

Longevity factors: A case for southwest Japan

People living in the southwestern archipelago (Amami and Okinwa) off the coast of the Japan's main island are well known for their relatively high life expectancy rate. I will present several key elements contributing to their longevity by previous studies such as healthy diet, laid-back cultural milieu, close social network, and adequate exercise. In particular, I will focus on the potential role that spirituality/religion plays in an elevated level of well-being and life satisfaction among the older people in this region. However, like *champuru*, a traditional stir-fried dish native to this region, it is not a single element but a harmonious combination of all these indigenous ingredients that, when cooked "just right," seems to produce the taste of longevity.