

What is aging?

Aging is a gradual, continuous process of natural change. This includes changes to how the body and mind work. It is important to understand the difference between changes that are part of the normal aging process and those that are not.

Normal Aging	Not Normal Aging
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes forgetting things like peoples' names or the date but figuring it out later. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memory loss that interrupts daily life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needing help changing a lightbulb or changing the settings on the TV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty completing familiar daily tasks and making decisions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making the wrong decision once in a while or wanting to stick to a specific routine and way of doing things. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in planning or problem-solving skills, mood or personality.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes forgetting the right word to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having trouble communicating or holding a conversation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not feeling up to certain activities from time to time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling a lack of interest, excitement or concern. No longer joining in on social activities or favorite hobbies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needing more light to see well, or people to speak clearly to understand them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sudden changes to vision or hearing abilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gradual loss of some muscle and gaining some fat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weakness and unintended weight loss.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking a little longer to get over an illness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a difficult time recovering from an illness or hospital stay.

What is healthy aging?

The goals of healthy aging are maintaining physical and mental health, avoiding disorders, and remaining active and independent. Healthy habits include exercise, healthy eating and staying mental active. Talk to a health care provider if yourself or someone you care for is experiencing any of the changes not typical to the aging process.

To learn more, see the additional resources or infographic related to this topic.

References

Besdine, R. (2019). Overview of aging. Retrieved from <https://www.merckmanuals.com/en-ca/home/older-people%E2%80%99s-health-issues/the-aging-body/overview-of-aging>