

Tips from the world's longest-lived residents

Developing a plan that gives your life purpose and meaning may add quantity as well as quality to your years.

That's one of the lessons learned from studies of places in the world where people live the longest – namely Loma Linda, CA, USA; Sardinia, Italy; Okinawa, Japan; and the Nicoya Peninsula of Costa Rica. Residents in these areas live an average of 10 years longer, delay disability until later in life, and have 1/6 the rate of heart disease and 1/5 the rate of cancer. Here's more advice these elders gave for leading a longer, healthier life:

- Put your family first and surround yourself with people who share your values.
- Keep your total calories low and eat more fruits and vegetables. In Okinawa they purposely stop eating before they feel completely full.
- Walk or do some physical activity on a regular basis.
- Practice yoga, meditate, or do something to relieve stress for at least 15 minutes every day.

Source: Adapted from The Blues Zones: Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who've Lived the Longest, by Dan Buettner, National Geographic
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