

Lifestyle Choices Lower Risk of Death in Elderly

A series of scientific reports published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, indicate that by following a Mediterranean diet i.e., focusing on vegetables, fruits, seafood, getting regular exercise, consuming moderate amounts of alcohol and not smoking, people aged between 70 to 90 will lower the risk of death in the next 10 years by 65%. Moderate alcohol consumption is often defined as up to 30grams a day or about two drinks.

One study showed that elderly men who walk 2 or more miles a day had only 1/5th the risk of developing dementia compared with those who walked less than a quarter of a mile a day. Women aged 70 and older who regularly exercised reduced their risk of cognitive decline by 20%.

One study showed that after 2 years on the Mediterranean diet 55% of patients with metabolic syndrome no longer showed symptoms of the syndrome.

Researchers found that people on the Mediterranean diet experienced significant decreases in weight, blood pressure, glucose, insulin and total cholesterol and triglycerides and they had a significant increase in the HDL so called good cholesterol. The 10year study of the Mediterranean diet's effect on longevity involved 1,507 men and 832 women ages 70 - 90 in 11 European countries. It found that each of the four lifestyle choices independently reduced the risk of death from all causes in the next 10 years. It also found that those people who followed all four lifestyle changes lowered their risk of death from stroke, heart disease, cancer and other common killers by 65% compared with those people who only followed three (55%) or two (38%).