



The universal human desire  
of ending age-related diseases

# Freedom from aging and age-related diseases is a long-standing dream of humankind



Epic of Gilgamesh  
(Ancient poem of  
Mesopotamia)

After losing his  
friend, in the  
deepest of grief,  
Gilgamesh journeys  
to find the flower of  
immortality.

# Myths explaining why people cannot remain young and live for as long as they want are similar on all continents



Messages from God



Lunar rejuvenation



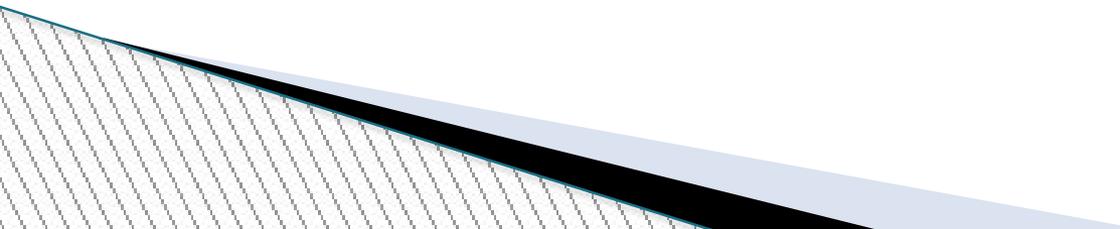
Failed test



Shedding skin and rejuvenation

Berezkin Yu. E. (2007). Origins of death – the most ancient of all myths. *Ethnographic bulletin*, (1), 70-89.  
( [in Russian](#) )

**What do modern people think  
about life extension  
and desired lifespan?**



# "How long do you want to live?" is the wrong question

Asked how long they would like to live, more than two-thirds (69%) cite an age between 79 and 100. The median ideal life span is 90 years – about 11 years longer than the current average U.S. life expectancy, which is 78.7 years.<sup>3</sup>

## Ideal Length of Life

% saying their ideal life span is...



Source: Pew Research Center survey March 21-April 8, 2013. Q14. Responses of those who did not give an answer not shown.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



Pew Research Center

In a survey of the desired lifespan of elderly people, **the average US person adds only 11 years to the average life expectancy, and the average Canadian adds only 12 years.** This conservative scenario is due to the question being framed in the wrong way.



[Link to the study results online](#)

## CARP Radical Life Extension Poll Report

Americans would prefer to live, on average, to 89, while CARP members would prefer, on average, to live to 94. CARP members do not expect, however, to live longer than Americans; desired life span (average 88 years). This may be a factor of longer average life spans among Canadians.

*To what age would you prefer to live/To what age do you expect you will live?*

	Pew (prefer)	CARP (prefer)	CARP (expect)
<b>AVERAGE AGE</b>	89 years	94 years	88 years

[Link to the study results online](#)



# "How long do you want to live?" is the wrong question

Journal of Gerontology: PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES  
2007, Vol. 62B, No. 5, P268-P276

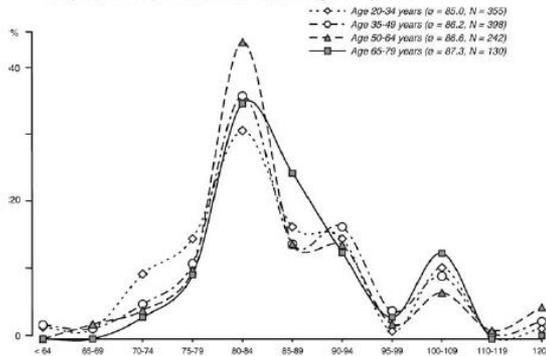
Copyright 2007 by The Gerontological Society of America

## Desired Lifetime and End-of-Life Desires Across Adulthood From 20 to 90: A Dual-Source Information Model

Frieder R. Lang,<sup>1</sup> Paul B. Baltes,<sup>2</sup> and Gert G. Wagner<sup>3</sup>

[Link to the study results online](#)

Study 1 (N = 1125): "I would like to reach the age of ... years".



Study 2 (N = 364): "I would like to reach the age of ... years".

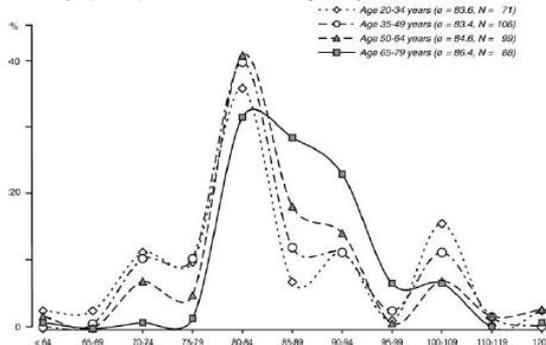


Figure 1. Desired lifetime (in years) across age groups (a) for Study 1 (N = 1,175; 20–80 years) and (b) for Study 2 (n = 364; 20–80 years), after exclusion of 12 respondents older than 80 years. In older age groups, adults express a greater preference to live longer.



Финансовый Университет при Правительстве РФ  
Департамент социологии

Большинство россиян хочет дожить только до 80 лет

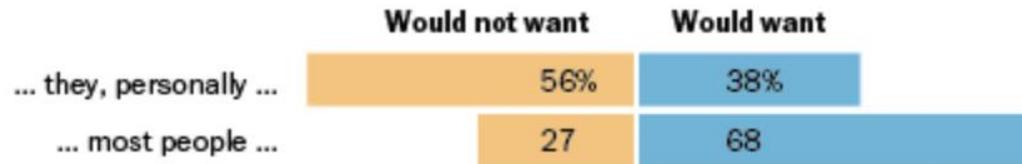
[Link to the study results online](#) (in Russian)

When answering the questions "For how long do you want to live?" or "What is the optimal lifespan for you? For other people?", the Russians give a number that is only 10 years above the average life expectancy. The Germans give a number that is 5-6 years above the average life expectancy.

# 1 / 3 of people in developed countries want HEALTHY life extension

## Who wants to live decades longer?

*% of U.S. adults saying ... would or would not want medical treatments that slow the aging process and allow the average person to live decades longer, to at least 120 years*



*... % saying their ideal life span is ...*



Note: "Don't know"/refused responses not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 21-April 8, 2013.  
"Living to 120 and Beyond"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

**How long you would like to live, provided you would keep your health and youth?**

As much as nature allows now – 64%

**Several times longer than people live now – 23%**

**Indefinitely long, as long as I want, up to immortality - 9%**

Hard to say – 4%

Survey by Levada Center  
1600 people in Russia in 2012



[Link to the study results online](#)

[Link to the study results online](#)  
(Russian)

# "For how long you would like to live, provided that you preserve your health and youth?"

1000 participants  
2015, USA



PERSPECTIVE  
published: 20 January 2016  
doi: 10.3389/fgene.2015.00353

## Great Desire for Extended Life and Health amongst the American Public



*Yoni Donner<sup>1</sup>, Kristen Fortney<sup>2</sup>, Stuart R. G. Calimport<sup>3</sup>, Karl Pflieger<sup>4</sup>, Munjal Shah<sup>5</sup> and Joe Betts-LaCroix<sup>5\*</sup>*

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[Link to the study results online](#)

**423 (42%) wanted indefinitely long lives.  
374 (37%) wanted to extend their lifespans to at least 120.  
Therefore, a total of 797 out of 1000 (80%) wanted their lives significantly extended.**

# A global desire for perfect health



World Health  
Organization

[Link to the WHO Constitution](#)

Health is a state of **complete physical, mental and social well-being** and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The objective of the World Health Organization shall be the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health.

**If the WHO is aiming at eradicating all diseases, does it include age-related diseases?**

**Of course it does.**

**Thus, the global consensus is to find a way to eventually bring aging under medical control, as this is the most cost-effective way to cure and prevent age-related diseases.**

# Conclusion

To get rid of aging and age-related diseases is an ancient dream of humanity that is shared by all peoples on all continents.

However, to make people admit and openly express this dream, you have to frame the question in the right way.

Asking about desired lifespan, without mentioning health, causes people to make a simple extrapolation and add more years to the period of old age and frailty – which is obviously undesirable. This is how resistance to the idea of life extension is typically provoked.

Instead, asking if people want to extend the period of youth and health, and how long they would like to live provided that they are young and healthy, is the right wording because it helps people imagine living longer while being productive and disease-free, which is the real goal of rejuvenation medicine.



## Thank you!

If you have an interesting research project in mind to investigate one of the main mechanisms of aging and longevity or you would like to support such a project, you are welcome to contact us at [info@lifespan.io](mailto:info@lifespan.io).

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