

## The 4 Principles of Healthy Living.

1. Do Not Smoke.
2. Maintain a BMI<30.
3. Exercise 150 minutes/week. (30 minutes 5 days a week of some form of aerobic exercise)
4. Eat 5 servings of fruits or vegetables daily.

Several studies have conclusively shown that individuals who do these things have a dramatic reduction in overall mortality, heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, congestive heart failure, and cancer. This means that without taking any pills, vitamins, tonics, etc – without spending a single penny – you can live a longer, healthier, more production life. Let's look at these 4 principles separately.

1. Do Not Smoke – Make up your mind to quit, talk with your doctor to formulate a plan, and set a date.

2. Get to and maintain a BMI<30. This gets you out of the obese category. No longer being obese will dramatically reduce you and your family's risk of a multitude of health problems. It is not easy, but, it is possible. If you are extremely obese it may take years, but, each step you take will lead to dramatic rewards. With just 20 pounds of weight loss most people feel better, have less fatigue and joint pain, and feel more energetic. If you have health problems like diabetes, hypertension, or high cholesterol you might do away with your need for some medications. And most of all, while you change you lifestyle to attain this goal you will set a good example for all those around you, especially your children. Here are two proven steps to help you start losing weight.

- Portion Control – Eating your meals on a smaller plate and limiting the amount of calories you eat at each meal has been shown to lead to weight loss. The average plate is 10 inches in diameter. A 10 inch plate piled high with food can add up to 1500 calories (even more if you go back for seconds). The typical man needs 2000 calories per day total. Try using a smaller plate (8 inch paper plate or 7 inch saucer) at each meal and NEVER go back for second helpings.
- Pedometer - individuals who wear a pedometer and try to walk 10,000 steps each day increase their physical activity, lose weight, and decrease their blood pressures.

3. Exercise 150 minutes/week. The overall health benefits of regular aerobic exercise are overwhelming:

Reduces the risk of dying prematurely.  
Reduces the risk of dying from heart disease.  
Reduces the risk of stroke.

Reduces the risk of developing diabetes.  
Reduces the risk of developing high blood pressure.  
Helps reduce blood pressure in people who already have high blood pressure.  
Reduces the risk of developing colon cancer.  
Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety.  
Helps control weight.  
Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints.  
Helps older adults become stronger and better able to move about without falling.  
Promotes psychological well-being.

If you have health problems or are over age 60 we recommend consulting your doctor before beginning. We recommend starting slow and working up. Start by reading the Healthnote on Starting an Exercise Program then get going. Do not over think the process. Pick something simple at home like walking with friends, using a treadmill, or riding an exercise bike. Experiment with different types of exercise until you find something you can tolerate (it does not have to be fun). Pick a 30 minute disc of inspirational music and listen to it while you exercise. The more you do it the easier it will become and the better you will feel.

#### 4. Eat 5 servings of fruits or vegetables daily.

A serving size is:

- One medium-size fruit
- 1/2 cup raw, cooked, frozen or canned fruits (in 100% juice) or vegetables
- 3/4 cup (6 oz.) 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- 1 cup raw, leafy vegetables
- 1/4 cup dried fruit

While this sounds easy enough actually getting this much fruits and vegetables takes some work and planning. You will need to experiment with different types of fruits and vegetables to find ones you and your family can eat every day. Some simple tips include:

- Add fruit to your cereal each morning.
- Eat a salad each day for lunch. The typical bowl of salad counts for 2 servings of vegetables.
- Have some fruits and vegetables at every meal. Use canned or frozen products if needed.
- Eat fruits and vegetables for snacks – especially for the kids.
- Replace the side of fries or chips with a cup of fruit, an apple, or a bowl of celery.

What are the benefits?

Reduces heart disease and stroke.

Possible reduction in cancer risk.

Protects against the development of diabetes.

Filling up on fat free fruits and vegetable decreases the amount of high fat foods you will eat, aiding in weight loss.

# The Benefits of the 4 Principles of Healthy Living

## Results from Medical Studies

1. Do Not Smoke.
2. Maintain a Body Mass Index (BMI) < 30.
3. Exercise 150 minutes/week
4. Eat 5 servings of fruits or vegetables daily.

### Mortality

1) *The American Journal of Medicine* (2007); 120:598-603

“Turning Back the Clock: Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle in Middle Age”

Individuals who adopt 4 healthy lifestyle principles have a 40% reduction in mortality in just 4 years.

2) *Plos Med* January 2008

“Combined Impact of Health Behaviors and Mortality in Men and Women: The EPIC-Norfolk Prospective Population Study”

The risk of death (particularly from heart disease) decreases as the number of positive health behaviors increase. People who practice all 4 healthy principles will on average live 14 years longer than people who practice none.

3) *BMJ* 2008:337

“Combined Impact of Lifestyle Factors on Mortality: Prospective Cohort Study in US Women”

Over 24 years follow-up it was found that 55% of all deaths (mostly from heart disease and cancer) could have been prevented by following all 4 principles of healthy living.

## **Coronary Heart Disease**

1) *Circulation* 2006; 114: 160-167

“Healthy Lifestyle Factors in the Primary Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease Among Men”

62% of heart attacks can be prevented by long term (16 years) adherence to healthy lifestyle habits.

Among people taking medications for hypertension or high cholesterol 57% of all heart attacks can be prevented by following healthy lifestyle habits.

Just adopting 2 healthy lifestyle habits lowers the risk for heart attacks by 27%.

2) *The American Journal of Medicine* (2007); 120:598-603

“Turning Back the Clock: Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle in Middle Age”

Individuals who adopt 4 healthy lifestyle principles have a 35% reduction in coronary heart disease in just 4 years.

3) *Circulation* 2008;118

“Dietary Patterns and the Risk of Acute Myocardial Infarction in 52 Countries”

The typical American diet of fried foods, salty snacks, eggs, and meat leads to a 30% increase in heart attacks while a diet high in fruits and vegetables leads to a 35% reduction in heart attacks.

4) *Arch Intern Med.* 2009;169(15):1355-1362.

“Health Living Is the Best Revenge: Findings From the European Prospective Investigation Into Cancer and Nutrition–Potsdam Study”

Individuals who follow all 4 healthy principles have an 81% lower risk of having a heart attack.

## **Diabetes**

1) *The New England Journal of Medicine*; Sept 2001; 345: 790-797  
“Diet, Lifestyle, and the Risk of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in Women”

91% of cases of diabetes can be prevented by following healthy lifestyle habits.

2) *Archives of Internal Medicine*; April 2009; 196  
“Lifestyle Risk Factors and New-Onset Diabetes Mellitus in Older Adults”

In individuals 65 years or older, 90% of cases of diabetes can be prevented by following healthy lifestyle habits.

3) *Arch Intern Med.* 2009;169(15):1355-1362.  
“Health Living Is the Best Revenge: Findings From the European Prospective Investigation Into Cancer and Nutrition–Potsdam Study”

Individuals who follow all 4 healthy principles have a 93% lower risk of developing diabetes.

## **Hypertension**

*Journal of the American Medical Association*; July 2009; 302: 401-411  
“Diet and Lifestyle Risk Factors Associated with Incident Hypertension in Women”

80% of cases of hypertension can be prevented by following healthy lifestyle habits.

In women a BMI > 25 (being overweight) causes 40% of all cases of hypertension.

## **Stroke**

1) *Circulation* 2008; 118: 947-954

“Primary Prevention of Stroke by Healthy Lifestyle”

**Individuals who follow healthy lifestyle principles have a 50% reduction in stroke.**

2) *Arch Intern Med.* 2009;169(15):1355-1362.

“Health Living Is the Best Revenge: Findings From the European Prospective Investigation Into Cancer and Nutrition–Potsdam Study”

**Individuals who follow all 4 healthy principles have a 50% lower risk of having a stroke.**

## **Congestive Heart Failure**

*Journal of the American Medical Association*; July 2009; 302: 394-400

“Relation Between Modifiable Lifestyle Factors and Lifetime Risk of Heart Failure”

**Individuals who follow healthy lifestyle principles have a 50% reduction in the development of congestive heart failure.**

## **Cancer**

*Arch Intern Med.* 2009;169(15):1355-1362.

“Health Living Is the Best Revenge: Findings From the European Prospective Investigation Into Cancer and Nutrition–Potsdam Study”

**Individuals who follow all 4 healthy principles have a 36% lower risk of developing cancer.**