

# MERRITT

# Wellness

Committed to the Health of our Family

October 2013

## Eight Tips for Aging Well

September was National Healthy Aging Month—a month set aside to “focus national attention on the positive aspects of growing older.” What is the secret to healthy aging? In order to answer this question, we must first define what “healthy aging” really means. Laura DeFina, MD of The Cooper Institute explains healthy aging, health conditions that commonly affect people as they age and provides tips for getting to your golden years in tip-top shape.

### What is healthy aging?

The underlying goal: getting into your golden years without significant disease, functioning fully and with your independence intact. Aging is a natural process; healthy aging isn't about preventing aging, but about aging well. Take Kenneth H. Cooper, MD, MPH, for example. At 82-years-old (2013), Dr. Cooper is active and healthy with high physical function and quality of life. What is the secret to healthy aging?

### 8 tips to healthy aging

**Make healthcare a priority.** When was your last checkup? Regular preventive healthcare is critical to help you avoid developing health conditions or to catch diseases in the early stages. If you want to age well or age without disease, you must see your doctor regularly. This goes for men and women alike.

**Follow your doctor's recommendations.** Do you have an underlying health condition or disease such as hypertension or diabetes? Make sure you follow up with your doctor regularly to keep your health in check. You are your own best advocate to ensure control of your underlying health conditions to prevent long-term damage.

**Take supplements and vitamins.** The best research suggests that omega-3 fatty acids do have positive

effects on the brain. Vitamin D and calcium can help keep your bones healthy and prevent bone thinning. Talk to your physician to determine which supplements and vitamins you should be taking regularly.

### Don't leave the house without putting on sunscreen.

Yes, it is primarily cosmetic, but it is still a component of healthy aging. Recurrent sun damage makes you look older, even if you are healthy and well underneath your aging skin. Wearing sunscreen can help prevent age spots, wrinkles and most importantly, skin cancer.

**Always wear your sunglasses.** Protect your eyes from the damaging UV-A and UV-B rays from the sun. Sun damage can lead to cataracts, which may not be life-threatening, but can certainly affect your quality of life. Wear sunglasses to help prevent cataracts and the need for surgeries to treat vision problems.

**Control the things you can.** You are the only one who has control over your lifestyle. Develop healthy eating and regular exercise habits now to promote a lifelong physical activity pattern. Adults should get 150 minutes a week of moderate to vigorous activity or 75 minutes a week of vigorous physical activity. Focus on the activities you enjoy and change it up frequently to avoid overuse injuries.

**Get a good night's sleep.** Sleep doesn't just make you look younger, it also helps to prevent diseases such as hypertension and cardiovascular disease. Adults should get seven to eight hours of sleep every night.

**Manage your stress.** Take advantage of personal stress management tools, take time to relax and exercise regularly to keep your stress levels low. Stress can be hard on your heart, brain and body. Manage your stress well to stay healthy.

*Article provided by Cooper Clinic Nutrition Services.*



## Join the Merritt Team Today for these Upcoming Walks or Rides! See Meg to Sign Up



The **Komen Maryland Hunt Valley Race for the Cure** will be on Sunday, October 20, 2013.



Register now for the CF Cycle for Life on October 20 at beautiful Herrington Harbour South in North Beach, Maryland. Choice from three routes (20 miles, 40 miles or 60 miles) through the most scenic landscapes in Maryland.



**Making Strides of Baltimore, MD**  
Sunday, October 27, 2013 ~ 9:00 AM  
Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Y at Stadium Place  
900 E 33rd St, Baltimore

## 30 Day Squat Challenge

We will be having our first Quick Fire Challenge November 1-30. The Quick Fire Challenges are designed to be a simple and quick month-long challenge. The first one is a Squat Challenge coupled with water intake. Hydration is always important but since we have our biometric screening upcoming in November it's even more important!

Participation in the challenge is simple:

See Tracy to sign up and pick up your tracking form.

Each day complete the daily number of squats and drink the required glasses of water (hydration is important!) Check off each box daily.

Put your name on the form and submit complete form to Tracy to be entered into a drawing for one of three \$100 gift cards.



## Wellness Program Biometric Screening

**Virginia - Wednesday, November 13th**

**Maryland - Friday, November 15th & Monday, November 18th**

**Times and details to follow shortly.**

Please feel free to contact any of the committee members for additional information or share any ideas you may have for upcoming events, newsletter articles, contests, questions, seminars, & more.

Committee Members: Tracy Funk, Ken Jonmaire, Holly Moye, Meg Truchon, Pam White

**Send all ideas to : MerrittWellness@merrittproperties.com**

**Reminder:** Additional helpful articles can be found by logging onto BHSOnline.com using User Name Merritt.