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David van Bodegom was born on the 30th of January 1978 in Zuidhorn, the Netherlands. From 1990 to 1996 he attended the Rotterdam Montessori Lyceum and completed his VWO studies. At age eighteen, he moved to Leiden, where he studied Ancient history and in 2000 graduated (cum laude) on a study on Greek sacrifices. After this, he started his medical training, which resulted in his master degree in 2004 (cum laude) and his medical degree in 2007. From 2004 onwards he became involved in the Ghana research project of the department of Gerontology & Geriatrics of the Leiden University Medical Centre. First as a student and later as a Phd student, he travelled extensively between the Netherlands and the research area in Ghana. Since 2009, he is a member of the scientific staff of the Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing, which aims to improve the quality of life of older people. Here, his main responsibilities include the research programme of the academy and the international post-graduate master Vitality and Ageing, which trains medical doctors to become pioneers in the field of ageing. Since 2010, he is appointed assistant professor of medicine at the Leiden University Medical Centre.

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