

Healthy Aging



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When it comes to healthy aging, there are three important nutrition trends to watch: body shaping, high-protein diets, and brain health. As people age, more focus is placed on long-term health, with people of all ages seeking products that have healthy aging qualities. In fact, according to the Natural Marketing Institute, the millennial generation is just as interested in healthy aging products than baby boomers. Brain health, in particular, is a growing trend.

1. Body Shaping Workouts

Body shaping is a growing trend amongst people aged 35 to 44. More and more men and women are opting for natural ways to reshape their bodies – primarily through diet and exercise.

One reason is the shift in perspectives over body image. For example, according to a meta-analysis done by the American Psychological in 2016, women are becoming more accepting of their bodies. Based on the study, dissatisfaction over their bodies has decreased over a 31-year period.

As more people focus on their health and their individual body shape – instead of simply aiming to be skinny or thin – body shaping workouts will grow in popularity.

2. High Protein Diets and Protein Pacing

Every year, more consumers are recognizing the many benefits of higher protein intake. According to a study by Harvard Health, people who consumed more grams of protein at breakfast had lower blood sugar levels and were more satiated during the day than those who consumed less protein.

Vegetarians and vegans will need more plant-based protein sources, which not only include traditional sources such as beans and nuts, but also mixtures of different plant proteins. Soy protein is one of the highest quality plant-based protein, but blending a variety of sources such as quinoa, sesame, and peas can increase protein quality tremendously.

Protein pacing is another trend gaining popularity. Practitioners take protein up to five times a day to reach their personal goals. Similarly, many people are getting their body composition measured to calculate their total protein needs for the day.

3. Opportunities in Brain Health

When it comes to brain aging, we should consider 4 distinct aspects:

1. Memory
2. Mood
3. Attention
4. Cognition

In the industry of supplements in general, consumers tend to look for a single-supplement solution, rather than a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach. To deal with these four factors, the public needs an integrated program that combines diet, supplements, and exercise.

In her Ted Talk, neuroscientist Wendy Suzuki explains how exercise improves mood, attention, and memory, providing both immediate and long-term benefits to brain health. Her research shows that physical activity has transformative effects on the hippocampus and the prefrontal cortex, ultimately protecting the brain against neurodegenerative diseases such as dementia and Alzheimer's.

When it comes to supplements, look for caffeine, lutein, and curcumin. Caffeine targets all four aspects of brain health. In fact, new research suggests that the compounds found in dark roast coffee, in particular, may protect against Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

As for lutein, most consumers associate it as the "eye vitamin," but we're now finding that it also benefits brain health. In this recent study of older adults, lutein and zeaxanthin supplements had significant improvements in complex attention and cognitive flexibility.

Finally, curcumin, which is a substance found in turmeric and Indian curry, helps protect against brain inflammation. UCLA researchers found that daily consumption of curcumin improved memory and mood in people with mild, age-related memory loss.

As an additional note, abdominal fat and a high-fat diet filled with Omega 6 fatty acids contribute to brain inflammation. According to the Society of Neuroscience, a high number of people with dementia also have coexisting heart disease.

While more research is needed, these initial findings are promising and indicate the positive influence nutrition and exercise can have on how we age.