
Update Your Healthspan Steps

Not so long ago, most people didn't hook into 'longevity'. The closest they came was when retirement seemed to be looming. Our 'health' was the presence or absence of disease or risk factors. These days our health is our state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Our health reflects the interactions of our genetics, lifestyle, and environment – and our choices in dealing with them.

'Healthspan' was coined to mean, in today's terms, our remaining healthy longevity – the rest of our life. But knowing what it means doesn't help much unless you have a personal context for your own healthspan. Here's where longevity planning comes in.

What's likely to be my healthspan and why?

Australian research enabled the SHAPE Analyser to give you a personal insight. It suggests three potential stages in your longevity – Able, Less Able, and Dependent. The first two stages are when you remain capable of independent living, representing your healthspan. As well, from your own answers, your initial longevity plan identifies key issues which you can address to support and perhaps improve your healthspan. You can review our suggestions for action on your Surroundings and Health, and along with consulting our Knowledge library, arrange a conversation with your health advisers to take on board their thoughts and their support. Casual visitors to our website can review these first two of the five Immediate Steps to managing your healthspan and subscribe to reviewing and responding to the Attitude, Parents (gene pool) and Eating steps.

What's next?

With a clearer view of your healthspan, the Longer-Term Steps of your planning come into focus.

Your healthspan is the time to address these steps, so the Dependent stage does not come as a surprise. It's important to acknowledge that this stage is when you may not be capable of fully independent living. It doesn't necessarily mean that you are mentally or physically helpless. By planning in advance, including managing your healthspan as well as possible, you are more likely to make the best of it. A bonus can be that by prolonging your healthspan, you are more likely to shorten your dependency.

Increasing longevity is a major social bonus and challenge. As you learn more about the drivers and consequences of increasing longevity, you are better placed to make informed choices about your future. This helps to frame your conversations with professional advisers if you choose, bringing all your advice into the same time context of you and your immediate family.

Language changes, but the goal is the same – to make the best of the rest of your life with longevity planning. If you are not yet a subscriber, find out more here.

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

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SHAPE Analyser now