

Healthy Habits Can Mean 14 Extra Years

Recent findings of a University of Cambridge study revealed that people who adopted four healthy habits lived approximately 14 years longer than those who did not. These healthy habits included not using tobacco products, engaging in regular physical activity, eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily, and consuming moderate amounts of alcohol. The Active Living Partners program has two evidence-based courses (Active Living Every Day and Healthy Eating Every Day) that help adults address two of those four healthy habits: engaging in regular physical activity and eating healthier.

The study, conducted in the United Kingdom, tracked approximately 20,000 people. Susan Jebb, head of nutrition and health at Britain's Medical Research Council, states, "We've known for a long time that these behaviors are good things to do, but we've never seen these additive benefits before."

The study conducted a baseline survey between the years 1993 and 1997 and then another follow-up survey in 2006. Participants were men and women between the ages of 45 and 79 who had no known cardiovascular disease or cancer at the time of the baseline survey. Participants received a point each for the following health habits: not using tobacco products, engaging in regular physical activity, eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables, and consuming moderate amounts of alcohol (measured at 1 to 14 units per week). The researchers tracked the number of deaths from any cause, including cardiovascular disease, any type of cancer, and respiratory diseases. Research showed those who scored 4 points were four times less likely to die than those who scored 0. The lead researchers hope the study will demonstrate to people that even small changes to their lifestyles can improve health outcomes. However, one limitation of the study was that the researchers observed people instead of specific changes; therefore, it is unrealistic to conclude that people who adopted these four behaviors suddenly would immediately gain 14 years. Thus, it is theoretically possible that 14 years would be the average across the population that a person could hope to gain.

Are you interested in adopting a healthier lifestyle? If so, try either Active Living Every Day or Healthy Eating Every Day. Both curriculums are evidence-based programs, which provide the knowledge and skills to help you adopt and maintain a healthier lifestyle. For more information, please contact Bhibha Das at bhibhad@hkusa.com or 800-747-4457 ext 2455.

Sources:

Preidt, R. January 8, 2008. Small lifestyle changes can boost longevity. [MSN](#)

Khaw, K.-T., Wareham, N., Bingham, S., Welch, A., Luben, R., Day, N. January 2008. Combined impact of health behaviours and mortality in men and women: The EPIC-Norfolk prospective population study. [PLOS](#)