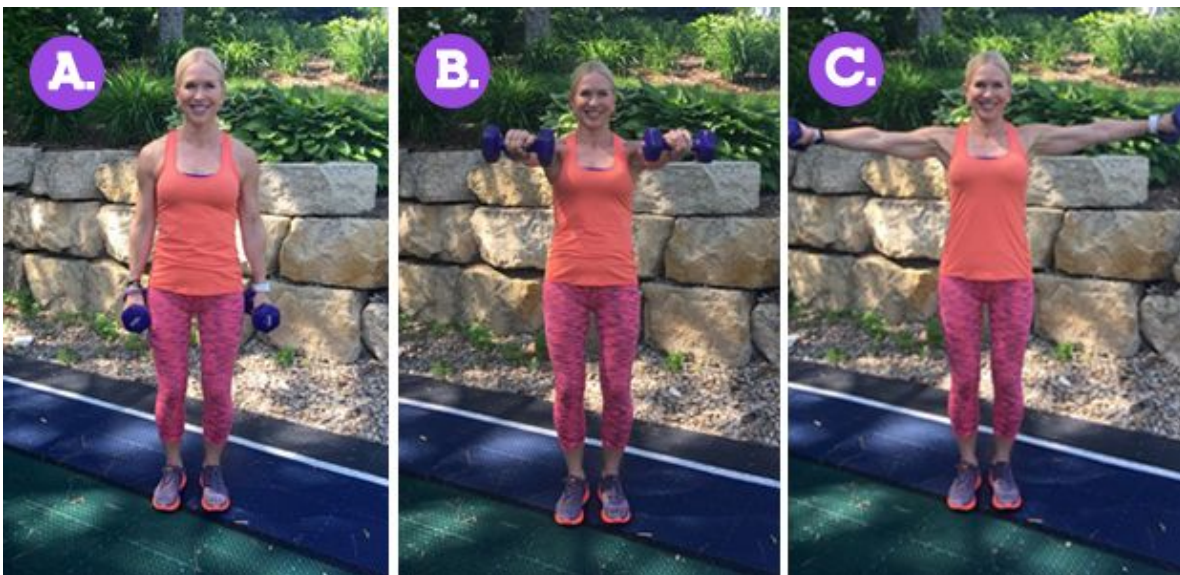
## Lateral Raises to Bicep Curls



**Target Areas:** Biceps, Shoulders

While standing, hold the dumbbells with your arms hanging at each side. Bend your knees slightly while keeping your abdominals tight. Curl your arms to your shoulders, with palms facing your body. Raise your elbows up to shoulder height. Return your elbows back to the sides of your body, and then slowly your lower hands.

## Shoulder Ts



**Target areas:** Back, Core, Shoulders

Put your feet together and hold the dumbbells at your sides, with your palms facing in. Lift the dumbbells in front of your body to shoulder height. Rotate the dumbbells so that they're parallel

to the floor and then open your arms so that your body is in a “T” position. Lower the dumbbells slowly down to your sides. Perform 12 reps.

### Air Punches



**Target areas:** Arms, Back, Shoulders

Stand with your feet apart so they equal the width of your hips. Keep your arms bent, with the elbows in near your body. Tighten your abs and punch the air with the strength of your shoulders and back, not your wrists and elbows. Alternate between right then left. Continue for 30 seconds.

## Concentration Curls



**Target area:** Biceps

Only one dumbbell is needed for both arms, so feel free to choose a heavier one in order to anchor your elbows to your inner thigh. More support on the joint will also focus the bicep. Start in a seated position with your feet and knees wide apart. Hold the dumbbell in one hand, bend your elbow, and rest your arm on the inside of your thigh. Lower the dumbbell slowly and extend your arm to its full length. Curl it back up until the dumbbell touches your shoulder. Perform 12 reps on each side.

# 8 Healthy Steps To Look Younger

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I admit, at age 50, I started to notice small changes in my skin and body. And, I can't help but notice all the marketing targeted at my generation, advertising both surgical and spa services that promise you a younger appearance. I personally have tried a few laser treatments (worked okay on some dark spots) and I tried sclerotherapy on my spider veins with no success...actually they are even worse now. And I can live with all of this.

You don't have to visit a plastic surgeon to hold on to your youth and youthful appearance.

There are many steps you can take naturally so people will be shocked when you reveal your age. If you want people to keep telling you that you don't look your age, incorporate these 8 tips into your life.

## 1. Be colorful



Eating as colorful as possible is one of the most natural ways to ensure you are getting the nutrients your body needs. Before you sit down to dinner, make sure your food looks colorful. Load up on tomatoes, citrus fruits, bell peppers, nuts, avocado, berries, leafy greens and sweet potatoes.

## 2. Sleep



Okay, you know what you look like when you pull an all-nighter or you can't sleep. Imagine dragging your body around with limited sleep for days on end. It simply isn't good for you. The saying, "get your beauty rest" is true. Sleep is a critical component of your overall health and if

you don't get enough, it's not only bad for your health, but it won't help how you look either. Try to get as close to [eight hours a night](#) as you can.

### 3. Down the water



It's not news that you need to stay hydrated and it's probably drilled into your head to drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day. This is good advice and truly easy and inexpensive. Our bodies are made up of approximately 60 percent water. Water aids in digestion, circulation and absorption, and rids the body of toxins. Dry skin has less resilience and is more prone to wrinkling. Bottom line: your organs (your skin is the largest organ!) need water to function properly. As you get older, you can lose skin elasticity and get more fine lines if you are dehydrated. So drink up! Throw some fresh lemon into your water. [Lemon water](#) adds extra health benefits.

### 4. Load up on antioxidant foods such as brown rice, bulgur, quinoa



Quinoa is a gluten-free grain that is easy to digest and can be cooked like rice. It has the highest protein content of any grain and contains more calcium than milk.

### 5. Get enough fiber



You can get fiber from grains, but don't forget you can also get fiber from fruits, vegetables and legumes. Per cup, black beans have about 15 grams of fiber, raspberries have about 8 grams and broccoli has 5 grams.

## 6. Smile and laugh



While optimists are known to live longer than pessimists, smiling and laughing can make you appear younger too. Adopting an energetic and positive attitude will translate to a youthful appearance.

## 7. Limit your sun exposure



I am a sun lover and love the warmth and energy it gives me. But too much sun is unhealthy. While 10 minutes of a natural dose of vitamin D from the sun is good for you—anything more and you should be bathing in sunscreen. And if you are an outdoor exerciser and saying to yourself, “I don’t need sunscreen for my hour long run, I’ll just sweat it off.” You are wrong. Even when you sweat, it will protect you. Just be sure to avoid the toxic ingredient, oxybenzone.

## 8. Muscle up



Your muscle mass can dwindle up to 10 percent for every decade over age 30. Make sure you eat enough protein with every meal—about one third of your meal should come from a protein source. And use exercise to build and keep your muscle as you age. Use free weights, your body weight and circuit routines to fight muscle loss and stay toned as you age.

With a little effort and adherence to these tips, you will be looking (and feeling!) younger in no time. Just don’t be surprised when people tell you that you don’t look your age.