

# Top 10 Causes of Premature Aging

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Getting older is simply part of living. However, you might have things in your life that are actually causing your body's aging process to speed up. So you end up looking and feeling older than you really are.

A study performed on biological markers showed that there was more aging in people who suffered from certain conditions. To prevent premature aging, you need to avoid these top ten causes.

## **#1 - Drinking Other Liquids in Place of Water**

Did you know that there's something called lifestyle-induced aging? This means that what you do or don't do can cause your body to age earlier than it should. You might be in your thirties or forties, but the age of your biological markers can be a decade or more older.

One of the ways that you can induce aging is by not drinking enough water. With all of the admonitions to drink between six and eight glasses of water daily, it can be easy to start turning a deaf ear toward the advice.

Everyone knows that water is a necessary part of keeping the organs healthy and is needed to help keep your skin moist. But it turns out there's a valid aging reason that you need the water.

When you don't get enough water - and instead, you replace that liquid intake with other fluids such as caffeinated coffee or sodas, you can cause premature aging.

That's because caffeine has the same effect on the body that a diuretic does. It forces the body to get rid of water. You end up with organs not being able to function properly as well as dry, sagging skin.

When you lack the right water intake, you end up dehydrated. Most people believe that if they reach that point, they'd feel thirsty, but you often don't feel thirsty with dehydration until it's pretty well established.

## **#2 - A Lack of Sleep**

You know that when you don't get enough sleep, you don't feel like you're at your best. You might even be aware of all of the studies that talk about how you don't perform as well at home or at your job on less than the optimal amount of sleep your body needs.

Not getting enough sleep speeds up the aging process. When you don't get enough sleep, it can cause anxiety, and depression as well. When you lose sleep, the body experiences a surge of cortisol, which is the stress hormone.

Under normal circumstances, this stress hormone is healthy and enables you to deal with situations, but a steady influx of this hormone actually causes your body to slow down the production of collagen.

Since collagen is necessary for healthy looking skin, your skin will begin to show the effects of this lack of collagen, caused by not getting enough sleep. Your skin begins sagging.

Plus, the extra cortisol causes internal premature aging as well. You'll also develop lines and dark circles under your eyes. Besides the extra cortisol, you'll experience a lack of growth hormone when you lose sleep. You need this growth hormone to keep your bones from becoming weak.

## **#3 - Bad Habits Cause Premature Aging**

Not only can certain bad habits cause problems with the health of your organs and lead to life-threatening conditions, but they can also lead to premature aging. Smoking can cause a host of health problems that can shorten your life.

But it accelerates aging because it triggers the aging process within your body. It kicks enzymes into high gear that work against your appearance and health. That means that you'll develop wrinkles, lines, bags and sagging skin.

The cause behind the sagging skin occurs because smoking works to inhibit the production of collagen - plus, nicotine thins the skin, which impacts how smooth the skin appears to look.

Not only is smoking a habit that can cause premature aging, but so is drinking alcohol. Besides causing liver damage, drinking alcohol speeds up aging. When you drink, the ingredients in alcohol destroys cells that your body normally uses in the detoxification process.

These toxins make your body age faster. Plus, alcohol can cause you to become dehydrated. As if that's not enough, many drinks are packed with sugar, which leads to cell damage.

Drinking also causes changes in how your body is able to handle the blood circulation. This causes your body to age prematurely inside as well as out. One of the outward changes you'll see from this impacted blood flow is the development of spider veins on your legs.

#### **#4 - Stress Causes Premature Aging**

Everyone on the planet is familiar with the effects of stress. There can be small stressors that you have to deal with on a day by day basis. These don't last long and usually don't cause a lot of harm to the body.

But on the other hand, there can be major stressors, which can lead to premature aging. Your body has DNA strands. These strands have ends on them known as telomeres.

These are what protect your DNA strands. It's instrumental in enabling your cells to be able to divide. When cells can no longer divide, they die. In healthy bodies, these telomeres have a longer length.

In unhealthy bodies, the length is short. These telomeres can be shortened by stress, which can lead to premature aging, disease and even death. There are studies that link shortened telomeres to work stress, emotional stress, and chronic anxiety or worry.

If you're under a lot of stress, to prevent premature aging, you'll want to take steps to deal with this and eliminate it from your life as soon as possible. Use some self nurturing and counseling if you have to – whatever works to stave off the aging process.

### **#5 - Low BMI Is Linked to Premature Aging**

With so many articles focused on making sure you have a low BMI to stave off weight-related diseases, it can be easy to think that having a low BMI is a good thing.

That's wrong. The leading cause of a low BMI is not carrying the right amount of weight for your body's frame. While it might be tempting to think that the thinner a person is, the better it will be for their overall health, that's simply not true.

A too-low BMI can lead to premature aging. What you need is a healthy range BMI, not one that's considered too low. When you have a low BMI, it impacts the body's soft tissue by causing a loss of it.

When this happens, your collagen production slows down and you'll develop sagging skin and wrinkles at a younger age than someone would that has a healthy BMI range.

It's not all about appearances, either. A BMI that's considered too low can weaken the immune system as well as cause anemia. It can also lead to low levels of energy.

### **#6 - Your Diet Can Lead to Premature Aging**

You've heard the phrase, "You are what you eat" - but what you might not realize is that what you eat can lead to premature aging. Eating healthy gives you more benefits than simply keeping your weight at a healthy level.

When you eat right, you can stave off premature aging. When you don't, you can hasten the aging process and some foods will bring it on faster than other foods. Whenever your body has an inflammation issue, you don't feel well and you don't look well.

Inflammation impacts the body because it can make you appear to be older than you are. Some types of foods are worse than others. You might have heard that you should keep the sugar-laden foods to a minimum, but there's a good reason for that other than weight gain.

High carbohydrate foods - even foods that aren't considered junk foods - cause a break down in the body's ability to produce collagen. Without the right collagen production, you can see the effects of premature aging on your skin.

But inside the body, your diet can lead to premature aging among your organs. You can develop a fatty liver, which is directly tied to the kinds of foods that you eat.

A diet that's high in carbs and low in protein can lead to premature aging. So can fad diets, crash diets, yo-yo diets and diets that are seemingly healthy, but call for you to extremely limit one of the food groups.

### **#7 - Being a Couch Potato Leads to Premature Aging**

When your lifestyle is mostly sedentary, your risk of premature aging doubles. There's more to exercise than helping to keep your body weight in a healthy range.

There's more to it than making sure that your muscles and bones can remain strong. Exercise can help keep diseases at bay that can be caused by an unhealthy weight or a sedentary lifestyle.

But one of the top reasons that exercise can prevent premature aging is because exercise protects your telomeres. When your telomeres become shortened, it means that your cells can't divide as often as they would normally be able to.

This lack of division causes aging due to the death of the cells. What exercise does is strengthen the telomere, which has a preventative, anti-aging result. When you engage in regular exercise, not only are you helping prevent cell death (which is linked to premature aging), but you're reaping all of the other benefits as well.

You'll be improving your blood circulation and helping prevent the development of certain heart disease and other conditions that are linked to a lack of exercise. Plus, you'll boost your immune system and help stave off inflammations that can cause premature aging.

## **#8 - Depression is Linked to Premature Aging**

There are times that everyone can experience periods of feeling down. But usually, these periods don't last. In someone like that, depression usually doesn't cause premature aging.

However, when you're dealing with chronic bouts of feeling down or have been diagnosed with depression, this is tied to premature aging. Depression can cause the body's cells to age faster, which can then cause inflammation and other health problems.

People who experience depression can develop health issues that you would normally only see in people who were much older. These issues can include cognitive problems, cardiovascular disease, weakened bone strength, tremors and muscle weakness.

Another reason that depression can cause premature aging (besides faster aging cells) is that it can cause the length of the telomeres to shorten. To prevent this, you can engage in actions that boost your telomerase level, which work to protect you from premature aging.

The top three ways to boost this level is through regular exercise, eating a healthy diet and learning how to manage anything that might be causing you a lot of stress that becomes chronic, and turns into a depression situation.

### **#9 - The Sun Causes Premature Aging**

There are lotions and makeup on the market today that claim to give you sun protection. However, many of these products fall far short of protecting your skin from premature aging from sun exposure.

That's because most of these products don't contain enough of the preventative ingredients against damage. Being in the sun can cause sagging skin, fine lines, and wrinkles.

When you're out in the sun, when there's a bright glare, you automatically squint. This produces the wrinkles and lines as well as the sagging around your eyes. If you have to squint outdoors, wear sunglasses - even in the winter - especially if you live in an area that gets snow.

The sun can damage your skin and cause premature aging even in the cold months. The sun causes damage to the collagen and hastens premature aging of the skin.

But it can also cause a breakdown in the cells that lead to the development of skin cancers. Exposure to the sun's rays can give your skin a dry, weathered appearance.

If you've ever noticed people who practice years of tanning, you'll see that their skin tends to make them look a lot older than they really are. This is a direct result of the sun hastening the aging process.

## **#10 - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Premature Aging**

PTSD can be caused by either physical or mental stress. This can develop because of having experienced a physical or emotional trauma personally or having seen a trauma occur.

There are many reasons that PTSD can develop. Events such as being robbed, being physically assaulted, experiencing a car accident or a major event such as fire can cause PTSD.

The underlying cause of PTSD in any event that triggers it is a massive stressor or a series of stress long term. Your brain can only handle so much trauma at once. Your body can experience such an amount of stress at any given time that it can be an overload.

When you have PTSD, you can experience, depression, insomnia, have a higher inflammatory marker and have telomeres with shorter lengths. How long or how short your telomeres are is directly linked to accelerated aging.

Studies done on PTSD and premature aging found that besides shorter telomeres and higher inflammatory markers, that there was also a link between diseases that are normally associated with people who were much older.

These diseases included heart disease, intestinal problems, cognitive ability and even dementia. People who struggle with PTSD were shown to have higher mortality rates due to the premature aging process.

Aging is going to take place for all of us. But there are many things we can do to inhibit the speed at which it occurs. Some of that is physical, such as applying sunscreen – but a lot of it is a mindset and mental fortitude that you also have to work on achieving so that you live a peaceful life and age at a slower pace.



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