

# Northwestern Mutual: Americans Are Living Longer - Are You Planning Accordingly?

MILWAUKEE (BUSINESS WIRE), March 23, 2011 - Following the Centers for Disease Control's recent [announcement](#) that American life expectancy continues to increase, [Northwestern Mutual](#) - a leading financial security company - reminds individuals to think ahead and be proactive about planning for their long-term financial security.

Over the last 10 years, death rates have continued to decline in the United States. Recent figures from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) show that the average American's life expectancy at birth has increased slightly from 78.0 to 78.2 years, and death rates dropped to an all-time low of 741 deaths per 100,000 people.

## Women living longer

According to the CDC data, there are clear gender differences when it comes to life expectancy. Women can expect to live about five years longer than men, with an average lifespan of 80.6 years, versus 75.7 years for men.

"Planning is even more important for women for a number of reasons," continues Barsch, "The reality is that women not only live longer, but are more likely to take time away from their careers to act as caregivers for their families. What this means is women have to make the most of every retirement dollar, and protecting those dollars is a top priority. That's why risk management is such an essential piece of the puzzle."

For men and women alike, retirement is an ongoing planning opportunity. Northwestern Mutual recommends that all Americans consider the following:

**Have a plan:** Be proactive and take the time to develop a flexible, long-term financial security plan. Then,  
1. stick with that plan.

**Work with a professional:** A financial professional can help you identify the right solutions to help meet  
2. financial needs and reach your retirement goals. Review annually to stay on track.

**No silver bullet:** A mix of insurance and investments is needed to maintain financial security throughout  
3. your lifetime.

"Any winning strategy involves a strong offense and a strong defense," says Barsch. "In retirement planning, a strong offense is achieved through the right mix of investments, and defense lies in the protection provided by insurance. Together, prudent risk management and careful investing will help to keep your plan on track and ensure long-term success."

## Consider your life expectancy

No one knows for sure how long they will live, but Northwestern Mutual has developed a calculator to help. 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. In addition, social networkers on Facebook can download the new [Lifespan Calculator Facebook application](#) to compare their life expectancy score with that of other Facebook friends.

"Understanding your potential lifespan puts retirement planning in context," adds Barsch. "It's important to recognize that planning *to* your life expectancy leaves a lot to chance, so think beyond that. Creating lifetime income is an important element of every successful retirement plan."

## About Northwestern Mutual

The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company - Milwaukee, WI ([Northwestern Mutual](#)) has helped clients achieve financial security for more than 150 years. As a mutual company with \$1.2 trillion of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual has no shareholders. The company focuses solely and directly on its clients and seeks to deliver consistent and dependable value to them over time.

Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a holistic approach to financial security solutions including: [life insurance](#), [long-term care insurance](#), [disability insurance](#), [annuities](#), [investment products](#), and [advisory products and services](#). Subsidiaries include Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC, broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company, limited purpose federal savings bank; and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company; and [Russell Investments](#).

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“It’s no longer just about getting *to* retirement, it’s about getting *through* retirement,” said Rebekah Barsch, Northwestern Mutual director of retirement markets. “Life expectancy continues to increase, and we need to be smarter about our finances. It’s about planning ahead so you can optimize your income and maintain your desired lifestyle, no matter how long you live. This requires a comprehensive approach that leverages the efficiencies of insurance and investments together.”

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