

# AGE WELL PROJECT

## 6 Rules for Ageing Well

4 Nov 2021

### Resources

The Age-Well Project

Website: <https://agewellproject.com>

Instagram: [@agewellproject](https://www.instagram.com/agewellproject)

Facebook: [@theagewellproject](https://www.facebook.com/theagewellproject)

### Books

[\*The Age-Well Project\*](#) Easy Ways to Live a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life

[\*The Age-Well Plan\*](#) The 6-week Programme to Kickstart a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life

---

### Disclaimer

I'm not a doctor or a nurse. I can't prescribe, I can't give you advise on individual health issues. You need to talk to your GP about those. I'm here to guide you to make your own healthy choices, and to coach you to discover what's right for you.

---

### My 6 Rules for Ageing Well

1. Find your Purpose: why do you want to age well?
2. Diet and nutrition: Eat well to age well
3. Exercise: get moving
4. Sleep: don't lose the snooze
5. How to be – feeling grateful when things are tough, dealing with stress etc
6. How to live – ageing well at home/ environment

## **First Rule of Ageing Well: Find Your Sense of Purpose**

### **Background Research**

A 2019 study of almost 7000 people found that those with the strongest sense of purpose had decreased mortality rates.

Heart, circulatory and blood conditions were noticeably reduced among those who lived purposefully. The researchers defined 'purpose' as 'a self-organising life aim that stimulates goals, promotes healthy behaviours and gives meaning to life'.(Alimujiang et al., 2019)

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2734064>

### **This Is My Sense of Purpose**

"To help the world age well, to remain healthy myself so that I can travel, enjoying arts and culture around the world, for as long as I can".

What's yours?

## **Second Rule of Ageing Well: Eat Well to Age Well**

**Make Sure You're Getting Enough Fibre.** I mean fibre from vegetables, fruits, pulses and whole grains. There are many reasons why fibre helps us age well – a big research project in Australia looking at successful agers – the ones who were ageing most successfully ate the most fibre.(Gopinath et al., 2016)

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://academic.oup.com/biomedgerontology/article/71/10/1335/2198172>

Experts recommend between 25 and 30g of fibre a day, UK average is 18g. It's very easy to let it slip.

### **Good fibre sources**

Baked beans – half a tin in tomato sauce = 7.4g of fibre

Kidney beans – half a tin, drained = 6.6g of fibre

Chia seeds – 1 tablespoon = 5.7g of fibre

Porridge oats – 50g = 50g of fibre

Banana – 1 medium = 4.2g of fibre

Raspberries – 50g = 3.2g of fibre

### **Third Rule of Ageing Well: Get Moving**

12 minutes of exercise is enough to make a big difference

A study found that 12-minute bursts of exercise dramatically changed our body's circulating metabolites. Metabolites are small molecules in our blood that indicate how well (or not) our bodies are functioning and how effectively we're repairing ourselves. Doctors use metabolites as biological markers to gauge what's going on inside us, and to check our metabolic health.

Our metabolites can reveal the proficiency of our insulin resistance, our levels of inflammation, how healthy our heart is, how well our bodies are dealing with oxidative stress, and our likely longevity,

12 minutes of brisk exercise is enough to improve over 80% of these extraordinarily revealing biomarkers. (Naylor et al., 2020)

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.120.050281>

### **Fourth Rule of Ageing Well: Don't Lose the Snooze**

When we're in deep sleep, our brains go into 'housekeeping' mode, with their in-built cleaning team, the glymphatic system, clearing out toxins which accumulate during the day. Recent research shows that microglia – immune cells which act as brooms to sweep accumulated toxins out of the brain - work much more effectively while we sleep. (Stowell et al., 2019) The sleeping brain is also better at removing the beta amyloid implicated in Alzheimer's. As we enter deep sleep, the brain physically alters, with cells shrinking up to 60% to allow cleaning between them – the neurological equivalent of shifting the furniture around when you give the house a Spring clean!

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41593-019-0514-0>

### **Fifth Rule of Ageing Well: Engagement – Social And Mental**

Ageing well isn't just about the physical – a lot comes down to how we are in the world, the positivity I talked about at the beginning, our attitude to ageing and our attitude to the world around us. Social engagement and interaction make a huge difference to how we age.

We're social animals who developed to work as a tribe. Positive interaction with others has a measurable impact on our brain health: the amygdala (the area of the brain which processes emotions and memory) is stimulated by the company of others. If you're interested in this topic, have a look at Marta Zaraska's book [\*Growing Young: How Friendship, Optimism and Kindness Can Help You Live to 100.\*](#)

## **Sixth Rule for Ageing Well: Environment Inside and Out**

We can do a lot of work on ourselves but we need to think about the environment we seek to age well in.

Almost every cell in our bodies is affected by air pollution, reaching our lungs, skin, bones, and brains in particular. The damage is caused in a myriad of ways, triggering both acute responses, like lung infections and heart attacks, and chronic conditions, including dementia and osteoporosis. Exposure to environmental toxins causes our mitochondria – the batteries of our cells - to misfire and our telomeres to shorten.

All-purpose sprays and glass sprays. Using cleaning sprays daily for 10-20 years can impact lung function, in one study the effect was comparable to smoking a packet of cigarettes a day for the same amount of time.

You can read more about it in a research paper into indoor air quality.(Cincinelli & Martellini, 2017)

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5707925/>

## **References**

- Alimujiang, A., Wiensch, A., Boss, J., Fleischer, N. L., Mondul, A. M., McLean, K., Mukherjee, B., & Pearce, C. L. (2019). Association Between Life Purpose and Mortality Among US Adults Older Than 50 Years. *JAMA Netw Open*, 2(5), e194270-e194270. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.4270>
- Cincinelli, A., & Martellini, T. (2017). Indoor Air Quality and Health. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 14(11), 1286. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14111286>
- Gopinath, B., Flood, V. M., Kifley, A., Louie, J. C. Y., & Mitchell, P. (2016). Association Between Carbohydrate Nutrition and Successful Aging Over 10 Years. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series A*, 71(10), 1335-1340. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gerona/glw091>
- Nayor, M., Shah, R. V., Miller, P. E., Blodgett, J. B., Tanguay, M., Pico, A. R., Murthy, V. L., Malhotra, R., Houstis, N. E., Deik, A., Pierce, K. A., Bullock, K., Dailey, L., Velagaleti, R. S., Moore, S. A., Ho, J. E., Baggish, A. L., Clish, C. B., Larson, M. G., Vasan, R. S., & Lewis, G. D. (2020). Metabolic Architecture of Acute Exercise Response in Middle-Aged Adults in the Community. *Circulation*, 142(20), 1905-1924. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.120.050281>
- Stowell, R. D., Sipe, G. O., Dawes, R. P., Batchelor, H. N., Lordy, K. A., Whitelaw, B. S., Stoessel, M. B., Bidlack, J. M., Brown, E., Sur, M., & Majewska, A. K. (2019, 2019/11/01). Noradrenergic signaling in the wakeful state inhibits microglial surveillance and synaptic plasticity in the mouse visual cortex. *Nature Neuroscience*, 22(11), 1782-1792. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41593-019-0514-0>