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9 SIMPLE LONGEVITY HABITS

FROM WORLD-LEADING DOCTORS:

WHAT THEY EAT AND DO TO STAY STRONG,
SHARP, AND HEALTHY AS THEY AGE

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Introduction

Slow Aging From the Inside Out by Restoring Your Gut

If you've been told that slowing down is simply part of getting older – that the stiffness, memory lapses, fading energy, and loss of resilience are inevitable once you cross a certain decade – there's something important you need to know:

Age isn't just one number.

There's your chronological age – the number of candles on your birthday cake.

And then there's your biological age – a way of describing how well, or how poorly, your cells, tissues, and systems are functioning compared with what we'd typically expect at your age.

The two don't always move in lockstep.

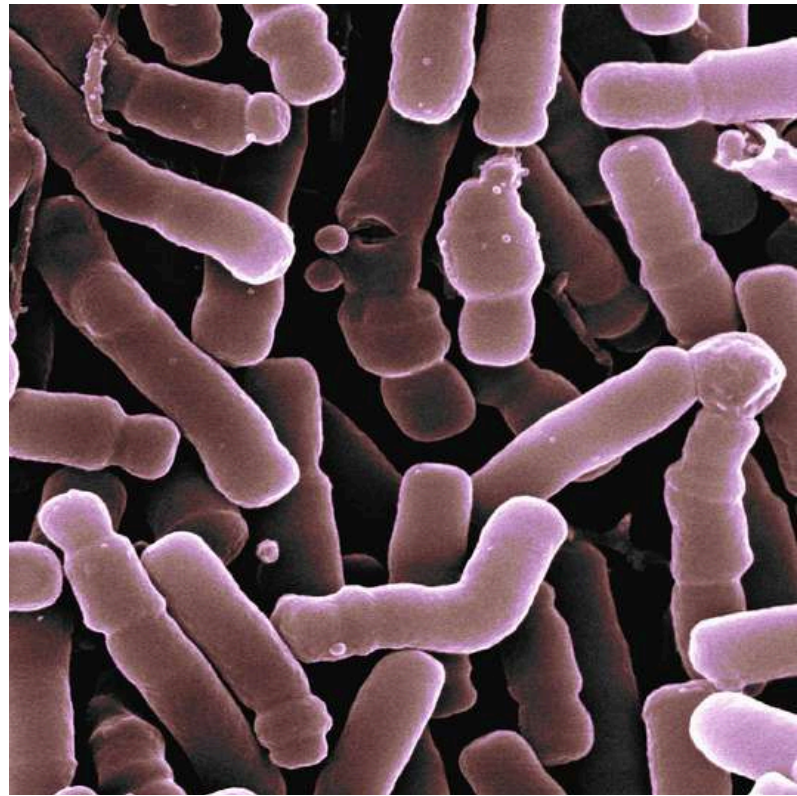
We've all seen it: two people can both be 70, yet one is traveling, hiking, gardening, remembering everything, and bounding up the stairs while the other is struggling with fatigue, pain, brain fog, and declining mobility.

Same chronological age.

Very different aging trajectory.

And increasingly, researchers studying healthy aging are looking at one extraordinarily complex ecosystem that may help explain some of those differences:

Your gut microbiome.



The Study That Changed How We Think About an “Aging” Gut

In 2017, researchers from Western University, Lawson Health Research Institute, and the Tianyi Health Science Institute studied the gut microbiomes of more than 1,000 exceptionally healthy people in China, ranging in age from 3 to over 100.¹

These weren't average study participants.

The adults were deliberately selected for unusually good health. Among other criteria, they had no diagnosed diseases, weren't taking prescription medications, and reported no family history of disease.

Then researchers compared the bacterial communities living inside their guts.

What they found was remarkable.

Among these exceptionally healthy adults, the overall composition of the gut microbiota changed surprisingly little from about age 30 onward.

1. Bian G, Gloor GB, Gong A, et al. The gut microbiota of healthy aged Chinese is similar to that of the healthy young. *mSphere*. 2017;2(5):e00327-17. DOI: 10.1128/msphere.00327-17

As principal investigator Dr. Greg Gloor put it:

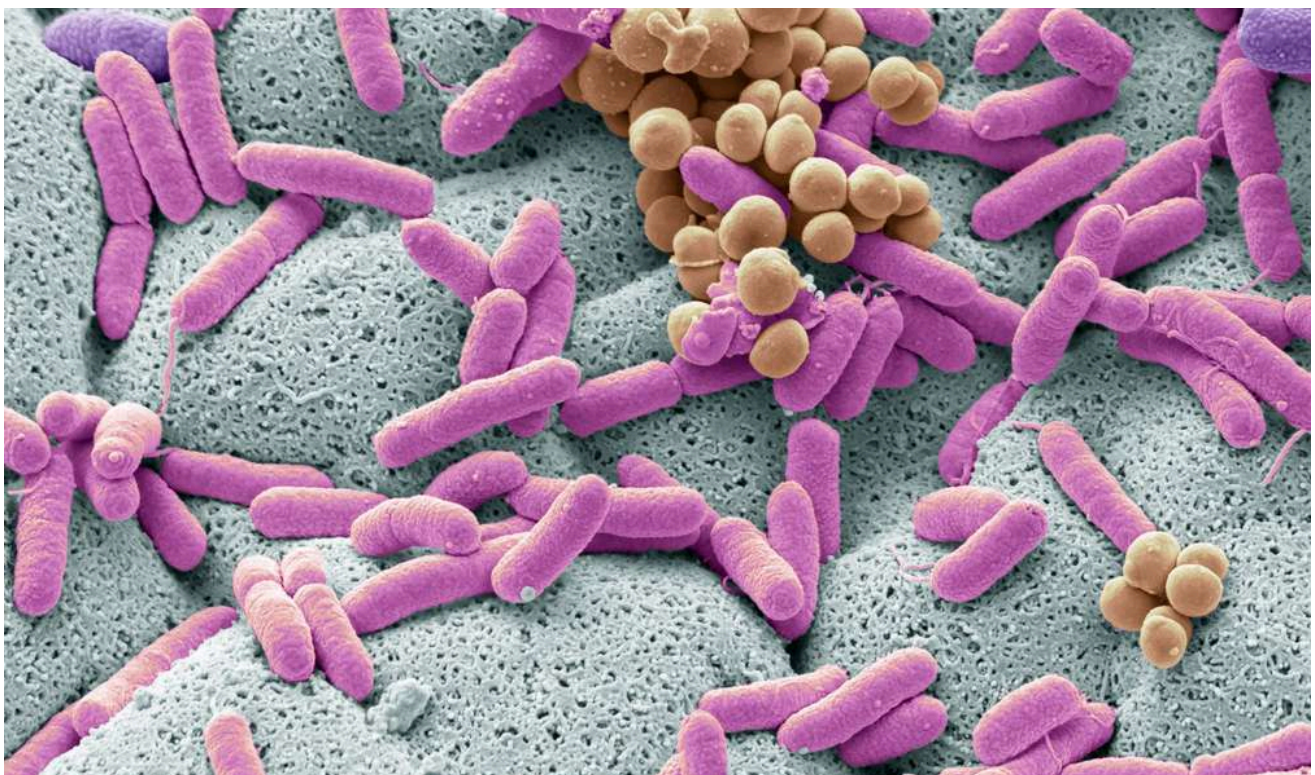
"The main conclusion is that if you are ridiculously healthy and 90 years old, your gut microbiota is not that different from a healthy 30 year old in the same population."

That doesn't prove that a youthful microbiome causes exceptional longevity.

But it raises a fascinating possibility:

Perhaps losing microbial diversity and function isn't simply an unavoidable consequence of adding candles to your birthday cake. And perhaps the secret to aging well lives inside your gut.

And one extraordinary woman would later give researchers an even more intriguing glimpse into that possibility.



The 117-Year-Old Woman With a Remarkably Youthful Gut

Maria Branyas Morera lived to the extraordinary age of 117.

But researchers weren't interested only in how long she lived.

They wanted to understand how she had remained remarkably resilient for so long.

So they examined everything from her genetics and metabolism to her immune system and gut microbiome.

And Maria's biology revealed something fascinating.

Despite her extreme chronological age, several aspects of her gut microbiome resembled patterns associated with much younger, healthier people.

One finding was particularly striking:

Her microbiome contained an extraordinary abundance of *Bifidobacterium*.²

2. Lenharo M. She lived to 117: what her genes and lifestyle tell us about longevity. *Nature*. 2025;646(8083):20. DOI: 10.1038/d41586-025-03112-6

These beneficial bacteria are abundant early in life but commonly decline with age – particularly in Western populations.

Yet Maria had maintained an unusually large population of them more than a century into her life.

Was that the secret to living to 117?

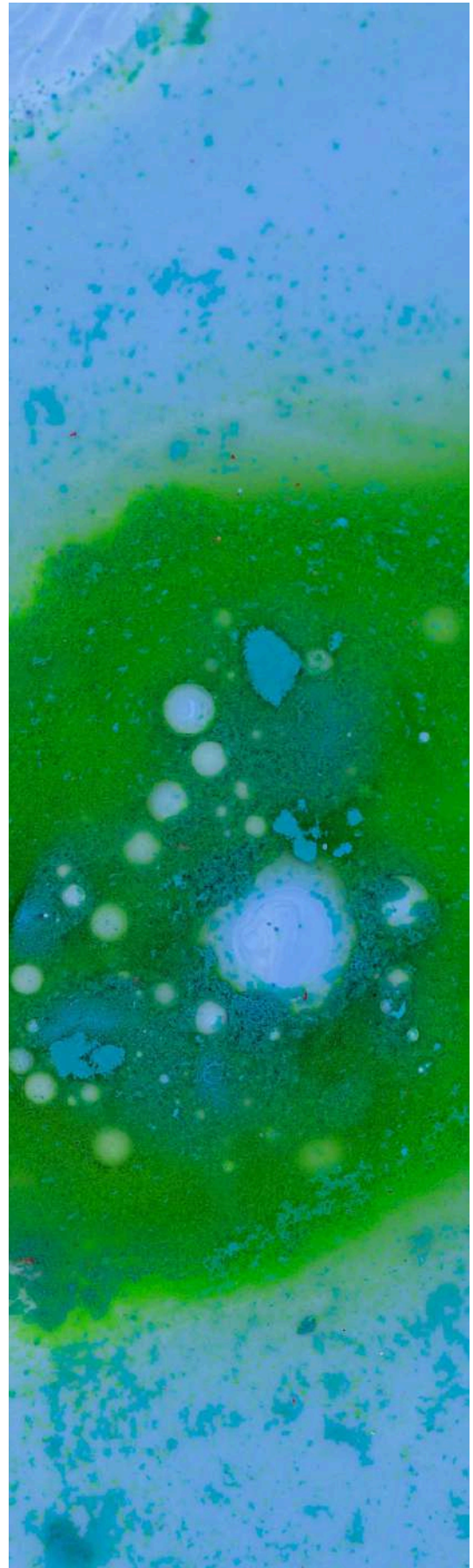
We can't say that.

Longevity is enormously complex, and Maria also carried protective genetic variants and had favorable metabolic, inflammatory, and lifestyle characteristics.

But her microbiome gives us an extraordinary real-world example of something the 2017 study suggested years earlier:

An old body doesn't necessarily have to harbor an “old” gut.

And certain microbes are key to promoting healthspan and longevity, and even slowing aging from the inside out.



But Here's What They Didn't Tell You

Knowing that exceptionally healthy older people can maintain remarkably youthful gut ecosystems is fascinating.

But it doesn't tell you what to make for breakfast tomorrow.

It doesn't tell you which probiotic strain is worth buying.

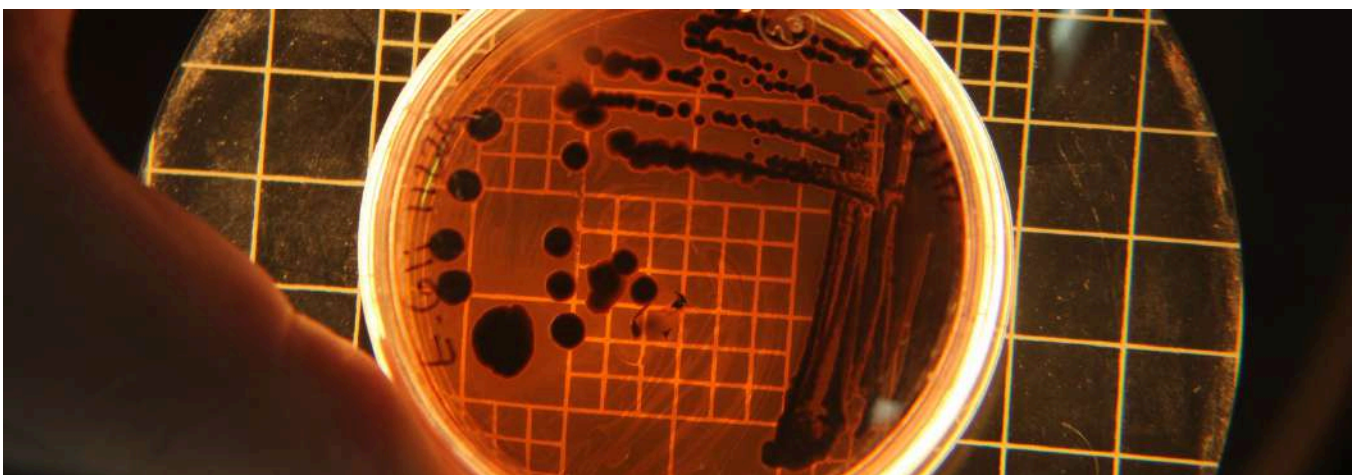
Or what to do when you want to eat more fiber but your gut rebels.

Or which ordinary foods doctors and microbiome researchers actually keep in their own kitchens.

That's why we created this guide.

We wanted to take healthy-aging science out of the laboratory and put it somewhere much more useful:

Into your everyday life.



9 Leading Experts. 9 Longevity Secrets. One Powerful Resource.

We gathered insights from nine leading doctors, microbiome researchers, and integrative health experts featured in *The Gut-Aging Solution*.

And instead of asking for another list of generic healthy-aging rules, we wanted to know something much more personal:

What do these experts actually eat, take, or do in their own lives to support healthy aging?

The answers were fascinating. And surprisingly simple.



The answers were fascinating. And surprisingly simple.

In the chapters that follow, you will discover:

- **The "Microbiome Fertilizer" Ancient Food Group:** The simple, savory kitchen staple a top clinical nutritionist tosses into her meals to build microbiome diversity and boost beneficial species.
- **The "Controversial Age Shield":** Why a seven-time New York Times bestselling physician keeps one widely misunderstood food in his house at all times – and the unusual "pizza jerky" he makes with it.
- **The "Longevity Microbe" Powder:** The specific age-protective probiotic strain a microbiome researcher uses – and his remarkably easy trick for taking probiotics so more survive the trip through your stomach.
- **The "On-the-Go Blood Sugar Anchor":** Why an integrative medicine specialist always travels with a simple, pocket-sized snack that can stabilize your glucose levels and could slash your risk of cardiovascular death by 40% according to studies.
- **The "Blue Zone" Freezer Staple:** The inexpensive longevity food one gut-health expert batch-cooks and freezes so dinner is practically made before she's hungry.

- **The Vagus Nerve Brain Food:** A simple, delicious culinary “supplement” a naturopath sautés to boost his brain health and calm systemic inflammation.
- **The Bone-Building Exercise Prescription:** The simple, specific type of movement an ER doctor prescribes to stop bone loss in its tracks and even build new, healthy bone.
- **The Daily Cellular Protector:** Why a board-certified physician eats half of a specific, deeply pigmented garden vegetable every single day to shield her cells from age-accelerating damage.
- **The “Every Single Day” Antioxidant:** The familiar nutrient one naturopathic doctor says he takes every day – and plans to continue taking for the rest of his life.

These aren't elaborate biohacks.

They don't require a private chef, a refrigerator full of exotic ingredients, or an expensive anti-aging clinic.

They're real habits these experts have incorporated into their own lives – many of which you can begin implementing today.

So let's start with perhaps the most fitting longevity secret of all:

A food humans have been making for thousands of years.

Up First: Dr. Liz Lipski

Discover why this renowned clinical nutritionist keeps traditionally fermented foods close at hand – and the ancient food she throws into soup, eats before breakfast, and recommends even to some of her most sensitive patients.

Your younger gut starts here.

Ready to Dive Deeper?

THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION DOCUSERIES

This guide is your starting point. But if you're ready to explore the gut-aging connection in greater depth, The Gut-Aging Solution brings together 21 leading doctors, researchers, and clinicians across eight episodes devoted to the gut's surprising connections with inflammation, energy, brain health, bones, joints, skin, hormones, and longevity.

**[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR THE
FREE, LIMITED-TIME SCREENING](#)**

The information contained in this guide is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult with a qualified healthcare provider before making changes to your health regimen.

1. Dr. Liz Lipski: The “Microbiome Fertilizer” Ancient Food Group



MEET THE EXPERT

Dr. Liz Lipski, PhD, CNS

Director of Academic Development,
Maryland University of Integrative
Health

Author of *Digestive Wellness:
Strengthen the Immune System and
Prevent Disease Through Healthy
Digestion*

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Digestive Health Pioneer Who Keeps Coming Back to Food

Dr. Liz Lipski has spent more than three decades studying one of the most fundamental connections in human health:

What happens in your gut doesn't stay in your gut.

Long before the microbiome became a household word, Dr. Lipski was helping people understand how digestion, nutrition, intestinal health, and the trillions of microorganisms living inside us can influence health throughout the body.

And when it comes to supporting that inner ecosystem as she ages, one of her favorite strategies isn't an expensive supplement or complicated biohack.

It's an ancient food humans have been making for thousands of years.

Fermented vegetables.

And there's one in particular you'll find Dr. Lipski eating straight from the refrigerator, throwing into soup, and sometimes even enjoying before breakfast.

Her Personal Longevity Secret

Kimchi.

Dr. Lipski doesn't turn eating fermented foods into a complicated protocol.

She simply makes them part of ordinary meals.

As she puts it:

"I love kimchi. My husband won't eat kimchi. Every time I have soup, I just throw a whole bunch in soup. Sometimes, I have some before breakfast."

That's it.

No elaborate morning ritual.

No carefully timed dosing schedule.

Just a traditional fermented food sitting in the refrigerator where it's easy to eat regularly.

And that remarkably simple habit has some fascinating science behind it.



Why Fermented Foods Are So Interesting to Your Microbiome



Fermentation is one of humanity's oldest methods of transforming and preserving food.

During fermentation, microorganisms such as bacteria and yeasts break down components of the original food, creating organic acids and an enormous variety of microbial metabolites along the way.

Traditionally fermented foods can therefore deliver something an ordinary raw vegetable can't:

A food that's already been transformed by microbes.

And depending on how it's produced and processed, it may also contain living microorganisms when you eat it.

Researchers have become increasingly interested in what happens when those foods become a regular part of the modern diet.

One of the most fascinating studies came from Stanford.

The Stanford Study That Surprised the Researchers

In a randomized clinical trial published in *Cell*, Stanford researchers assigned healthy adults to one of two diets for 10 weeks:

A diet rich in high-fiber foods...

Or one rich in fermented foods, including kimchi, yogurt, kefir, fermented vegetables, vegetable brine drinks, and kombucha.

Researchers collected blood and stool samples throughout the study to see what happened inside both the microbiome and immune system.

The fermented-food group showed two striking changes:

Their gut microbial diversity increased.

And levels of 19 inflammatory proteins decreased, including interleukin-6, or IL-6 – an inflammatory signaling protein associated with conditions including rheumatoid arthritis, type 2 diabetes, and chronic stress.

The effect on microbial diversity was also dose-related: people who ate more servings of fermented foods tended to show stronger increases.

Even Stanford microbiome researcher Dr. Justin Sonnenburg called the result “a stunning finding.” ³

3. Wastyk, H. C., Fragiadakis, G. K., Perelman, D., Dahan, D., Merrill, B. D., Yu, F. B., ... & Sonnenburg, J. L. (2021). Gut-microbiota-targeted diets modulate human immune status. *Cell*, 184(16), 4137–4153. [Link](#)

Why?

Because it demonstrated that a relatively simple dietary change could reproducibly alter the gut microbial community across a group of healthy adults.

Interestingly, the high-fiber group didn't show the same short-term increase in microbial diversity.

That doesn't mean fiber isn't important – far from it. Fiber is one of the primary food sources for many beneficial gut microbes.

But over this relatively short intervention, fermented foods produced a different and particularly intriguing response.

And newer research suggests kimchi itself may influence specific members of the microbial ecosystem.



What Happened When Researchers Studied Kimchi

In 2024, researchers conducted a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial involving 90 adults with overweight.⁴

For 12 weeks, participants consumed either spontaneously fermented kimchi powder, kimchi fermented with a specific starter culture, or a placebo. Both kimchi groups experienced a significant reduction in body fat mass compared with the placebo group.

But something else changed inside their guts.

Kimchi consumption was associated with an increase in the relative abundance of *Akkermansia muciniphila* – a bacterium that has attracted enormous scientific interest because of its relationship with the mucus layer lining the intestine and its associations with metabolic health.

At the same time, researchers observed decreases in Proteobacteria, a broad group that includes a number of potentially problematic organisms when present in excess.

One study doesn't make kimchi a magic anti-aging food. But taken together with the Stanford findings, it helps explain why traditionally fermented foods have become such an exciting area of microbiome research.

And why Dr. Lipski makes eating them so wonderfully uncomplicated.

4. Hong, S. W., & Han, K. (2024). Anti-obesity effects of kimchi and its impact on the gut microbiome of overweight adults: A randomized, double-blind, clinical trial. *Journal of Functional Foods*, 111, 106124. [Link](#)

How To Implement Today The Inspired “Good Mistake” Kimchi Recipe

Years ago, a student of Korean heritage gave Dr. Lipski a homemade kimchi recipe with an instruction to add red chili until the mixture was red.

Dr. Lipski misunderstood exactly what her student intended – and reached for dry red pepper flakes.

The result?

A happy accident she actually preferred.

"I started making it with red pepper flakes. It tastes delicious. I actually like it more that way."

The recipe below is inspired by Dr. Lipski's kitchen swap. While it isn't her student's exact recipe, it's a simple way to experiment with making fermented cabbage at home.

Ingredients

- 1 medium head Napa cabbage, shredded (about 2½ pounds)
- 1½ tbsp + ½ tsp canning or pickling salt
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 inch fresh ginger root, grated
- 2–3 tbsp red pepper flakes, or to taste

Instructions

1. **Salt & Massage the Cabbage:** Place the shredded cabbage in a large clean bowl. Sprinkle evenly with the salt and use clean hands to gently massage it into the cabbage until the leaves soften and begin releasing their natural liquid.
2. **Add the Aromatics:** Add the minced garlic, grated ginger, and red pepper flakes. Mix thoroughly until everything is evenly distributed.
3. **Pack & Submerge:** Transfer the cabbage and all of its liquid into a clean glass fermentation jar. Pack it down firmly, pressing out air pockets as you go. The cabbage should remain completely submerged beneath its brine during fermentation. Use a clean fermentation weight if necessary to keep it below the surface.
4. **Let It Ferment:** Cover with a fermentation lid or airlock and leave at room temperature, ideally around 68–72°F. As it ferments, you may notice bubbles and a pleasantly sour aroma. Once it has developed the tanginess you enjoy, transfer it to the refrigerator to slow fermentation.

A Few Fermentation Safety Basics: Always start with clean hands, equipment, and fresh produce. Keep the cabbage submerged beneath the brine throughout fermentation. If your kimchi develops mold, becomes slimy, or develops a spoiled or rotten odor, discard it rather than tasting it.

Dr. Lipski's Warm Kimchi Soup Hack



The Routine:

Whenever you make a warm veggie or noodle soup, ladle it into your bowl and let it cool for a few minutes before stirring in a generous handful of raw kimchi. Adding it after cooking rather than boiling the kimchi helps preserve more of its live microorganisms.

The Breakfast Boost:

If you're in a rush, simply grab a quick forkful of raw kimchi straight from the refrigerated jar before breakfast.

As Dr. Lipski says:

"You'll either like them or you won't. I love kimchi. My husband won't eat kimchi. Every time I have soup, I just throw a whole bunch in soup. Sometimes, I have some before breakfast."

Dr. Lipski's Expert Tip: Start Small, Or Even With The Brine



If you're not accustomed to fermented foods – or your digestive system is particularly sensitive – you don't necessarily have to begin with a forkful of fermented cabbage.

Dr. Lipski sometimes starts sensitive patients with something much smaller:

The **brine**.

"I remember working with a client who was only eating about five foods and one of the things I said was, 'Get some sauerkraut and start just having a teaspoon or two of the brine. You don't even have to eat the cabbage part to begin with.' And she said, 'Oh, I had a couple teaspoons. I just felt like a flower that was blooming for the first time in years. I felt so great.'"

So if you're new to fermented foods, there's no prize for starting big.

Start small and see how your body responds.

Want More From Dr. Lipski?

In The Gut-Aging Solution – our limited-time free screening – Dr. Liz Lipski also reveals:

- **The “Clock That Ran Down” Cellular Battery:** The daily energy compound Dr. Lipski takes to stop her internal battery from running down, and the exact clinical dosages she uses for cellular survival.
- **Her Nightly Nervous System Reset:** The remarkably simple practice Dr. Lipski uses to shift her body out of stress mode.
- **The Hormone-Detoxifying Plant Hack:** The everyday family of vegetables she uses to help her liver safely clear old, circulating hormones.
- **The “Garden-Fresh Mash” Technique:** Her simple, savory kitchen preparation method that makes tough plant fibers gentler on sensitive digestion.
- **The Dysbiosis-Energy Trap:** How an unhealthy gut may interfere with the absorption of nutrients your mitochondria rely on to produce energy.

Plus, you'll get access to 20 more of the world's leading medical doctors, researchers, and clinicians sharing the practical strategies they use to support healthier aging from the inside out.

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UpNext: Dr. Joel Fuhrman

Discover why this seven-time New York Times bestselling family physician keeps one widely misunderstood, controversial food stocked in his home – and the unusual “pizza jerky” he makes with it.



2. Dr. Joel Fuhrman: The “Controversial Age Shield”



MEET THE EXPERT

Dr. Joel Fuhrman, MD

Board-Certified Family Physician

Seven-Time *New York Times*
Bestselling Author

President of the Nutritional Research
Foundation

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Physician Who Wants You to Look Past the Soy Myths

Few foods have been subjected to as much nutritional whiplash as **soy**.

For generations, traditional soy foods like tofu, edamame, miso, and tempeh have been staples in Asian diets.

Then came the internet warnings.

Soy contains "estrogen."

Soy disrupts your hormones.

Soy increases your cancer risk.

Dr. Joel Fuhrman has heard them all.

And after decades spent studying the relationship between nutrition and chronic disease, he has reached a very different conclusion.

Not only does Dr. Fuhrman regularly recommend minimally processed soy foods – **he keeps them in his own house all the time**.

And one of his favorite ways to eat tofu is considerably more interesting than tossing a few plain cubes onto a salad.

He turns it into **pizza jerky**.

His Personal Longevity Secret

Dr. Fuhrman's personal secret is **minimally processed organic soy** – foods like tofu, edamame, soybeans, and tempeh.

And at home, he has developed a particularly creative way to make tofu into something savory, portable, and easy to keep around.

He starts with super-firm tofu, slices it into five flat pieces, then covers each one with a thick tomato-based sauce.

His mixture includes tomato sauce, tomato paste, some of his Thai curry sauce, and sometimes a little almond butter.

The result is one of his household staples:

"That's one of my favorite things that we have in the house all the time."

But why soy?

To understand that, we have to clear up one of the biggest misconceptions surrounding this controversial food.



Yes, Soy Contains “Phytoestrogens” – But Here's What That Actually Means



Soybeans are unusually rich in plant compounds known as **isoflavones**.

Isoflavones are often called phytoestrogens because their chemical structure bears some resemblance to human estrogen.

And that one word – estrogen – is responsible for a tremendous amount of soy's controversial reputation.

But here's the crucial distinction:

Soy isoflavones aren't estrogen.

They can interact with the body's estrogen receptors, but they bind far more weakly than estrogen itself – and they don't interact with the two major estrogen receptors in exactly the same way.

Estradiol – the body's primary estrogen – binds to both estrogen receptor alpha ($ER\alpha$) and estrogen receptor beta ($ER\beta$).

Soy isoflavones show a preference for **$ER\beta$** .

Why does that matter?

Because these receptors are distributed differently throughout the body and can produce different biological effects when activated.

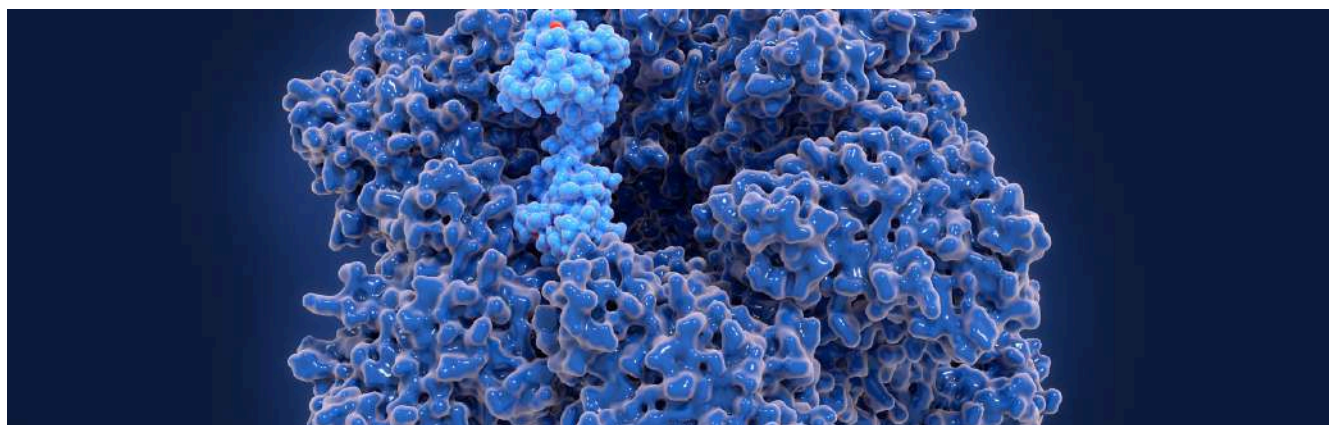
That's why researchers have described soy isoflavones as **selective estrogen receptor modulators**, or SERMs.⁵

In other words, calling soy “estrogenic” as though eating tofu were equivalent to adding human estrogen to your body dramatically oversimplifies what's actually happening.

And human studies give us another important clue.

A recent systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials in postmenopausal women found that soy isoflavones did **not** significantly affect four commonly studied measures of estrogenicity – including circulating estradiol.⁶

So the internet warning that eating traditional soy foods simply “raises your estrogen” doesn't match what the human evidence shows.



5. Messina M, Duncan A, Messina V, et al. *The health effects of soy: A reference guide for health professionals*. **Frontiers in Nutrition**. 2022;9:970364. doi:10.3389/fnut.2022.970364.

6. Viscardi G, Back S, Ahmed A, et al. Effect of Soy Isoflavones on Measures of Estrogenicity: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials. *Advances in Nutrition*. 2025;16(1):100327. doi:10.1016/j.advnut.2024.100327. PMID: 39433088.

What the Cancer Research Actually Shows

Dr. Fuhrman is particularly interested in soy because decades of research have investigated its relationship with some of the cancers most closely associated with aging.

As he explains:



"Soy foods like Edamame and Soybeans that you can cook in the pot or Tofu and even Tempeh have been shown in scientific studies to offer tremendous protection against common cancers. They have very powerful effects to protect the prostate against prostate cancer and protect the breast against breast cancer."

The evidence is strongest as a **pattern of association**, rather than proof that soy itself prevents cancer.

But that pattern is compelling.

Large prospective studies have found that women who consume more soy tend to have a **lower risk of breast cancer**.⁷

And importantly, the evidence does **not** support the persistent internet fear that eating traditional soy foods increases breast cancer risk.

7. Kazemi A, Barati-Boldaji R, Soltani S, et al. Intake of Various Food Groups and Risk of Breast Cancer: A Systematic Review and Dose-Response Meta-Analysis of Prospective Studies. **Advances in Nutrition**. 2021;12(3):809–849. doi:10.1093/advances/nmaa147. PMID: 33271590.

Research on prostate cancer points in a similar direction.

A 2024 systematic review and meta-analysis encompassing more than **1.4 million participants** found that greater soy consumption was associated with a modestly lower overall risk of prostate cancer.⁸

The association was particularly evident for **non-fermented soy foods** – the category that includes tofu.

That doesn't make tofu a cancer treatment.

And it doesn't mean one serving of soy can cancel out everything else you eat.

But it does turn the old “soy feeds cancer” warning on its head.

Traditional soy foods aren't nutritional villains.

For Dr. Fuhrman, they're valuable, cancer-protective whole plant foods he deliberately keeps in his own diet.



8. Huang Y, Wang W, Jin J. Association between soy products and prostate cancer: A systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies. *Investigative and Clinical Urology*. 2024;65(6):540–550. doi:10.4111/icu.20240186. PMID: 39505513.

How To Implement Today

Dr. Fuhrman's Homemade "Tofu Pizza Jerkies"

Want to recreate Dr. Fuhrman's favorite savory soy snack?

Fortunately, he gave us the method himself:

"I take a super firm tofu block and I cut the block straight through into five slices. So now I have five little flat pieces of extra firm tofu. Then I make the tomato sauce on top. I mix tomato sauce with tomato paste with some of my Thai curry sauce. I thicken it, I use the tomato paste and the Thai curry sauce and maybe even a little almond butter to thicken it. I pile this tomato sauce mixture on top of these flattened pieces of soy as much as I can fit on top, put as much of the tomato sauce on top as I possibly can practically and I put them in the dehydrator to cook at 130 degrees for 20 hours... That's one of my favorite things that we have in the house all the time."

How to Try It at Home

1. **Slice the Tofu:** Cut a block of super-firm tofu horizontally into five equal, flat slices.
2. **Make the Sauce:** Start with tomato sauce, then mix in tomato paste and Thai curry sauce until you have a thick, spreadable mixture. Dr. Fuhrman says he may also add a little almond butter to thicken it.
3. **Pile It On:** Lay the tofu slices flat on your dehydrator trays and generously pile the tomato mixture on top. As Dr. Fuhrman says, use as much as you can practically fit onto each slice.
4. **Dehydrate:** Set your dehydrator to 130°F and dehydrate for 20 hours, following Dr. Fuhrman's method.

And just like that, you've turned one of the internet's most controversial foods into a savory snack Dr. Fuhrman says his family keeps "in the house all the time."





Dr. Joel Fuhrman's Expert Tip: Look Past The Internet Myths To The Human Studies

If you've avoided soy because of something alarming you read online, Dr. Fuhrman has a simple message:

Look at the evidence.

As he puts it:

"There's circulating myths on the internet... that promotes doubt in the fact that beans and soy can extend you in lifespan. But let me say this very clearly, that the consumption of pulses including lentils and beans and soy has more than a thousand studies showing its effects at extending human lifespan and preventing chronic diseases and enabling people to achieve their ideal weight more readily."

You don't need to turn soy into the centerpiece of every meal.

But foods like **tofu, edamame, soybeans, and tempeh** can be another way to bring legumes, plant protein, fiber, and protective plant compounds into your diet.

And if plain tofu has never exactly inspired you?

Dr. Fuhrman's pizza jerky gives you a much more interesting place to start.

Want More From Dr. Joel Fuhrman?

In The Gut-Aging Solution – our limited-time free screening – Dr. Joel Fuhrman also reveals:

- **The Estrogen-Squelching Mushroom Secret:** Why he adds cooked mushrooms to his meals – and the fascinating enzyme researchers are studying for its role in estrogen production.
- **The “Pre-Cook” Soup Sequence:** The unusual raw-preparation step Dr. Fuhrman uses before heating cruciferous vegetables to help preserve their ability to produce valuable protective compounds.
- **The Weight-Loss Fat Paradox:** Why Dr. Fuhrman still makes nuts and seeds a regular part of the diet even when weight loss is the goal.
- **His Signature “Liquid-Base” Longevity Soup:** Why his personal recipe starts by juicing an enormous bag of ordinary vegetables to create the liquid base for one of his favorite bean soups.
- **The Cancer-Fighting Chewing Trick:** Why Dr. Fuhrman says how thoroughly you chew cruciferous vegetables can change how many of their protective compounds your body actually gets.

Plus, you'll get access to 20 more of the world's leading medical doctors, researchers, and clinicians sharing the practical strategies they use to support healthier aging from the inside out.

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Discover why a microbiome researcher is so fascinated by one beneficial bacterium that tends to decline as we age – and the specific probiotic strain he works into his own healthy-aging routine.



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Dr. Jason Hawrelak, PhD, ND

Naturopathic Physician, Microbiome
Researcher, and Educator

Founder of the Microbiome
Restoration Center

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Microbiome Expert Mapping the Path to an Age-Defying Gut

Remember Maria Branyas Morera, the 117-year-old woman with the astonishingly youthful gut?

There was one remarkable detail of her microbiome we haven't explored yet.

Nearly 50% of her gut ecosystem was made up of Bifidobacteria.

For Dr. Jason Hawrelak – a microbiome researcher who has spent more than two decades analyzing thousands of stool tests – that number immediately stood out.

As Dr. Hawrelak explains, finding this level of Bifidobacterium is exceptionally rare outside of early childhood:

"I've looked at thousands and thousands of microbiome analyses now, and to get 40, 50% of the ecosystem in bifidobacteria outside breastfed infants and breastfed toddlers is immensely rare, and that's what she had, 50% bifidobacteria."

And Maria isn't the only reason these particular microbes have captured his attention.

"Japan's got, population-wise, the highest rates of bifidobacteria amounts per nation," he says. "And I do think they've got one of the longest healthspans on earth too, not just how long they live for, but they live well up to a certain age point. And one wonders, based on our current data, how big a role bifidobacteria play in that."

That last point is important.

We can't say that Bifidobacteria caused Maria's extraordinary longevity – or that they explain Japan's long healthspan.

But the pattern has made these microbes an intriguing focus of healthy-aging research, particularly because Bifidobacteria commonly decline as we get older.⁹

And Dr. Hawrelak believes they may play an important role.

He notes that this vital microbe seems to be "a pivotal player in aging well, and preventing a range of chronic disease, keeping our immune system working well."

Which brings us to a fascinating new area of microbiome science.



9. Tsai YC, Cheng LH, Liu YW, Jeng OJ, Lee YK. "Gerobiotics: probiotics targeting fundamental aging processes." *Bioscience of Microbiota, Food and Health*. 2021;40(1):1-11. doi:10.12938/bmfh.2020-026. PMID: 33520563

The Breakthrough of “Gerobiotics”

Researchers have begun exploring whether certain probiotic strains might influence biological processes associated with aging.

There's even a term for probiotics being studied through this lens:

Gerobiotics.

As Dr. Hawrelak explains:

"Gerobiotic as a term just sort of came as they realized some probiotics had that capacity to alter that aging process... And they realize, okay, we've got some that can actually slow down that aging process so we'll classify them as gerobiotics. And I think it's a relatively new area of research. We don't have necessarily a huge range of strains that I'd say definitely work in that level currently, but there's a few, I think, that meet that criteria."

That caveat matters.

This is an emerging field – not a blanket claim that any probiotic on a store shelf can slow aging.

And as Dr. Hawrelak emphasizes throughout his work, probiotic benefits are often **strain-specific**.

Two probiotics can belong to the same species yet have very different research behind them.

Among the strains Dr. Hawrelak believes fit the emerging gerobiotic criteria, one in particular stands out:

Bifidobacterium longum BB536.

And when he describes why, the list is impressive:

"Bifidobacterium longum BB536 fits the criteria too, that it improves immunity in older people, reduces cholesterol levels, improves metabolic function, again has beneficial impacts on the microbiome that encourage growth of butyrate producers, Bifidobacterium lowering levels of pathogens and pathogenic byproducts that drive inflammation, some gut-healing properties too, improved quality of life and mood when consumed. Fits that criteria and improves speeds of your transit time too if you're constipated and it's not universal across the board, but many Westerners, I would say, have slow-moving bowels. Sometimes they don't even know it, but many of them actually do. So it speeds up transit time."

And this isn't simply a strain Dr. Hawrelak talks about academically.

It's one he uses himself.

His Personal Longevity Secret

To harness the healthy-aging potential of gerobiotics in his own life, Dr. Hawrelak turns to *Bifidobacterium longum* BB536.

But he doesn't merely swallow a capsule.

In true microbiome-researcher fashion, **he makes his own fermented soy milk with it.**

He combines the probiotic strain with soy milk and prebiotics, then gives the bacteria time and the right conditions to ferment the mixture.

He describes his custom preparation in his own words:

"I make a soy milk ferment, for example, fermented soy milk that I add Bifidobacterium longum BB536. I add that to soy milk. I add some prebiotics, like lactulose and inulin to that. Let it ferment for 24 hours at around 37 degrees and it makes a beautiful fermented milk and that BB536 strain of Bifidobacterium improves immune response, improves bowel habit. It changes the microbiome composition to have more broader Bifidobacteria, more Butyrate producers, reduces cholesterol, improves metabolic function, reduces levels of pathogens. And then I'm getting that every time I eat that.."

Dr. Hawrelak's homemade ferment is a fascinating example of how a microbiome expert incorporates a targeted probiotic into his own routine.

But let's face it:

Most of us are probably not about to start incubating soy milk at 37°C for 24 hours.

Fortunately, you don't have to recreate his microbiology experiment to borrow the basic idea.

There's a much easier way to work his preferred strain into a food you may already eat.



How To Implement Today

The Instant “Stir-In” Longevity Yogurt Hack

Instead of fermenting your own soy milk, you can take the simpler route and stir a probiotic containing BB536 into unsweetened plant-based yogurt.

Here's how:

1. **Choose Your Yogurt:** Add some high-quality, unsweetened plant-based yogurt – such as soy yogurt – to a bowl.
2. **Check the Strain:** Look for a probiotic that lists the full name *Bifidobacterium longum* BB536. The letters and numbers matter: BB536 identifies the specific strain.
3. **Stir It In:** Open the capsule and mix the powder into the yogurt with a clean spoon.
4. **Enjoy It with a Meal:** Eat it during or immediately after a meal.



That last step isn't incidental.

It's one of Dr. Hawrelak's simplest probiotic tips – and one that requires nothing more than changing your timing.



Dr. Jason Hawrelak's Expert Tip: Consume Your Probiotics On A Full Stomach

You may have heard that probiotics are best taken first thing in the morning on an empty stomach.

According to Dr. Hawrelak, **the opposite is true.**

Food buffers the highly acidic environment of the stomach, which can help more probiotic organisms survive their trip through it.

As Dr. Hawrelak explains:

"I think sometimes there's that misnomer and this old myth that you should have probiotics on an empty stomach. That's been well and truly disproven so many times. You get much better survival with food. So if you eat a bigger meal, you get much better survival... because your stomach pH is far greater, more acidic on an empty stomach and it actually gets really buffered by food... So the thing I always recommend is, make sure you have your probiotics with a meal or immediately following, definitely not on an empty stomach. That is very clear from the research."

So if you're already taking a probiotic, this may be the easiest healthy-aging strategy in the entire chapter:

Don't add another thing to your routine. Simply take it with food.

Want More From Dr. Jason Hawrelak?

In The Gut-Aging Solution – our limited-time free screening – Dr. Jason Hawrelak also reveals:

- **The Bone-Density Improving Powder:** The simple, inexpensive prebiotic Dr. Hawrelak used to help a patient with severe bone loss – and how adding it to her routine not only halted her bone degeneration, but actually triggered a dramatic, clinically documented rise in bone mineral density.
- **The “Stool-Normalizing” Secret:** Why a simple, flavorless plant-derived powder is his absolute go-to clinical tool to effortlessly regulate slow or overactive digestion with minimal gas.
- **The Liver's Toxic Gatekeeper:** How a traditional, purple-flowering herb stimulates the gut to break down dangerous metabolic toxins before they can enter your bloodstream and damage your brain and bones.
- **The Sleep-Inducing Strain:** Why a unique, live culture found in traditional fermented foods synthesizes calming neurochemicals to reduce anxiety and quiet an overactive mind.
- **The Probiotic Label Test:** The two things Dr. Hawrelak looks for before he considers a probiotic worth buying – and why the species name on the label isn't enough.

Plus, you'll get access to 20 more of the world's leading medical doctors, researchers, and clinicians sharing the exact daily protocols they personally use to slow aging from the inside out.

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UpNext: Dr. Katie Takayasu

Discover why an integrative medicine specialist always travels with a simple, pocket-sized snack – and how studies reveal it's associated with a 40% lower risk of cardiovascular death.



4. Dr. Katie Takayasu: The "On-the-go Blood Sugar Anchor"



MEET THE EXPERT

Dr. Katie Takayasu, MD

Board-Certified Family Medicine
Physician

Integrative Medicine Physician

Author of *Plants First: A Physician's
Guide to Wellness Through a Plant-
Forward Diet*

Founder of Wellness Insights

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Integrative Physician Who Makes Healthy Eating Work in Real Life

Dr. Katie Takayasu knows that the healthiest food in the world won't do you much good if it isn't there when you actually need it.

A board-certified family medicine physician and integrative medicine specialist, Dr. Takayasu combines conventional medicine with nutrition, botanical medicine, acupuncture, and other evidence-based complementary approaches. She is also passionate about plant-forward cooking and helping her patients turn healthy choices into habits that fit real life.

And when it comes to aging well, one of the simplest foods she relies on checks several important boxes at once.

It provides fiber to support your gut microbes. Protein and healthy fats to help keep you satisfied. And perhaps most importantly when you're busy or traveling, it gives you something nourishing to reach for before hunger sends you toward the nearest processed convenience food.

Dr. Takayasu calls nuts and seeds, quite simply, **"the perfect food."**

Her Personal Longevity Secret

Dr. Takayasu's personal secret is refreshingly simple: **she never likes to travel without nuts and seeds nearby.**

Whether she's boarding an airplane or spending hours in the car, she keeps individual packets of pistachios or almonds in her travel bag so she has a satisfying whole-food snack ready when hunger strikes.

As she explains:

"Nuts and seeds are so helpful to us and they confer quite a bit of fiber, a little bit of protein and some fat. And so from an optimization standpoint, they're like the perfect food. I also really like to travel with nuts and seeds. So sometimes, I'll take packets of pistachios or almonds with me in my travel bag so that if I do feel like I want something on the airplane or while I'm traveling in a car, like I have something healthy that's going to keep my blood sugar balanced."

It's a tiny habit. But the science behind regularly eating nuts and seeds is anything but small.



The Little Snack with Outsized Longevity Benefits

One reason nuts and seeds are so useful is the unusual nutritional package Dr. Takayasu describes: **fiber, protein, and fat all together in one whole food.**

The fiber supports your gut microbiome, while the combination of protein and fat makes nuts and seeds satisfying and useful for maintaining steadier blood sugar between meals.

But their healthy-aging benefits extend far beyond convenience.

In the Adventist Health Study 2, researchers followed more than 81,000 adults and found that participants whose diets derived the greatest proportion of protein from nuts and seeds had a **40% lower risk of dying from cardiovascular disease** than those in the lowest group.¹⁰

That is an extraordinary association for such an ordinary food. Nuts and seeds also supply fiber and an impressive variety of vitamins, minerals, healthy fats, and protective plant compounds – all packed into a remarkably portable package.

In other words, the little packet Dr. Takayasu keeps tucked into her travel bag isn't merely keeping hunger at bay.

It's a simple whole-food habit that helps support metabolic health, nourish the microbiome, and – according to some of the strongest observational evidence we have – may help support a longer, healthier life.

10. Tharrey M, Mariotti F, Mashchak A, Barbillon P, Delattre M, Fraser GE. "Patterns of plant and animal protein intake are strongly associated with cardiovascular mortality: the Adventist Health Study-2 cohort." *International Journal of Epidemiology*. 2018;47(5):1603–1612. doi:10.1093/ije/dyy030.

How To Implement Today

Build Your Own "Blood Sugar Anchor" Pack

Dr. Takayasu's habit may be one of the easiest healthy-aging strategies in this entire guide to copy.

You don't need a recipe. You don't need special equipment. You just need to make the healthy choice the convenient choice.

1. **Choose Your Nuts:** Start with a simple serving of pistachios, almonds, walnuts, or a mixture of your favorites.
2. **Pre-Portion Them:** Divide them into small reusable containers or individual snack bags so they're ready to grab before you leave home.
3. **Put Them Where Hunger Happens:** Keep a pack in your purse, work bag, travel bag, or another convenient place so you aren't dependent on airport kiosks, vending machines, or convenience stores when hunger hits.
4. **Use Them as an Anchor:** Reach for your nuts when you need a satisfying snack between meals or while traveling, just as Dr. Takayasu does.

And don't limit them to snacking. You can sprinkle nuts and seeds onto salads, oatmeal, yogurt, or grain bowls to add texture, richness, and an extra layer of plant diversity to your meals.

In fact, Dr. Takayasu says nuts and seeds are one of her favorite ways to transform even the simplest salad:

"It's really easy to say make a salad and just make it boring, like use some lettuce, some tomatoes and some cucumbers. But once you take something like a salad and you start to add some nuts or seeds to them, all at once, your salad just levels itself up a little bit."

Dr. Katie Takayasu's Expert Tip: Don't Turn A Healthy Food Into An Unlimited Food



Nuts and seeds may be nutrient-dense, but they are also calorie-dense – and Dr. Takayasu cautions against treating that healthy reputation as permission to eat them endlessly.

As she explains:

"Ultimately, we do have to be careful because nuts and seeds are calorie-rich foods and so we don't want to eat them ad nauseam, but they do provide a lot of texture and a lot of that rich flavor that we're looking for when we make something that's healthy."

Rather than mindlessly eating straight from a large bag, take a cue from Dr. Takayasu's own habit and portion them ahead of time. You still get the satisfying crunch, healthy fats, fiber, and plant nutrients – while making it easier to keep your serving intentional.

Want More From Dr. Katie Takayasu?

In The Gut-Aging Solution – our limited-time free screening – Dr. Katie Takayasu also reveals:

- **The Three-Part Muscle-Building Formula:** The three things your muscles require to keep growing as you age – and why the strength you build in midlife may determine whether you're still climbing stairs, driving, cooking, and living independently decades later.
- **The "Humble" Mushroom with a Hidden Anti-Aging Advantage:** Why Dr. Takayasu believes one cheap, ordinary grocery-store mushroom may be one of the most underrated longevity foods.
- **The Vegetable-Hater Roasting Trick:** Dr. Takayasu's simple olive oil, salt, pepper, and "hero of all hero spices" formula for transforming bitter vegetables into sweet, caramelized favorites – plus her favorite shortcut for getting them on the table fast.
- **The Midlife Phytoestrogen Strategy:** The everyday whole food Dr. Takayasu recommends to women approaching menopause.
- **The "Crispy Outside, Tender Inside" Food Hack:** The simple kitchen tool Dr. Takayasu uses to transform healthy foods into something even picky kids and reluctant spouses are more likely to devour – without adding complicated ingredients or hours of prep.

Plus, you'll get access to 20 more of the world's leading medical doctors, researchers, and clinicians sharing the exact daily protocols they personally use to slow aging from the inside out.

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UpNext: Dr. Ilana Gurevich

Discover the simple freezer staple a board-certified naturopathic gastroenterologist batch-preps for nights when she's too tired to cook – and why research suggests this budget-friendly food may be one of the most powerful dietary predictors of longevity.



5. Dr. Ilana Gurevich: The "Blue Zone" Freezer Staple



MEET THE EXPERT

**Dr. Ilana Gurevich, ND, LAc, MSOM,
FABNG**

Board-Certified Naturopathic
Gastroenterologist

Licensed Acupuncturist

Founder of Open Wellness PDX

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Gut Expert Who Says Aging Isn't Really About Your Age

When most people think about aging, they think about the number of candles on their birthday cake.

Dr. Ilana Gurevich sees it differently.

As a naturopathic gastroenterologist who specializes in complex digestive disorders, she has spent years looking at what happens inside the gut as people lose their energy, mobility, and resilience.

And in her view, the number on your driver's license tells only a tiny part of the story.

As she explains:

"Aging is not chronological... Age is something that happens with a slow, steady deterioration of your physiologic function."

One of the places that deterioration can begin is inside your gut. As microbial diversity declines, Dr. Gurevich explains, the integrity of the intestinal barrier can begin to deteriorate. That can contribute to greater systemic inflammation – and, over time, the aches, fatigue, brain fog, stiffness, and loss of resilience we commonly associate with getting older.

But that also means some of the simplest foods in your kitchen may help support the very microbes we're prone to losing with age. And one of Dr. Gurevich's favorites is so inexpensive and ordinary, you might already have a bag sitting in your pantry.

Her Personal Longevity Secret

Beans.

More specifically, Dr. Gurevich loves making her own Cuban-style black beans.

But what makes her personal ritual so useful isn't simply what she eats.

It's the clever way she prepares them ahead of time so that one of the world's most celebrated longevity foods is always within reach – even on the nights when she's exhausted and doesn't feel like cooking.

Here's how she describes it:

"My favorite thing to do is actually to make a Cuban black bean. I got this from one of my girlfriends where I will sprout my beans and then I'll put them in the pressure cooker with cumin, with onion that I just take the peel off and cut in half, with a green pepper, with salt and with pepper."

She pressure-cooks everything for about 40 to 45 minutes. Then, if any of the pepper or onion remains intact, she blends it and stirs it back into the beans before seasoning them to taste.

But here's the part that makes this ritual so practical:

"I do this in bulk and then I take all of these beans and I put them in little jars and I put them in my freezer. So then when I need a dinner idea and I'm kind of tired and don't want to cook a dinner, I'll just pull out my frozen cooked beans and we just make some tacos very quickly."

One cooking session.

A freezer full of ready-made meals.

And a humble food with a remarkable connection to both your microbiome and longevity.



The Humble Food That Keeps Showing Up in Long-Lived Populations

Beans and other legumes have long been a dietary staple in some of the world's longest-lived populations.

And there may be good reason.

In one fascinating study, researchers followed 785 adults aged 70 and older across five cohorts in Japan, Sweden, Greece, and Australia.

They compared the participants' diets to find out which foods were most consistently associated with survival.

The standout wasn't an exotic superfood.

It was **legumes**.

In fact, legumes were the only food group that consistently predicted survival across the different populations studied. For every additional 20 grams eaten per day, researchers observed a **7–8% lower risk of death** during the follow-up period.¹¹

And newer research points in the same direction.

11. Darmadi-Blackberry I, Wahlqvist ML, Kouris-Blazos A, Steen B, Lukito W, Horie Y, Horie K. Legumes: the most important dietary predictor of survival in older people of different ethnicities. *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2004;13(2):217–220. PMID: 15228991.

A systematic review and meta-analysis encompassing more than 1.1 million people found that people who ate the most legumes had a lower risk of dying from any cause compared with those who ate the least.¹²

But their longevity benefits may go much deeper than the nutrients you absorb from them.

Because some of the most valuable parts of a bean aren't really meant to feed you.

They're meant to feed your microbes.

12. Zargarzadeh N, Mousavi SM, Santos HO, Aune D, Hasani-Ranjbar S, Larijani B, Esmailzadeh A. Legume Consumption and Risk of All-Cause and Cause-Specific Mortality: A Systematic Review and Dose-Response Meta-Analysis of Prospective Studies. *Advances in Nutrition*. 2023;14(1):64–76. doi:10.1016/j.advnut.2022.10.009.

How Beans Feed Your "Longevity Microbes"

Beans contain an unusually rich mixture of **fiber, resistant starch, and fermentable carbohydrates**.

Unlike ordinary starch that's rapidly broken down and absorbed in your small intestine, resistant starch can make its way farther down your digestive tract.

There, your gut bacteria get involved.

They ferment these compounds and produce short-chain fatty acids – including **butyrate**, one of the most important metabolites for maintaining a healthy intestinal environment.

That's particularly relevant as you get older.

Dr. Gurevich explains that one of the microbial changes she sees with aging is a loss of *Faecalibacterium prausnitzii* – an important butyrate-producing bacterium.

As she puts it:

"Fiber feeds the microbiome. So when you eat fiber, think of it as less a nutrient for your body and more a nutrient for your microbiome."



Research on legumes and the microbiome is still developing, but human studies have linked legume consumption with changes in beneficial bacteria including Bifidobacterium and Faecalibacterium.

In other words, that inexpensive bowl of black beans isn't simply giving you plant protein and fiber.

It's delivering dinner to an entire microbial ecosystem.

And that makes Dr. Gurevich's freezer strategy particularly clever:

She doesn't have to decide to eat for her microbiome every night. She makes the healthy choice the **easy** choice before she's hungry.

How To Implement Today

Dr. Gurevich's Freezer-Bean Shortcut

You don't need an elaborate Blue Zone meal plan to borrow Dr. Gurevich's strategy.

The key is to **cook once and create several future meals at the same time.**

1. Start with black beans.

Dr. Gurevich sprouts hers before cooking. If you want to, you can follow her lead. Otherwise, you can simply prepare your beans according to standard package or pressure-cooker directions.

2. Add Dr. Gurevich's flavor base.

She cooks her beans with:

- Cumin
- Onion
- Green pepper
- Salt
- Black pepper

No complicated specialty ingredients required.

3. Pressure-cook until tender.

Dr. Gurevich pressure-cooks her sprouted beans with the vegetables and seasonings for approximately **40–45 minutes.**

4. Blend the vegetables back in.

If pieces of onion or pepper remain intact, she blends them and returns them to the pot, creating a richer, thicker base.

5. Portion and freeze.

Once your beans have cooled, divide them into freezer-safe individual or meal-sized containers and freeze them for later.

Now you've created your own healthy "fast food."

On a night when cooking feels impossible, thaw a portion and use it for quick tacos, spoon it over a baked sweet potato, add it to a grain bowl, or serve it alongside vegetables and avocado.

The goal isn't culinary perfection.

It's making one of the simplest microbiome-supporting foods on earth just as convenient as the processed food you'd otherwise grab when you're tired.

Dr. Ilana Gurevich's Expert Tip: Don't Let A Little Gas Scare You Away



If you don't currently eat much fiber, suddenly piling your plate high with beans and other prebiotic foods may leave your gut with something to say about it.

Dr. Gurevich's advice?

Go slowly.

A large, sudden influx of fermentable material can cause gas and bloating while your microbiome adjusts. Instead of deciding the food "doesn't agree with you" and giving up, Dr. Gurevich recommends introducing prebiotics gradually.

"The trick to introducing any prebiotics is go slow. You are not in a hurry."

That simple principle may be particularly helpful if your current diet is relatively low in fiber.

Start with a smaller amount, see how your body responds, and gradually work your way up as tolerated.

As Dr. Gurevich jokes, the goal is to create a habit you'll actually maintain – not another abandoned product for the **"supplement graveyard in your pantry."**

Want More From Dr. Ilana Gurevich?

In The Gut-Aging Solution, Dr. Gurevich also reveals:

- **The "Good Bug" Smoothie:** The colorful combination Dr. Gurevich recommends to patients when she wants to nourish one particularly valuable species – including an unexpected ingredient you may already have in your kitchen.
- **The "Go Slow" Gut Rule:** Why doing too much of one supposedly healthy thing can backfire – and the simple strategy Dr. Gurevich uses to help her patients stick with it instead.
- **The Ancient Brain-Food Strategy:** The unusual food Dr. Gurevich reaches for to support both cognitive function and the nervous system – and why she prefers one form whenever possible.
- **The Overlooked Bone-Building Nutrient:** The specific form of a familiar vitamin Dr. Gurevich considers especially important as we age – and the surprising way she pairs it with two other bone nutrients.
- **The "Sweet Miso" Trick:** The surprising place Dr. Gurevich uses this ancient fermented food that has absolutely nothing to do with soup – and why its salty flavor may be the secret to making something sweet taste even better.

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UpNext: Dr. Peter Bongiorno

Discover the unusual food a naturopathic doctor keeps in his refrigerator and works into everyday meals – and why scientists are investigating its remarkable connection to the aging brain and nervous system.



6. Dr. Peter Bongiorno: The "VagusNerve" Brain Food



MEET THE EXPERT

Dr. Peter Bongiorno, ND, LAc

Naturopathic Doctor and Licensed
Acupuncturist

Author of *How Come They're Happy
and I'm Not?*

Expert in Integrative Mental Health

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Mental Health Expert Who Looks Beyond the Brain

When people begin struggling with brain fog, forgetfulness, anxiety, or mood changes as they age, it's natural to focus on the brain itself.

Dr. Peter Bongiorno looks deeper..

As a naturopathic doctor who has spent decades specializing in integrative approaches to mental health, he sees the brain as part of a much larger network – one that includes your gut, your immune system, and one extraordinary communication pathway connecting them all:

The vagus nerve.

This massive nerve travels from your brainstem through your body, carrying signals between your brain and many of your major organs – including your digestive tract.

And according to Dr. Bongiorno, keeping this communication pathway healthy may become especially important as we age. He explains that aging can bring declining resilience, poorer nutrient absorption, digestive changes, and greater inflammation.

But he also emphasizes that this decline isn't inevitable.

"The good news is that there's so many things that we can do to slow down that process."

And one of the foods Dr. Bongiorno personally works into his own diet is an unusual mushroom that's become famous for its connection to the brain and nervous system.

His Personal Longevity Secret

Lion's Mane mushrooms.

Rather than treating this remarkable mushroom solely as another supplement to swallow, Dr. Bongiorno prefers something much simpler:

He eats it.

"I personally like to cook with it because it's just a great way to get our supplements in if we can actually get them through food."

And his strategy for making sure he actually eats it couldn't be easier.

He buys fresh Lion's Mane and keeps it right in the refrigerator. Why?

Because when he opens the refrigerator to make a meal, there it is. *"Just seeing them in the fridge, it's just great. You just take them out, you chop them up and you could put them into pretty much anything you're cooking."*

For his meals, he might quickly cook it in a little water or sauté it in a small amount of oil, then add it to whatever he's making.

No elaborate protocol.

No complicated recipe.

Just a remarkable functional food sitting in plain sight, ready to become part of his next meal.

And there's an intriguing reason this particular mushroom has captured the attention of neuroscientists.

The Mushroom That May Help Your Nerves Grow

Your nervous system is constantly adapting.

But unlike many tissues in your body, damaged nerve fibers can be painfully slow to repair.

One of the molecules involved in maintaining and developing neurons is nerve growth factor, or NGF.

Think of NGF as one of the body's signals for helping certain nerve cells grow, survive, and maintain their connections.

And Lion's Mane contains unusual bioactive compounds – particularly hericenones and erinacines – that researchers have been investigating for their potential effects on neurotrophic pathways, including NGF.¹³

That's a big reason Lion's Mane has generated so much excitement as a potential brain-supporting food.

But there's another intriguing connection.

Research has also begun investigating Lion's Mane's effects on BDNF – brain-derived neurotrophic factor – another protein involved in neuronal health and plasticity.

That means scientists aren't simply studying Lion's Mane as an antioxidant or generic "healthy mushroom."

13. . Li IC, Lee LY, Tzeng TT, et al. Neurohealth Properties of *Hericium erinaceus* Mycelia Enriched with Erinacines. *Behavioural Neurology*. 2018;2018:5802634. doi:10.1155/2018/5802634.

They're investigating whether compounds within this unusual fungus can influence some of the biological pathways involved in maintaining the very cells and connections your nervous system depends upon.

And for Dr. Bongiorno, that makes it particularly interesting for people experiencing the kinds of mental and cognitive changes that often become more noticeable with age.

"People who tend to have cognitive issues, like maybe there's like a little bit of brain fog, maybe some mood issues, some anxiety, some depression that we know their vagal tone is kind of on the low side and they're very nervous all the time.

People who also have some issues with the gut as well and they're nervous and they feel like they're not thinking clearly. So those are people I think who could benefit from a lion's mane. I've certainly seen adding lion's mane to a patient's protocol can really support and improve their thinking processes and their cognition and their executive function."



Why Your Vagus Nerve Matters for Healthy Aging

Here's where the story becomes even more interesting.

Your brain doesn't age in isolation.

Your vagus nerve is one of the major communication routes connecting the brain with the digestive system and the rest of the body.

And Dr. Bongiorno points to an intriguing relationship between healthy vagal function, inflammation, and aging.

He even uses a wonderfully simple analogy to explain one marker of cellular aging: telomeres.

Telomeres are protective structures at the ends of your chromosomes.

Dr. Bongiorno compares them to the little plastic caps – called aglets – on the ends of your shoelaces.

Just as those caps prevent a shoelace from fraying, telomeres help protect the ends of your chromosomes.

Over time, telomeres tend to shorten.

And research has found associations between autonomic nervous system function, inflammation, stress, and telomere biology.¹⁴

That's important because the vagus nerve plays a major role in your body's parasympathetic – or "rest and digest" – response.

14. Ask TF, Sütterlin S. Prefrontally modulated vagal neuroimmunomodulation is associated with telomere length. *Frontiers in Neuroscience*. 2022;16:1063162. doi:10.3389/fnins.2022.1063162.

As Dr. Bongiorno explains:

"When the vagus nerve works really well and inflammation is low, then the telomeres stay intact longer and we age more healthily."

The science here is still evolving, and Lion's Mane hasn't been proven to lengthen telomeres or reverse biological aging.

But it illustrates the larger principle behind Dr. Bongiorno's approach:

Supporting the aging brain isn't simply about the brain.

It's about supporting the interconnected systems – gut, nervous system, inflammation, sleep, stress, movement, and nutrition – that influence how well your brain and body continue communicating over time.

And Lion's Mane is one delicious way Dr. Bongiorno brings that philosophy into his own kitchen.

How To Implement Today

The "See It, Eat It" Lion's Mane Habit

Dr. Bongiorno's strategy doesn't require a complicated mushroom recipe.

In fact, the simplicity is the point.

- 1. Find fresh Lion's Mane.** Look for it in a well-stocked grocery store, farmers market, Asian market, specialty produce shop, or local mushroom grower.
- 2. Put it somewhere you'll see it.** This is Dr. Bongiorno's real trick. Don't buy a healthy food only to bury it behind three containers in the refrigerator. Keep your Lion's Mane visible so opening the refrigerator becomes your reminder to use it.
- 3. Give it a quick chop.** When you're already preparing a meal, take some out and chop it into bite-sized pieces.
- 4. Cook it simply.** Dr. Bongiorno says you can cook Lion's Mane in a little water or sauté it in a small amount of oil.
- 5. Add it to something you're already eating** Try it with eggs, vegetables, grain bowls, soups, or another savory meal. You don't need to build dinner around Lion's Mane. You simply need to make it easy to add.

And that's what makes Dr. Bongiorno's strategy so useful: instead of relying on willpower to remember another "healthy-aging protocol," he changes his environment so the healthy choice practically reminds him.



Dr. Peter Bongiorno's Expert Tip: Food First – Supplements When They're Useful

Lion's Mane is widely available in capsules and extracts.

But when fresh mushrooms are accessible, Dr. Bongiorno personally likes getting them through food.

"I personally like to cook with it because it's just a great way to get our supplements in if we can actually get them through food."

That doesn't mean he dismisses supplements.

In fact, Dr. Bongiorno says supplemental Lion's Mane can be particularly convenient when traveling.

His approach is refreshingly practical:

Use the whole food when it fits naturally into your life. Use a quality supplement when convenience makes that the better option.

And don't underestimate the power of simply keeping the healthy food where you'll actually remember to eat it.

Want More From Dr. Peter Bongiorno?

In *The Gut-Aging Solution*, Dr. Bongiorno also reveals:

- **The “Out-Loud” Vagus Trick:** Why something you can do in the car or shower may help activate your body's calming pathway.
- **The Omega-3 Conversion Problem:** Why some people may struggle to turn plant-based fats into the omega-3 forms their bodies need — and the genetic wrinkle Dr. Bongiorno checks for.
- **The Men’s Healthy-Aging Handful:** The crunchy little food Dr. Bongiorno especially recommends to men as they get older – and the key mineral packed inside.
- **The Kid-Friendly Bean Hack:** Dr. Bongiorno's ridiculously simple way to turn one longevity staple into a snack the whole family will love to eat.
- **The Overnight Repair Window:** Why Dr. Bongiorno believes what happens while you sleep can determine how well your brain clears away the day's cellular debris.

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UpNext: Dr. Christina Miller

Discover the simple type of movement this integrative physician added to her own routine after seeing the latest research on aging – and why what happens inside your muscles may affect far more than your strength.



7. Dr. Christina Miller: The "Anti-inflammatory Organ" You Can Build



MEET THE EXPERT

Dr. Christina Miller, MD

Board-Certified Emergency Medicine
Physician

Board-Certified Integrative Medicine
Physician

Functional Medicine Practitioner

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Doctor Who Changed Her Own Routine After Seeing the Research

For years, most of us thought about muscle in fairly simple terms. Strong muscles help you lift things.

They help you stay toned.

And as you get older, they help keep you from becoming weak or frail.

All true.

But as Dr. Christina Miller began digging deeper into the emerging research on muscle and healthy aging, she realized we'd been dramatically underselling it.

Muscle isn't simply something that moves your body.

It's metabolically active tissue that communicates with the rest of your body.

And the research was compelling enough to change what Dr. Miller herself was doing.

"I feel like it's something a lot of us didn't talk about, at least I didn't and I didn't focus on it as much."

But that changed.

"As the data is coming out now, I've made significant changes in my own health and what I teach with my patients."

Her longevity secret?

Resistance training.

Not because she's trying to become a bodybuilder.

But because maintaining and building muscle may be one of the most powerful things you can do to protect the body you're going to need 10, 20, or 30 years from now.

Her Personal Longevity Secret

For Dr. Miller, resistance training has become part of a much bigger longevity strategy.

Because muscle loss isn't simply about looking less toned. It's about **what you remain capable of doing.**

"We want to be able to walk up and down stairs," she says.

She lives in Colorado, so her own vision goes a little farther:
"We want to be able to hike and ski into our 80s and 90s and age well. We want to be able to play with our grandkids and be able to carry our own groceries and not fall."

That's the real goal.
 Not bigger biceps.

Independence.

And that's particularly important because age-related muscle loss can gradually chip away at the strength that makes ordinary life possible.

Resistance training gives you a way to fight back.
 In fact, randomized trials show that even adults over 75 can still gain significant strength through resistance training.

Even people over 80 aren't necessarily "too old" to get stronger.¹⁵
 Your muscles can still respond when you give them the right signal.
 But strength is only the beginning.

15. Grgic J, et al. Effects of Resistance Training on Muscle Size and Strength in Very Elderly Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials. *Sports Medicine*. 2020;50(11):1983–1999. doi:10.1007/s40279-020-01331-7.

Your Muscles Are Secretly Sending Messages

Here's the part most people never hear about.

When your muscles contract during exercise, they don't simply pull on your bones and move your limbs.

They also release signaling molecules known as **myokines**.

Think of them as tiny chemical messages sent out by working muscle to communicate with other tissues throughout your body.

Scientists are now investigating how these signals influence metabolism, immune function, inflammation, and other systems involved in healthy aging.

And resistance exercise itself has been shown to alter circulating levels of several immunoregulatory myokines.

That's why researchers increasingly view skeletal muscle as more than machinery.

It's a signaling organ.

Dr. Miller puts it simply:

"Muscle secretes factors that are like cytokines called myokines and they go off and put out inflammation."

That makes building muscle particularly **interesting** in the context of inflammaging – the chronic, low-grade inflammation that tends to rise as we get older.

Instead of thinking of resistance training solely as a way to build strength, think of every squat, wall sit, or set of weights as activating metabolically busy tissue that communicates with the rest of your body.

Muscle Helps Build Strong Bones

Resistance training gives you another major healthy-aging advantage:

It loads your skeleton.

Your bones are living tissue.

When muscles work against resistance, they create mechanical forces that your bones must adapt to.

That's one reason resistance and weight-bearing exercise are so important for maintaining bone-density as we age.

Then there's metabolism.

Skeletal muscle is a major site for glucose disposal, which means maintaining active muscle tissue can play an important role in insulin sensitivity and blood-sugar regulation.

And then there is perhaps the simplest benefit of all:

Strong legs make it easier to stay on your feet.

Strong muscles help you get out of chairs.

Climb stairs.

Carry groceries.

Catch yourself when you stumble.

Continue doing the things that make your life your life.

In fact, studies following hundreds of thousands of adults have found resistance training is associated with a lower risk of premature death.

*One large meta-analysis found that compared with doing none, **any resistance training was associated with a 15% lower risk of death from any cause.***¹⁶

And here's the encouraging part:

You don't necessarily need hours in a gym to benefit.

16. Shailendra P, Baldock KL, Li LSK, Bennie JA, Boyle T. Resistance Training and Mortality Risk: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 2022;63(2):277–285. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2022.03.020.

How To Implement Today The No-Gym Strength Starter

If the words resistance training immediately make you picture barbells, weight benches, and intimidating gym equipment, Dr. Miller has good news.

You can start much more simply.

1. Choose one basic resistance movement.

Try a chair squat, wall pushup, wall sit, or another simple movement appropriate for your current ability.

2. Let your own body provide the resistance.

You don't need heavy weights to begin. Body weight can be resistance.

3. Make the last repetitions challenging.

Dr. Miller recommends working toward the point where your muscles are getting tired while you're still able to maintain good form.

4. Progress slowly.

As a movement becomes easier, gradually increase the challenge rather than jumping immediately to heavy resistance.

5. Protect your form.

If you're new to resistance training – or have osteoporosis, significant joint problems, balance issues, or another medical concern – getting guidance from a qualified professional can help you learn movements safely.

The goal isn't to destroy yourself in a workout.

It's to give your muscles and bones a reason to build.



Dr. Christina Miller's Expert Tip: "Test, Don't Guess"

There's one form of aging you can't see in the mirror.

Bone loss.

Dr. Miller tells the story of a highly active woman in her early 60s who ate a plant-based diet, walked, rode a bike, and practiced some yoga.

She appeared healthy.

She had no warning that anything was wrong.

Then Dr. Miller ordered a DEXA scan.

It revealed **severe osteoporosis**.

That discovery allowed them to intervene with a comprehensive program that included targeted progressive resistance exercise.

About a year and a half later, Dr. Miller says the woman's T-score had improved from roughly **-4.2 to -2.1** – moving her from the osteoporosis range into the osteopenia range.

It's an extraordinary clinical story.

But the lesson Dr. Miller takes from it is remarkably simple:

"Test, don't guess."

You can feel healthy and still be losing bone.

That's why she encourages people – particularly those with risk factors – to talk with their healthcare provider about whether and when bone-density testing makes sense for them.

Want More From Dr. Christina Miller?

In *The Gut-Aging Solution*, Dr. Miller also reveals:

- **The “Cold Kitchen” Gut Hack:** The simple kitchen trick that turns foods we’re commonly told to avoid into a feast for your beneficial bacteria.
- **The 81-Year-Old Who “Came Back to Life”:** How one woman went from fatigue, stiffness, and struggling with everyday activities at 72 to thriving at 81.
- **The Menopause Muscle Shift:** Why midlife can change the rules for maintaining strength – especially for women.
- **The “Never Too Late” Patient:** What happened when a 91-year-old came to Dr. Miller ready to make changes – and why she says age shouldn't stop you from starting.
- **The Spice-Rack Microbiome Boost:** Why Dr. Miller says everyday herbs and spices may help you build a more diverse, anti-inflammatory gut — and the four she specifically calls out for their high polyphenol content.

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UpNext: Dr. Monisha Bhanote

Discover the colorful food this physician eats nearly every single day – sometimes a surprising amount of it – and why one powerful compound inside it has scientists so interested in cellular aging.



8. Dr. Monisha Bhanote: The “Half-an-onion-a-day” Age Shield



MEET THE EXPERT

**Dr. Monisha Bhanote, MD, FCAP,
ABOIM**

Quintuple Board-Certified Physician

Integrative & Cellular Health Expert

Functional Culinary Medicine
Specialist

Best-Selling Author of *The Anatomy
of Wellbeing*

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Physician Who Has Spent Decades Looking at Aging Under a Microscope

Most of us judge aging by what we can see in the mirror. Dr. Monisha Bhanote has spent much of her career looking much deeper.

As a physician and pathologist, she's examined what happens to human tissue at the cellular level – and she says many of the changes we associate with aging begin long before they become obvious on the outside.

Oxidative stress. Glycation. Mitochondrial dysfunction. Changes in the tiny blood vessels that deliver nutrients and oxygen to your tissues.

As she explains:

"Skin is probably one of the easiest ways to see how you are aging... some of these processes that I see are going to include glycation, are going to include oxidative stress, is going to include mitochondrial dysfunction, is going to include microvascular changes. All of this is happening on a cellular level."

Fortunately, Dr. Bhanote believes your everyday food choices can help supply your cells with compounds that protect them against some of the stresses of aging.

And one of her personal favorites is so ordinary, you may already have one sitting in your kitchen.

Her Personal Longevity Secret

Dr. Bhanote eats an astonishing amount of one humble vegetable:
Red onion.

Why?

Red onions are a rich food source of quercetin – a plant compound belonging to the flavonoid family of polyphenols.

And Dr. Bhanote doesn't merely recommend them to her patients. She makes them a near-daily fixture on her own plate.

"Quercetin is found in red onions and in apples. In fact, you'll probably see, if you ever hang out with me, I probably eat half a red onion a day, if not a whole red onion."

Her favorite way to get it couldn't be much simpler.

"I'll chop that up and put it onto my salad and definitely an apple. So my latest salad that I've been eating is a wedge salad with red onions, purple cabbage on it and sliced apples on it. An easy way to get a lot of these polyphenols."

No elaborate recipe.

No exotic superfood.

Just a few deeply colored plants piled onto a plate.

Why Red Onions Are an Especially Interesting Source of Quercetin

Quercetin is found in many plant foods, including apples, berries, broccoli, tea, and onions.

But there's something particularly interesting about onions:

The form of quercetin in a food affects how readily your body can absorb it.

Human studies have found that the quercetin glucosides found in onions are particularly bioavailable – making onions one of the better-studied whole-food sources of this protective plant compound.¹⁷

And once you eat quercetin, the story doesn't end in your digestive tract.

Some is absorbed in the small intestine and transformed into metabolites that circulate through your body. Other portions can reach the colon, where your gut microbes help break them down into additional compounds.

In other words, the benefits you get from a colorful plant food aren't necessarily limited to the original compounds sitting on your plate.



Your gut helps determine what happens to them next.

17. Almeida AF, Borge GIA, Piskula M, et al. Bioavailability of quercetin in humans with a focus on interindividual variation. *Compr Rev Food Sci Food Saf.* 2018;17(3):714–731. doi:10.1111/1541-4337.12342.

A Colorful Defense Against Cellular Aging

That matters because aging cells face a constant barrage of oxidative stress.

Every day, normal metabolism produces reactive molecules commonly called free radicals. Environmental exposures, inflammation, poor diet, and other stressors can add to that burden. Your body has its own antioxidant defenses to keep these molecules in check.

And plant foods provide another layer of support through thousands of bioactive compounds – including polyphenols like quercetin.

That's one reason Dr. Bhanote's personal salad is so clever.

She's not relying on one isolated nutrient.

Red onion provides quercetin.

Purple cabbage brings its own family of colorful plant compounds. Apples contribute additional polyphenols and fiber.

Instead of chasing one “miracle” antioxidant, she's creating a simple mix of plant compounds in one meal.

And that's something anyone can borrow.

How To Implement Today

Build Dr. Bhanote's "Polyphenol-Packed" Salad

You don't have to eat an entire red onion to follow Dr. Bhanote's lead.

Simply use her latest salad as inspiration:

1. Start with your favorite salad greens.

Use whatever makes salad easiest for you to eat regularly.

2. Add chopped red onion.

Start with an amount you enjoy. There's no need to match Dr. Bhanote's impressive half-an-onion habit!

3. Add purple cabbage.

It brings crunch, color, and another completely different collection of plant compounds to the bowl.

4. Finish with sliced apple.

The sweetness plays beautifully against the sharp onion while adding yet another source of polyphenols.

That's it.

And you can apply the same principle far beyond salad:

Look for opportunities to combine different naturally colored plant foods on the same plate.

The goal isn't perfection.

It's making cellular-protective foods so ordinary that they simply become part of how you eat.

Dr. Monisha Bhanote's Expert Tip: Eat More Colors – And More Variety



To easily boost your daily intake of polyphenols, focus on variety and color.

Dr. Bhanote's own salad is a perfect example: red onion, purple cabbage, and sliced apple – three differently colored plant foods, each bringing its own mix of polyphenols to the plate.

But she recommends thinking beyond a single meal:

"You want to eat a microbiome diverse diet. We have three meals a day, or even if you're eating two meals a day, you do not want to be eating the same foods. There was research done with a very, very large gut study project that showed eating at least 30 different plant foods a week would increase your microbial diversity."

And reaching that number may be easier than it sounds.

You don't need 30 different vegetables. Fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, seeds, herbs, and spices can all help bring greater variety to your diet.

So instead of getting hung up on one "superfood," think color + variety. Add another vegetable to your salad. Sprinkle on a different herb or seed. Rotate the fruits you buy each week.

The goal isn't perfection – it's giving your microbiome a wider variety of plant foods to feast on.

Want More From Dr. Monisha Bhanote?

In *The Gut-Aging Solution*, Dr. Bhanote also reveals:

- **The Collagen "Assembly Line":** The five nutritional pieces your body needs to manufacture its own collagen – and the everyday foods Dr. Bhanote uses to supply them.
- **The "Grow It or Brew It" Skin Protector:** The fragrant herb Dr. Bhanote says may help defend the proteins that keep skin firm and resilient.
- **The \$60 Collagen Mistake:** Why Dr. Bhanote says there's something she would address before spending another dollar on collagen supplements.
- **The Forgotten Collagen-Building Herb:** The little-known plant Dr. Bhanote says directly stimulates the cells responsible for producing your body's collagen.
- **The Grape Catch:** Why Dr. Bhanote recommends this familiar fruit as a source of a powerful polyphenol – but warns there's one reason you may not want to overdo it.

Watch Dr. Bhanote's complete interview in *The Gut-Aging Solution* to discover these strategies and more.

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UpNext: Dr. John Dempster

Discover the everyday nutrient this functional medicine doctor makes sure he gets every single day – and why this familiar antioxidant may be far more important to healthy aging than most people realize.



9. Dr. John Dempster: The “Every Single Day” Antioxidant



MEET THE EXPERT

Dr. John Dempster, ND

Naturopathic Doctor

Functional Medicine Practitioner

Founder of The Dempster Clinic

AS FEATURED IN
THE GUT-AGING SOLUTION

The Doctor Who Says Aging Shouldn't Mean Running Out of Energy

Fatigue.

Less stamina.

Feeling like you simply don't have the reserves you once did. These are complaints Dr. John Dempster hears all the time from people as they get older.

But he doesn't believe we should automatically chalk them up to another birthday.

Instead, he looks deeper – at the cellular systems responsible for producing energy, repairing damage, managing inflammation, and helping us remain resilient as we age.

And one of his favorite ways to support those systems involves a familiar nutrient you can find in virtually any grocery store.

In fact, it's so important to Dr. Dempster that he says he plans to take it for the rest of his life.

His Personal Longevity Secret

Dr. Dempster's longevity and vitality staple is vitamin C.

"One of the most commonly known antioxidants out there right now is vitamin C and it's one of my favorites," he says. "I take it every single day and I plan on doing it for as long as I live."

There's a good reason for that daily commitment.

Unlike most animals, humans cannot manufacture vitamin C inside our own bodies. We have to obtain it from our diet.

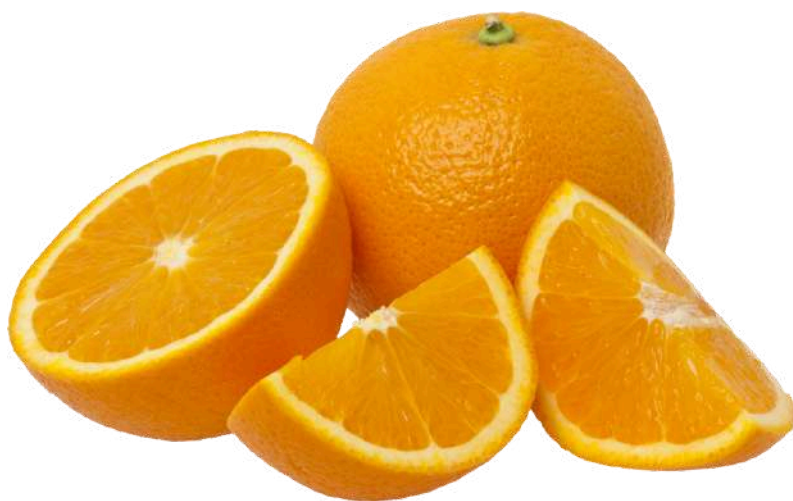
And because vitamin C is water-soluble and our bodies maintain only limited stores, regular intake matters.

As Dr. Dempster explains:

"Vitamin C is such an important compound, but it's interesting in humans. We can't store it very well. So we require it almost at a daily level."

But vitamin C isn't merely something we need to prevent a deficiency.

It plays a direct role in some of the very processes that help our tissues withstand the wear and tear of everyday life.



Your Built-In Defense Against Oxidative Stress

Every day, your cells are exposed to unstable molecules known as free radicals.

Some are produced naturally as your body turns food into energy. Others can arise from environmental exposures such as cigarette smoke, pollution, and ultraviolet radiation.

When free radicals overwhelm your body's antioxidant defenses, the result is oxidative stress – one of the cellular processes associated with aging and numerous chronic diseases.

That's where antioxidants come in.

And vitamin C is one of the body's important physiological antioxidants. It can donate electrons to reactive molecules, helping neutralize them before they can go on to damage cellular components.

Dr. Dempster believes this becomes particularly important when life places greater demands on us.

"But here's the interesting thing about vitamin C," he says. "We burn through it really quickly. The busier we are, the more stressed we are and the more inflamed we are."

His goal is to give the body the nutritional reserves it needs to better handle those everyday assaults:

"I firmly believe that if we want to do this effectively to slow down some of the aging processes in our body, we have to look at nutrients, not only vitamin C, but many others that are going to give you that reserve and give you that fortification that's going to help your body slow down some of the degenerative processes that are happening."

The Vitamin Your Collagen Can't Do Without

Vitamin C also performs another job with enormous implications for healthy aging:

Your body needs it to make collagen.

Collagen is the structural protein woven throughout your skin, bones, cartilage, tendons, blood vessels, and other connective tissues.

But producing strong collagen fibers requires specialized enzymes – and vitamin C serves as an essential cofactor for enzymes involved in collagen synthesis and stabilization.

That's why severe vitamin C deficiency causes scurvy.

Without enough vitamin C, collagen synthesis becomes impaired. Connective tissues weaken, wounds heal poorly, gums can bleed, and other signs of tissue breakdown appear.

So this humble vitamin works on two important fronts:

It helps support your antioxidant defenses against oxidative damage and supplies something your body requires to continually build and maintain connective tissue.

And fortunately, you don't have to look far to find it.

How To Implement Today

Look Beyond the Orange

When most of us hear “vitamin C,” we immediately picture an orange. But Dr. Dempster specifically wants people to think bigger.

"Food sources are a very common source," he says. "We understand that we can get this through citrus. We can also get it through a number of other very colorful vegetables and fruits. It's not just about your oranges and your lemons."

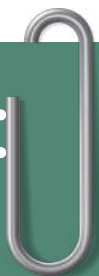
So instead of relying on a single vitamin C food, make **colorful produce** a regular part of your day.

Some easy vitamin C-rich choices include:

- Red and green bell peppers
- Kiwi
- Strawberries
- Broccoli
- Citrus fruits
- Tomatoes

The goal is to make vitamin C-rich produce something you eat consistently – just as Dr. Dempster makes vitamin C part of his own daily routine.

Dr. John Dempster's Expert Tip: Think "Every Single Day"



Vitamin C isn't a nutrient to think about once in a while.

Dr. Dempster's own approach is right there in his words:

"I take it every single day."

So create a simple visual cue for yourself: **Where is the vitamin C on my plate?**

Maybe it's strawberries at breakfast, sliced bell pepper with lunch, broccoli at dinner, or a kiwi for a snack.

It doesn't have to be complicated.

The important thing is making colorful, vitamin C-rich foods a regular fixture of your diet – rather than something you only remember when you feel a cold coming on.

Want More From Dr. John Dempster?

There's much more from Dr. Dempster inside The Gut-Aging Solution, including:

- **The 30-Second Vagus Nerve Trick:** The remarkably simple thing Dr. Dempster recommends doing twice a day to support the nerve that shifts your body toward “rest and repair.”
- **The High-Powered Executive Who Felt Like Herself Again:** How a woman in her 60s went from struggling to get out of bed and feeling like she was “falling apart” to “bounding with energy” – and handling her demanding life in an entirely different way.
- **The Gut-Energy Drain:** How inflammation in your gut can increase nutrient demands and leave fewer resources available for the tiny cellular engines responsible for producing your energy.
- **The Bone-Building Stressor:** The type of “stress” Dr. Dempster says you actually want as you age – because it can help shift your bones toward rebuilding rather than breakdown.
- **The “Never Too Late” Rule:** Why Dr. Dempster says getting older doesn't mean you have to surrender your energy, resilience, and ability to make meaningful changes to your health.

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Your 9 Longevity Secrets

Nine experts.

Nine remarkably simple strategies.

And one message running through every one of them:

How you age is not determined by the number on your birth certificate alone.

The foods you eat...

The microbes you feed...

The muscles you build...

The nutrients you supply...

And the small choices you make every day can influence the biological processes that determine how well your body continues to function over time.

You've now discovered how our experts use fermented foods, soy, beneficial microbes, nuts, beans, medicinal mushrooms, resistance training, polyphenol-rich foods, and vitamin C in their own healthy-aging routines.

None requires perfection.

Most don't require an expensive overhaul of your life.

They begin with something much simpler:

Giving your body more of what it needs to remain resilient – one small choice at a time.

Your Healthier, More Resilient Future Starts Now

You've Just Discovered 9 Expert Secrets

Over the past pages, you've met 9 remarkable doctors and healthy-aging experts.

And while their specialties range from microbiome science and nutritional medicine to integrative health and functional medicine, one message has surfaced again and again:

How you age is far more changeable than most of us have been led to believe.

Here's what they've shared with you:

Dr. Liz Lipski showed you how a traditional fermented food can act like "fertilizer" for your microbiome – and how she effortlessly works kimchi into everyday meals.

Dr. Joel Fuhrman revealed why he keeps soy foods in his home at all times – and how he transforms ordinary tofu into a savory, portable snack.

Dr. Jason Hawrelak introduced you to the emerging world of "gerobiotics" – and the specific *Bifidobacterium longum* strain he personally uses.

Dr. Katie Takayasu showed you why nuts are one of her favorite "optimization foods" – and why packets of pistachios and almonds are a permanent fixture in her travel bag.

Dr. Ilana Gurevich revealed her Blue Zone-inspired freezer staple: sprouted black beans she pressure-cooks in bulk, freezes, and turns into quick, nourishing meals whenever she needs them.

Dr. Peter Bongiorno shared why Lion's Mane mushrooms have become part of his own healthy-aging routine – and why this unusual fungus has captured the attention of scientists studying nerve and brain health.

Dr. Christina Miller explained why resistance training is one of the most powerful tools we have for maintaining muscle, strengthening bone, supporting metabolic health, and preserving independence as we age.

Dr. Monisha Bhanote revealed the colorful polyphenol-rich salad she eats again and again – including the half to whole red onion she may eat in a single day.

And Dr. John Dempster shared the familiar antioxidant he takes "every single day" – and plans to continue taking for the rest of his life.

Nine experts.

Nine remarkably practical strategies.

And none of them requires turning your life upside down.

The Bigger Picture

These 9 secrets are just the beginning.

Each of the experts you've met shared far more in their complete interviews – from the hidden processes that accelerate aging to the foods, nutrients, microbes, and everyday habits that may help protect your health as the years go by.

And they're not alone.

In The Gut-Aging Solution, you'll hear from 21 world-leading doctors, researchers, and clinicians exploring one extraordinary question:

What if many of the changes we blame on getting older actually begin much deeper – inside the gut?

Throughout the 8-part series, you'll discover:

- Why the microbes living inside you may influence how quickly – or slowly – your body ages
- How chronic, low-grade “inflammaging” can quietly accelerate decline throughout the body – and what may help cool that internal fire
- Why the vagus nerve acts as a powerful communication highway between your gut, brain, immune system, and stress response
- How gut-derived toxins may contribute to aching joints, thinning bones, and loss of resilience
- Why declining mitochondrial function can leave you feeling exhausted – and how your gut may influence the nutrients those cellular “engines” depend on
- What your skin may reveal about the way you're aging on the inside
- How shifts in the microbiome can intersect with the dramatic hormonal changes of midlife and beyond
- And what some of the world's longest-lived populations can teach us about building our own “Blue Zone” at home

This guide gave you **9 simple places to begin.**

The Gut-Aging Solution gives you the bigger picture.

Your Invitation

The Gut-Aging Solution is screening free for a limited time.
8 episodes. 21 experts. Dozens of practical longevity insights.

Episode 1

Same Birthday, Different Body: Why Your Gut Shapes How Fast You Age – And the Microbes That Slow Aging From the Inside Out

Episode 2

Your Body's Built-In Cleanup Crew: Why It Stalls With Age and Fuels "Inflammaging" – And the Gut Bacteria That Get Your Cells Cleaning House Again

Episode 3

The Longevity Nerve: Why Your Gut and Brain Stop Talking as You Age – And the 60-Second Practices That Reconnect Them

Episode 4

It Was Never Just Wear and Tear: Why Your Aching Joints and Thinning Bones Trace Back to the Gut – And the Common Herbal Remedy That Stimulates New Bone

Episode 5

Tired Is Not Just "Getting Older": Why Your Cellular Engines Are Failing – And the Gut-Made Compound That Gets Them Running Again

Episode 6

More Than Skin Deep: Why Your Body Can't Build Collagen Without This #1 Nutrient – And What Your Skin Is Telling You About Your Gut

Episode 7

The Estrogen Your Gut Decides to Keep: How It Shapes Your Heart, Bones and Cancer Risk

Episode 8

Build Your Own Blue Zone: The Two Ordinary Foods in Most 100-Year-Olds' Kitchens – And the Daily Handful Linked to a 40% Lower Risk of Heart Disease

Each episode builds on what you've discovered here.

The doctors you've met in this guide go deeper.

You'll meet even more leading experts.

And you'll see how the gut connects seemingly separate pieces of aging – your energy, your brain, your joints, your bones, your skin, your hormones, your immune system, and your ability to remain strong and independent.

Register for the free screening below:

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The Gut-Aging Solution is presented by Goodness Lover.

Our mission is to ensure no one feels unnecessarily sick simply because they lack information about their gut health.

This docuseries is part of that mission – bringing you emerging science, practical strategies, and insights from leading experts so you can make more informed choices about how you care for your body as you age.

Getting older is inevitable.

Feeling older before your time doesn't have to be.

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