

Americans' Unhealthy Lifestyle Is the Leading Cause of Death

By Chip Eichelberger



The leading cause of death in America is not heart disease, cancer, stroke or diabetes. It is the unhealthy lifestyle that most Americans are addicted to which is the true cause. A study by Mathew Reeves, a Michigan State University epidemiologist finds that **only 3% of Americans maintain a healthy lifestyle**. It is a situation that is causing **dire consequences for millions of Americans**.

"I was really quite surprised at how low that number was," said Reeves, an assistant professor of epidemiology." The research published in the journal Archives of Internal Medicine, found that **only 3 percent undertook four basic steps** that define a healthy lifestyle:

- not smoking
- healthy weight
- eating right including a minimum of 5 fruits/vegetables a day
- exercising at least 5 times a week for 30 minutes.

Those are not exactly Olympic caliber qualifications. That is the good news. These 4 criteria is something you can easily choose to do. You can **become a 3%er**. All you need to do is put on the hat of responsibility and **own this choice**. In all likelihood, if you are fat or your kids are fat, it is your fault.

You have made some bad choices in the past - take responsibility now. You need to step up and make some new choices, maybe extremely different choices right now!

Recent research from the National Cancer Institute wants men to increase their consumption of fruits and veggies to nine servings a day and women increase to seven. A serving is considered a medium orange, eight carrot sticks or ¼ cup of raisins – **French fries don't count!**

Is that possible to get those 7 or 9 servings? Of course it is if you make the decision to do so. You have to choose to do that. A couple simple ways is to have one meal a day that is entirely fruits and vegetables. When you are snacking (have a cooler in your car/office to make it easy) – instead of a candy bar or chips, grab an apple, banana, orange, carrot sticks, celery with peanut butter, cherry tomatoes.

Remember it is an apple a day, not a Krispy Kreme!

My favorite way is to make sure I regularly eat a BIG salad and a small entrée. That is of course the opposite choice that most Americans make. Only use dark green lettuce and spinach – never Iceberg lettuce – add a variety of vegetables, fresh berries, raisins, sunflower seeds or nuts, a little chicken or lean meat or fish. The trick is to consistently make it interesting. The same salad will get boring. There are also plenty of low calorie natural dressings you can make too.

“It’s important to note that the effect of following these lifestyles is greater than anything else medicine has to offer,” Reeves said. “I don’t know anything a doctor’s office can do that **would reduce your risk of diabetes or cardiovascular disease by 80 to 90 percent**, which is what other studies have now shown.”

We need a societal change so that leading a healthy lifestyle is seen as a necessary expectation, and not something that is only followed by some tiny minority.” We know from epidemiologic studies that if you do this there are huge benefits in terms of increased life expectancy, reduced disease risk, reduced medical costs and improved quality of life.”

For the people over 50 it is even more crucial to make the 3 Percent Choice now. A **study** of nearly 4000 Chicago residents age 65 and older found that people who ate 2.8 or more servings of vegetables a day slowed a person’s mental decline by 40% - “equivalent to about five years of younger age.” **It is never too late to start.** “Older people who started eating over two servings a day still showed a significant delay in mental decline.”

Why do so few Americans lead a healthy lifestyle? I believe at the heart of the issue is choice. You need a compelling reason to make the choice. How about this – how long do you want to live? What quality of life do you want to have when your 80? **Do you see yourself even being alive at 80?**

My guess is you may need to make some **extreme changes in the choices** you are making right now. They could include cutting out all soda, sweet drinks and energy drinks, stop hanging around people who push donuts on you, join a walking/hiking club instead, getting up 3 mornings a week for a solid cardio session, one meal a day of just veggies and fruit, quit smoking, cut fast food down drastically, put a cooler in your car with easy access to healthy food or hire a personal trainer for the next 3 months to get you jump started.

I just created a new web site for you to step up and choose to be a 3%'er – 3PercentChoice.com. It is an online community of like minded people who are

committed to being the best they can be. Put on the hat of responsibility today and make the choice to be a 3%'er. This new site is a resource you can count on. Please help spread the word.

Chip Eichelberger

A peak performance strategist and motivational dynamo, Chip is positively great at making your next convention unforgettable. Former Tony Robbins international point man, Chip has been speaking about health, vitality and success for 19 years. Clients include Ernst & Young, Tommy Hilfiger, ADP and Bank of America. 866-224-1393, Chip@GetSwitchedOn.com – Visit 3PercentChoice.com and become a 3%'er.