



**2013 Get Old Survey**  
Research Findings Fact Sheet  
*Embargoed for release until June 5, 2013*

## **Research Background and Goals**

Today, Americans are living longer and aspire to live better than ever before. While this is great news, we know getting older isn't always easy.

To uncover attitudes and perceptions around age and aging, and better understand how people want to get old, Pfizer and Generations United fielded the recent 2013 Get Old Survey.

Get Old is an effort by Pfizer to support a candid conversation around aging and living better. We want to challenge people of all ages to rethink what it means to Get Old in order to discover a better quality of life at every age.

The survey found that while people expect to live longer than ever, all ages and generations are concerned about their ability to get old the way they want to, and many believe their communities are not prepared to manage an aging population.

Less than half of Americans surveyed feel very comfortable about getting older (48 percent), and only 49 percent feel very comfortable about their future; 40 percent feel being old is something to fear citing concerns of potential health problems and financial burdens.

A turning point is at mid-life – around age 40 -- when physical health becomes more important than independence, wisdom and wealth. However, people at all ages do not feel proud of their current physical health, suggesting they know they could and should do more to improve it.

A large majority (78%) of those surveyed believe that people who work past retirement age stay healthier longer and are happier, but almost 50 percent felt their city was ill-prepared to offer job opportunities to an aging workforce.

Getting old the way we want to starts with embracing who we are today. That's why Pfizer is encouraging people to claim their age now, and share how they want to Get Old.

## **Key Findings**

People are comfortable telling their age, but all ages and generations are concerned about their ability to get old the way they want to

- The majority of respondents (75 percent) indicated that they are very comfortable with their current age or (81 percent) telling people their real age - even more so than talking about sex (43 percent) or politics (40 percent).
- But all respondents, regardless of age, expressed concern about aging; less than half indicate they are 'very comfortable' with 'getting older' (48 percent) and with 'their future' (49 percent).
- 40 percent agree that being old is something to fear, since it can bring health concerns and financial burdens.



### As we age, our priorities for what is most important shift

- At Age 22: independence, physical beauty and wealth are most important
- At Age 40: physical health and wisdom are most important
- At Age 65: physical health and living a long life are most important
- If they had the ability, more than half (51 percent) of all respondents said they would go back in time to be a younger age.

### Communities equipped to support aging populations are essential to aging well, yet many are unsure about our preparedness

- Nationally and across generations, less than 30 percent feel their community is 'very prepared' to support the aging population among multiple facets of their community.
- Overall, we see a low percentage for those who feel their communities are very prepared when it came to healthcare facilities (20 percent), home care giving (17 percent), transportation (16 percent), housing (16 percent) and employment for older people (5 percent).
- Additionally, nearly half (47 percent) feel their community is 'not prepared at all' to support employment options for older people.

### All generations are concerned with how aging will impact them in the workplace

- More than half (57 percent) of all respondents felt that their workplace values age diversity, yet when compared to other generations, Millennials were more likely to say their work environment favors older workers, while the Greatest Generation were more likely to say their work environment favors the young.
- The greatest fear among workers (61 percent) is not being able to find a new job should they lose their current one.
- 57 percent also note that not being able to retire when they want to is a major concern.

### Significant differences existed in generational perspectives in how older/younger people are perceived and valued in the workforce

- According to 50 percent of Millennials vs. 70 percent of Gen X'ers, being tech savvy is the reason younger workers are favored.
- Boomers significantly feel that experience (81 percent) and leadership (48 percent) are the factors why older workers are favored.
- Nationally, respondents agree that a strong work ethic (98 percent), creativity (88 percent) and leadership (86 percent) are the most important traits that equate to workplace success - however there are mixed emotions when it comes to the trait "Being young with a fresh perspective" (nationally 57 percent felt this is important). Gen X'er's find it significantly less important than all other generations (49 percent) – potentially another proof point to the pressure they may feel in competing with Millennials for a place in the workplace.

### Aging and Technology

- While there is broad agreement across generations that technology allows you to stay connected with the people in your life, a large percentage (71%) of Millennials and Gen X'ers (74%) believe that technology has made personal connections more superficial.
- One-third of Generation X-ers and over one-third of Millennials (39%) surveyed agree that technology has made them feel isolated.



### **End of Life and Aging Parents**

- A majority, or 77%, believes the most important personal issue was getting their financial arrangements in order as they age.
- But 39% felt uncomfortable confronting their aging parents by asking them to stop driving when are no longer able to do so.

Join the conversation at [www.GetOld.com](http://www.GetOld.com) to share and view stories, photos and videos about how people around the world want to Get Old. You can also join the Get Old Facebook community at [www.facebook.com/GetOld](http://www.facebook.com/GetOld) or participate via Twitter at [www.twitter.com/GetOld](http://www.twitter.com/GetOld).

*About the survey:* One thousand Americans ages 18+ participated in 20 minute telephone interviews March 25 - April 12, 2013. This is a representative sample based on national statistics for age, gender and region. Data has been weighted to reflect U.S. national census data based on these demographics. The survey was conducted by Harris Interactive.