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Gracefully Aging

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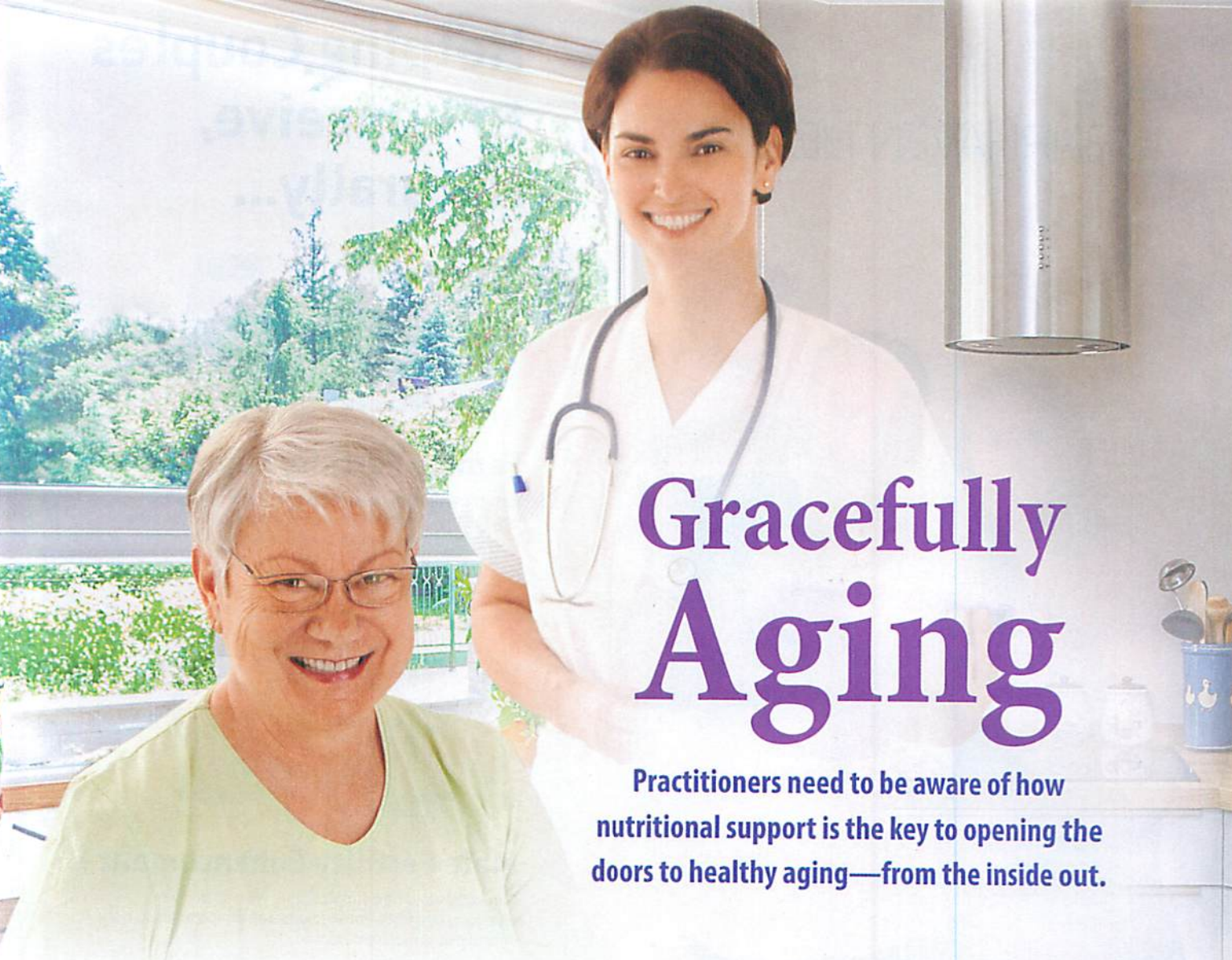
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Gracefully Aging

Practitioners need to be aware of how nutritional support is the key to opening the doors to healthy aging—from the inside out.

By Courtney Anaya, CPT

Growing old is inevitable, yet there are methods in assuaging the aging process through proper diet and health support. It's projected by 2050 that Americans aged 65 and older will amount close to 89 million people, which is double the number of elderly adults in 2010. The reason: individuals are living longer into their 70s and 80s, even with the post-World War II Baby Boom.

From January 1, 2011 and on for the next 20 years, approximately 10,000 Americans will blow out their 65th birthday candles, making the last Boomers 65 in 2030. By then, the aging population will be significantly changed. Close to 72 million people will be considered elderly; that's one of every five Americans.

The rising number of elderly throughout the country has stimulated advances in medical treatment, prolonging the average life expectancy. Chronic diseases such

as tuberculosis and syphilis were once a problem. Fast-forward 30 years: heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's disease and diabetes pose as the current threats. Due to this, addressing the aging population's nutritional needs has become more demanding.

Even when a person's situation is at its best, that individual may be marred by a weakened immune system. That health decline is simply bought on by age. Not consuming enough calories and protein along with essential micronutrients further exposes the elderly population to a reduced immune system. That in turn produces a higher risk for acute illness and infection.

Moving forward, adopting healthy behaviors at an early age can prevent the drastic health decline down the road. For example, studies have indicated that individuals who do not smoke and participate in regular activity during their youth are

less likely to develop heart disease, cancer and other chronic illnesses. Sadly, current data regarding health-related practices for people aged 55-64 years old foreshadow a negative future for aging Americans. It's essential for the aging population to practice health-promoting behaviors. Simply, becoming older does not mean that one's health should be restricted.

Other factors influencing the aging population's health are economic hardships, lack of accessibility to food, poor food choices and physiological changes. Ron Antriasian, vice president of sales and business development for Florida-based Life Extension said, "In many cases, seniors on a fixed income may choose to cut back on costs they can control, including fresh fruits, vegetables and organic foods, in favor of cheaper, less healthy alternatives." Unfortunately, the mindset of the elderly population is quantity over quality, thinking that they are receiving a deal on

a food item when in actuality that food item isn't deemed healthy. Processed foods do not contain enough vitamins and minerals, terming these foods as empty calories. As a practitioner, one needs to be aware of these psychosocial issues because they are key players when trying to convey proper nutrition and health practices to such a vulnerable population.

Nutrition101

An inadequate diet and malnutrition have been the forefront of the geriatric population. The journal *Clinical Intervention Aging* published a review in 2010 indicating that 16 percent of those over the age of 65 are malnourished. That number is expected to increase in the next 30 years. Malnutrition is defined by the journal, "as a state in which a deficiency, excess or imbalance of energy, protein and other nutrients causes adverse effects on body, form, function and clinical outcome."

There are evident mechanisms of weight loss—wasting, cachexia and sarcopenia—that are caused by malnutrition. The first of the three is wasting, a primary indication that the body is not receiving proper food intake. This is mostly caused by physiological changes that the aging process presents.

Cachexia is when there is a loss of fat-free mass or body cell mass—triggered by catabolism and resulting in changes of body composition. When this occurs, there is an acute immune response where cytokines get released, effecting hormone production and a spike in resting energy expenditure. An increase in gluconeogenesis is to be expected as well as a negative nitrogen balance to be present. Eventually, this instigates the loss of muscle mass, also termed sarcopenia.

The *Current Opinion in Clinical Nutrition and Metabolic Care* published a review indicating that 3 to 8 percent of lean muscle mass is lost per decade after 30—hypothesizing to impact 30 percent of individuals over the age of 60 and 50 percent over the age of 80. The loss of lean muscle mass is mostly due to the elderly population's decrease in activity in conjunction with a poor diet. The loss of muscle mass reduces the mammalian target of rapamycin (mTOR) pathway. The mTOR pathway governs muscle protein

synthesis. To prevent muscle wasting from happening throughout the aging process, it's recommend to intake 25 grams of protein with each meal, and to participate in a daily workout regime that incorporates resistance training.

The aging process also brings other physiological changes not related to weight loss. These changes are pertaining to vision, taste, smell, cognitive function and even dental problems. Ultimately those changes will impair muscle function, reduce bone mass, decrease cognitive function and prolong hospital stays.

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The goal with the aging population is to follow a balanced diet, including the use of supplements where it is needed. "With proper diet and exercise regimes, older adults can retain excellent health through their 60s and 70s. Choosing a nutrient-dense, anti-inflammatory dietary strategy can minimize damage to the body's natural repair mechanisms and provide key substrates for optimal health," said Registered Dietitian, Desiree Nielsen. Dr. Jacob Teitlebaum, medical director of the Practitioner's Alliance Networks encouraged, "the elimination of sugary drinks such as sodas and fruit juices."

Coinciding with poor nutrition habits,

it has also been seen that oxidative stress can cause significant damage regarding someone's health—impacting sight, cognition, and skin. Dr. Wendy Bazilian is a registered dietitian who recommends a diet that is not only rich in anti-inflammatory properties but also omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamins D and C and calcium.

One diet in particular that fits the mold is the Mediterranean diet. The *JAMA Internal Medicine* conducted a study that showed a Mediterranean diet that uses olive oil or nuts could improve cognitive function. The reason is due to the omega-3 fatty acids that are present within the diet. Cognitive function doesn't just pertain to memory and brain function but also balance and coordination.

Boost From Supplements

Even with a proper diet, there is always room for an added health boost. That's where the right supplements come into play. Nielsen stated, "Supplement needs in an aging population will be highly individualized based on their current intake and medical history; however, for a well population, those that target common deficiencies—vitamin B12, vitamin D, calcium—and address chronic inflammation—probiotics, long chain omega-3 fatty acids, turmeric—may be of particular benefit."

Due to the use of proton pump inhibitors, there are fewer gastric secretions leading to a reduced intrinsic factor (IF). This inhibits vitamin B12 absorption. Vitamin B12 deficiency has been seen in 12 to 14 percent of community-dwelling individuals over the age of 60. A deficiency in this essential vitamin can lead to dementia, anemia and an increased risk for cardiovascular disease.

As for vitamin D, it is a fairly common deficiency due not getting enough sun exposure or consuming vitamin D rich foods. Vitamin D works to support bone health, improve mood and the immune system.

Nielsen also recommended taking a probiotic, "With age, the diversity of the microbiota decreases leaving older adults at risk for colonization with more pro-inflammatory strains, leading to digestive or inflammatory concerns or even enteric



Gracefully Aging

infections such as *C. difficile*. Probiotics help support a resilient intestinal flora and certain strains help directly reduce gut-associated inflammation.”

Life Extension offers Super Omega-3 EPA/DHA with sesame lignans and olive fruit extract. According to the company, the supplement is made with proprietary EPA/DHA technology that generates tolerable fish oil. Sesame lignans extend the stability of DHA in the body—moving fatty acids to pathways that reduce inflammation. Lastly, olive fruit extracts is a powerhouse antioxidant that safeguards normal LDL levels from oxidation.

The company also offers Two-Per-Day capsules. The formula contains nicotinamide riboside—a derivative of vitamin

B3 that supports mitochondrial health. According to the company, compared to Centrum Silver Adults 50+, Two-Per-Day capsules have eight times more vitamin C, 10 times more biotin, and 25 times more vitamin B6—naming a few that are present in the supplement.

Reduce Oxidative Damage

As mentioned earlier, oxidative stress can cause more wear and tear within the body. Poor lifestyle habits are the ultimate trigger points for the unnecessary stress. Incorporating supplements that work to reduce the damage can help to further enhance one’s health.

New Zealand-based MitoQ has developed a line of supplements that are composed of antioxidants, protecting the mitochondria. CEO of MitoQ Ltd., Greg Macpherson said, “MitoQ is a premium mitochondria-targeted form of CoQ10 that goes straight to the place that 90 percent of free radicals are generated—the mitochondria to reduce free radical leakage into the cell and the associated dam-

age that it causes. MitoQ also improves mitochondrial function resulting in more energy being available to the cell so that they can do their job more effectively.”

From the age of 20, levels of cellular CoQ (CoQ10, ubiquinone or ubiquinol), start to drop. CoQ10 is typically taken to help support energy levels and repair cells. MitoQ 5 milligrams is different than a regular CoQ10 supplement because it functions as an antioxidant tank—decreasing free radical damage.

MitoQ Heart promotes heart and circulatory health. It’s made with MitoQ antioxidants as well as l-carnitine, magnesium, and vitamin D—all essential heart-health ingredients. L-carnitine is needed for the production of ATP and assisting the body in moving fatty acids to the mitochondria for fuel. Lastly, magnesium turns on the switch for ATP energy production.

Next in the MitoQ line is MitoQ Blood Sugar that protects the pancreas, kidneys, liver, eyes, brain and heart. It has been formulated with chromium, cinnamon

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and zinc—all aiding in sugar metabolism and weight management. Studies have also shown that cinnamon backs glucose metabolism at a cell's receptor site.

To get to the surface level of anti-aging support, MitoQ developed Anti-aging Serum that supports collagen and elastin production. The product has been seen as an impactful anti-wrinkle remedy that diminishes wrinkles and lines, fostering a firmer and denser face.

Feel Younger

Life Extension is a company that has been researching and distributing exclusive formulas to the health supplement market for more than 30 years. According to the company, each supplement's formula is based off of clinical trials of several key ingredients. In regard to the anti-aging products, Life Extension offers several products that make the inside of the body more youthful.

To aid the cellular environment in the body is AMPK Activator from Life Extension. AMPK is an enzyme that is considered the "master switch." It targets harmful aging factors by promoting mitochondria production and healthy blood glucose and lipid levels. AMPK Activator is formulated with *Gynostemma pentaphyllum*—a key ingredient that supports longevity. According to Antriasian, "This natural formula supports AMPK enzymatic activities required to safely support a more youthful cellular environment.

A poor diet with age can cause high levels of cholesterol. CHOL-Support creates equilibrium between the "good" and the "bad" cholesterol. Composed of artichoke leaf extract and pantethine, studies have shown that each ingredient can balance out cholesterol levels with out negatively impacting CoQ10 levels.

When choosing to eat right, healthy food can still be impacted from high cooking temperatures—producing harmful glycation end products (AGEs). This can lead to premature aging. Glycation Protection Formula is made with carnosin, vitamin B1 and pyridoxal 5'

phosphate (P5P). Each protects parts of the body from glycation.

Youthful Glow

Having healthy skin not only boosts confidence levels but skin is also the body's first line of defense against aging. Z Skin Systems (ZSS) in Missouri has created nutrition-focused skin regimes that contain the antioxidant, zeaxanthin. Emily Frank, the president of ZSS said, "The key ingredient, zeaxanthin, is a carotenoid found in foods such as green vegetables, corn and eggs." Zeaxanthin protects the eyes and the skin. "For the eyes, it protects them from damaging sunlight and can help decrease the likelihood of developing age related eye disorders such as age related macular degeneration," she continued.

"The key ingredient, zeaxanthin, is a carotenoid found in foods such as green vegetables, corn and eggs."

**—Emily Frank
President, Z Skin Systems**

For the skin, the antioxidant has photoprotective benefits and decreases inflammation caused from sun exposure and skin conditions like eczema and rosacea.

It has been clinically shown to nourish the skin—producing a clear surface that's not flawed by daily stressors. ZSS products are different than any others on the market because it is the first to combine oral and topical components into a nutrition skin product. A 12-week, placebo-controlled, clinical study was also performed on ZSS products.

ZSS Method No. 1 is for radiant skin—designed for healthy skin aging. ZSS

Method No. 2 is for clear skin, made for those with sensitive skin. These products are not yet available to practitioners.

Results from the study confirmed for Method No. 1 that it does improve skin radiance as well as hydration, fine lines and wrinkles. The study also confirmed for Method No. 2 that it does have a positive anti-inflammatory effect—creating less spots, redness and blotchiness. 🩺

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■ Three to 8 percent of lean muscle mass is lost per decade after the age of 30.

■ The last of the Baby Boomers are expected to turn 65 in 2030.

■ A diet that is rich in fiber, protein, healthy fats, and vitamins and minerals will help stave off certain physiological changes that the aging process can present itself with.

■ Certain supplements such as AMPK Activator can help aid the cell's environment—promoting longevity and fighting off free radicals.

■ Twelve to 14 percent of Baby Boomers over the age of 60 in a community-dwelling setting have been said to have a vitamin B12 deficiency.

Healthy Take Aways

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Dr. Wendy Bazilian, www.wendybazilian.com
- Life Extension, (800) 544-4440, www.lifeextension.com
- MitoQ Ltd., www.mitoq.com
- Desiree Nielsen, RD, www.desireerd.com
- Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, www.endfatigue.com
- Z Skin Systems, (866) 479-7980, www.zss-skincare.com