

# The Adventist Advantage



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The fabled fountain of youth lured ancient adventurers into a lifetime of fruitless searching. No one wants to get old, and for many the search continues for some kind of a magic potion to help us stay youthful as long as possible. Today we want to talk with you about how to be healthy by choice, and not by chance.



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Aging is a gradual process that begins at conception and continues throughout life. In reality, old age is determined not merely by chronological age,



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but when disease and disability limit our everyday tasks. Some people become old while still relatively young in years.



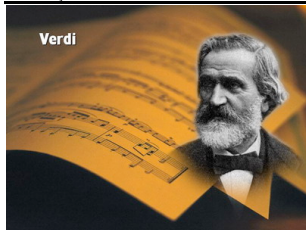
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On the other hand, others remain youthful, vibrant, and productive even though well advanced in years.



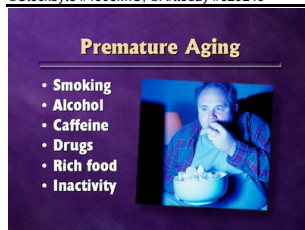
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Many works of genius were accomplished late in life. For example, Michelangelo was 70 when he painted the Sistine Chapel,



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and Verdi composed one of his most famous operas at age 80.<sup>1</sup>



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Premature aging and disability are largely the result of certain lifestyle factors.



Habits such as smoking, alcohol and caffeine consumption, and the abuse of drugs can make people old before their time.



In addition, a diet of rich, refined foods, and a lack of exercise also accelerate aging.

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The scientific community has shown much interest in certain groups of people who possess better than average health and longevity. Prominent among these are...



...the Seventh-day Adventists, considered by many as some of “the healthiest people” in the world.<sup>2</sup>



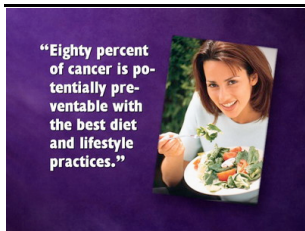
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Study after study has found that Seventh-day Adventists throughout the world rank dramatically ahead of the rest of the population...



...with significantly **less heart disease and cancer**.

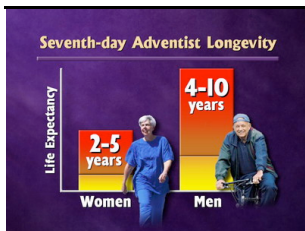
This is of special interest since two thirds of people in Western countries die of these two diseases, and...



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...the National Cancer Institute states that, “Eighty percent of cancer is potentially preventable with the best diet and lifestyle practices.”<sup>3</sup>

Adventists have fewer hospitalizations, surgeries and prescriptions. They suffer from less obesity, osteoporosis,<sup>4</sup> and a multitude of other illnesses. If they do experience these diseases, it is usually 10 years later than the average westerner.<sup>5</sup>



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Research conducted in the United States, the Netherlands, Norway, and Poland, has revealed that the life expectancy of Adventist women is two to five years longer than the rest of the population.<sup>6</sup>



In the case of Adventist men, their longevity is even greater, a full four to ten years longer than their peers.<sup>7</sup>



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Over 250 research studies have reported on the health benefits experienced by the members of this church, made up of people from all different races and cultures. These studies consistently show...



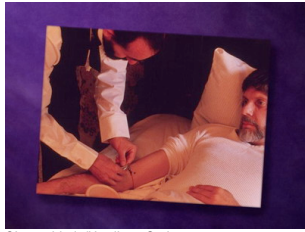
...that Adventists around the world live longer, healthier lives.<sup>8</sup> The evidence is in, and it is overwhelming.

Now the important question is, **how do they do it?**

Are Seventh-day Adventists healthier by choice, or chance?

## The Adventist Advantage

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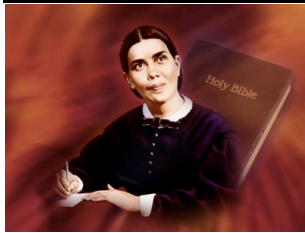
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In the mid-1800's, at a time when little was known about health, or concerning the causes and prevention of disease, when bloodletting to lower fevers was the common practice,



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and drugging with poisonous pills and preparations, like arsenic and mercury, was considered standard medical practice...



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...Seventh-day Adventists were choosing to follow health principles found in the Bible and in the inspired counsels of a godly woman named Ellen G. White.



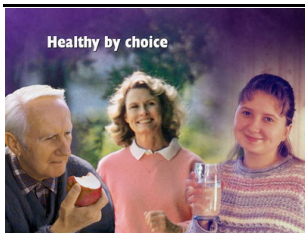
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Ellen White was a prolific writer on the subject of health and a variety of other topics. Though written over a century ago, her teachings on healthful living are still valid today. When you look at the majority of scientific studies conducted in the past 30 years, many of them now confirm her recommendations.<sup>9</sup>



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**Tobacco** is one example. Around 1850, Ellen White began warning that tobacco is a poison, causing cancer, heart disease, and other health problems. Yet as late as the 1950's, the American Medical Association advocated that tobacco's benefits outweighed its harms.<sup>10</sup>



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So what brings the Adventist people the significant health benefits we've mentioned?

Their advantage seems to be directly related to how they live, and how closely they follow the lifestyle principles gathered from the Bible and the counsels of Ellen G. White.

It's evident that Seventh-day Adventists are healthier not by chance,



but by **choice**.

While research shows a significant decrease of disease among **all** Adventists, those who most **closely** follow the conservative lifestyle achieve the greatest benefits.

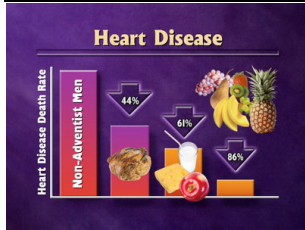
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## The Adventist Advantage



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Heart disease is a good illustration. Worldwide, it is the number one killer in developed nations.



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When compared to their non-Adventist neighbors,



Adventist men who included meat in their diet were found to experience 44% **fewer** deaths from heart disease. This is thought to be largely due to their being nonsmokers, nondrinkers, and having somewhat of a healthier diet than the general population.

Of greater significance, Seventh-day Adventist men eating a vegetarian diet,



including the use of eggs and dairy products, were found to do even better, with 61% fewer heart disease deaths.

But the **healthiest** of all were those vegetarians...



...who used no meat, fish, milk or eggs. Compared to the general population, these were **86%** less likely to die of heart disease.<sup>11</sup>

That's quite an advantage!

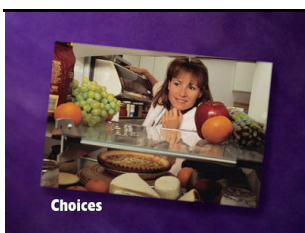
However, this advantage is not limited to just heart disease and cancer.



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Adventist vegetarians, between 30 and 50 years of age, were found to have 4 times less risk of death from **all causes** as compared to those who eat meat.

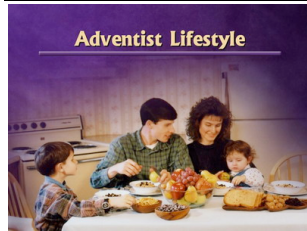
Do these advantages only take effect on the other end of life, when you're old? No. Studies have shown that the benefits are more marked in younger people.<sup>12</sup>



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From the Adventist Health studies we've learned that our everyday lifestyle choices have a profound impact on both the quality and length of our lives.

# The Adventist Advantage



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Here's a summary of some major protective elements found in the Adventist lifestyle studies.

Health minded Seventh-day Adventists:

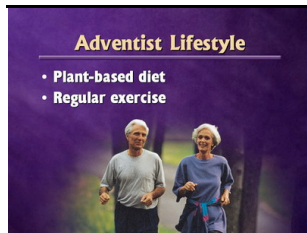


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## Adventist Lifestyle

- Plant-based diet

**Eat a plant-based diet** chosen by our Creator, as found in Genesis: a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds. This may be the single most important thing we can do for our health.<sup>13</sup> Eating a diet high in fruits and vegetables adds an extra 4-5 years of life.



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## Adventist Lifestyle

- Plant-based diet
- Regular exercise

They get plenty of **exercise** in the open air. Participating regularly in moderate exercise adds 3-4 years of life.

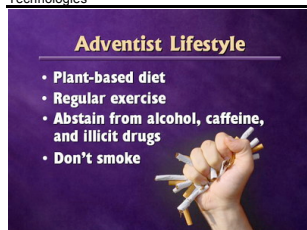


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## Adventist Lifestyle

- Plant-based diet
- Regular exercise
- Abstain from alcohol, caffeine, and illicit drugs

**Abstain from alcohol, caffeine, and illicit drugs.** The toll these poisons take on our lives is a major tragedy that can be avoided.

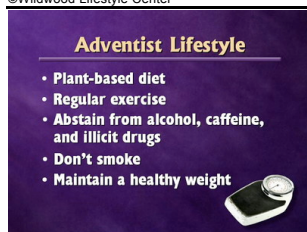


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## Adventist Lifestyle

- Plant-based diet
- Regular exercise
- Abstain from alcohol, caffeine, and illicit drugs
- Don't smoke

**Don't smoke.**<sup>14</sup> One out of 4 smokers dies an early death because of smoking. These individuals lose an average of 21 years of life.<sup>15</sup>



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## Adventist Lifestyle

- Plant-based diet
- Regular exercise
- Abstain from alcohol, caffeine, and illicit drugs
- Don't smoke
- Maintain a healthy weight

They **maintain a healthy weight.** Being relatively lean gives an extra 3 to 4 years of life.<sup>16</sup>



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## Adventist Lifestyle

- Plant-based diet
- Regular exercise
- Abstain from alcohol, caffeine, and illicit drugs
- Don't smoke
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Trust in God

Adventists are firm believers in the importance of **trust in God** for optimal physical, mental and spiritual health. Science has demonstrated that **spirituality** profoundly improves quality of life.<sup>17</sup> God offers healing hope for all. An optimistic positive attitude boosts the immune system, our body's defense against disease.

## The Adventist Advantage

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Regular Bible study benefits the whole body. An active and stimulated mind retards aging. Studies indicate that clergy, scientists and teachers all live longer.<sup>18</sup>

**What can one expect** from adopting the principles of the Adventist lifestyle?



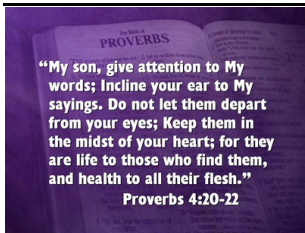
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From the Adventist Health studies we've learned that a nonsmoker, nondrinker, who is relatively thin, exercises moderately, and emphasizes fruits, and vegetables in their diet...



...may expect to live an **extra 10 to 12 productive years** of life.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all experienced these benefits? Fortunately, the Bible's principles for good health are available to everyone. The word of God promises rich blessings of physical, mental, and spiritual health to all who heed its instruction.



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In the book of Proverbs we read, "My son, give attention to **My words**; Incline your ear to My sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are **life** to those who find them, and **health** to all their flesh." Proverbs 4:20-22 (NKJV)

Health is largely a matter of lifestyle...and lifestyle is a choice. The choice is yours!

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1 Wilfred Frank, *Six weeks to Words of Power*, p.6

2 Chris Rucker and Jan Hoffman, *The Seventh Day Diet*.

3 *Journal National Cancer Institute* 85(1993):846,847

4 A. Marsh, T. Sanchez et al. Critical Bone Density of Adult Lacto-ovo-vegetarians and omnivorous women. *J Amer Diet Assoc* 76(1980):148

5 Dr Fraser in *Healthy People* 2001, Loma Linda University.

6 *Enjoy It*, New Lifestyle; Review and Herald, Hagerstown, MD; 1998, pg.78

7 *Enjoy It*, New Lifestyle; Review and Herald, Hagerstown, MD; 1998, pg.78

8 *Enjoy It*, New Lifestyle; Review and Herald, Hagerstown, MD; 1998, pg. 76

9 Nedley, MD, Neil, *Proof Positive*; Nedley Publishing, 1998; pg. 537

10 Nedley, MD, Neil, *Proof Positive*; Nedley Publishing, 1998; pg. 537

11 Phillips RL, Lemon FR, et al. Coronary heart disease mortality among Seventh-Day Adventists with differing dietary habits: a preliminary report. *Am J Clin Nutr* 1978 Oct;31(10 Suppl):S191-S198. (Source: Proof Positive, p. 84)

12 Ibid.

13 Dr Stavric, *Patient Care* Nov 15, 1995, p.36

14 Deut. 29:18,20, margin

15 Neil Nedley, *Proof Positive*, p. 372

16 Ludington, M.D., Aileen, *Feeling Fit*, Review and Herald Publishing, Hagerstown, MD, 1997, p.14

17 Ellison CG. Religious involvement and subjective well-being. *J Health Soc Behav* 1990 Jun;31(2):p. 185-202

18 Ibid nr. 1