

## Okinawan Lifestyle Offers Keys to Healthy Aging

*More people live past 100 years in Okinawa, Japan than anywhere else worldwide. Researchers reveal the keys to successful aging.*

How can you live to be 100? We'd all like to know – that is *if we could do so* while also remaining healthy and active, unburdened by sickness and disease. After 25-years of extensive research on a small, Japanese island population in Okinawa, we have some answers.

Living to 100-years and becoming a *centenarian* is no small feat, and Okinawa, Japan hails the highest percentage of centenarians in the world. The Okinawan Centenarian Study of the *world's healthiest, longest-lived people* reconfirms and adds to the growing scientific evidence on diet and lifestyle practices that reduce the risk of many of our debilitating chronic diseases *and promote long, healthy lives.*

Diet, exercise, social activities, no smoking and moderate alcohol (optional) are essential factors contributing to health and long-life among the Okinawans. Surprised? Probably not, but the actual quantities amaze most Americans.

On a daily basis, Okinawans consume *a minimum* of: 7 vegetables, 7 grains (mostly whole grain), 2 fruits, 1 soy food including tofu, a serving of fish high in omega-3 fats, calcium-rich foods like seaweed and dark greens, and green tea. Meat and poultry are consumed infrequently, as are sweets.

Compared to the Okinawan diet, the typical American diet contains only 1/3 the grains, ½ the vegetables, 1/10 the omega-3 fish, but 10-times the meat, poultry and eggs and 3-times the fruit.

Researchers also found that daily exercise like walking, martial arts and dance along with social interaction with family and friends were important contributors to healthy, long lives in Okinawa. This is powerful information from overseas that we can begin to apply to our own lives today.

### *References:*

Willcox BJ, Willcox DC, Suzuki M. (2001). The Okinawa Program: How the World's Longest-Lived People Achieve Everlasting Health – and How You Can Too. New York: Clarkson Potter Publishers.