



Live Healthy Georgia

Seniors Taking Charge

Let's Celebrate Healthy Aging!

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“Successful aging” or “healthy aging” is often considered enjoying health without disease or disability, maintaining cognitive and mental function, and remaining socially engaged. However, healthy aging is very individual. It's important to have a healthy lifestyle – eating well, exercising, and staying active mentally and socially go a long way in helping you to age well. September is National Healthy Aging Month – keep reading for tips to help you stay on the road to healthy aging.

9 Tips for Re-Inventing Yourself

(adapted from Carolyn Worthington,
HealthyAging.net)

1. *Back to School.* It's never too late to learn something new. If you're still working, take courses to enhance your skill set, such as using particular software or business writing. If you're retired, take classes about something you've always wanted to learn. For example, learn a foreign language, take a class in photography or art, take a cake-decorating or cooking class, or learn more about computers or computer programs. Many local universities and colleges offer programs through their continuing education departments. Another idea – challenge yourself to complete a degree program in something that you enjoy!

2. *Take a Volunteer Vacation.* Many programs allow you to travel and give back to the community in which you're visiting. It's a great way to immerse yourself in a new culture, as well as make a difference. For more information, visit <http://www.volunteerguide.org/vacation>.
3. *Dance Like There's No Tomorrow.* Physical activity is important to healthy aging. Walking, running, and biking aren't the only ways to get moving. If you like to exercise to music or with other people, as well as mix up what you're doing, try dancing as exercise. An added benefit is that dance often requires memory work and active learning – which boosts brain health. Ballroom, ballet, jazz, modern, tap, hip-hop, swing, shag, and square-dancing are just a few of the types of dance you can try. Check out your local phone book for places to take dance classes.



4. *Hit the Road.* Travel is good for the soul and the mind. Planning a trip gives you a goal and is often as much fun as actually going on the trip. Sometimes, money may prohibit taking “dream vacations.” Consider day trips (i.e., 1-4 hours away) as a way to travel for less. Also, travel sites, such as www.travelocity.com or www.expedia.com help you find lower rates for airfare or hotels, especially when booked together.
5. *Become a Rock N Roll Star.* Or anything else you’ve always wanted to try. There are a variety of camps and workshops around the country that give you the experience of being a rock ‘n’ roll star, baseball player, or any other “dream job.” Recreation departments often host senior citizen leagues for many sports, as well.
6. *Learn to Paint a Landscape or Still Life.* There are many art classes at local craft stores (i.e., Michael’s or Hobby Lobby). Engaging in artwork helps you practice coordination, imagination, and relaxation.
7. *Become a Surfer Dude.* Try any activity that you’ve always wanted to try but never had the opportunity. Surfing, skydiving, white water rafting, etc. However, the activity doesn’t have to be dangerous. Going on a longer bike ride is also a challenge. For all activities, be sure to check with your doctor first, especially if you have not been active.



8. *Eat fresh.* September is a great time to add more fruits and vegetables to your plate. Farmers markets are still going strong, and most late summer/early fall produce is in season (which means lower prices). Remember to eat a variety of colors to get the nutrients you need.
9. *Re-invent yourself in Napa Valley.* If you love wine, take a trip to Napa Valley for a wine-tasting course. Or if that’s too far, you can always try local vineyards and wine shops. If you’re not a wine connoisseur, treat yourself to something else special – dinner with friends, a trip to a museum or concert, or a sporting event. The important idea is to celebrate healthy aging!

More September Events

[National Cholesterol Education Month](#)
[Fruit and Veggies – More Matters Month](#)
[National Child Obesity Awareness Month](#)
[National Yoga Awareness Month](#)
[Prostate Cancer Awareness Month](#)
[Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month](#)
[Whole Grains Month](#)

References

- Rowe, JW, & Kahn, RL. Successful aging. *Gerontologist* 1997;37(4):433-40.
- Worthington, C. September is Healthy Aging Month – Time to Celebrate Positive Aging! Available from <http://www.healthyaging.net/articlelive/articles/10-tips-for-september-is-healthy-aging-month-2.html>

Pictures

- http://targetgoodhealth.com/yahoo_site_admin1/assets/images/MPj042763200001.86151250.jpg
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