

CHAPTER

1

Introduction

“Man Fools himself. He prays for a long life, and he fears an old age.”

— Chinese proverb

Do you want to live to blow out 100 candles on your birthday cake? Would you like those extra years to be filled with productive activity, enjoyment, and meaning? Would you prefer to stay fit and maintain a radiantly youthful appearance throughout your life? You are not alone and the answer is within easy reach!

The search for eternal youth and good health has preoccupied mankind for centuries. Initially, alchemists and explorers searched for some rejuvenating “power”, be it an elixer or some natural substance. Although modern times have added some degree of scientific knowledge to the search, the “Fountain of Youth” is still a highly sought after prize.

While it is unlikely that a “magic potion” capable of altering the aging process will ever be found, each of us has within our own power the ability to live longer, healthier, more productive and happy lives. Although we cannot change many factors, such as our genetic makeup, we can certainly control many aspects of our lives. Science has shown that modifications in our lifestyle and environment can lead to the maintenance of good health, prevention of disease, and a high quality of life as our bodies undergo the natural aging process.

Aging occurs throughout life with no clear demarcation between periods of youth, maturity, and senescence. While our birth certificates provide a chronological age for comparison, our physiological or biological age more accurately reflects the way our bodies actually function with some dividing this even further to include a separate and measurable functional age. These forms of aging may or may not run in parallel; our genetic make-up and lifelong exposure to a variety of environmental factors, including diet, exercise, lifestyle, among many other variables, will determine just how “successful” one’s individual aging

process will actually be. In brief, we have the ability to lead healthier, more active, and rewarding lives — it is up to each of us to make this a reality.

Unfortunately, as we age, many of us neglect ourselves. We may eat less than an ideal diet gaining weight and increasing our risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and stroke. Even having healthy bones demands proper diet throughout one's life. A sedentary lifestyle will result in reduced tolerance for everyday activities, weight gain, loss of vital muscle mass and bone strength while increasing one's risk of developing certain diseases including heart disease and diabetes. While stressful situations may not easily be avoided, the way we "deal" with life's stressful situations varies greatly from person to person. Numerous stress reduction techniques can be mastered for a healthier and happier life.

The literature is filled with empty promises, testimonials, and at times, unsafe and unproven techniques and diets. Even some nutritional supplements and "natural" products may not be as safe as one might be led to believe. Not everyone will benefit from the same diet, exercise program, or life changing process. Individualization is key if one is to not only achieve success in reaching one's goals, but also maintain these goals throughout life.

A healthier YOU is within easy reach. Your individualized Prescription for a Healthy Life as outlined in this book can easily be achieved. Simply incorporate the information provided in this book into your everyday life; it has been specifically designed to meet your specific needs, desires, and goals. The information provided in this book is based on scientific evidence and many years of experience. *Be Fit for Life* is designed with YOU in mind!