

Nature has given us a blueprint for longevity. We just need to decode it

Our aging process extends for years, during which we experience a slew of age-related disorders. Diabetes. Heart disease. Dementia. Surprisingly, many of these don't ever occur in worms and other animals. Something is obviously amiss.

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The key to human longevity, [[a group of researchers](#) says], lies in the genes of centenarians. These individuals not only live over 100 years, they also rarely suffer from common age-related diseases. That is, they're healthy up to their last minute. If evolution was a scientist, then centenarians, and the rest of us, are two experimental groups in action.

Nature has already given us a genetic blueprint for healthy longevity. We just need to decode it.

“Long-lived individuals, through their very existence, have established the physiological feasibility of living beyond the ninth decade in relatively good health and ending life without a period of protracted illness,” the authors wrote. From this rare but valuable population, we can gain “insight into the physiology of healthy aging and the development of new therapies to extend the human [healthspan](#).”

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Guided by centenarian genes and validated by animal models of aging, we can design powerful drugs that sever the connection between the genes and proteins that drive aging and its associated diseases. Metformin is an experimental pill that came out of aging studies in nematode worms—imagine what studies in human centenarians will yield.

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