

**MICHAEL BREUS****Psychologist, sleep doctor, Atlanta**

Michael Breus says that as many as 73 per cent of people report that they're unable to get a good night's sleep. How you feel during the day, he claims, is an indication of how well you slept the night before. Insufficient or low-quality sleep has an impact on all aspects of our lives, affecting our creativity and productivity at work, causing memory loss, even affecting our relationships (think snoring partner). Breus suggests a number of common sense ways we can get quality shut-eye: cut out caffeine, drink in moderation, relax at bedtime, get regular exercise, don't overeat before bed and, above all, avoid stress.

**VALERIE RAMSEY Model and ELAINE DEMBE Chiropractor and motivational speaker**

"Life is an adventure," says speaker Valerie Ramsey. That's certainly true of Ramsey and Elaine Dembe, two speakers who easily put to rest any stereotypes society has about aging. Ramsey, a tall elegant 65-year-old Californian, is a mother of six, grandmother of eight, a busy PR executive and, oh yeah, a very in-demand model. Dembe, a Toronto-based chiropractor who was there to promote her philosophy of "conscious aging," is stronger, leaner and healthier at 60 than most people half her age. Both women shared their secrets of

later-in-life beauty and fitness. The goal is to eliminate negative forces in life and only concentrate on the positives. "Visualize your future," says Ramsey. "Believe what you want next is already yours." And Dembe feels we shouldn't stress about aging. "Growing old doesn't bother me," she says. "I simply put the emphasis on growing."

**DR. IKE AHMED****Glaucoma, cataract and anterior segment surgeon, practising in Toronto**

"The eye," says Dr. Ike Ahmed, "is the body's black box." That's due to the fact that many health problems can be diagnosed by taking a deep look into our eyes. And since the eyes are so important, it's crucial they remain healthy. Ahmed spoke on advances in vision care, particularly cataract surgery and glaucoma, and had the audience squirming with a graphic video presentation showing a cataract removal procedure. He believes that new surgical techniques and high-quality lens implants mean we can look forward to a future of "youthful vision for our aging eyes."

**DR. RICHARD SATAVA Professor of surgery, University of Washington Medical Center**

As a former battlefield doctor, Dr. Rick Satava searches for innovative ways to use new technology to advance health care. An example of this is a robot that can be operated remotely by a surgeon or used

to practise surgical techniques. Satava showed how existing equipment could rescue soldiers, scan their bodies, scan dog tags, operate on the wounded in the field without humans on site and then evacuate the stabilized soldiers in unmanned helicopters. Satava showed a video of experimental technology: a minimally invasive appendectomy performed through the mouth; another demonstrating how researchers could remotely send cockroaches to find victims of earthquakes and other disasters.

**DR. MARK LIPONIS****Corporate medical director, Canyon Ranch health spas**

According to this American physician, aging is caused by an overactive immune system. Our bodies are composed of roughly 50 billion white blood cells, which are equipped to destroy disease-causing bacteria and viruses. But if these blood cells become too active, they can begin attacking healthy parts of the body. Liponis claims that over-stimulated white blood cells may attack the lining of arteries (causing heart disease) or attack brain neurons (causing Alzheimer's). He suggests that a C-reactive protein (CRP) blood test acts as a barometer of how active our immune system is. A high CRP reading can be a marker of the development of disease, such as high blood pressure, macular degeneration, type 2 diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and certain cancers. Liponis explained that by improving the way we breathe, eat, exercise, sleep and

respond to stress can lead to a healthy immune system.

**DR. COLIN POWELL****Geriatrician and professor of medicine, University of Calgary**

Dr. Colin Powell says his frail older patients are among the 10 per cent of those over 65 who are "at the tough end of aging." Unfortunately, they're being treated in a health-care system where ageism is pervasive. Powell believes that stronger communication between health-care professionals and older patients will overcome ageism and lead to better outcomes. Patients need to ask about their health, what they need to do and why. And family members should be involved. Powell quoted a recent survey that found patients wanted four things from their doctor: respect me; talk with me; involve me; don't confuse me.

**DR. AKBAR PANJU****Chief of medicine at Hamilton Health Sciences family of hospitals**

Dr. Akbar Panju admitted that he'd been obese and had had two significant heart "episodes." He gave a common sense blueprint for longevity, which includes: eat fruits and vegetables; be active; don't smoke; don't misuse alcohol; don't gain too much weight; look after the whole body; avoid psychological stress. He also suggests you exercise for 40 minutes three times a week, avoid abdominal obesity and reduce sodium in your diet. **Z**