FROM THE EXPERTS

What Are You Doing to Avoid Illness?

by Dr. Andrew T. Brady

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Chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity and diabetes are responsible for 7 out of every 10 deaths in the United States. To put this number into perspective, cancer, heart disease and diabetes will kill roughly 1.5 million Americans next year, which is equivalent to 505 September 11th terrorist attacks.

Chronic diseases are diseases caused by poor lifestyle choices, which means they are preventable. Yet 70% of Americans will be diagnosed with a chronic disease in their lifetime. Many people try to blame sickness on their genes or old age. Our genes have not changed in the last 40,000 years, while the rate of chronic diseases has skyrocketed in just the past 20 years. Less than 1% of chronic diseases can be blamed on genetics – that's it. Blaming chronic disease on genes is simply not scientific.

Many Americans have been reassured that they can "manage" their chronic diseases with prescription medications and more frequent doctor visits. Do you think all of the 1.5 million people who will die from a chronic disease this year were the ones that couldn't get their medications or didn't have access to their doctor? Obviously not. In our office, we often see new patients who are taking upwards of 16 different medications, many of which cause negative interactions with each other. There has to be a point where you take a step back and ask yourself: "Are drugs the answer to our chronic health problems?" The answer is no. Drugs and surgery can be life saving when used in a crisis, but they do not cure chronic diseases.

So, what can you do to avoid chronic disease? It boils down to eating well, moving well and thinking well. We need to adopt the lifestyle we were genetically engineered for. Our genetics are programmed to express health and wellness, but you have to give the body what it needs and take away the things that are harmful.

What are you doing to avoid developing a chronic disease? Need a place to start? Join me for a nutrition seminar October 7th at 7:00 p.m. at the Hudson Library to learn more about eating well. To reserve your seat, stop in Heinen's in Hudson or call (330) 655-5255.

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