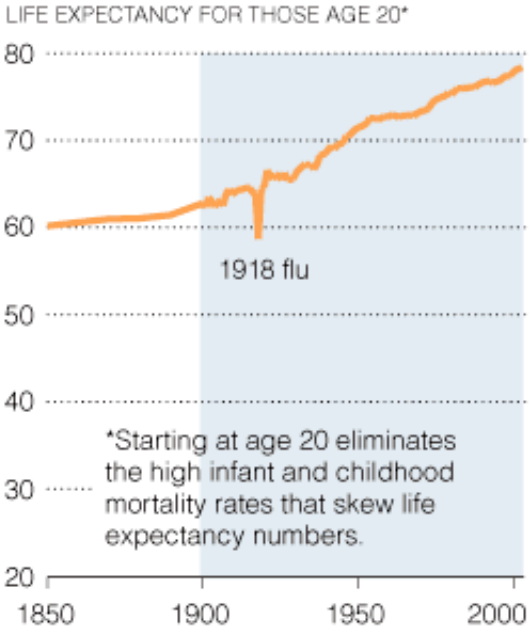
The New York Times July 30, 2006

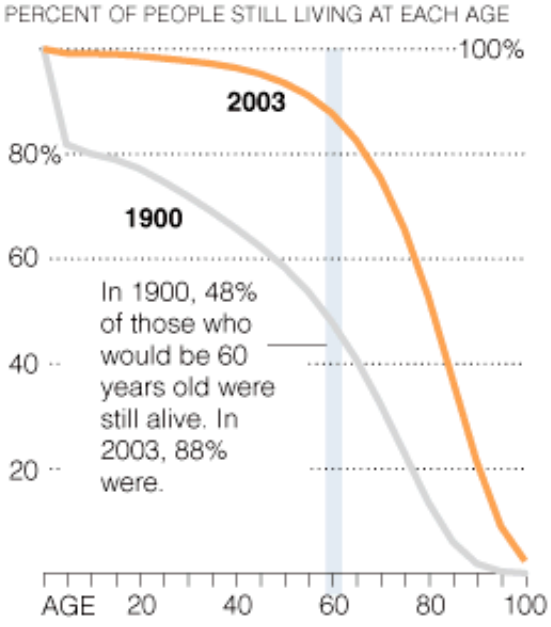
Longer Lives, Larger Bodies

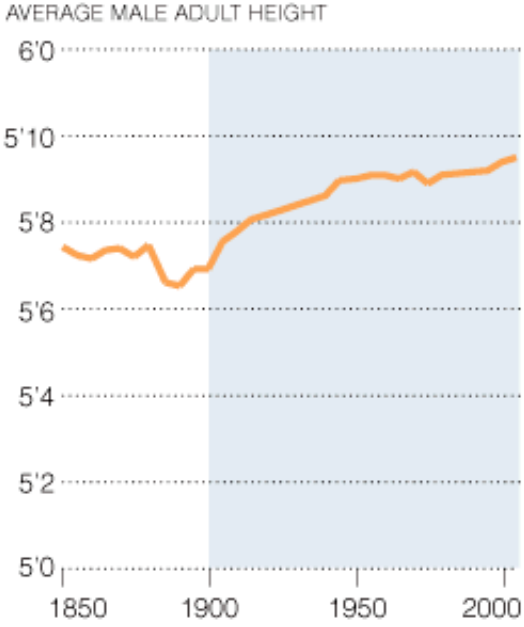
In little more than a century, Americans have undergone remarkable growth in longevity and form.

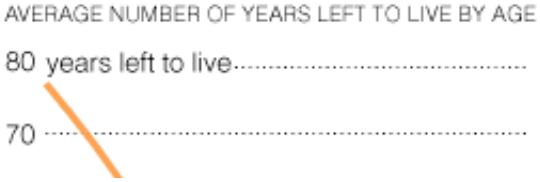
People Today Live Longer

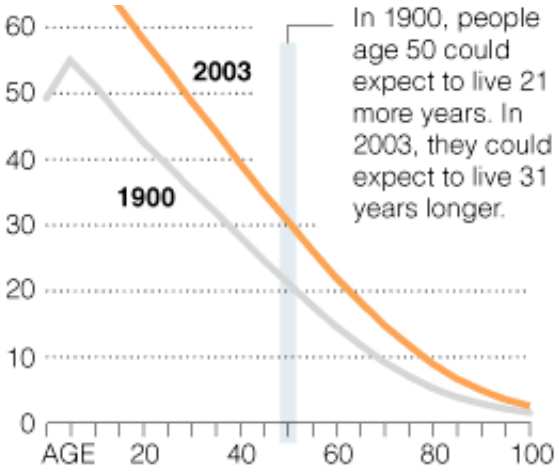


And They Look Different

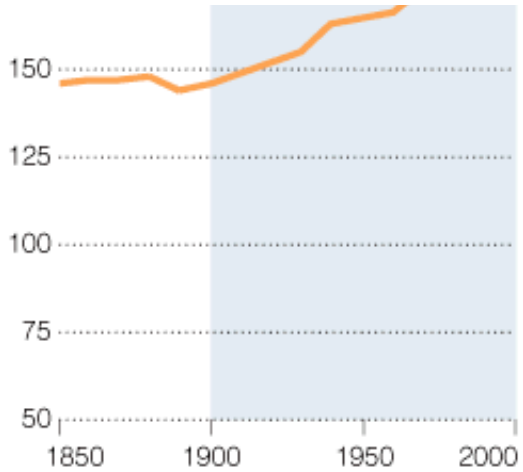








Life expectancy data before 1930 only from states that had full death registration systems. The data is for men and women combined.



Height and weight data before 1950 come from military enrollment numbers, and similar data for women do not exist.

Sources: National Center for Health Statistics; National Vital Statistics System; Dora Costa, M.I.T.; Richard H. Steckel, Ohio State University; Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging, University of California, Berkeley

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