

Live Long and Die Healthy

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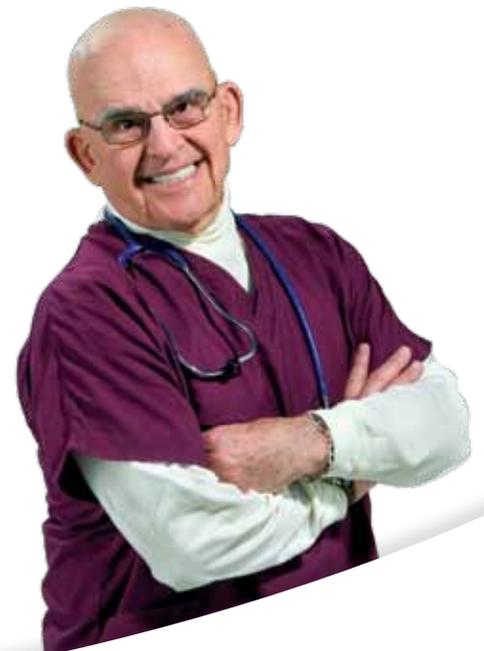
For the first time in history, most of us have the chance to live the full human life span of 90 to 100 years. Our challenge is to maintain good health throughout our lives. And the first step in maintaining health is learning and understanding more about it. Just as important, we must assume personal responsibility for our health – because nobody cares about your health more than you!

In the 20th Century medical science conquered many causes of human death. Some diseases are now cured, others easily treated. And yet, in the 21st Century, our medical system is not a true “health-care” system. It remains a “sickness-care” system. Few of the billions of dollars spent on medical care each year go to maintain health. We know how to prevent many of the diseases that cripple and kill us, but we direct our resources instead toward curing rather than prevention. Anyone who understands that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” must take responsibility for his own health and wellness. Our present system just isn’t going to get that job done.

This program examines the medical system and how it has extended life American expectancy from 54 in the 1930s to nearly 80 today. It emphasizes the critical fact that our medical system provides no financial incentives for maintaining health. It is a system designed to cure sickness, repair trauma and keep ill patients alive.

The challenge of living in good health thus falls to each individual. Through personal life-style decisions, each of us can take responsibility for preserving our health and improving our quality of life for the full human lifespan of 90 or more years.

No individual can hope to change our entire medical system. But if each of us takes more responsibility and control for our own wellness, the system will surely change. In the 21st Century, more than ever before, patients and physicians must become partners, working together and sharing knowledge. Together we can transform the American “sickness care system” into a true “health care system”. The new system will focus not only on curing the sick but also on preventing disease and maintaining health.



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John D. Shier RN, PhD

Living Long and Dying Healthy Requires:

- Regular vigorous exercise at least three to five times per week with each exercise period lasting at least twenty to thirty minutes with the heart rate raised to a rate appropriate to one's age according to the following formula:
 - 220 minus age
 - Divide the result by 4
 - Multiply the result by 3
 - E.g.: 220 minus age 40 = 180
 - 180 divided by 4 = 45
 - 45 times 3 = 135- the target heart rate
- Reducing the fat content of the diet to no more than 25% of calories consumed. (See www.mypyramid.gov for the newest food pyramid.)
- Controlling weight within healthy limits through the management of caloric intake and regular exercise.
- Smoking is absolutely prohibited if one desires a long and healthy life.
- Alcohol can have positive health benefits for persons who are neither alcoholic or allergic to alcohol, who have no religious or ethical objections to imbibing and who can drink sensibly and with moderation.
- It is important to research family medical history at least to include parents, aunts and uncles, cousins and siblings. This is the basis of the "Owner's Manual" which prescribes regular preventive screening and tests.
- Stress must be recognized and dealt with. Perhaps the best stress relief comes in and through regular exercise.
- The practice of everyday safety at work at home and while recreating is important. Seat belts, safety helmets and life jackets is strongly advised whenever their use is appropriate. Safety requires constant awareness of unsafe conditions and practices.
- Preparing and enacting a durable power of attorney for health care (DPOA) is vital given that, without other direction, the primary function of the American medical system is to prolong the life of the patient. A trusted family member or friend empowered by the DPOA to act on a person's behalf in determining what the medical system will do or not do when one is unable to speak or act for oneself is a basic requirement.

Finding a physician with whom one can be a partner in pursuing health.

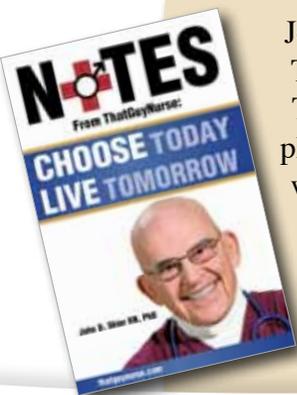
Finally, each person must understand and accept that the responsibility for health belongs only to the individual.

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