

The oldest-old Americans — a growing group

Is 90 the new 85? In 1980, there were 720,000 people aged 90 and older in the United States. In 2010, there were 1.9 million people aged 90 and older. By 2050, the ranks of people 90 and older may reach 9 million, according to a report from the U.S. Census Bureau, commissioned by the National Institute on Aging.

An average person who has lived to 90 years of age has a life expectancy today of 4.6 more years (versus 3.2 years in 1929–1931), while those who pass the century mark are projected to live another 2.3 years.

The majority of those 90 years and older reported having one or more limitations in physical function. Two-thirds had difficulty with activities such as walking or climbing stairs.

Women aged 90 years and older outnumber men nearly 3 to 1.

What does this mean for you? Will Grandma find a place to live with you? Will you even want to retire early if you're healthy and intending to live another third of your life? Have you saved for retirement and beyond? What can you do now to keep from having disabilities when you are older?

