

Jungle people with almost no heart problems

10th April, 2017



Researchers have discovered the people with the healthiest hearts in the world. The Tsimane people live in the Amazon region of Bolivia and have almost no

risk of serious heart disease because of their plant-based diet and high levels of physical activity. Besides having a healthy heart, the Tsimane also have low blood pressure, low cholesterol levels and low blood glucose. This all adds up to a very strong cardiovascular system. And this means they avoid many of the diseases and conditions that kill hundreds of millions around the world, such as heart attack, stroke, diabetes and kidney failure. A study estimates that an 80-year-old from the Tsimane tribe has the same cardiovascular age as an American in their mid-50s.

The study on the Tsimane is published in the medical journal 'The Lancet'. Study co-author Dr Gregory S. Thomas stated: "This study suggests that coronary [disease] could be avoided if people adopted some elements of the Tsimane lifestyle, such as keeping their cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar very low, not smoking and being physically active." He added: "Most of the Tsimane are able to live their entire life without developing any coronary [disease]. This has never been seen in any prior research. While difficult to achieve in the industrialized world, we can adopt some aspects of their lifestyle to potentially forestall a condition we thought would eventually effect almost all of us."

Sources: healthline.com / newscientist.com / thelancet.com

Writing

It is easy for all of us to eat an extremely healthy diet and exercise a lot. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

researchers / region / plant-based diet / physical activity / cholesterol / heart attack / medical journal / coronary disease / blood pressure / industrialized / lifestyle / condition

True / False

- a) The people with the healthiest hearts live in the Amazon jungle. T / F
- b) The people have a largely freshwater fish-based diet. T / F
- c) The people generally have high levels of blood sugar. T / F
- d) An 80-year-old has the world's strongest cardiovascular system. T / F
- e) The study on the jungle people can be read in a medical journal. T / F
- f) A doctor recommended keeping levels of blood sugar low. T / F
- g) A study has never before documented people with no coronary disease. T / F
- h) The doctor said we couldn't adopt aspects of the tribe's lifestyle. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. discovered | a. stay away from |
| 2. risk | b. whole |
| 3. besides | c. calculates |
| 4. avoid | d. features |
| 5. estimates | e. possibility |
| 6. adopted | f. earlier |
| 7. entire | g. in the end |
| 8. prior | h. found |
| 9. aspects | i. took on |
| 10. eventually | j. apart from |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How interested are you in reading the full article?
- c) How are your blood pressure and cholesterol levels?
- d) Is there anything in this article we didn't know before?
- e) Should we have health training at school?
- f) Should the government make laws to make us follow a healthy lifestyle?
- g) What do you need to do right now to be healthier?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. in the Amazon region | a. of serious heart disease |
| 2. no risk | b. in any prior research |
| 3. because of their plant- | c. failure |
| 4. a very strong cardiovascular | d. of their lifestyle |
| 5. kidney | e. based diet |
| 6. coronary | f. almost all of us |
| 7. their entire | g. of Bolivia |
| 8. This has never been seen | h. life |
| 9. we can adopt some aspects | i. system |
| 10. eventually effect | j. disease |

Discussion – Student B

- What is the most interesting thing about what you read?
- Should we all go back to living off the land?
- Why doesn't everyone have a plant-based diet?
- How can we fit exercise into every part of our day?
- How is your health?
- What do you do to stay fit and healthy?
- What do you know about the cardiovascular system?
- Would you swap your life to live with the Tsimane people?

Spelling

- the Amazon neiorg of Bolivia
- low blood seusrpe
- low chllerstoeo levels
- such as heart attack, stroke, ietebdas ...
- kidney afluire
- the same lrrascaduivao age
- published in the medical oanlurj 'The Lancet'
- rryaoocn disease
- This has never been seen in any ropir research
- in the iltrdnaudzisi world
- enytlaioltp forestall a condition
- ueavyeltln effect almost all of us

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. a	5. c
6. i	7. b	8. f	9. d	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Love

You think love is the best thing for your heart. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least beneficial of these (and why): vegetables, sleep or medicine.

Role B – Vegetables

You think vegetables are best for your heart. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least beneficial of these (and why): love, sleep or medicine.

Role C – Sleep

You think sleep is the best thing for your heart. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least beneficial of these (and why): vegetables, love or medicine.

Role D – Medicine

You think medicine is the best thing for your heart. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least beneficial of these (and why): vegetables, sleep or love.

Speaking – Lifestyle

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things for your heart at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| • love | • laughter |
| • medicine | • long country walks |
| • vegetables | • being with friends |
| • sleep | • exercise |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.