



一無、二少、三多™  
**ichi-mu**                      **ni-sho**                      **san-ta**

# What is “ichi-mu, ni-sho, san-ta”

Quite **ONE** Habit

Reduce Serving Sizes of **TWO**

Enhance **THREE** Activities

Lifestyle-related diseases, including hypertension, type 2 diabetes and hyperlipidemia may develop without symptoms, making it difficult to recognize their presences. These conditions can lead to arteriosclerosis (thickening or hardening of the arteries). It can develop silently for years, and one day you may experience an unexpected heart attack or stroke.

Events such as cardiac and cerebral infarction can occur before we even know we are at risk. In order to prevent such harmful incidents, we need to be mindful of our own bodies, including our current health condition and any minor changes experienced. And it is important to build good lifestyle habits, not only after reaching middle age but while we are still young, and continuing those habits throughout our lives.

“**ichi-mu, ni-sho, san-ta**” are tips for self-management to stay healthy based on ancient wisdom and scientific facts in an easy and practical manner to illustrate desirable lifestyle habits that we should maintain daily. It was introduced by the honorary chairperson Yoshio Ikeda, MD at the Japan Preventive Association of Life-style related Disease (JPALD) in 1991, and we have been advocating it to the public since.



## ONE Habit : Smoking

**Quit Smoking: Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death**

Tobacco smoke contains 7,000 different chemicals and 250 kinds of toxic substances, over 70 of which are known carcinogens. The most widely known harmful chemicals are nicotine, radical oxygen, carbon monoxide, and tar. Heated tobacco and electronic cigarette products claim to produce 90% fewer toxins than regular cigarettes, yet it has been confirmed that the 90% reduction only applies to a handful of toxins. The "reduced" toxin content is still high enough to lead to the development or worsening of diseases caused by smoking/passive smoke, including cancer. In relation to COVID-19, smokers are more likely to have severe symptoms, and their antibody levels do not elevate much after vaccination.



## Reduce Serving Sizes of TWO : Alcohol and Food

**Reduce Portion Size: Don't stuff yourself, chew thoroughly and eat regularly**

One Japanese proverb states, "Moderate diet calls for no doctor!" It is very important not to overeat in order to maintain healthy bodily function. Dietary measures are often used in the treatment of lifestyle-related diseases, suggesting that the best regimen for hypertension, type 2 diabetes and hyperlipidemia should be based on good diet and moderation. To help reduce the amount of food ingested, we should stop eating before we feel full; it's best to stop when we feel we can still eat a little more. A helpful way to think about this is to eat to 80% of your stomach capacity, while leaving 20% empty. We should also eat a balanced diet, chew our food thoroughly and eat three regular meals a day. Such moderation helps reduce elevation of blood glucose after eating, which can contribute to healthier outcomes. Other important tips are to eat less of "Three Whites—white rice/bread, salt and sugar—<sup>2</sup>" and eat more dietary fiber.



**Reduce Alcohol Consumption: Balance risks and benefits of alcohol**

Many lifestyle-related diseases are closely related to alcohol consumption, especially when it's excessive. Alcoholism is a very serious disease, which can affect normal daily activities and have a devastating impact on psychological and physical states. As another Japanese proverb - "While it is the best of all medicines, alcohol can cause all diseases<sup>3</sup>,"—says, even those who have high alcohol tolerance should drink only in moderation.

## Enhance THREE : Exercise, Sleeping, and Social Interaction

**Be More Active: Even an extra 10 minutes of physical activity can benefit your health**

Engage in more physical activity in your daily life. Try not to sit for a long time and do as much physical activity as possible everyday. "Two legs are two doctors<sup>4</sup>" is a popular proverb for a reason. If you feel you are not getting sufficient physical activity, you should increase it modestly, like walking for a longer time, rather than setting an overly challenging goal.



**Get More Sleep and Relaxation Time: Balance your mind, body, and soul**

While 6–8 hours of sleep is considered ideal, what is "comfortable" may vary among individuals. Adjust your sleep schedule to complement your activity level. On top of getting adequate "sleep", set opportunities aside to refresh your body, mind and soul. The resting time should accommodate your daily schedule and life stage, including "breaks" during work, "off days" when you completely stay away from work, and enjoying summer and year-end "vacation". Committing to these restful periods will provide healthful balance in your life. Making sure to have these restful moments to refresh your body, mind, and soul will bring you a balanced and healthy life.



**Stay Socially Connected: Maintain physical and emotional health via interaction**

It is important to interact with many people, maintain curiosity and expose yourself to a wide variety of experiences. This may enhance your creativity and aid in coping with stress. It is scientifically proven that socially isolated and segregated people are more prone to experiencing physical and/or emotional health issues. It is well known that those who have participated in volunteer work feel healthier and happier. The sense of contributing to society helps one feel young, regardless of actual age. Whether via their hobbies or occupation, people with a sense of purpose or something to live for tend to be more energetic.



<sup>1</sup> Yojokun; Life Lessons from a Samurai by Kaibara Ekiken (1630-1740, a Botanist and Confucian in Edo Era)

<sup>2</sup> Three Whites (white rice/bread, salt and sugar)

White rice/bread: Brown rice and whole-wheat flour are rich in nutrients such as dietary fiber and protein, which are stripped away to make white rice/bread. Such processed grains are also absorbed more quickly by the body and can increase postprandial hyperglycemia.

Salt: Excess sodium intake can cause hypertension, stomach cancer and kidney diseases.

Sugar: Excess sugar intake can cause obesity, heightening the risk of lifestyle diseases including diabetes, cardiac diseases and brain infarction.

<sup>3</sup> Tsurezuregusa; Essays in Idleness by Yoshida Kenko (around 1200-1300, a Poet and Essayist in Kamakura Era). "While it is the best of all medicines, alcohol can cause all diseases", "People often say alcohol helps forget the bitter things life offers, but they just look miserably intoxicated", and other aphorisms on alcohol. "Alcohol is the best of all medicines" comes from the Chinese ancient historical records of the Later Han Dynasty, Gokanjo.

<sup>4</sup> Hippocrates (c.460-c.370 BC, ancient Greek physician). Two doctors indicate a surgeon and a physician.