

DR. CABRAL'S TOP 10 SCIENCE-BACKED LIFESTYLE PROTOCOLS TO ADD AN EXTRA 20+ HEALTHY YEARS TO YOUR LIFE

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The protocols outlined in this guide represent the top 10 of the most well-studied lifestyle factors associated with longer life and lower all-cause mortality. Each has been examined in large population studies, long-term cohort research, or meta-analyses **involving hundreds of thousands of individuals**. When practiced consistently, many of these habits are associated with reductions in mortality risk ranging from 15% to more than 50%.

Importantly, these lifestyle factors do not work in isolation. Research consistently shows that when several of these habits are combined, such as regular physical activity, a high-quality diet, not smoking, maintaining a healthy body composition, and getting adequate sleep, the benefits compound significantly. In fact, **major longitudinal studies have found that individuals who follow multiple healthy lifestyle habits can reduce their risk of early death by more than 60% compared with those who follow few of them**.



This guide summarizes the most impactful lifestyle interventions (with no additional associated costs) and the scientific evidence behind them. **The goal is not perfection, but instead progress in** identifying the small number of daily behaviors that have the largest influence on long-term health and longevity.

By consistently applying these evidence-based lifestyle protocols, you should be able to meaningfully lower your risk of chronic disease and hopefully add **two or more decades of healthy life**, which are years defined not only by longevity, but by energy, mobility, mental clarity, and resilience.

Wishing you a long healthy life (Ayubowan),



Stephen Cabral

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Author of the [Rain Barrel Effect](#) & [Personomics](#)

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01

REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (AEROBIC + STRENGTH TRAINING + DAILY STEPS)

Estimated Reduction

~20–40% lower all-cause mortality

What It Is

Regular movement through aerobic exercise, walking, and resistance training improves cardiovascular function, insulin sensitivity, metabolic health, and muscle mass. Individuals who meet recommended activity levels consistently live significantly longer than sedentary individuals.

Typical Amount Needed

- ⦿ 150–300 minutes/week moderate activity or 75–150 minutes vigorous activity
- ⦿ 40 minutes 4 days per week
- ⦿ 7,500–10,000 steps/day
- ⦿ Resistance/weight training 2+ times per week
- ⦿ Sample Schedule (1-hour a day):
 - **Monday:** Weight training x 20–30 minutes (+20-min Sauna optional)
 - **Tuesday:** Aerobic exercise x 40-minutes (+20-min Sauna optional)
 - **Wednesday:** Weight training x 20–30 minutes + 20-minutes Interval Training
 - **Thursday:** Aerobic exercise x 40-minutes (+20-min Sauna optional)
 - **Friday:** Weight training x 20–30 minutes (+20-min Sauna optional)
 - **Saturday:** Aerobic exercise x 40-minutes (+20-min Sauna optional)
 - **Sunday:** Rest Day

Scientific Research Studies

- ⦿ Tarp et al., 2024 – American Journal of Preventive Medicine
- ⦿ Paluch et al., 2021 – JAMA Network Open
- ⦿ Momma et al., 2022 – British Journal of Sports Medicine

02

HEALTHY BODY WEIGHT / BODY COMPOSITION

Estimated Reduction

~20–40% lower mortality compared with obesity

What It Is

Maintaining a healthy body weight or body composition reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, metabolic disease, and many other chronic conditions that drive premature mortality.

Typical Amount Needed

- ☼ BMI approximately 19–25
- ☼ Body fat roughly 10–20% for men, 18–28% for women (general population ranges)

Scientific Research Studies

- ☼ Global BMI Mortality Collaboration, 2016 – The Lancet
- ☼ Flegal et al., 2013 – JAMA
- ☼ Bhaskaran et al., 2018 – The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology



03

MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE DIET

Estimated Reduction

~20–25% lower all-cause mortality

What It Is

A Mediterranean dietary pattern emphasizes vegetables, fruits, legumes, olive oil, fish, whole grains, and nuts while limiting processed foods and refined sugars. This diet improves metabolic health, reduces inflammation, and lowers risk of cardiovascular disease.

Typical Amount Needed

- ☼ High intake of plant foods daily
- ☼ 7–9 servings of fruit/vegetables per day
- 1–2 cups Breakfast, 2–3 cups Lunch, 2–3 cups Dinner
- ☼ Olive oil as primary fat
- ☼ Fish 2–3 times per week
- ☼ Limited processed foods
- ☼ Bonus: Fast for 12–16 hours overnight
- Stop eating 3–4 hours before bed



Scientific Research Studies

- ☼ Sofi et al., 2008 – BMJ
- ☼ Ahmad et al., 2024 – JAMA Network Open
- ☼ Soltani et al., 2018 – PubMed

04

ADEQUATE SLEEP

Estimated Reduction

~12–20% lower mortality compared with inadequate sleep

What It Is

Sleep is critical for immune function, hormone balance, metabolic health, and brain function. Chronic sleep deprivation increases risk for cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, and early mortality. Almost as important as total sleep time, is maintaining a sleep schedule of going to bed and waking up within a half hour of the same time on a daily basis.

Typical Amount Needed

- ⦿ 7–9 hours per night
- ⦿ Consistent sleep schedule
- ⦿ Aim for 75–90+ minutes Deep Sleep & 2+ hrs REM Sleep

Scientific Research Studies

- ⦿ Cappuccio et al., 2010 – Sleep
- ⦿ Yin et al., 2017 – Journal of the American Heart Association
- ⦿ Windred et al., 2024 – Sleep (sleep regularity study)



05

STRONG SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS (SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS)

Estimated Reduction

~25–50% lower mortality risk

What It Is

Humans are biologically wired for social connection. Supportive relationships improve emotional well-being, reduce stress hormones, and improve long-term health outcomes. Multiple studies show loneliness as a leading cause for early mortality.

Typical Amount Needed

- ☼ Regular social interaction
- ☼ Supportive friendships and family relationships

Scientific Research Studies

- ☼ Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010 – PLOS Medicine
- ☼ Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015 – Perspectives on Psychological Science
- ☼ Alcaraz et al., 2019 – American Journal of Epidemiology



06

NOT SMOKING / SMOKING CESSATION

Estimated Reduction

~50–70% lower mortality risk vs current smokers

What It Is

Smoking dramatically increases risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory disease, and many other causes of death. Quitting smoking (vaping, or any type of smoke inhalation) at any age significantly improves life expectancy.

Typical Amount Needed

- ☼ Complete smoking cessation
- ☼ Benefits begin within just 90 days of stopping

Scientific Research Studies

- ☼ Carter et al., 2015 – New England Journal of Medicine
- ☼ Thomson et al., 2022 – JAMA Network Open
- ☼ Pierce et al., 2022 – JAMA Network Open



Estimated Reduction

~10–20% lower mortality

What It Is

Omega-3 fatty acids support cardiovascular health, reduce inflammation, improve lipid profiles, lower triglycerides, and may lower risk of fatal heart disease. With over 30,000 studies documenting their benefits, I would be remiss not to include omega-3 fatty acids in our top 10 list. They are the only nutritional supplement (optional) to make the cut, though Vitamin D3 is a close second.

Typical Amount Needed

- ⦿ Fatty fish 2–3 times per week (Choose low to no mercury fish)
- ⦿ ~2 g/day EPA + DHA fish oil per day

Scientific Research Studies

- ⦿ Khan et al., 2021 – eClinicalMedicine
- ⦿ O'Keefe et al., 2024 – Mayo Clinic Proceedings
- ⦿ Rizos et al., 2012 – JAMA



**Estimated Reduction**

~15–30% lower all-cause mortality

What It Is

Fiber improves gut microbiome diversity, reduces inflammation, improves cholesterol levels, stabilizes blood sugar, and supports metabolic health. It also helps sweep out harmful pathogens and reduces hormonal/cholesterol reabsorption.

Typical Amount Needed

- ☼ ~25–38 grams per day
- ☼ Aim for 1/3rd of your total protein in fiber
- i.e., 100g of protein per day = 33g of fiber

Scientific Research Studies

- ☼ Reynolds et al., 2019 – The Lancet
- ☼ Park et al., 2011 – Archives of Internal Medicine
- ☼ Kim & Je, 2014 – American Journal of Epidemiology

Estimated Reduction

~15–30% lower mortality

What It Is

Psychological health, including optimism, life purpose, and emotional resilience, reduces chronic stress, improves cardiovascular health, and is associated with longer lifespan. Approach early retirement with a clear plan for how you will fill your days with purpose. Aim for a life filled with seeking opportunities for growth, service, and purpose.

Typical Amount Needed

- ⚙ Meaningful relationships
- ⚙ Purpose-driven goals and activities
- ⚙ When in doubt, list how you can be of service to others

Scientific Research Studies

- ⚙ Russ et al., 2012 – BMJ
- ⚙ Alimujiang et al., 2019 – JAMA Network Open
- ⚙ Rozanski et al., 2019 – JAMA Network Open



Estimated Reduction

~20–30% lower mortality compared with heavy drinking

What It Is

Heavy alcohol intake increases risk of cardiovascular disease, liver disease, cancer, and premature death. Lower intake or abstinence is associated with better long-term health outcomes. The latest research shows that over 2–3 drinks per week is likely to increase cancer risk.

Typical Amount Needed

- ✿ Avoid heavy drinking
- ✿ If consumed: ≤1–2 drinks/week for women; ≤2–3 drinks/week for men

Scientific Research Studies

- ✿ Zhao et al., 2023 – JAMA Network Open
- ✿ Tian et al., 2023 – BMC Medicine
- ✿ Xi et al., 2017 – Journal of the American College of Cardiology



BONUS LONGEVITY FACTOR

This protocol is included as a bonus because, unlike the previous nine habits, it involves a financial investment rather than a simple lifestyle swap. However, of all the biohacking tools supported by research, none are more effective at reducing all-cause mortality– specifically regarding cardiovascular health and Alzheimer’s prevention– than this final factor.

SAUNA USE

Estimated Reduction

- ☼ 2–3 sessions/week: ~24% all cause mortality reduction, 27% lower cardiovascular disease
- ☼ 4–7 sessions/week: ~40% lower all cause mortality, 63% reduced sudden cardiac death risk

What It Is

Regular sauna use increases heart rate (Zone 2), improves vascular function, lowers blood pressure, detoxes the body of heavy metals and microplastics, and may mimic some cardiovascular benefits of moderate exercise.

Typical Amount Needed

- ☼ 3–7 sessions per week
- ☼ ~15–20 minutes per session

Scientific Research Studies

- ☼ Laukkanen et al., 2018 – BMC Medicine
- ☼ Laukkanen et al., 2015 – JAMA Network
- ☼ Kunutsor et al., 2018 – Mayo Clinic Proceedings



HOW DID YOU DO?

Take a moment to reflect on the 10 lifestyle factors you just reviewed.

These habits represent the most powerful, science-backed ways to reduce the risk of chronic disease and extend healthy lifespan. You don't need to implement all of them perfectly to see benefits, but the more consistently you apply them, the greater the impact on your long-term health.

Check off the ones you're already completing 5+ days a week:

- ☐ Regular Physical Activity (Aerobic Exercise, Daily Steps & Resistance Training)
- ☐ Healthy Body Weight / Body Composition
- ☐ Mediterranean-Style Diet
- ☐ Adequate Sleep
- ☐ Strong Social Relationships
- ☐ Not Smoking / Smoking Cessation
- ☐ Omega-3 Intake (Fish / EPA / DHA)
- ☐ High Dietary Fiber Intake
- ☐ Psychological Well-Being / Purpose in Life
- ☐ Avoiding Heavy Alcohol Intake
- ☐ Sauna Use

If you already practice several of these habits, that's a strong foundation to build upon. If a few areas need improvement, that simply means you've identified opportunities to strengthen your health moving forward. The key is to focus on **progress, not perfection**. Small changes practiced consistently lead to profound improvements in energy, resilience, and longevity.

Start with one or two areas that feel most achievable right now, whether that's moving more each day, improving sleep, increasing fiber intake, or strengthening social connections. As these habits become part of your routine, you can gradually layer in others.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP ON YOUR HEALTH JOURNEY?



Your future health is shaped by the choices you make today. By committing to even a few of these evidence-based lifestyle practices, **you begin shifting your trajectory toward a longer, healthier life.** The best time to start was years ago. The next best time is today. And, if you ever need help in achieving your health & wellness goals, my team and I are here whenever you are ready. Simply contact us [here](#).

Wishing you all the best of health & happiness,

Stephen Cabral

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**READY TO START YOUR OWN HEALTH & LONGEVITY
PROTOCOL OR PERSONALIZED PLAN?**

START HERE