

Staying healthy now to work into older age

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(HealthDay)—While you can take Social Security benefits at age 62 and get 75% of your maximum, waiting until you reach full retirement age (between age 66 and 67 depending on the year you were born) gets you

much closer to the full amount. But the age at which Americans can collect the most dollars has inched up to 70.

The problem is that, in general, people today aren't as healthy during their pre-retirement years as past generations were. Having one or more [chronic health conditions](#), from diabetes to arthritis, can make it harder to keep working through your 60s and, for those who want or need to, beyond.

Though you might see retirement as being in the distant future, taking care of yourself today creates the foundation for a healthier and more productive old age. The American Academy of Family Physicians has seven key lifestyle habits to follow that can get you there.

Build the Foundation for Lifelong Fitness

- Eat healthy: fruit, vegetables, legumes, nuts, whole grains and lean proteins.
- Get regular exercise—on nearly every day of the week.
- Lose weight if you're overweight.
- Protect your skin every time you leave your home to help prevent skin cancer.
- Don't smoke.
- Limit alcohol to a max of one drink a day for women, two for men. Less is better.
- Practice safe sex.

Map out a long-term strategy with your [health care provider](#) that includes the number of daily calories and minutes of exercise appropriate for you. And make sure you're getting regular preventive care, such as screenings for [blood pressure](#) and cholesterol and, depending on your age, breast, colon and other cancers.

More information: Get more tips for a healthy future from the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#).

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