

Secret to living past 90 mostly in good genes

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

Mary Harada's father lived to 102, healthy and sharp to the end. She wouldn't mind living that long, if she could stay as mentally and physically fit as he was. "He died sitting in his chair," says Harada, 80, a retired history professor who lives in West Newbury, Mass. "He was in excellent shape until his heart stopped."

She may, in fact, have a good chance of getting there. Longevity experts believe that extreme old age — 100 or older — runs in families, and often is strikingly apparent in families where there are several siblings or other close relatives who have reached that milestone. (Harada's great-aunt — her father's aunt — also lived an extremely long life, to 104.)

Moreover, researchers are finding that many of those who live to extreme old age remain in remarkably good condition, delaying the onset of such chronic and debilitating age-related illnesses as cancer, heart disease and diabetes until close to the end of their lives, and a certain percentage don't get them at all.

Experts attribute healthy longevity to a combination of good genes and good behaviors. Good behaviors play a greater role than genes in getting you to your mid-to-late 80s — don't smoke or drink alcohol, exercise regularly and eat healthfully — while getting beyond 90, and to 100 or even older, probably depends more heavily on genes, they say.

Read full, original post: [Do you think you'll live to be 100? The answer may be in your genes.](#)