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EDITORIAL OPEN ACCESS

A report on realistic and successful healthy male aging

Ufuk Çakatay

Editorial,

My friend M.E., 85-year-old, has led a long-life illustrative of how rational living modes can delay and effectively prevent the onset of age-related diseases in human beings. He has always been lean (with low body-mass index) even before stomach perforation and the ensuing gastric resection for duodenal ulcers and stomach collapse at age 36, in 1962. This operation subsequently resulted in life-long caloric restriction and a dietary change of eating several small meals instead of the usual three full meals a day.

Although the publication of the antioxidant effects of various natural compounds creates huge public interest, they raise many questions and misconceptions in people's minds about the popular media. Almost no one had had seen or would have the scientific background to read the original articles and dozens of crucially-relevant papers. Claims of benefits of the intake of high doses of vitamins and various antioxidants and their supposed anti-aging and life-prolonging effects are supported by very little scientific evidence [1], although he has used a limited dose of multivitamins for the last ten years or so. In contrast with this, nutritional moderation through caloric restriction has been shown to be an effective anti-aging and longevity-extending approach in rodents and monkeys, with possible application to human beings [2].

On the other hand, he did not develop any degenerative endocrinological diseases, such as diabetes and thyroid disorders. He thus remained as optimistic in life as before the stomach operation. He regularly checks his normal lipid profile and routine biochemistry test parameters including prostate specific antigen in our laboratory as he has done in the last ten years. Perhaps, we should also mentioned that he suffer no cardiovascular disease, though he has senile osteoporosis and benign prostate hypertrophy.

He was born in Antioch, Turkey, on 25th April 1926 and had a highly successful primary and high school education, during studies he achieved a good degree of proficiency in French language. He then went to the United States of America, first to learn the rudiments of English by attending a course for foreign students at American International College in Springfield, Massachusetts, followed by university education at Stanford University in California for electronics and radio engineering, as well as advanced mathematics, in full-year curricula (including every summer) for six years and covering BS, MS, and the doctoral requirements, and the BS degree in mathematics. He also worked for a year in a factory that designed and manufactured electronic equipment before returning to Turkey as one of the first electronics engineers in this country.

As presented in a seminal review in 1997, normal brain aging is not, as previously dogmatically thought, associated with or explained by a decrease in the number of neurons [3]. Many other studies since then have confirmed this fact and few brain regions show significant neuronal losses. Since normal aging is, nevertheless, associated with a small decline in cognitive and memory functions, the substrate for such dysfunctions must become functional, at the level of synaptic activity [4, 5] This explains his lively synaptic activity through advanced age.

As he often relates, he believes that studying and learning sciences was a lifetime necessity rather than ending with school attendance, and maintains the habit of testing his knowledge by taking unrequited tests and entering competitive tests on various occasions along with bonafide young students. Even now at his old age, he enjoys studying mathematics and solving mathematical problems, and maintains a keen interest in intellectual

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activity including the aging and age-related biochemical events affecting the human body, among other subjects.

The other secrets seem to be three-fold: First, elderly people including my friend M.E. eat low-sugar, plant-based diets without processed foods and junk. This dramatically lowers their risk for inflammatory diseases and cancer. Younger generations who are now adopting more western diets are seeing sharp increases in obesity and heart disease. Positive lifestyle habits, such as adopting plant-based diet, caloric restriction, moderate exercise, and intense intellectual activity may reverse and/or delay the aging process.

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Ufuk Çakatay – Substantial contributions to conception and design, Acquisition of data, Analysis and interpretation of data, Drafting the article, Revising it critically for important intellectual content, Final approval of the version to be published

Guarantor

The corresponding author is the guarantor of submission.

Conflict of Interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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