

Celebrating the vitality in all of us

# spry

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spryliving.com

## Live Younger Longer!

**Top tips** for a **healthy**  
body, mind and spirit  
**AT ANY AGE**

### Mother of Reinvention

Valerie Ramsey launched her modeling career at age 63; wrote a book at 68. And she's just getting started. **Pg. 4**



# What's Next?

**A mother of six and grandmother of eight, author and model Valerie Ramsey is always looking ahead.**  
By Laurie Herr

**ON THE FIRST DAY OF WORK** at her dream job, Valerie Ramsey broke her foot. The second day, she learned she had uterine cancer. The third day, her doctor discovered a dangerous heart abnormality that required surgery.

Not an auspicious start for her first week as a public relations honcho at the famed Pebble Beach Resorts in Carmel, Calif. But Valerie, then 58, didn't let the grim medical news stop her. "At first I thought, I'm down three for three—should I just retire and be a nanny to my grandkids?" she recalls. "But then I thought, no! I've worked too hard for this."

Such a take-that attitude is typical for Valerie, a mother of six who didn't even fill out a job application until her early 50s. After her kids were grown Valerie wanted her own career, so she took a job as a sales clerk in the resort's golf shop. She worked her way up, learning "by osmosis" until she became public relations manager. She beat the uterine cancer (the same disease that killed both her mother and grandmother) and now lives with a heart defibrillator in her chest. "If you looked at me naked, you wouldn't know it was there," she jokes.

Valerie's success story could end there—but it doesn't. A film producer spotted her on the golf greens and, struck by her natural good looks, encouraged her to try modeling. "It sounded fun, so I thought, why not?" Valerie says. A San Francisco agency signed her up, and at 63 she launched yet another career. Now, Valerie does runway shows and has appeared in ads for Lexus and other companies.

After receiving countless emails from women inspired by her story, Valerie and her daughter, writer Heather Hummel, decided to co-author a book. *Gracefully: Looking and Being Your Best at Any Age* shares the wisdom Valerie's learned over the years (see her tips, below). To Valerie, it's all about staying healthy, and constantly looking ahead. "It's not about physical beauty," she says. "Aging gracefully means continually living a rich and ful-



**AUTHOR, AUTHOR:** Valerie and daughter/co-author Heather Hummel.

DEIDRE FULLER

**Name:** Valerie Ramsey, 69

**Profession:** Model, author, public speaker

**Passions:** Raising awareness about heart disease, spending time with her grandchildren, inspiring others

**What spry means:** Constantly creating the next step—and the next—in your life

filling life. We're never too old to chase our dreams."

Does Heather take after her mom? In some ways, says the 43-year-old, who falls somewhere in the middle of the clan of six. "I've learned to take hold of opportunities, to think about what's next," Heather says.

There's that catchphrase again—what's next. It's a question Valerie lives by. "If you open yourself up to the world and to people and possibilities," she says, "it's amazing what can fall into your lap—and what you can do for others." ●

## VALERIE'S TIPS for Aging Gracefully

\* **LOVE YOURSELF** enough to take care of yourself. This means making time for exercise. Walking, yoga, Pilates and weight training are all excellent.

\* **GET HEALTHY ON THE INSIDE.** That's the only way to look healthy on the outside. Eating right and getting good sleep are key.

\* **EAT PLENTY OF FRESH** fruits and vegetables, as well as foods rich in omega-3s such as salmon, flaxseed and walnuts (see Spry Kitchen on page 14 for more on foods and healthy aging).

\* **BANISH NEGATIVE THOUGHTS.** Valerie recommends meditation to reduce stress.

\* **FOLLOW A GOOD SKINCARE ROUTINE.** Valerie exfoliates two or three times a week to maintain a healthy glow.

\* **CULTIVATE CURIOSITY.** Aging well has as much to do with your spirit and your mind as it does with your body.

\* **CHOOSE A GOOD CUT AND COLOR.** The right hairstyle can take years off your looks.

\* **DRESS RIGHT** for your body type and age. Use a tailor to get the proper fit.

\* **KEEP MOVING FORWARD.** Find your "what's next?" and pursue it.

# Stealthy Sugar

DAVE DAMIER



## TALK ABOUT A SUGAR RUSH.

The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that each American consumes an average of 156 pounds

of sugar per year—that's more than 3 pounds per week. And at 16 calories per teaspoon, it won't take long to see the results on your waistline. It's a no-brainer that candy and soda are sugar-heavy, but it's also hidden in foods you may not expect. *Registered dietitian Lanah J. Brennan, helps us ID some of the sneakiest culprits.*

### “HEALTHY” BREAKFAST CEREAL:

Sugar-coating isn't just rampant in kids' cereals—even some “adult” versions are loaded with sugar. Don't be fooled by healthy declarations on the front of the box. Instead, flip it over and look for less than 6g sugar per serving.

### JAMS, JELLIES AND PRESERVES:

Some jams and jellies pack more than a tablespoon of sugar into each serving. Look for 100 percent fruit spread—we promise you won't miss the added sweet stuff.

### LOW-FAT PEANUT BUTTER:

You may save a few grams of fat, but one popular brand's lowfat version has the same number of calories and double the sugar compared to the original version. Opt for natural peanut butter instead. ●



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