In 1987 John Rowe introduced the concept of Successful Aging. This is a new point of view, and its appearance has been followed by a growing amount of literature and research on the subject. The author reviews the concept of Successful Aging and some of the results of his experimental work. The growing numbers of people who age successfully leads us to reconsider some of the concepts that continue to prevail about aging. It seems that we can think of aging as something more than progressive and irreversible functional deterioration. Throughout the text the author insists on: the heterogeneity of the aging process and the possibility of a preventive approach to avoid the disabilities associated with the aging process. Our current knowledge on the subject faces the challenge of establishing specific preventive measures that would lead to successful aging. Some factors identified as positively associated with successful aging are: belonging to a high socio-economic level, relatively low body weight, good pulmonary function, good cognitive status, lack of diabetes and high blood pressure and sustained physical and social activities. The study of the successful aging process will lead us to a better understanding of the aging process itself, and will result in the identification of behaviors that should be promoted to optimize this life period. Existing evidence of a significant remaining plasticity even in the very old opens interesting perspectives of eventual correction of erratic aging.

Keywords
aging; successful aging; health promotion; morbidity; France