

THE Wellness Minute

Wellness Series: 3.4
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Take Control of Your Health

Are You In Control?

There is an old saying, "Everyone wants to go to heaven but nobody wants to die to do it." We feel the same way about our health. Everybody wants to be healthy but no one wants to do the necessary things to get there.

The fact is, health comes from within you. You cannot buy it at a local pharmacy. Health cannot be given to you by someone. It is not contagious. You may receive a genetic predisposition toward health from your parents and grandparents, but your genes don't really determine your health. Your genes express themselves as a result of your lifestyle. Poor lifestyle creates poor health and a healthy lifestyle creates better health. Your decisions and actions about your lifestyle are literally a matter of life and death.

Without any doubt, the single most important concept to understand and accept so that you may attain maximum health and get the most out of life is that YOU are responsible for your health. That's really the way it should be.

The idea of taking control and responsibility for one's own health is a relatively recent concept. Throughout history the responsibility for a people's health was assumed by the most learned or powerful person in the tribe, village or city... witch doctors, medicine men, or shamans... and in our day it was Marcus Welby, MD on television or Benjamin Spock, MD telling us how to raise our



children. However, beginning in the late 1960's the pedestal that medical doctors had been placed upon was shattered. Few people accept the role of the physician as the sole authority in matters of health. Just look at the rise in popularity of alternative health care methods. By 2007, nearly 40% of all U.S. adults were using alternative non-medical health care and taking back the control of their health from the medical establishment. But, giving away your control of your health to anyone is still giving it away.

Here are some questions to ask yourselves to determine if you control your health: (1) Do you ever ask about the side effects of prescriptions? (2) Do you get a 2nd opinion on physical problems? (3) Do you ever question your doctor's recommendations? (4) Have you read a book on health in the past few months? (5) If you chose the three most important things in life, would health be one of them? (6) Do you find yourself ever really listening to drug commercials? (7) Do you think that health is mostly a matter of luck?

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