

Why Is Prevention Really More Important For You?

Where possible, prevention is always better than cure. We can cure some of the individual ailments that arise, but it's increasingly clear that to get the best out of the rest of our life, the best strategy is prevention.

We progress through three basic stages as we age – Able, Less Able and Dependent. The SHAPE Analyser indicates each of these stages, which add up to your estimated lifespan. Your personal longevity plan also suggests immediate actions that you can address, ideally with the insights and support of your health professionals.

The best outcomes are likely to be achieved by making the best use of your Able stage whatever your current age. The purpose of longevity planning is to help you achieve the best possible healthy lifespan. This can also reduce or eliminate the need for aged care.

Prevention

Medical science continues to make amazing steps in understanding how the body ages and why. This has resulted in treatments and medicines that were simply unavailable even a decade ago and enable lifespans that were in many cases simply out of reach.

However, in many cases quality of life may not be sustained with these extended lifespans. The best approach is to take every reasonable step to avoid the more obvious paths that can lead to poor health. Longevity planning simply helps you to identify those that may apply to you and encourages you to stay up to date in knowing your potential for making an impact.

Motivation

Having a sense of purpose is increasingly acknowledged as the driver of healthy longevity. Many people remain well and with the potential to remain in paid work much longer than the traditional 'retirement' age of 65 while they are still Able. The additional benefit from working longer is clearly financial as well.

If paid work is not wanted, or unavailable, 'in kind' work like volunteering and grandparenting all contribute to personal wellbeing. They support motivation to stay in good health longer and are an increasingly important social contribution as lifespans increase.

Aged Care

Aged care is an essential support for those unable to manage essential processes of daily life. Home care is increasingly being sought, reflecting dissatisfaction with institutional care, which is under pressure from the demographic shift to an older population. However, home care is also under increasing pressure, so taking action to minimise this through preventive behaviour make sense.

What can we take out of this?

We know we can empower more people from midlife onwards to understand why longevity is

increasing. Longevity planning provides the insights into what each of us can do to live healthier and productive lives and achieve our own longevity bonus.

Governments should provide more support for this through longevity education, reductions in healthcare premiums for sustained wellness, support for employers and incentives for a more holistic approach to personal longevity planning from health and financial advisers.

We all need to push for increasing community longevity awareness in every way we can. Personal example is an excellent way of contributing to this – and reaping the benefits!

It's a good idea to update your SHAPE Analyser results regularly - why not do one now?

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