



DOUGLAS R. CLIFFORD/ TAMPA BAY TIMES/ ZUMA PRESS Seniors play water volleyball at the Lake Miona Pool and Recreation Center at the Villages in Florida.

Test Your Knowledge Of Life Expectancies

Which U.S. state has the highest average longevity? Take our quiz

BY SIMON CONSTABLE

We all know that life is finite. But some people live far longer than others, and it isn't always clear why longevity varies from person to person.

Some point to genetics, others to wealth and still others to where people live.

How much do you know about longevity?

Test yourself with the following quiz.

1. What is the average life expectancy at birth for the total U.S. population?

A. 75 years B. 77 years C. 79 years D. 81 years E. 84 years

2. Which U.S. state has the highest average life expectancy?

A. Hawaii B. Massachusetts C. Colorado D. California E. New Jersey

3. Which state has the lowest average life expectancy?

A. Indiana B. Arkansas C. Ohio D. West Virginia E. Mississippi

4. Which three places have the highest longevity in the world, according to U.N. data?

A. Moldova, Turkmenistan, Guyana

B. South Korea, Canada, Italy C. Faroe Islands, Singapore, Australia

D. Monaco, San Marino, Hong Kong

E. Switzerland, Norway, Estonia **5.** There were 7.4 centenarians per every 10,000 adults age 65 and older around the world in 2015, up from 2.9 in 1990, according to Pew Research. What does Pew project that the share of centenarians will be in 2050?

A. 12.4 B. 16.9 C. 23.6 D. 33.1 E. 40.1 **6.** The Journal of the American Medical Association published a study showing that wealthier adults in the U.S. live longer. How much longer, on average, do the richest 10% live compared with the poorest 10%?

A. Approximately one year B. Approximately 3.5 years C. Approximately 6.3 years D. Approximately 14 years E. Approximately 15.1 years **7.** Which country has the most centenarians, according to World Population Review?

A. Thailand B. India C. Japan D. U.S.

E. China **8.** Genetics may play a bigger role in longevity than had been previously believed. What percentage of a person's potential lifespan is likely inherited from parents, according to a new paper that was published in Science, which analyzed data from twin studies?

A. Approximately 30% B. Approximately 40% C. Approximately 50% D. Approximately 60% E. Approximately 75% **9.** Which of the following was the leading cause of death in the U.S. in 2024?

A. Heart disease B. Cancer C. Diabetes D. Stroke E. Chronic liver disease **10.** In the U.S., women tend to live longer than men. Which state has the largest difference between the two?

A. Arkansas B. Florida C. Nevada D. New Mexico E. Louisiana **ANSWERS 1-10** C. Life expectancy was 79 years in 2024, up from 78.4 years in 2023, according to the latest data from the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2. A. People living in Hawaii are expected to live to 80 years old, according to the latest state life tables from the CDC. Massachusetts is next at 79.8 years, followed by New Jersey at 79.6 years.

3. D. West Virginia has a life expectancy of 72.2 years, according to the CDC. The next lowest is Mississippi at 72.6 years.

4. D. Life expectancy is 86.5 years in Monaco, 85.8 in San Marino and 85.6 years in Hong Kong, according to United Nations data from 2026.

5. C. Since 1990, the population of people age 80 and older, the oldest segment of the 65-plus population, has grown faster than the younger segments, according to Pew.

6. D. Among other things, wealthy people in the U. S. have greater access to healthy food; more options for safe employment; better access to healthcare; and more leisure time to engage in health-promoting activities, researchers say.

7. C. Japan had roughly 120,000 people age 100 or above in 2023, while the U. S. ranked second with at least 64,000, according to the report.

8. C. After correcting for deaths caused by extrinsic factors such as accidents and infections, the study found that about 50% of a person's potential lifespan comes from parents. Previous research on twins put it at 20-25%, while another large study suggested it was as low as 6%.

9. A. Heart disease killed 638,491 U. S. residents in 2024. Cancer was next, causing 619,876 deaths.

10. D. In New Mexico, women live 7.07 years longer than men on average, according to a World Population Review analysis for 2023. The second-highest difference is in Louisiana, where women live an average of 6.67 years longer.

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