

# LET HEALTH HAPPEN



**Dr. Geoff Walburn, D.C.**

The University of South Carolina just released an inspirational study that embodies everything that this column is about. They took a group of middle-aged adults to measure exactly what benefits they could gain from a healthy lifestyle. The researchers reported that adults age 45 to 64 who began eating five or more fruits and vegetables every day, exercising for at least 2 1/2 hours a week, keeping weight down and not smoking decreased their risk of heart disease by 35 percent and risk of death by 40 percent in the four years after they started. The really exciting part about these findings is that within four years, their mortality rate and rate of heart attacks matched the people who had been doing these behaviors all along. This means that changing behavior allowed them to “catch up” with people who had always been healthy. Dr. Dana King who led the research added “even if you have not had a healthy lifestyle previously, it’s not too late to adopt those healthy lifestyle habits and gain almost immediate benefits.” The four key habits are eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables everyday, exercising for 2 ? hours per week, not smoking and maintaining a healthy weight. □ A critical point learned in the study is that it took all four habits — having just three of the healthy habits yielded no heart benefits and a more modest decrease in overall risk of death. As I’ve said in the past, health exists on a continuum and no matter where you are on that line, information like this proves that simple changes in lifestyle will move anyone further toward health and away from disease.

*– Dr. Geoff Walburn, D.C.*

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