

Insight into the Determinants of Exceptional Aging and Longevity (IDEAL) Study

What happens as we age: Researching the science of healthy aging

IDEAL is a special project sponsored by the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging (BLSA), the premier study in the United States on human aging and age-related conditions. For over 50 years, BLSA researchers have studied changes that take place in the human body as we age in an attempt to differentiate normal aging from disease-related processes.

By launching IDEAL, investigators will expand the scope of the BLSA focusing on a small but growing segment of the aging population -- "exceptional agers". Exceptional agers are individuals aged 80 years and older who are still healthy and fully functioning. Understanding the characteristics and circumstances that have allowed these special individuals to age successfully may provide important clues on how to preserve physical and cognitive function in late life and prevent the disease and disability that burden most aged individuals.

Exceptional agers: individuals aged 80 years and older who are still healthy and fully functioning.

The IDEAL study plans to recruit 500 individuals aged 80 years and older who are exceptionally well-aged. These individuals will be evaluated through annual clinic visits to track the aging process in multiple systems and identify genetic, biologic and behavioral characteristics that support healthy aging.

Screening Criteria (sidebar/text box/separate panel)

IDEAL participants are 80 years of age or older with:

- No established genetic diseases
- No difficulties or need for help in performing self-care or normal activities of daily living
- The ability to walk 400 meters (approximately a quarter mile) and no shortness of breath while performing normal activities of daily living, such as walking or climbing a flight of stairs
- No medical conditions, including a history of:
 - cardiovascular disease
 - diabetes
 - active cancer
 - metabolic disease
 - severe hormonal dysfunction
 - neurological or brain diseases
 - kidney or liver diseases
 - severe gastrointestinal or stomach diseases
 - musculoskeletal disorders
 - severe mental conditions

11/10/10

- any medical condition that requires absolute need for long term treatment with antibiotics, antiviral, corticosteroids, immunosuppressant, H2 blockers and pain medications
- significant vision and hearing problems
- any condition that prevents participants from being tested with standard psychological tests or providing approval to undergo specific medical tests

➤ No cognitive or thought process issues based on standard psychological testing

Know an exceptional ager? Participants must be 80 years or older and meet the stated eligibility criteria (see above/pg. #) to be considered for participation. Interested participants can call XXX to begin the screening process.

To learn more about IDEAL and how you or your organization can be involved contact XXX at 1-800.....

“Nothing can be so rewarding in life than contributing to scientific discoveries that can help men and women live a better and healthier life. If you are fortunate to be an exceptional ager, help us understand what is special about you so that we can learn how to reduce the burden and suffering of others.”

-- Luigi Ferrucci, M.D., Ph.D., Senior Investigator