

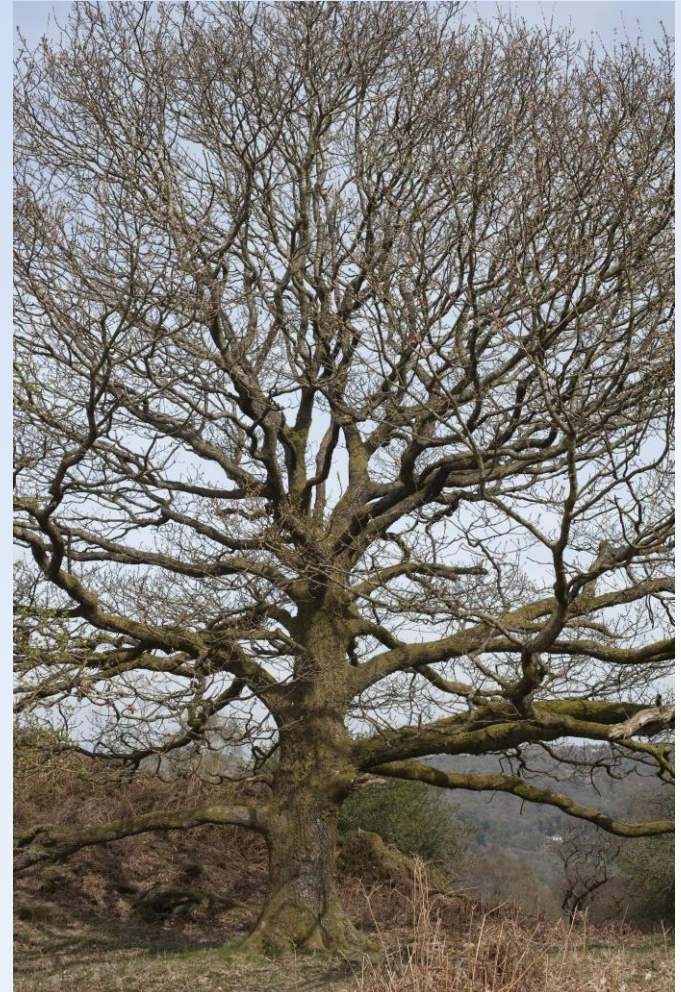
Healthy Aging through the Naturopathic Lens

OGA Annual Conference 2019

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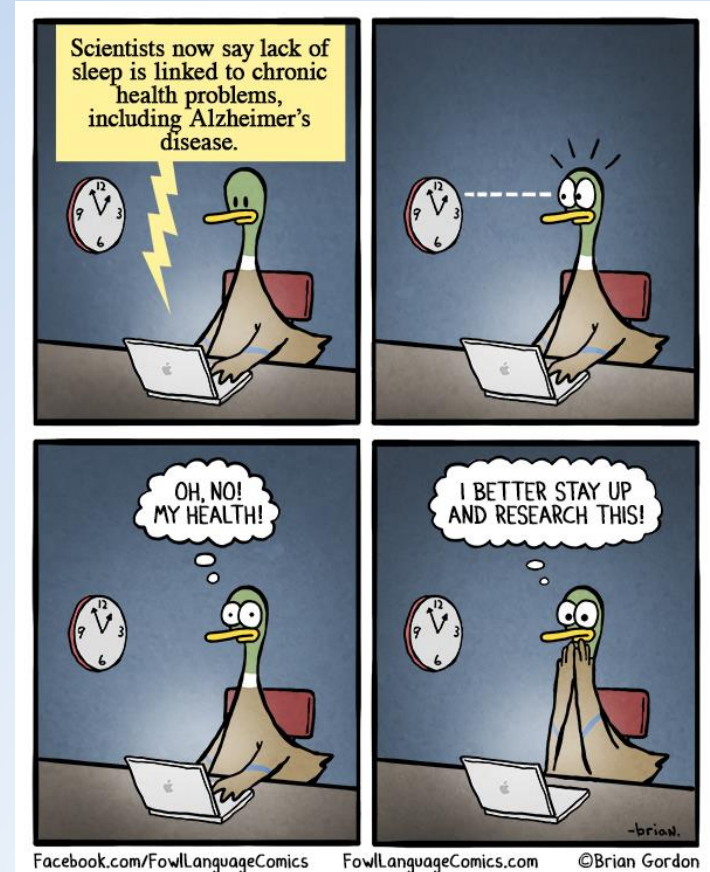
Fundamentals of Healthy Aging

- ✓ **Treat the whole person**
- ✓ Sleep
- ✓ Food
- ✓ Exercise
- ✓ Joy



What Is the Function of Sleep?

- Needed for:
 - Hormone secretion
 - Brain cleaning
 - Microbial diversity
 - Healthy psyche
 - Physical repair
 - Immune activity
 - Appetite regulation
 - Mood modulation



Do We Need Less Sleep with Age?

- Myth - we still need 7-9 hours of restorative sleep at any age.
- Almost 50% of patients over 65 report insomnia.
- Poor sleep has higher risks in older patients.
 - Increased risk of falls
 - Increased risk of skilled nursing home placement
 - Lower quality of life
 - Increase in all-cause mortality

What Changes with Age?

- Sleep becomes more fragmented (less continuous sleep).
- Sleep efficiency decreases. Can be as low as 70% in 70s and 80s (compared to 95% for healthy young adult).
- Non-REM sleep decreases – esp in men.

Sleep cycle changes

- Increased sleep latency
- Phase advanced circadian rhythm – esp in women.
- Less time in bed, more time napping.



What interferes with sleep?

- Polypharmacy
 - Rx meds: ACE inhibitors, Alpha blockers, Cholinesterase inhibitors, SSRIs, steroids, beta-blockers
 - OTC stimulants: nicotine, decongestants
- Caffeine
 - Half life of caffeine is 5-7 hours.
 - Present in OTC headache meds.
- Alcohol
 - Decreased sleep latency
 - Increased sleep fragmentation
 - Suppresses REM
 - Increased risk of falls & drug interactions
 - Changes in brain and pharmacokinetics/dynamics.

Do sleep meds work?

- All current Rx meds are sedatives that impair quality of sleep.
 - Benzos, diphenhydramine, eszopiclone, suvorexant, zolpidem
- Improves sleep latency slightly and perception of sleep, but **functionally do not improve sleep.**
- Older patients at higher risk of negative SE of impaired cognition and increased falls.
- Only to be used PRN
- Wean slowly (months)



Sleep hygiene

- Routine – we are all toddlers in adult bodies.
 - Social jetlag even in retirees.
- Dark (black-curtains or eye mask), cool (<70).
- Uncluttered room with no electronics, caution with memory foam mattresses.
- Don't assume a partnered couple sleeps together.

More than a nightlight

- Common sense older patient specific safety precautions:
 - Eliminate throw rugs or other obstacles en route to bathroom.
 - Adequate non-LED lighting. Dim bedside lamp, lights in bathroom, hall. Consider motion-sensor lights.
 - Telephone on bedside table with pre-programmed emergency numbers.
 - Glow-in-the-dark pet collars.

Treatment

- ✓ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy - Insomnia
- ✓ Melatonin
 - ✓ Tells the body it's time to sleep
- ✓ Light therapy
 - ✓ Bright light in AM, no screens 60 mins before bed.
- ✓ Exercise before 5 PM
- ✓ Nervine herbs: lemon balm, chamomile, california poppy, oatstraw, passionflower, verbena.

Nutrition in Aging

- ✓ Nutrient density
 - ✓ Decreased caloric needs, increased nutritional needs.
 - ✓ Common micronutrient deficiencies: Vitamins A, B-12, C, D, calcium, iron, zinc.
 - ✓ Decreased absorption (PPIs)
- ✓ High protein
 - ✓ More vegetarian sources with CKD & gout.
 - ✓ Regular amounts each meal

Nutrition in Aging

- ✓ Barriers to healthy eating:
 - ✓ Food insecurity
 - ✓ Dentition
 - ✓ Interest in cooking and/or access to shopping.
- ✓ Honoring rituals, while avoiding food ruts.
- ✓ Respect food traditions.
- ✓ Nutrition from food vs supplements.
- ✓ Isolation

Hydration

- ✓ Decreased thirst sensor
- ✓ What are barriers to hydration?
 - ✓ Incontinence
 - ✓ Dysphagia



- ✓ Rely on habits more than numbers
- ✓ Increased vulnerability to UTI, delirium

Exercise

- ✓ Best preventative medicine for just about everything.
 - ✓ Parkinson's
 - ✓ Dementia
 - ✓ Cardiovascular/metabolic/cancer
- ✓ Mood modulator
 - ✓ Decreases cortisol (stress hormone)
 - ✓ Improves sleep
 - ✓ Increases serotonin and BDNF

Overcoming exercise barriers

- ✓ Baby steps
 - ✓ Even 10 minutes a day helps
 - ✓ Goal is that with time it becomes habit
- ✓ Meet people where they are
 - ✓ Social or solo exerciser?
 - ✓ What's realistic for current level of fitness?
- ✓ Education
 - ✓ What are their perceptions of exercise?

Sarcopenia

- Def: progressive general loss of skeletal muscle mass and strength. Over 50% of people 80 +. Impact quality of life, hastens death.
- Muscle accounts of 60% of protein stores in body.
- More common in elderly, but seen in younger pts with inflammation, disuse, malnutrition.
- Test grip strength, walking speed
- ICD-10 (new!) M63.84
- Obesity, DM increase risk, inactivity

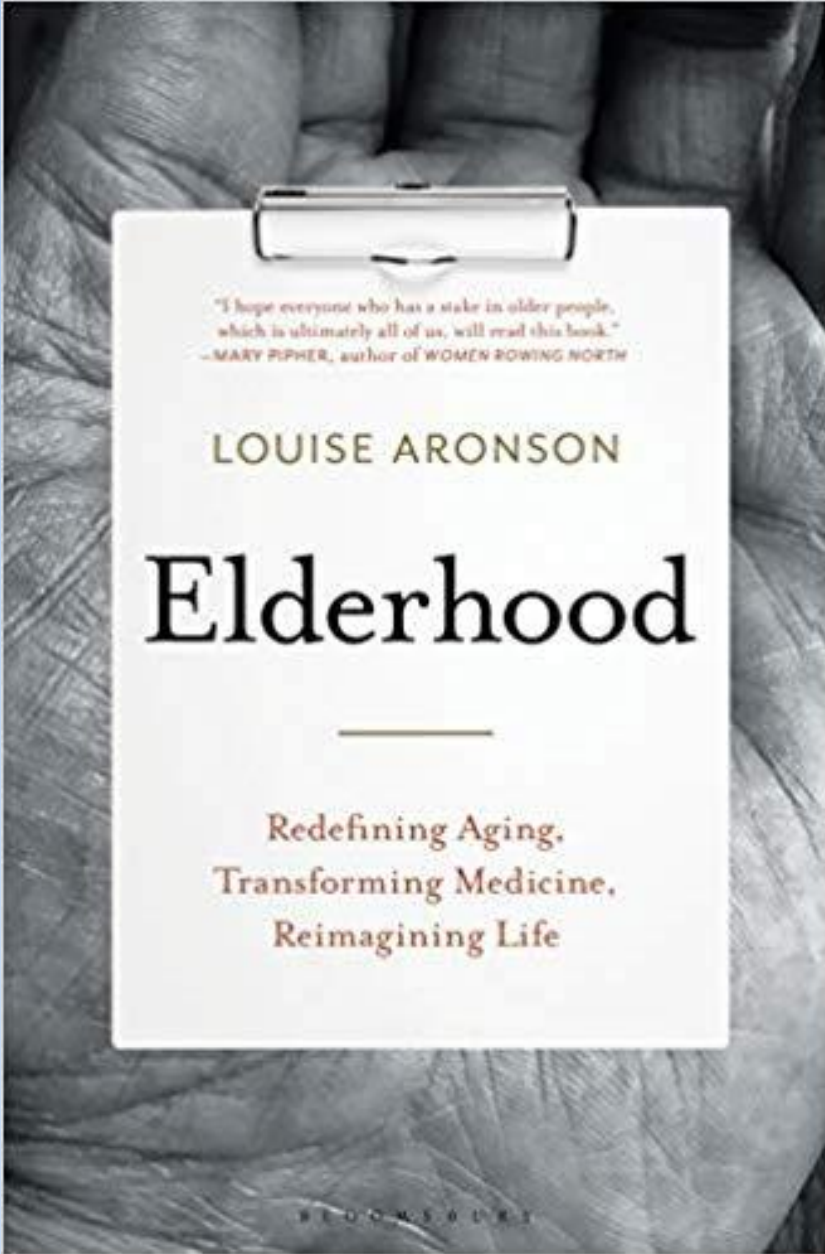
Sarcopenia Tx



- Improve absorption
- Limit sugar
- Increase protein
- Increase exercise
- Vitamin D
- Anti-inflammatory
- Astaxanthin

Joy

- ✓ Meaningful occupation
- ✓ Connection with family, friends, animals
- ✓ Book recommendation:
 - ✓ Women Rowing North by Mary Pipher



*"I hope everyone who has a stake in older people,
which is ultimately all of us, will read this book."*
—MARY PIPHER, author of *WOMEN ROWING NORTH*

LOUISE ARONSON

Elderhood

Redefining Aging,
Transforming Medicine,
Reimagining Life

BLOOMSBURY

ND Approach

- ✓ Prevention
- ✓ Identify and treat the cause
- ✓ Healing Power of Nature
- ✓ Meet people where they are
- ✓ Bridging therapies
- ✓ Dose low and go slow

Questions?



Thank you!

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