

**Living Longer, Looking Younger**  
**What Every Woman Wants to Know**  
(ABC News, August 2002)

Baby Boomers, 76 million strong, are growing older. Every eight seconds, another one turns 50. But not the way their parents did. Today's middle-aged are richer, healthier and more active, and they're not letting time get the better of them - they're Two beautiful women who've aged gracefully before the camera - Lauren Hutton and Cybill Shepherd - have each dealt with age-related career setbacks. Hutton, a top fashion model, watched her career hit a brick wall when she left her 30s. "At 40, they fired me," she said. Shepherd, whose career has spanned from modeling, to film, to television, said she spent most of her 40th birthday weeping. "It was so hard to look in the mirror and see the wrinkles," Shepherd said. fighting back.

Hutton and Shepherd have each triumphed over the "ageism" inherent in their professions. Still, if aging is difficult for models and actresses, it's understandable that the rest of us are working so hard to keep father time's signature off of our faces. For years, women have been struggling to lose those last 10 pounds. Now, we're struggling to lose those last 10 years.

In the past 10 years, the number of people having cosmetic surgery has tripled. In 2001, more than 8.5 million Americans spent more than \$8 billion on some kind of cosmetic procedure, most of them women. More than a million got collagen injections. Nearly 1.5 million underwent chemical peels and more than \$300 million was doled out for the poison that paralyzes frown lines - Botox.

If we weren't injecting our faces, we were slathering on more than \$300 million in anti-aging creams, and consuming more than \$16 billion worth of vitamins and supplements. We also sweat through \$12 billion in health club memberships.

**Facelifts Without Surgery?**

Imagine if you could get the look of having a facelift without going under the knife. And do it yourself at home. Not all that far-fetched, some say, if you consider what's on the horizon.

One non-invasive procedure that's showing promise is called "photomodulation," developed by Dr. David McDaniel, a dermatologist at Eastern Virginia Medical School.

Twice a week, patients sit for a few minutes in front of a panel of lights less powerful than a 25-watt bulb. The panel is filled with thousands of light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, similar to those that illuminate alarm clocks and VCRs. The frequency and duration of the lights used in McDaniel's photomodulation process are thought to activate skin cells.

Since LEDs have been used to heal wounds, McDaniel thought they could also renew skin. The treatment is gentler than lasers, which use white-hot light to regrow collagen by burning the skin first. McDaniel said he wanted to bypass the skin and stimulate the cells directly. "We're actually making the existing skin cells function more like younger cells."

McDaniel's device, which he has a financial interest in, is about to undergo a multi-center clinical trial.

Another popular facial treatment comes in a more conventional form - a cream - but its source is anything but conventional. The cream, called TNS Recovery Complex, is genetically derived from cells extracted from infants' foreskins that are discarded after circumcisions. It's a cocktail of growth factors, collagens and proteins that aging skin cannot produce. A month's supply of the cream, a non-prescription gel sold only at doctors' offices, will set you back \$120.

Dr. Roy Geronemus, who runs a research clinic to study new non-invasive procedures, is one of the investigators in a study in which 200 participants are using the cream. "Growth factors have been used for decades to help healing. You're developing new cells . There appears to be new collagen formed when this cream is applied," Geronemus said.

Trial results of the TNS study are likely to support a preliminary study, which reportedly shows a one-third increase in collagen growth and skin thickness among users of the cream.

A third non-invasive procedure showing promise is Thermalift, which uses radio waves to tighten sagging skin.

In early tests with a prototype machine, a few patients suffered small burns that healed quickly, but that hasn't happened in recent testing. Results vary from patient to patient, but doctors are getting results that seem to hold up for a while - as long as a year-and-a-half.

### **Eating Less and Living Longer**

We know that exercise . a good diet . and a positive attitude about life can make us look and feel better, and help us live longer. In 1776, the average life expectancy in this country was 35. Now, it's 77.

But we still get older and die. Some scientists, however, believe we could live decades longer if we did one thing: eat less - a lot less.

Extensive research with all sorts of animals has shown that significantly reducing the number of calories we eat could lengthen our lives. Caloric restriction, CR for short, involves cutting back our caloric intake by 30 percent. "We have observed that the animals on caloric restriction live longer, and that they develop diseases later, if at all, and that biologically they stay younger longer than the normally fed animals," said Dr. Richard Weindruch of the University of Wisconsin, who has been studying CR since 1975.

Halfway around the world there's strong evidence that cutting back on calories works. People on the Japanese island of Okinawa eat fewer calories than the typical Japanese, and up to 40 percent less than the average American. They have the highest proportion of people over 100 anywhere in the world.

The typical Okinawan diet is low in calories, low in salt and very high in vegetables. It also includes limited amounts of lean meats and some fish, according to Dr. Bradley Willcox, who has been studying Okinawans' diets for more than 25 years.

Most Americans balk at the notion of cutting calories so dramatically to lengthen their lives. Nearly three-quarters of Americans in an ABCNEWS poll say going on a very strict diet - eating one-third fewer calories - in order to live longer isn't worth it.

Knowing how hard it is to cut calories, different groups of scientists are working on drugs that would allow us to eat the same amount of food, while fooling our bodies into thinking we are eating less. The result: we would achieve the same benefits of calorie restriction, without the sacrifice.

### **No Gold Watch at 65**

Experts say it's no longer a question of when we'll start living longer, because so many of us are already doing it. In the next 50 years, they predict there will be more than 8 times as many people over the age of 100 as there are today.

Imagine a world filled with people 120 years old and older, a world where you can't get promoted because your 90-year-old boss is still going strong, and where death do us part could mean being married to the same person for 80 years or more. If science could extend life that long, would you want to live there?

If it were possible to live to 120, 65 percent of Americans responding to our ABCNEWS poll say they wouldn't want to live that long. Among those who would, men outnumber women, 40 percent to 27 percent. And when asked how society would be affected if many more people lived past 100, some 65 percent it would have a negative impact.

If science does succeed in helping us put off death for a few decades, it'll probably put off our retirement age as well. Professor Jay Olshansky of the University of Illinois - Chicago, a noted demographer on aging, says, "people will probably not only want to work, but need to work longer, just to support their own retirement."

But some experts see benefits to an older society. Simon Melov, of the Buck Institute for Age Research, said, "I think society stands to benefit tremendously. We retain the wisdom and the collective experiences of all these individuals who are the baby boomers."