

Anti-Aging & Longevity Terms Made Simple

Most of us spend the first half of our life earning money and losing our health and the second half spending our money trying to buy back our health. Aging complicates the consequences of unhealthy stressful life styles. The optimal state of health created from following a strategic prolonging health plan is insurance against following this stereotype. When optimal health is extended into mid-life and advanced age, you can fulfill your purpose in life and enjoy the financial freedom gained from working hard earlier in life.

Though health, happiness, and longevity are goals we all share, the terms used by doctors and lay people in the field needs defining. What is anti-aging medicine? What do the terms prolongevity, life extension, longevity, maximum life span, and health span mean?

Let's start with positive longevity, a term Randall Moore of Positive Change Media and I developed two years ago. If we were to distill all the anti-aging approaches into one unified model, it would take in the theory and practice of anti-aging medicine as well as longevity science and life-extension practice. By "positive longevity," I mean a healthy approach to living longer and one that encompasses all aspects

of prevention of disease and prolonging health into advanced age. The healthy approach to aging begins with life style, exercise, a diet of whole organic foods, and moderate use of nutritional supplements and herbal medicine. It advocates the wise use of hormone replacement and cosmetic enhancement like medical skin care. It is based on science, as well as empirical clinical experience, and honors the ancient longevity practices from India and China. It uses what nature provides and what is naturally produced in our bodies. It empowers people to believe in the miracle of optimal wellness and healthy aging. It reveals the secrets of longevity without overcomplicating the basic steps required to achieve your maximum life span.

Longevity is the attainment of a long life or the process of achieving a long, healthy, normal life span. It suggests achieving your maximum life span in good health, which should be between 95 and 120 years. Longevity is the term preferred by Asian and European researchers, where as anti-aging and life extension are more popular terms in America. It also necessitates prolonging health throughout life, including during aging, which is termed one's health span.

The term anti-aging medicine, first coined in 1985 by my friend, Sheldon Hendler, PhD, MD, in his book *The Complete Guide to Anti-Aging Nutrients*, was popularized by Ronald Klatz, MD, DO, the cofounder of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine. It caught the public imagination in the late 1990s and really took off with the release of Suzanne Summers' books *The Sexy Years* (2005) and *Ageless* (2006).

Anti-aging implies that there are specific treatments that actually reverse aging. This term, however, is misleading because there is no proven way, now or at any time in history, to effectively and permanently reverse or stop aging. Like the myth of a panacea, a medicine that cures everything and anything, the fountain of youth is etched into our ancestral consciousness. We love to believe in the impossible. However, there are ways, particularly with the use of hormones, called the "juice" of

anti-aging medicine, to increase robustness during middle age, reduce biological age, and eliminate some of the physical characteristics of aging. The net effect is that you look and feel younger and sexier, even though you continue to age. Though the term "anti-aging" is scientifically incorrect; anti-aging medicine is a means of resisting the symptoms of aging.

In order to resist aging, you have to remain biologically young. This is referred to as your biological age, as compared to your chronological age based on your birth date. Lowering your biological age is accomplished by improving all aspects of your physiology related to homeostasis including cardiovascular health, liver and kidney function, maintaining muscle mass, normalizing weight, and achieving youthful levels of key hormones. When you accomplish this, you lower your biological age.

Life extension and prolongevity are terms first popularized in 1982 by Durk Pearson and Sandy Shaw, the authors of *Life Extension: A Practical Scientific Approach*. Both terms suggest the proactive involvement of an individual in promoting longevity and prolonging health through the practice of taking mega-dosages of nutritional supplements as well as hormones to increase robustness during aging and extend life span. Those who follow such practices care called "life extensionists." The Life Extension Foundation, founded in the early 1980s, is the largest organization promoting these practices.

The secret to living longer is to live well. To live well, you have to change your lifestyle to one that promotes health from one that causes disease and prolong your health as long as possible. Don't get confused by the terms or follow the latest fashion for staying young. Follow a comprehensive but simple approach to maximize your health span. Remember, positive longevity is a choice. Choose wisely in order to live long and prosper.

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