HOW THE BODY AGES
A Guide To Physical Deterioration

Thinning hair: One of the body's first warnings that the party's over. Time to dig out those old Yankee caps.

Body hair: The greying of hair, flappers from your head magically takes root in the ears, breasts, and even on the shoulders.

The "Paunch": Once you hit the big 30, your body begins to redistribute fat from under the skin to the abdomen. Every slice of pizza you eat is now "sitting over your belt.

Sex Organs: Although fertility throughout life, older men take up to three times longer to get an erection than their younger counterparts—and produce only half as much semen.

Knees: Time to pay the piper for years of pick-up basketball games. The once spunky cartilage protecting the knee joints is now flabby and tattered.

Brain: Scores of brain cells are lost or damaged over the years. The brain adapts by increasing the number of connections, or synapses, which carry messages between brain cells.

Teeth: Start making cavities. Three of four adults over 35 get gum disease. Forty percent of Americans over 65 are totally toothless.

Lungs: Breathe deeply. Between the ages of 20 and 70, maximum lung capacity can shrink by almost 40 percent.

Lifespan: Peace at last. Women live an average of seven years longer than men.

Bosom: The fight against gravity becomes a losing battle as breasts begin their downward droop into pancake oblivion.

Menopause: Say hello to hot flashes, insomnia, and mood swings—all telltale signs of reduced estrogen levels. The good news: Sex gets better thanks to increased levels of hormones secreted by the adrenal glands.

Varicose veins: One in five women suffer from the spider-web woes. The human equivalent of a clogged fuel line, varicose veins begin to swell into unsightly lumps when valves fail, causing blood to pool and exert pressure on vein walls.

Muscles: Time to flex. Muscle mass declines by as much as 23 percent between ages of 30 and 70—though exercise can prevent this loss.

Skel: Supporting cells that attach the inner and outer layers of skin begin to break down. Telltale signs: wrinkles and baggy knees.