

## Lifelong Solutions, Not Resolutions!: 5 Life-Lengthening Tips

"Planning is the New Plaid, the Basics are the New Black," Says Northwestern Mutual's Medical Director

MILWAUKEE, Dec. 19, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Imagine a world without New Year's Resolutions. That's what Northwestern Mutual Medical Director Dr. Tony Norelli prescribes.

"Let's ban resolutions altogether," said Norelli. "Flavor-of-the-month fad-chasing will never be the best way for people to reach their long-term goals."

Research shows that every year nearly [half of Americans resolve to make lifestyle changes but only 8% actually achieve those goals](#). According to Norelli, the key to making change stick is to stick to the basics – and to plan.

"Over the past decades, Americans have been inundated with quick fixes like fad diets," said Norelli. "We don't need *new* ways to live healthier and happier. What's old is new again. We need to get back to the basics. We need long-term solutions, not resolutions with a deadline. Today, planning is the new plaid; the basics are the new black."

Research shows that [physical well-being is among the top resolutions](#) that people made in 2014 – and Norelli expects more of the same in 2015 and beyond. That's why he recommends focusing on these essential five lifelong life-lengthening solutions to live healthier and happier in 2015 and beyond:

- 1) **Plan a check-up.** When it comes to your physical health, primary prevention is key. Routine "check-ups" at a doctor's office can help keep your well-being on track – and add a year, on average, to your lifespan[i]. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 3 American adults has high blood pressure[ii], one of the leading contributors to heart disease. But many people with hypertension don't know their blood pressure is high or are under-treated. A sound medical routine can keep your blood pressure under control.
- 2) **Eat less.** Food portions in America's restaurants have doubled or tripled over the last 20 years[iii]. Many of us are members of the "clean plate club" generation so it can seem strange to encourage yourself to stop eating when you're full. Remember, "all you can eat" is a suggestion, not a challenge...
- 3) **Move more.** An active lifestyle is an investment in your lifespan - and can be good insurance against heart disease and cancer, common causes of death[iv]. Can you make physical activity or sports a regular part of your day? If so, you could add years to your lifespan.
- 4) **Buckle down.** Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death among those aged 1-54 in the U.S.[v] In fact, auto accidents are the leading cause of death for Americans teens[vi]. Putting down the smart phone would be wise as well.
- 5) **Relax!** Stress can help you be more productive or block you from achieving your potential. Knowing how to handle stress can make your life longer – and more enjoyable. Regular exercise is an excellent way to mitigate stress. Find something like yoga, walking, running, cycling, weight lifting, etc... *and keep doing it.*

### Plan to Live a Long Life

Ever wondered how long you'll live? According to Dr. Norelli, it may be longer than you think. The answer to your question can be found by going to Northwestern Mutual's Lifespan Calculator: <http://www.lifespancalc.com>. This calculator highlights the importance of simple lifestyle choices on overall life expectancy.

"If people can estimate how long they're going to live, they can begin to think about ways to make their lives and life savings last longer," says Norelli. "It's important to think how physical and financial well-being work together to expand our quality of life."

The Lifespan Calculator considers 13 lifestyle factors including diet, drinking, smoking and stress to estimate life expectancy, using the latest information from the National Center for Health Statistics.

It's clear that Americans are living longer. In 2008, for the first time in U.S. history, American life expectancy surpassed 78 years[vii]. The U.S. Census Bureau projects U.S. life expectancy is almost 79 years[viii]. And according to the Society of Actuaries, overall lifespan among males age 65 rose 2.0 years from age 84.6 in 2000 to age 86.6 in 2014. For women age 65, overall longevity rose 2.4 years from age 86.4 in 2000 to age

88.8 in 2014.

### **About Tony Norelli, MD**

Dr. Tony Norelli joined Northwestern Mutual in January of 2008 as an Assistant Medical Director. Prior to joining Northwestern Mutual, Dr. Norelli practiced family medicine at Pro Health Care Inc., in Mukwonago, Wisconsin. He received his medical degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin and pursued undergraduate studies at Marquette University. His residency was completed at Columbia Family Care Center in Milwaukee in 1995. Dr. Norelli is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians, Milwaukee Academy of Medicine, Midwestern Medical Director's Association and the American Academy of Insurance Medicine. His hobbies include music, reading, food and wine and distance cycling. His spare time is limited by his desire to be with his wife and children as much as possible.

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[i] U.S. Decennial Life Tables for 1999–2001, United States Life Tables by Elizabeth Arias, Ph.D.; Lester R. Curtin, Ph.D; Rong Wei, Ph.D.; and Robert N. Anderson, Ph.D,

[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr57/nvsr57\\_01.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr57/nvsr57_01.pdf).

[ii] <http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm>

[iii] <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/news-events/matte1.htm>

[iv] <http://www.cdc.gov/HeartDisease/facts.htm>

[v] <http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/seatbelts/facts.html>

[vi] [http://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/Teen\\_Drivers/teendrivers\\_factsheet.html](http://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/Teen_Drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html)

[vii] <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25097931>

[viii] <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/08/06/living-to-120-and-beyond-americans-views-on-aging-medical-advances-and-radical-life-extension/>

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