



How our BODIES AGE

Time is the body's mortal enemy. After the age of 30, wear and tear is part and parcel of growing older. MIND YOUR BODY shows you when and how your body ages

BRAIN

When: Either from the age of 27 or once you hit your 60s, depending on which medical reports you subscribe to.

Why: The brain loses neurons and the connections between the neurons as it ages, resulting in slower and lower brain function.

EYES

When: 40 and above

Why: The eye becomes unable to focus on near objects. The lens hardens as you age, eventually forming a cataract. Other common conditions affecting older people are diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration and glaucoma.

EARS

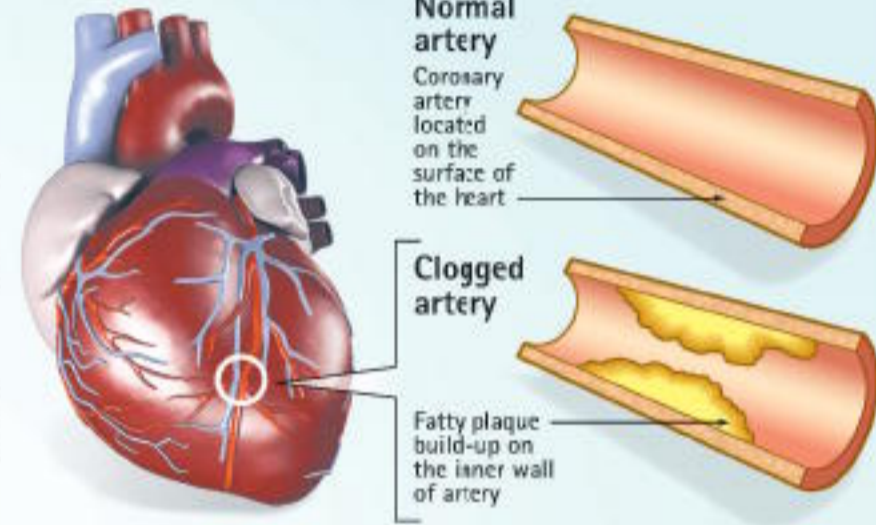
When: 20 and above

Why: Hair cells in the inner ear, which help you to perceive sounds, degenerate with accumulated noise exposure and time, resulting in hearing loss. Say that again?

HEART

When: 50 and above

Why: Heart muscles become thicker, stiffer and less efficient in pumping blood. The heartbeat can become irregular or slower. Heart arteries are also narrowed by plaque, leading to high blood pressure and even heart attacks.



KIDNEYS

When: 40 and above

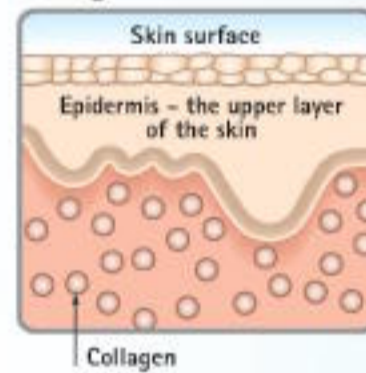
Why: Your kidney function is estimated to decline 1 per cent every year after the age of 40. As you age, scarring of the kidney's filtering units and various tiny tubes known as tubules occurs, resulting in kidney damage.

SKIN

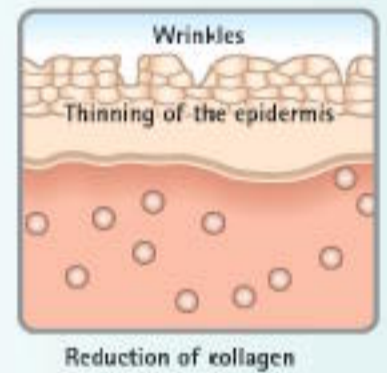
When: 30 and above

Why: As you age, your skin loses collagen and elastin – components essential for taut, bouncy skin. This, coupled with loss of fat in the skin, results in it becoming saggy, wrinkly and thinner.

Young skin



Old skin

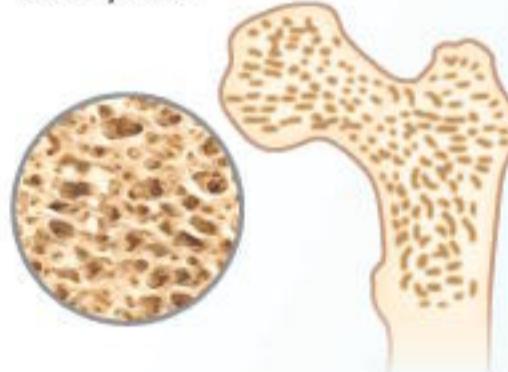


BONES

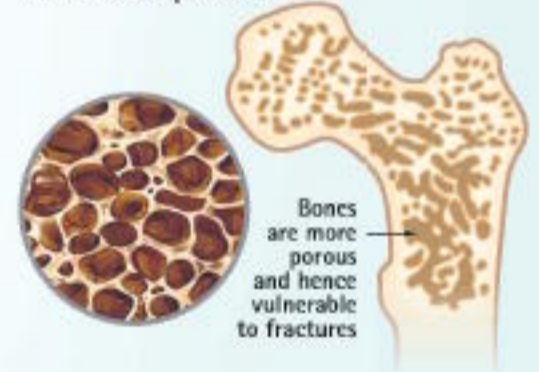
When: 30 and above

Why: It is all downhill after you hit peak bone mass at age 30. Bone mass is lost as you age, especially in women after menopause. The loss of calcium and other minerals makes bones thinner and more prone to breakage. There is height loss too.

Healthy bone



With osteoporosis

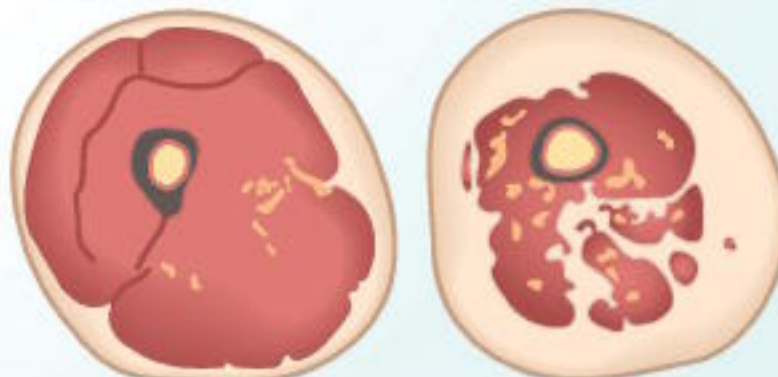


MUSCLES AND JOINTS

Thigh muscle cross-section

From a 20-year-old

From a 60-year-old



When: Early 30s and above

Why: Muscles shrink and lose mass, tendons become less elastic and joints get stiffer with age. Flexibility and strength are greatly reduced by the time you hit 70.

Knee

Healthy knee joint



Osteoarthritic knee joint

Collagen tissue in tendons and joint capsules becomes stiffer, reducing the joint's range of motion and flexibility. Joint cartilage also becomes thinner and produces less lubricating fluid. The cartilage layer may break down, resulting in degenerative arthritis. The joint surfaces cannot move over each other easily, leading to pain and stiffness.