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### January 2008 Newsletter: How Boomers Can Age Well☺

According to the latest data from the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#), we're still making gains on living longer. Babies born in 2004 can now expect to live 77.8 years, and if you were 65 that year on average you can expect to live to the age of 83.7. Even more astounding, if you were 85 that year you can expect to live to the age of 91.8. So why should a baby boomer worry about aging anyway? And what exactly must we all do to age well?

We've already heard that smoking, [poor diet and physical inactivity](#) account for 35% of all deaths in the U.S., since these and alcoholism are the leading causes of heart disease, cancer and stroke in America. However, sometimes its not quite as simple as just saying, "I'm going to eat right in 2008!" or "I'm going to exercise more!"



For example, if we've got issues with joint and muscle pain it may be hard or at least painful to walk for twenty minutes. And if we are on the run, skip breakfast and eat out for lunch and/or dinner, it may be next to impossible to get in those five servings of fruits and vegetables daily that was the national goal of the C.D.C. for 2010.

The sad truth is not everyone will do the recommended amount of exercise, and not everyone will eat the optimal servings of fruits and vegetables daily. *Indeed, there are layers of physical, social, and psychological barriers apparently preventing most of us from achieving these basic goals*



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Think about it. When we boomers were in high school sit-ups were the best way to strengthen your back, the latest craze in eating was going to this fabulous restaurant nestled under high golden arches that quickly served up hamburgers, French fries and a shake, and our parents had just learned that the most sound and nutritious meals could be eaten right out of their aluminum serving containers, on trays in front of the television, after removing them from the freezer and heating them for only minutes. This is great, we thought, now mom can go to work just like dad (as if staying at home with the kids wasn't work)!

The point is this, we're smart enough to understand that at some point if we're not active enough or our LDL cholesterol rises anyway, that we're going to have to use medicines. We also need to come to grips with the idea that even before we go that far down the line, some nutritional products and supplements may be helpful as well. Do cholesterol medicines or nutritional supplements replace the important role of physical activity and eating right? No, and on that scientists seem to agree. Yet for the average American wanting to age well, there is growing evidence nutritional supplements may play a valuable role in enhancing health.

You won't hear me say this often, but I was wrong on all this. For years I resisted advising patients to take nutritional supplements, instead following the example of many nutritionists and dieticians who advise we must simply eat better. Similarly, I resisted telling younger patients about monthly maintenance adjustments when they had back, neck or joint problems, advising exercise and return as needed instead.

Yet I've seen how hard it is for me to exercise and take in a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables on a daily basis, and apparently I'm not alone. The most recent data from the C.D.C. indicates that [no states are meeting the Healthy People 2010 goals for exercise and fruit and vegetable consumption](#). None!

So this coming year *we're going to talk more about when we should take nutritional supplements (vitamins, minerals) and which ones are helpful*. We will be glad to consult with you regarding your symptoms and medications and supplements, and this will sometimes require searches on the Internet and conversations with your physician, but it will be an important dialog. *We're also going to discuss more seriously the role of chiropractic adjustments for maintenance and prevention of spine and joint problems.*

Finally, we note that the World Health Organization has proclaimed that this is the [Bone and Joint Decade](#), since joint, muscle and back problems are the leading cause of disability not just in the U.S., but also around the world. Of all the joint and muscle problems and disease that contribute to this, back problems are the leading cause. *So Boomers take note...not only should you consider the importance of regular chiropractic care this year, you will want to tell your family and friends about chiropractic, so we can all age well*☺

Breaking News: On January 17, 2008 the United States Food and Drug Administration released a warning that [OVER THE COUNTER COUGH AND COLD MEDICINES SHOULD NOT BE USED BY CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF TWO](#), and that currently the FDA is reviewing safety of these products for 2-11 year olds: "There are a wide variety of rare, serious adverse events reported with cough and cold products. They include death, convulsions, rapid heart rates, and decreased levels of consciousness."

*If you are viewing a paper or hotmail copy of this newsletter, you may view the references associated with the hyperlinks by accessing our newsletters at [www.drleach.com](http://www.drleach.com), clicking on PLEASE ENJOY DR. LEACH'S LATEST NEWSLETTER, and then HOW BOOMERS CAN AGE WELL.*

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