Medicines and Treatments That Patients Don't Need

A journal published by the American Medical Association is taking a hard look at the perils of extra tests and treatments. Too many tests can often lead to unnecessary treatments or even hurt the patient.

"Less Is More" will become a feature in the Archives of Internal Medicine. It will examine treatments that expanded to the point where the risks of the treatment outweigh benefits.

According to ABC News:

“Studies in the current issue look at potential risks of proton-pump inhibitors, which were originally designed for gastric reflux but now are used for conditions as mild as heartburn.”

Sources:
» ABC News May 12, 2010

Comments:

I’m truly shocked that this JAMA journal has been able to take this leap, shackled to the conventional disease paradigm as they are. My guess is that they have finally realized that they’re simply unable to continue to pull the wool over everyone’s eyes forever, and that if they start to come clean now they will preserve some level of dignity and respect.

If you’ve been following this newsletter for any length of time, you will probably already be aware of many of the topics they’ll cover, because the concepts that “Less is More,” and “How Less Health Care Can Result in Better Health” are exactly what I’ve been teaching for many years on this site.

The sad reality is that most drugs and conventional treatment methods that are massively overused, don’t address the cause of the problem, and do more harm than simply doing nothing ever would.
As reported by ABC News:

"Treatments may come about to help a certain population, but when a medical treatment is overused in an otherwise healthy person, "There can only be harm," Grady said. "We'd really like to bring attention to this."

… when treatments are used for milder conditions, "There is no effectiveness, there is no benefit, there are only side effects."

I couldn’t have said it better myself.

**Your Body is a Self-Healing Machine**

The world is rife with evidence that the non-pharmacological approach can accomplish as much, and in many cases more than pills. This concept also makes perfect logical sense, if you remove the thrill of scientific discovery long enough to think that far.

Your body is exquisitely equipped for self-healing, as long as its systems are in good working order.

So how do you ensure that?

With man-made chemicals in doses your body has never encountered or dealt with before?

Were you to ponder this logically, you’d quickly realize the inherent fallacy of the promise of health from using many prescription drugs.

You simply *cannot* achieve optimal health through drugs. It’s impossible.

You can use drugs as band-aids, temporarily suspending a symptom or two, but then there are side effects… Your body tries to compensate and heal, but the more chemicals you throw down your gullet, the more off-kilter your body gets and the more ill you become.

Conventional medical doctors typically respond to this by prescribing you yet another drug, and another, and another…

This is why the average American [senior now gets 30 drug prescriptions!](#)

Meanwhile, adverse drug reactions from "properly prescribed drugs" are the [fourth leading cause of death](#) in the United States. And [overdoses from prescription drugs](#) rank [second only to motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of accidental death](#).

Additionally, many medications create life-long dependency upon the drug, despite the damage and suffering they’re inflicting, since drug withdrawal exacerbates your symptoms until the drug is completely out of your system.
The current medical paradigm, with its focus on a drug for every symptom creates a mind-boggling amount of needless suffering and premature death.

Optimal health requires optimal FOOD, not more drugs.

It really is that simple.

Once you feed your body the nutrients it needs instead of chemicals, “health” becomes the norm rather than the exception.

**Ills that Don’t Need Pills**

Sadly, some of the health problems that are most easily and/or effectively treated with diet, exercise and other non-pharmacological remedies are also some of the most over-medicated, using some of the most dangerous drugs on the market!

This includes:
- Depression
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Arthritis

The U.S. spends more than twice as much on each person for health care as most other industrialized countries, yet it has fallen to **last place** among those countries in preventing avoidable deaths through use of timely and effective medical care.

How can that be?

**Americans are Dangerously Over-Tested and Over-Treated**

In addition to overmedication and prescription drug abuse – which, by the way, cost the US health care system tens of billions of dollars to treat, over and above the cost of the actual drugs -- unnecessary or dangerous tests, and unwarranted medical treatments are also part of the problem.

Three years ago **Consumer Reports published a list of the 10 most overused medical tests and treatments**, and not much has changed since then.
Their list includes:

- Back surgery
- Heartburn surgery
- Prostate treatments
- Implanted defibrillators
- Coronary stents
- C-sections
- Whole body screens
- High-tech angiography
- Mammography
- Virtual colonoscopy

It may take awhile to change this trend of equating good health care with getting every test under the sun, and vigorously treating every ailment with everything in the conventional arsenal. But I believe we can and will change this perverse and fatally flawed model.

It all starts with you, though. It will require a public shift in mindset, which will influence the type of care expected from doctors, and it will spread upward and outward from there.

**The Staggering Health Care Costs of Diet-Related Disease**

It’s important to realize that diet-related diseases are mind-bogglingly expensive to treat with conventional medicine, and yet they are completely preventable.

The annual [health care cost of obesity in the US](#) has reached $147 billion, for example, and the [medical bills for diabetes](#) are at an estimated $217.5 billion a year.

Obesity is closely linked to [heart disease, which costs the US an additional $503 billion a year](#) in direct and indirect expenses.
These health problems are directly attributable to your diet and lifestyle, so just imagine the savings that could be achieved were we to focus on food rather than drugs as a primary means of achieving good health!

On an individual basis, it’s important to realize that every dollar you think you’re saving today by opting for processed fast food rather than cooking with fresh whole foods can turn into several dollars paid for eventual medical bills down the road.

You Can Use Your Kitchen as Your Pharmacy

For many people, convenience foods, either in restaurants or ready-to-cook frozen meals picked up from the grocery store, have become a way of life. In the United States, 90 percent of the money Americans spend on food is for processed food, and fast food is available just about everywhere, including in hospitals and schools.

For a clear, real-life demonstration of just HOW BAD this way of life actually is, go ahead and watch Morgan Spurlock’s documentary “SuperSize Me”. It may forever change your life – for the better. Another great resource is the book Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser. It does an outstanding job of identifying the problems of fast-food diets. Fast food:

- Exponentially increases your risk of obesity and diabetes
- Is loaded with dangerous additives like trans fats, high-fructose corn syrup and MSG
- Contains genetically modified ingredients
- Is devoid of nutrients

Spread the Word

Remember, you CAN help to turn this madness around if you spread the word as far and wide as you can -- that relying on drugs will never give you the healthy body and mind you desire.

What WILL give you optimal health does require a bit of work on your part, to eat healthy, to exercise, to relieve your stress.

But the rewards can be priceless.