

# Doctors Share The 8 Simple Habits You Can Do Today To Slow Aging In Your 60s

You don't have to overhaul your entire life.

BY KORIN MILLER MAY 28, 2025

Aging may be inevitable—but it doesn't always happen at a steady pace. Research shows that our cells tend to age in spurts, with noticeable accelerations around the ages of 44 and 60. During these periods, certain biological changes can make you feel your age more acutely.

It's not entirely clear from the research what's going on in the body around age 44, other than perimenopause in women. But men go through this speed-up in aging around this time, too, so, unanswered questions remain.

But when you near 60, research suggests you're more likely to face a bunch of factors related to aging, including the loss of lean muscle mass, as well as a drop in bone density—and both of those things can make you feel older. But hitting those milestone ages *doesn't* mean you're destined to fall off an aging cliff. Experts say there are

plenty of ways to counteract the physical effects of aging—and even slow them down. That's why your chronological age (the number on your birthday cake) and your biological age (how old your cells act) don't always match up.

A lot of controlling the effects and speed of aging comes down to lifestyle choices, which you can implement or adjust at any moment. “It's never too late to start,” says Barbara Bawer, MD, a family medicine physician at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

To help slow the aging process in your 60s, doctors and a trainer who works with older adults share their top strategies.

**Meet the experts:** Patricia Greaves, CPT, is a trainer and founder of StrongHer Personal Training. Scott Kaiser, MD, is a geriatrician and director of Geriatric Cognitive Health for the Pacific Neuroscience Institute at Providence Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica. Barbara Bawer, MD, is a family medicine physician at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

## 1. Fill your plate with plants.

You don't need to go full-on vegan, but eating a diet that's heavy in plants has been linked to healthy aging, especially heart and brain health. “What we eat plays a critical role in determining our health and well-being,” Kaiser says, calling a focus on plant-based foods your “*farm-acy*.”

A 2024 *JAMA* study that followed more than 25,000 women for 25 years found that those who followed the plant-based Mediterranean diet had a slew of better biomarkers (molecules found in your blood, tissues, and bodily fluids) which were linked to a lowered risk of developing conditions like cholesterol, diabetes, and high blood pressure compared to those who didn't follow the diet. They also had a 23 percent lower risk of dying from any cause.

## 2. Do strength and resistance training three to four times a week.

Women start to lose muscle mass in their 30s, and then lose 3 to 5 percent of that muscle mass per decade. But lifting a few days a week can help to combat that.

“I want more people, especially women, to see strength training as a nonnegotiable for preventing muscle and bone loss and supporting their independence in their later years,” says Patricia Greaves, CPT, a trainer and founder of StrongHer Personal Training. She suggests doing strength or resistance training three to four times a week to build and maintain muscle.

“Resistance training also has a direct impact on our bone density—as we lift, we force our bones to grow stronger,” she says. Given that the risk of osteopenia (a warning sign

of osteoporosis) and osteoporosis increases as you get older, this is a pretty important health hack.

“Along with strength training, mobility exercises should be done to improve your joint health, allowing you to move with greater ease and confidence,” Greaves says. She recommends leaning into exercises like Pilates, yoga, and dynamic stretching for better mobility.

A scientific review published in 2022 noted that plant-based diets are linked to better metabolism, along with less bodily inflammation. There's also a lowered risk of heart disease when you follow a plant-heavy diet, which is linked to better health.

Another style of eating called the MIND diet (it is similar to the Mediterranean diet) focuses on foods to boost brain health, including leafy greens, vegetables, nuts, berries, beans, whole grains, fish, poultry, olive oil, and wine. Many of these foods are high in phytonutrients that protect your cells from oxidative stress, which can damage cells and raise the risk of developing serious conditions like dementia and cancer, Kaiser explains.

Just don't neglect your protein. It's crucial to get lots of that macronutrient in the mix to combat the drop in lean muscle mass, Kaiser says. While the recommended daily allowance (RDA) for protein is 0.8 grams per kilogram, researchers suggest that regular exercisers need 1.2 to 1.5 grams per kilogram of protein to support tissue growth.

### 3. Clean up your bedtime routine.

You probably already know that you should aim to get seven or more hours of sleep a night, but sleep is way more complicated than just telling yourself to conk out.

That's why Kaiser says it's so crucial to establish a good bedtime routine now. That means powering down your phone, dimming the lights, lowering your thermostat to create a cool temperature, and creating other habits that signal to your brain that it's time to wind down.

### 4. Schedule regular mindfulness alerts in your phone.

It's easy to roll your eyes at the idea of practicing mindfulness meditation, but research shows it can be profoundly helpful for combating stress. One scientific analysis found that people who practiced mindfulness meditation had lower levels of anxiety, depression, and stress, while an eight-week study of people who followed a mindfulness program found that they had a "significant decrease" in stress levels.

"Stress management is very important because it can lead to other things falling off like diet, sleep, and exercise," Bawer says. "It can also increase inflammation, and stress hormones can affect the way organs function."

Making a point to schedule mindful breaths into your day can create a cascade effect in your body to help you chill out, Kaiser says. (You really only need to bring your attention to your breathing and take a moment to appreciate life, he says.) You can even just create a repeating alarm at a certain point in your day to focus on your breath for a few minutes. “This simple practice can actually unlock the power of meditation and help curb stress,” Kaiser says.

## **5. Invest in a water bottle you love - and refill it throughout the day**

Your body is mostly made of water, which is why it's so crucial to stay hydrated, Bawer says. The U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine recommends that women have about 11.5 cups of fluids a day from foods and liquids. But everyone's needs are slightly different depending on things like your size and how much you tend to sweat during the day.

Hydration can support good skin health, cognitive function, and even lower your risk of chronic diseases, Kaiser says. “Chronic dehydration can impact your risk for cardiovascular disease, your kidney health, and your brain health,” he says. “You should prioritize drinking plenty of water throughout the day, and be mindful of drinking enough, even when you're not thirsty.”

If you have trouble hitting your hydration goals, consider splashing out on a water bottle that you like the look of and keeping it by your side during the day. You can also set regular reminders in your phone to take a drink, if you're still not sipping enough.

## 6. Scrutinize your drinking habits.

It's understandable to be a little confused about the relationship between alcohol and your health, especially given that studies keep popping up that suggest a little wine is good for you. But a growing body of research suggests that any amount of alcohol is bad for your health, and even smaller amounts ramp up blood pressure and increase your risk of heart disease.

Alcohol has also been linked to several types of cancer, and it's known to mess with your sleep, which we already established is crucial for healthy aging. When it comes to drinking, "less is better, but nothing is best," Bawer says. Kaiser admits that recommendations around alcohol are "controversial," given that the science around alcohol's impact on the body continues to change. "But there's more and more research that indicate that there are health risks with drinking any amount of alcohol," he says.

## **7. Schedule your next doctor's appointment, like, now.**

Annual check-ups—where your doctor checks your blood pressure, listens to your heart, does a physical exam, and orders blood work—are "so important," Kaiser reminds. This is where your doctor can help stay on top of any health issues you may be experiencing and also detect new problems that you might not even be aware of. "If you detect conditions early, you may be able to significantly reduce your long-term risk of health issues," Kaiser says. "But if they're left unchecked, issues can progress and cause damage to your overall health that might have been otherwise prevented."

A good hack for keeping yourself consistent: Schedule your next check-up at your current check-up. That way you'll at least have something locked in for the future.

## **8. Talk to your doctor about Vitamin D and other supplements.**

The best way to know if you could benefit from a supplement is to have a conversation with your doctor about your overall health goals, and if you may need blood testing to see if you're deficient in anything, Kaiser says.



There is research that suggests taking Vitamin D can help lower the risk of dementia, and the vitamin also is linked with good bone health, Kaiser says. "But you really want to talk to your doctor first," Kaiser says. "Not everybody needs to take supplements."

The supplement market is not well-regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, "and so often what you're taking can be too much, not enough, or just wrong for you even if you meant well," Bawer adds.

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