



October 17, 2018

# Wellness Wednesday

## This Is The Age You're Happiest and Most Self-Confident

We know that wisdom comes with age — and apparently so do a number of other joyful qualities. Research shows that the older you get, the more self-assured and content you are. In fact, those in their 60s are more likely to be happier and, according to a recent study, they're also more self-confident overall than most of those in their younger decades.

So, what's the secret? Sadly, there's no one answer, but rather several factors. Here are just a few things that likely help, according to some science on the subject:

### **OLDER PEOPLE HAVE BETTER MENTAL HEALTH.**

Here's one case where your mind may get better with age. In a 2016 study, researchers surveyed more than 1,500 people of all different ages on their physical, cognitive and mental health. They found that those in their 20s and 30s reported the highest levels of depression, anxiety and stress and lower levels of happiness compared with those in older decades. Dilip Jeste, a psychiatrist and one of the study's authors, told Time this is likely because you're more able to brush off everyday stressors when you're older, and you're also — gasp! — wiser, which adds to happiness.

### **YOUR LIFE IS LIKELY MORE STABLE THE OLDER YOU GET.**

With those awkward high school years and tumultuous 20s far in the rearview, this probably doesn't come as much of a surprise. A 2018 paper published in the journal *Psychology Bulletin* found that self-confidence peaks around age 60, which the study's authors say is likely due to a more stable environment. By this time, you may have formed solid relationships, been promoted to various positions at work or helped your children grow into dependable adults.

### **WHEN YOU'RE OLDER, HAPPINESS MEANS BEING CONTENT WITH WHAT YOU HAVE.**

To quote Sheryl Crow's "Soak Up the Sun," "it's not having what you want, it's wanting what you've got." One study found that younger participants were more likely to describe happiness as times when they felt ecstatic or elated,



The Atlantic reported. Those who were older described feeling happy when they were peaceful, calm or relaxed, which is rooted more in being content with the here and now rather than getting excitable over what's ahead. This change is likely attributed to increased feelings of connectedness to others and the current moment as you age, according to the study's authors.

## Your brain might be wired for fewer negative emotional responses as you age.

Brain imaging research published in 2004 found that older individuals displayed reduced activity in their amygdala, the area of the brain associated with stress and emotional responses, when they were shown negative images. This could mean your automatic response to negative emotional stimuli can become more subdued as you age.

There are some caveats worth mentioning: When it comes to happiness, a lot of research on the subject that's been conducted over time suggests that it generally follows a U-shaped curve, meaning that happiness is at a high when you're in your 20s as well, before it dips in middle age and then shoots back up again in your late 60s. So, the retirement decade isn't the only time you've reached your peak, so to speak. These points also don't cover all of the theories surrounding aging and happiness, they're just a few studies on the wide subject.

Additionally, the simple truth is that anyone can increase their feeling of contentment or self-confidence. Your age doesn't necessarily dictate how joyous you are, but rather your habits do (and there are plenty you can practice to help you reach a state of bliss).

But, overall, the research is worth noting — especially given the fact that many people think aging is a negative more than a positive experience. Just a little something to keep in mind if you're dreading the number of candles on your next birthday cake.

Article source: <http://bit.ly/2pTnWs6>



# This Week's Exercise

## SQUAT



**THE SQUAT IS THE KING OF ALL EXERCISES. SQUATS HIT MOST MUSCLE GROUPS IN THE BODY, WITH EMPHASIS ON THE CORE AND LARGE LOWER BODY MUSCLES. THE MORE MUSCLE MASS AND MOTOR UNITS RECRUITED DURING AN EXERCISE, THE BETTER THE EXERCISE FOR BURNING BODY FAT, AND THE SQUAT IS THE BEST OF THEM ALL.**

**YOU CAN INCORPORATE VARIATIONS OF THE SQUAT, IN ORDER TO TARGET DIFFERENT MUSCLES MORE SPECIFICALLY: THE FRONT SQUAT FOCUSES MORE ON THE QUADRICEPS, WHEREAS THE BACK SQUAT (RECOMMENDED OVER THE FRONT SQUAT, BECAUSE IT RECRUITS MORE MUSCLE ACTIVATION) WORKS THE GLUTEALS AND HAMSTRINGS MORE.**

**CHANGING THE WIDTH OF YOUR STANCE DURING SQUATS WILL ALSO AFFECT WHICH MUSCLES ARE WORKED MORE: A NARROW STANCE IS GOING TO HIT THE QUADRICEPS MORE, WHEREAS A WIDE STANCE IS GOING TO CONCENTRATE ON THE GLUTEALS AND HAMSTRINGS, AND THE SUMO STANCE THE ADDUCTORS.**

**YOU CAN USE BARBELLS, DUMBBELLS, SWISS BALLS, AND EVEN JUST BODY WEIGHT, TO PERFORM SQUATS. WHETHER YOU USE FREE WEIGHTS (I.E. BARBELLS AND DUMBBELLS) OR MACHINES (I.E. THE SMITH MACHINE AND HACK SQUAT) ALSO DETERMINES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SQUAT, WITH BARBELLS BEING SUPERIOR TO THE REST.**

**IDEALLY, WHEN PERFORMING THE SQUAT, YOU WANT TO GO DOWN UNTIL YOUR THIGHS ARE PARALLEL TO THE GROUND; HOWEVER, SOME INDIVIDUALS CANNOT DO THIS (I.E. TALLER OR LONG-LIMBED INDIVIDUALS), AND SO GOING AS FAR AS YOU CAN COMFORTABLY IS ADEQUATE, IF YOUR FORM IS CORRECT AND THE INTENSITY HIGH ENOUGH.**

Source: <http://bit.ly/2ILTtoG>

*Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.*

## HOUSTON'S GRILLED CHICKEN KALE SALAD WITH PEANUT VINAIGRETTE



### Ingredients

#### For peanut vinaigrette:

2 tablespoons peanut oil  
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil  
2 tablespoons unseasoned rice vinegar  
1 teaspoon reduced sodium soy sauce (or gf soy sauce)  
2 teaspoons raw honey  
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

#### For chicken:

1/2 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast  
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper

#### For the salad:

1 small bunch kale leaves, ribs and stems removed, finely chopped (about 4 generous cups)  
1 cup finely chopped green cabbage  
1/2 cup shredded carrots  
1/4 cup chopped fresh mint  
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro  
2 small scallions, chopped  
1 1/2 tablespoons chopped roasted, salted peanuts

### Directions

#### For dressing:

1. In a small bowl, combine vinaigrette ingredients.
2. Whisk to combine and set aside.

#### For chicken:

1. Preheat outdoor grill or grill pan over medium-high heat.
2. Place chicken between a piece of plastic wrap or parchment and pound to an even thickness.
3. Season with 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Grill for 5-6 minutes, turn and grill for an additional 5-6 minutes more, or until chicken is cooked through.
5. Allow chicken to rest for 5 minutes, then slice thin.

#### For salad:

1. In a large bowl, combine salad ingredients from kale to scallions.
2. Top each with dressing, toss to evenly combine.
3. Divide salad evenly on 2 plates or bowls, top each with chicken and peanuts and serve.

### Nutrition Information

Yield: 2 servings  
Serving size:  
1/2 the recipe

Amount Per Serving:  
Freestyle Points: 7  
Points +: n/a  
Calories: 410  
Total Fat: 22g  
Saturated Fat: 4g  
Cholesterol: 73mg  
Sodium: 600mg  
Carbohydrates: 26g  
Fiber: 5g  
Sugar: 8g  
Protein: 31g

Recipe source:  
<http://bit.ly/2pXVN3n>