

Man, 109, Who Still Drives His Car Every Day Has Simple Tips For Long Life

At 109 years old, Vincent Dransfield still zips around town in his car every day, buying lunch, running errands and shopping for groceries. He lives independently in his own house in Little Falls, New Jersey, where he has resided since 1945. The centenarian requires no help navigating between the home's main floor, his bedroom upstairs and the basement where he does his laundry, his family says.



Vincent Dransfield, 109, says he still drives his Hyundai every day. (Courtesy Erica Lista)

Dransfield was funny and flirtatious when a reporter called and asked how he feels at 109.

"How do I feel? Let's go out to a dance somewhere. How about that? That's how I feel," Dransfield tells TODAY.com

"I've been very, very, very lucky in my lifetime. I feel perfect."

"He doesn't get back aches. He doesn't get the daily aches and pains that I, at 48, get. He doesn't get headaches, anything like that. It's crazy," says Erica Lista, Dransfield's granddaughter.

"I'm an occupational therapist, so I know a lot about activities of daily living, and

he requires help with none of it."

People who live 100 years or longer aren't rare anymore, but it's uncommon for men to live that long. Among centenarians, 85% are women and 15% are men, according to the New England Centenarian Study based at Boston University. The reasons are unclear.

Born on March 28, 1914, Dransfield not only enjoys incredible longevity, but *healthy* longevity, with a fit mind and body. He says he has never had major diseases, like cancer or heart disease. Dransfield has just always been healthy, Lista adds. He has one child, three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. His wife of 54 years died in 1992. Many of his family members recently gathered at his home to celebrate his 109th birthday with pizza and carrot cake, his favorite.



Dransfield turned 109 in March. (Courtesy Erica Lista)

Here is what to know about the centenarian and his advice for living a long life:

Spend time doing what you love

Dransfield spent more than 80 years serving as a member of the local volunteer fire department and was the chief for a period of time. When asked what brought him happiness and kept him going in life, he quickly answers: *"The fire department. ... I met so many friends."* Lista says her grandfather continued to be a regular at the fire house as he got older and was part of the "3 to 5 club."

"After my grandmother passed away, that's really what kept him going. Every day, he would go to the fire house from 3 to 5, and all the old guys would sit there and hang out. That was like his family," she notes.

As for Dransfield's professional life, he worked for 60 years — most of that as an auto parts manager — before retiring in his late 70s: *"I still wanted to work, but my wife said, it's time for you to quit,"* he recalls.

Milk does a body good

Dransfield left school after 8th grade and went to work for a dairy farm at 15 to help support his family. He delivered milk for five years and drank as much of it as he wanted, which he attributes to giving him a healthy boost — especially during the Great Depression in the 1930s. *"I was drinking milk and eating well because I worked on a farm. And I often go back and think they gave me a good start in life and for my bones in my*

body,” Dransfield says. Milk still plays a role in his life: The centenarian credits drinking Ovaltine — a milk flavoring and nutrition supplement — every day after breakfast for his longevity. He’s been so outspoken about it that when he when he turned 100, everyone drank Ovaltine at his birthday party, Lista says.

Stay active

Dransfield didn’t lift weights or exercise in a gym, but he kept moving throughout his life.

“I was 21 years old when I joined the fire department and that’s the exercise I got every day — answered the fire alarms in Little Falls,” he says. “I was active and ran out when the alarm went off for 40 years. Then for the next 40 years, (I continued) when I felt like it.” Structured exercise amuses him. *“He laughs at people who jog. He’s like, ‘Where are they running to?’”* his granddaughter says.

Enjoy what you eat

The centenarian likes Italian food, hamburgers, salad, milk chocolate and other sweets. He drinks a cup of coffee every day and occasionally drinks beer, but doesn’t enjoy other forms of alcohol. *“What’s crazy is he was not careful about his diet,”* Lista says. *“He has eaten whatever he wants. He has never watched his weight. He’s never had to lose weight. He’s always been fit.”*

At 109, Dransfield still cooks for himself, though that usually means heating up soup on the stove or



microwaving prepared meals, Lista notes. He likes to buy meals from a restaurant down the road from his house.

Dransfield relaxes at home. He lives independently and does everything around the house on his own. (Courtesy Erica Lista)
Dransfield has lived in the same house since 1945. (Courtesy Erica Lista)

It’s never too late to fix a bad habit

Dransfield started smoking when he was 50 after a fellow firefighter offered him a cigarette and he liked it. But about 20 years later, he quit. *“He told me one day that he was going to just stop smoking,”* Lista recalls. *“He threw the cigarettes out and that was it. He just never smoked again.”*

Stay positive

Dransfield considers himself an optimist. He also has a great sense of humor and likes knowing everybody’s name in town, his granddaughter says. *“He always had such a positive upbeat attitude, even when my grandmother passed away. He lived for her, but he was determined to keep on living,”* Lista notes. *“I keep positive. I never think any other way when something’s wrong,”* Dransfield says, *“I’m doing fine and I hope the good Lord keeps me that way.”*