

# You say your **grandmother** lived until she was **97**. But **will you?**

**B**y now, most of us have heard that Seventh-day Adventists tend to live longer than the general population. Images of Adventists in their 90s doing everything from swimming to heart surgery have appeared in the media and are a great testament to how following an Adventist lifestyle can lead to a better quality of life. But will future generations experience this same outcome? Research by Adventist Health Studies at Loma Linda University shows that 30, 50, and 70-year-old Adventists of today weigh, on average, more than

30, 50 and 70-year-old Adventists of the 1970s. Studies have shown that as weight goes up, the risk of health conditions goes up as well. The trend is worrisome, but the good news is we already have a road map to better health. Adventist Health Studies has shown that five simple behaviors the Adventist church has promoted for more than 100 years increase life span by up to 10 years. Apart from increasing life span, many of these behaviors offer protection against cancer, heart disease, diabetes, obesity and more. Let's take a look.

## 5 Ways to Increase Life Span by up to 10 years

### **exercise** regularly

Apart from providing better heart health, exercise protects against some cancers. In the cases of breast and colon cancer, there is clear evidence regular physical activity relates to lower risk.

### **consume nuts** several times a week

Eating nuts several times a week was found to reduce the risk of heart attack by up to 50%.

### eat a **plant-based diet**

Levels of cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, and the metabolic syndrome all had the same trend — the closer you are to being a vegetarian, the lower the health risk in these areas. In the case of type 2 diabetes, prevalence in vegans and vegetarians was half that of non-vegetarians.

### maintain a **normal weight**

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure of a person's weight in relation to their height. In an analysis of obesity, the relationship between moderate to high BMI and increased risk of heart attack was more than two-fold. Aim for a BMI below 25.

$$BMI = \frac{\text{weight in kg}}{(\text{height in m})^2}$$

### **avoid second-hand smoke**

Although most Adventists are non-smokers, it is also important to limit exposure to second-hand smoke to decrease risk for cancer.

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