

Lifestyle changes can directly affect rate of aging, authors of 'The Telomere Effect' argue

The main message of “The Telomere Effect,” [authored by Nobel Laureate Elizabeth Blackburn and psychologist Elissa Epel] being published Tuesday, is that you have more control over your own aging than you may imagine. You can actually lengthen your telomeres — and perhaps your life — by following sound health advice...

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Telomeres sit at the end of strands of DNA, like the protective caps on shoelaces. Stress from a rough lifestyle will shorten those caps, making it more likely that cells will stop dividing and essentially die.

Too many of these senescent cells accelerates human aging, the pair say. This doesn't cause any particular disease, but research suggests that it hastens the time when whatever your genes have in store will occur — so if you're vulnerable to heart disease, you're more likely to get it younger if your telomeres are shorter, said Epel.

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Telomere research suggests that extreme exercise isn't necessary to live healthier longer.

Also, Blackburn said, her research suggests that lengthening telomeres with medications could be dangerous — that lifestyle changes are far safer than a pill.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [You may have more control over aging than you think, say 'The Telomere Effect' authors](#)