

Special Topic

Tips to Live to 100

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A few years ago, I wrote from my own experience an editorial entitled “Will I live to be 100?”¹

Well, I am still here, and looking forward to reaching that ripe old age. Good news came this morning, just a few days before my 97th birth day on February 26. An American friend forwarded an article from the US News & World Report dated February 3, 2025; the title was “10 tips to live to 100”. It pointed out that Thailand is one of five nations around the world with largest number of people living to age 100 and beyond, ranking second place after Japan.

The article offered some tips to achieve longevity:

1. **Be social.** People with a fulfilling social life have better memory and cognitive skills and remain physically healthy. My paradoxical Thai motto for my future obituary can be translated as: “companions for eating together are rare, while dead friends are abundant.”

2. **Stress-busting.** People’s biological age increases dramatically when they are under high amounts of stress. Keep trying different stress management approaches. Being socially active and managing stress go hand-in-hand.

3. **Get regular physical activity.** People who achieve great longevity tend to move a lot naturally, through walking, gardening and completing chores around the house, taking the stairs instead of the elevator or parking a little farther away from stores in order to keep moving.

4. **Eat healthy and fresh foods.** As much as you can, aim for fruits and vegetables, lean meat and dairy, whole grains and healthy fats. Supplementation with vitamin D, omega-3 fatty acids and a multivitamin may help stave off cancer, coronary disease and memory loss.

5. **Get enough sleep.** In growing older, not getting enough sleep increases risks for falls, makes one more forgetful and irritated or even depressed. Sleeping too little (under 6 hours) or too much (more than 9 hours) is associated with a greater risk of early death.

6. **Having a good attitude.** Accepting help when it is offered, such as using a wheelchair at the airport.

7. **Having your own life.** Being involved with your own life instead of complaining that your children don't call, keeps one from relying on one's children. Keep yourself busy.

8. **Prioritize** Having priorities that support your social, emotional and physical health and being beware of them also refers to more practical matters, such as getting regular medical and dental check-ups. Daily tooth brushing and flossing as well as regular dental appointments are associated with longevity. Washing hands frequently and getting recommended vaccinations can help ward off serious illnesses.

Reference:

1. Bovornkitti S. Will I Live to be 100? KUHJ 2024;5(3):206.