

Promises and pitfalls of treating aging like a disease

Over the years, the movement to classify aging as a disease has gained momentum not only from longevity enthusiasts but also from scientists. In 1954, Robert M. Perlman published a paper in the Journal of American Geriatrics Society called "[The Aging Syndrome](#)" in which he called aging a "disease complex." Since then, others have jumped on board, including gerontologists frustrated by a [lack of funding](#) to study the aging process itself.

...

However, labeling aging itself as a disease is both misleading and detrimental. Pathologizing a universal process makes it seem toxic. In our youth-obsessed society, ageism already runs rampant in Hollywood, the job market, and even presidential races. And calling aging a disease doesn't address critical questions about why we age in the first place. Instead of calling aging a disease, scientists should aim to identify and treat the underlying processes that cause aging and age-related cellular deterioration.

...

[Gerontologist Jamie Justice] said during the GSA panel that she doesn't think "Is aging a disease?" is the right question. The better question, she said, is "Why do we have to force aging to be a disease in order to get clinicians, regulatory officials, and stakeholders to do something about it?"

[Read the original post](#)