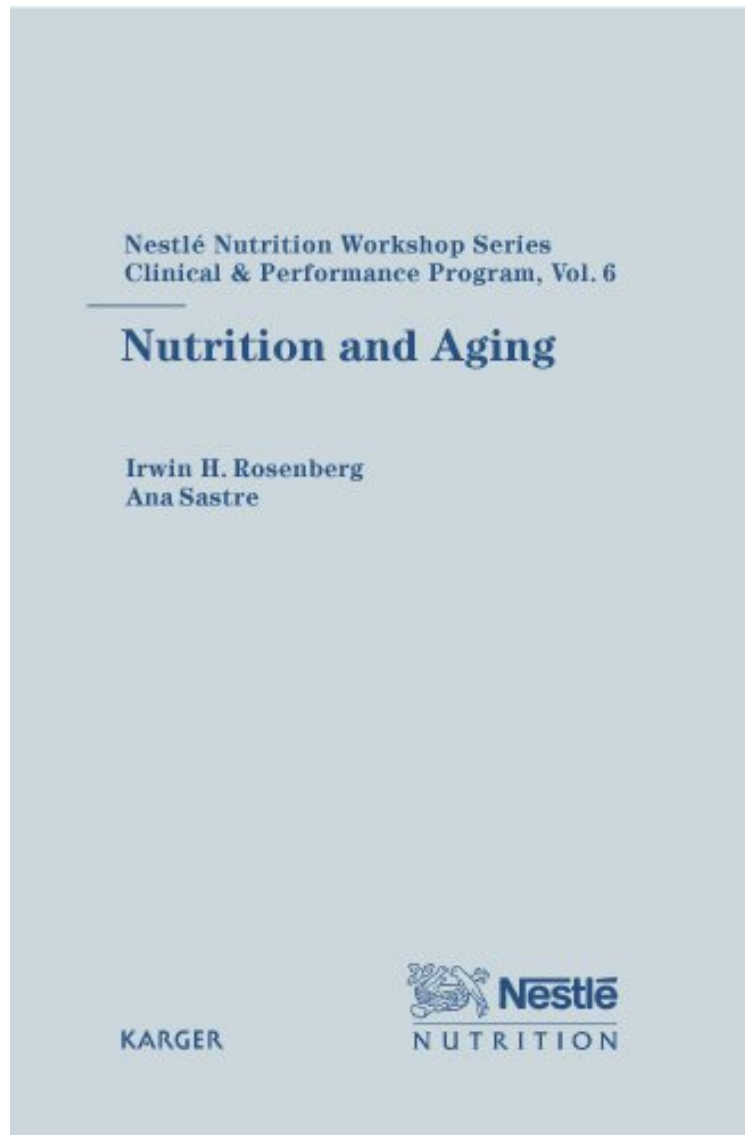


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Humanity is aging. In the last century, life expectancy has increased by as much as 25 years, the greatest increase in 5000 years of history. As a consequence the elderly constitute today the fastest growing segment of the world's population. This new situation creates many social problems and challenges to health care which both the developed as well as the developing countries will have to cope with. The present publication shows that scientific progress has reached a level where nutritional interventions may play a decisive part in the prevention of degenerative conditions of age, improvement of quality of life and impact on health care burden and resources. Topics deal with such different aspects as the influence of prenatal and early infant nutrition on the future aged individual and effects of energetic restriction on longevity. Further contributions include studies on mitochondrial alterations, digestive problems, specific metabolic deviations mediated by insulin, bone degradation, structural changes, neuromuscular dysfunctions, mental state of the elderly as well as the response of the immune system to nutrient intake. Finally the book offers a review of requirements appropriate to meet the age-related public health challenges of the 21st century. Nutritionists, endocrinologists, nurses and general health professionals concerned with aging processes, geriatric patients and / or public health will find this book a useful source of essential knowledge.