

# Lifespan Psychology

Chapter 13: Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Adulthood

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## Chapter Overview

- Transition into adulthood
- Physical development
- Lifestyle choices and health
  
- Cognitive development (Perry/Belenky)
- Patterns of work

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## Initiation rites

- **The transition to adulthood in the United States**
  - In the rural past
  - In modern society
- **Initiation activities in the United States**
  - Religious
  - Physical
  - Social
  - Educational
  - Economic

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## Physical development

- Peak is reached
- Growth in height and weight
- Strength
- Age related changes
- Effects of lifestyle

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## Growth in height and weight

- Adults are getting taller, heavier and maturing earlier (secular trend)
- Maximum bone mass by age 30
  - Aided by good nutrition and exercise during development
- Need to adjust diet after high activity level of adolescence
- Body fat increase during 20's
  - 21% for men, 39% for women

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## Strength



- Muscular system gains strength throughout 20's and peaks in early 30's
- Prime time for playing strenuous sports
- Organ reserve
  - Total capacity of our organs that we do not need to use
  - Extra capacity each body has for responding to particularly intense or prolonged effort

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## Age related changes

- Early signs
  - Wrinkles (changes in skin's elasticity)
  - Gray hairs (reduction in # of pigment producing cells)
- Occur in all systems
  - Cardiovascular
  - Respiratory
  - Sensory
- Changes are minimal, actually age when physical functioning is most stable

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## Effect of lifestyle on health

- Choices of foods
  - Link between heart disease and cholesterol
  - Link between diet and certain types of cancer
  - Obesity
- Exercise
- Use of alcohol
  - Prevalence
  - Health problems associated with alcoholism
  - Unsafe sex



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## Effect of lifestyle on health (cont.)

- Use of tobacco
  - Prevalence
  - Health problems associated with tobacco use
  - Reasons for smoking



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## Cognitive Development

- Intellectual/Ethical Development
  - Dualism
  - Relativism
  - Commitment
- “Women’s Way of Knowing”
  - Silence
  - Received knowledge
  - Subjective knowledge
  - Procedural knowledge
  - Constructed knowledge

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## Patterns of Work

- The Phenomenon of the Dual-Career Family
  - Men helping out more at home
  - Paternal child care
  - Home-based work
- Majority of burden still generally falls on women

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