# Daily movement over gym workouts is key to added years, says University of Salford expert



Getting up and moving throughout the day, rather than adhering strictly to gym routines, could significantly enhance longevity, according to Dr Gareth Nye, a biomedical expert at the University of Salford. This assertion reflects a growing understanding that living to 100 years of age hinges not solely on genetics or sheer luck, but rather on incorporating consistent physical activity into daily life.

Dr Nye emphasises that a higher level of daily activity—what he refers to as "whole activity levels"—is vital for longevity. He suggests that simple lifestyle adjustments, such as utilising standing desks or altering commuting habits, can mitigate the risks associated with prolonged sitting. "People who are more active in their daily lives tend to live longer," he stated in an interview, underscoring the importance of avoiding sedentary behaviour.

Recent studies substantiate these views. Research published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine reveals that even minor amounts of physical activity can have substantial life-extending benefits. Participants engaging in just 10 to 59 minutes of light to moderate exercise per week experienced an 18% reduction in early death risk compared to their sedentary counterparts. This illustrates that the cumulative effect of small, consistent activities throughout the week can indeed yield significant health rewards.

In addition to staying active, Dr Nye recommends a conscious approach to diet. He advocates for reducing alcohol intake, avoiding smoking, and steering clear of foods high in saturated fats. Specific recommendations include favouring less processed meats and opting for fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, reinforcing the idea that nutritional quality plays a crucial role in longevity. Dr Nye stressed that "the less processing, the better," highlighting that the integrity of the food consumed can directly impact one’s health and lifespan.

Sleep also emerges as a critical factor in Dr Nye’s longevity formula. He asserts that obtaining seven to eight hours of quality sleep each night can substantially influence lifespan. Research indicates that inadequate sleep is linked to numerous health issues, including obesity, heart disease, and Type 2 diabetes. Specifically, short sleep duration increases the risk of death by 12%, while excessive sleep—more than eight hours—can elevate this risk by 30%. Regular sleep patterns are vital for reaping the maximum health benefits and, consequently, living longer.

Understanding one's family health history and undergoing routine health checks is another cornerstone of Dr Nye’s longevity advice. He notes that genetic factors account for approximately 20-30% of an individual's lifespan, with genetics playing a significant role in the likelihood of developing certain diseases. Furthermore, the Office for National Statistics reports a troubling trend: after years of improving life expectancy, the average lifespan in England has recently declined, a stark reminder of the urgent need for individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Dr Nye’s insights echo broader findings from longevity studies which reveal that lifestyle choices account for about 75% of longevity potential, with genetics contributing around 25%. This correlation highlights a crucial message: while genetic predisposition matters, proactive lifestyle decisions can greatly influence the trajectory of one’s life.

As people ponder the secrets of longevity, these practical recommendations may serve as a roadmap towards a healthier, longer life. From integrating more movement into daily routines to prioritising quality sleep and nutrition, every small change can contribute to the greater goal of achieving not just longevity, but a life rich in health and vitality.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-14738369/longevity-exercise-live-100.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://time.com/5553504/exercise-to-live-longer/> - A study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine indicates that even 10 minutes of exercise a week can extend lifespan. Analyzing data from over 88,000 U.S. adults aged 40 to 85, the study found that those engaging in just 10 to 59 minutes of light-to-moderate activity per week had an 18% reduced risk of early death compared to sedentary individuals. The benefits increased with more exercise, highlighting that even minimal physical activity can significantly impact health and longevity.
3. <https://www.axios.com/2023/10/03/hacks-living-100-years-old> - Living to 100 is influenced by both genetics and lifestyle choices. While genetics account for 25% of longevity potential, behaviors like diet, exercise, and sun exposure contribute 75%. Longevity experts and centenarians highlight several lifestyle strategies to maximize the chances of a long life, emphasizing that reaching beyond 105 years of age is a rare achievement that combines optimal lifestyle practices and exceptional genetic fortune.
4. <https://www.silversneakers.com/blog/best-exercises-for-longevity/> - Certain types of exercise are proven to add more—and better—years to the average person’s life. Group fitness activities, such as tennis, badminton, and soccer, have been associated with increased lifespan. Additionally, high-intensity interval training (HIIT) has been shown to improve mitochondrial capacity in older adults, which is linked to aging. Strength training is also crucial, as muscle mass is a strong predictor of one's ability to combat disease and even survive cancer treatments.
5. <https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/exercise-and-longevity/> - Incorporating strength training into your weekly routine is important for a long life. Studies have found that older adults who strength-trained at least twice a week had 46% lower odds of early death. Even just a minute a day of resistance training can make a difference. Strength training doesn't have to mean lifting weights; it can also include working with a resistance band or using body weight for exercises such as squats and push-ups.
6. <https://www.businessinsider.com/68-year-old-athlete-shares-workouts-to-live-to-100-2024-3> - A 68-year-old athlete shares his workout regimen, which includes resistance training, biking, sprints, and power walking. His routine emphasizes compound exercises that strengthen multiple muscle groups simultaneously, such as bench presses, military presses, and bodyweight moves like pull-ups. This approach helps build a strong core and good stability, which are key factors in longevity, as they can prevent dangerous injuries like slips and falls as one ages.
7. <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/healthy-habits-live-100> - A study published in JAMA Network Open found that having a healthy lifestyle can increase the likelihood that 80-year-olds will live to the age of 100. The study identified not smoking, having a diverse diet, and exercising as lifestyle factors associated with becoming a centenarian. Although it was not included in the study, experts say having a sense of community is also an important factor in longevity that has been identified by other researchers.