

The Key to Active Aging is Active Living



Active Aging Week presented by Humana



We began the 20th Anniversary of Active Aging Week, presented by Humana, by asking the question, “Who wants to live to be 100 if you can enjoy it?”

We’ve answered that question every day through the examples and the words of ordinary people who are already there or well on their way. Men and women who live with passion and purpose despite the many challenges of life. Their stories are unique and diverse, but they all prioritized a healthy lifestyle and the proven pathways to whole person health. Their daily lives incorporate the International Council on Active Aging’s **7 Dimensions of Wellness**. Their examples show us what’s possible. Here are 8 tips we’ve learned from ordinary people.

Change Your Belief System About What's Possible

The ICAA's 7 dimensions all overlap providing a framework for wellness. A key to optimizing the benefits of all is a positive attitude about aging. Those with a positive view of aging live on average 7 ½ years longer than those with a negative view. What the mind believes, the body embraces.¹ Don't resent growing older, celebrate it!



Prehabilitate

Prehabilitation is important to physical wellbeing because it prepares us for active aging. Prehabilitation includes regular exercise, sound nutrition and sleep habits, and stress reduction. Prehabilitation is a key to independent living because it helps us recover more quickly from new health events.²

Adapt and Accommodate

Adapting to the challenges of aging without being overwhelmed by them is an important life skill. We might not be able to do everything we used to do or do it exactly like we used to do it, but we can still experience joy in similar activities. When Grandma Moses could no longer embroider because arthritis in her hands prevented her from doing fine needlework, she adapted and accommodated. She picked up a paintbrush and found the same enjoyment. The Seven Dimensions of Wellness help us pursue and optimize life's possibilities.

Have Purpose in Your Life

The professional and vocational dimension of wellbeing provides a reason to get out of bed every morning. Having a sense of purpose lowers the risks of all causes of mortality regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity.³ Your purpose doesn't have to be profound. It must simply move you to action.



Be Curious and Never Stop Learning

Curious people are happier⁴ and healthier.⁵ Curiosity is the foundation of the intellectual dimension of wellness and leads directly to lifelong learning. Lifelong learning helps us adapt to change, promotes brain health, creates social connections, increases happiness, reduces stress, and leads to a multi-dimensional life.⁶

Stay Socially Engaged

Strong social relationships of all kinds have a profound influence on our mental and physical health. Connecting with family, friends, and loved ones raises our immunity,⁷ lowers our blood pressure,⁸ and even lengthens our life.⁹ Participating in community activities fosters a sense of belonging, purpose, and wellbeing. Consider joining a club, taking a walk with a neighbor, or mentoring a student.

Be Optimistic

Much has been written about the power of positive thinking but very little about the power of negative thinking. Negative thinking leads directly to anxiety, low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence, unhealthy behaviors, and, ultimately, sickness.¹⁰ Positivity builds resilience, promotes mental well-being, and encourages healthier lifestyle choices.¹¹

Say Yes. Be an Amateur.

We have to continue to say, “Yes!” to life and be willing to risk embarrassment, social unease, and failure. Forget perfection. Develop a beginner’s mindset, which is open to new ideas and possibilities and understands that failure is nothing more than feedback.



The key to active aging is active living. We all have a great deal of power over how we age. Don't sit back. Lean in. Turn Active Aging Week into an active aging life by understanding the ICAA's 7 Dimensions of Wellness and embracing the keys to whole person health.

Humana and the ICAA are dedicated to helping you on your journey to whole person health. [Click here to download our complimentary Playbook for Active Aging: 7 Keys for Whole Person Health.](#)

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