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Dr. Marc Weissman's Breakthrough Patient Newsletter...

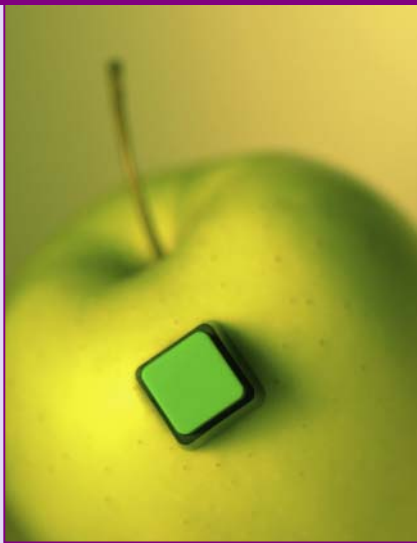
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Dear Patient and Friend,

Whether you are a parent, a grandparent, a future parent or a child, there are some simple guidelines you can follow to increase your chances of having the healthiest life possible. By applying some simple common sense ideas, you'll improve your quality of life and probably extend your life while you're doing it.

Starting in the Sixties and for over thirty years, a study was conducted in California called the Alameda County Study, which identified seven habits people who lived long healthy lives tended to develop. They observed seven key indicators for longevity and quality of life by following Alameda County residents 60-94 years of age and recording trends among those with optimal results. They are obvious once you see them – they are easy to adopt into your life, and will more likely than not reduce the amount of time and money you have to spend on doctors over your lifetime and your family's lifetime.

As you have probably already guessed, these seven lifestyle choices are nothing extreme – rather they are normal daily habits which many of you already do or sometimes do. You'll be amazed to discover how making a few changes can improve your chances of a long healthy life. And if you share these distinctions with your family, you can approach these lifestyle choices together and share in the benefits.

Here are the Alameda Seven:

1) Sleep seven or eight hours each night. The importance of sleep cannot be overemphasized. Rest and rejuvenation are critical components of a healthy metabolism, and sleeping long enough and restfully enough give your body the healing and regeneration time it needs to perform as you wish during the day. Allow sufficient time to sleep.

Also check your sleep equipment – is your mattress comfortable, is it the right size and shape for your needs, does it support you the way you need when you are sleeping? You'll spend between a quarter and a third of your life in your bed – make sure you have invested in the best sleep gear available. And you should be able to sleep comfortably on your pillow, not too low and not too high.

Finally, you're better off sleeping face up or on your side, not face down, since sleeping on your stomach keeps your neck turned all night, which can lead to misalignment and pain. Get into the habit of sleeping in healthy positions.

2) Eat breakfast. Beginning your day with a healthful, nutritious meal kick-starts your machinery and replenishes your energy storage after your night's fast – that where the word "breakfast" comes from, breaking your fast after sleeping. Coffee and a donut are not the kind of fuel you may choose to put into your finely tuned physiology – pick breakfast foods that have less sugar and artificial ingredients, and more balanced whole foods in moderate quantities. Some people do well with fruit, some with cereals, some with eggs, but select foods in combinations that your body processes well.

And drink water – your body needs it after having none for seven or eight hours. Don't make the assumption that coffee and juice are as good as water -- your body treats them more like food. Drink water, and your body will thank you for it.

3) Exercise. Scientists have an assortment of theories on exercise, many of which have merit, but the simplest exercise is just deciding to move around more as part of your lifestyle. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Park on the other side of the parking lot and walk a hundred yards to your office. Walk around the block before or after dinner. Use part of your lunch hour to ride a bicycle, stretch, or do some yoga.

Some exercise experts recommend short bursts of high intensity exercise, while others say that working physical movement and activity into your daily routines is better – in fact, why not do both, and you'll be astounded how quickly your body gets stronger, more flexible and less cranky.



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4) Maintain a desirable weight for your height. There is obviously a wide range of acceptability for this, but the product of sleeping enough, eating well and exercising, the first three habits mentioned, should get you into the ball park.

A word to the wise -- don't try to be something you're not. Some people have slimmer body types, others have thicker body types, and regardless of your natural gifts, you have to aim at the right proportions for someone of your particular body type. Be reasonable, and if you need feedback you can easily consult height and weight charts to get an idea if you are within the desired boundaries.

5) No smoking. If you've never smoked, even better. Most research shows that your body starts to repair itself once you stop smoking, and depending on the amount of damage, you'll come all the way or part of the way back to optimal. At the very least, notice the relationship between serious chronic illness and smoking, and do everything possible to reduce or eliminate smoking in your life and your family's life.

Smoking is a major contributing factor to the majority of the preventable disease our society is burdened by, so it cannot be overemphasized to quit or avoid smoking and campaign for others you care about to do the same.

6) Drink less than five drinks at one sitting. Alcohol is a matter of personal taste and conviction, but there is a correlation between health problems and excessive drinking. Where is the line for you? No one really knows for sure, but this study demonstrated that those who drank fewer than five drinks at a sitting were measurably healthier than those who drank five drinks at a sitting or more.

Give or take the right amount for any particular person, observing moderation with alcohol is consistent with good health, quality of life and longevity.

7) Avoid snacks. Sugary bursts confound and irritate your body's regulatory mechanisms, and daily coffee, soda pop, and donuts are both a poor start to a day's nutrition and a lousy snack along the way. It pumps the body's energy systems, and exhausts your resources, making you crash and crave more sugar. And diet sodas have recently been linked to heart attacks and stroke, so they aren't much better for you.

Some diet and nutrition experts believe that several smaller meals are easier on your body, while others subscribe to the more traditional three squares – but snacking on empty calories or non-nutritious foods seems to lead to worse health and shorter life.

There are other positive habits you can adopt to make your health and wellness even better. You can take appropriate nutritional supplements in addition to your clean, wholesome, balanced diet. You can meditate, get massage or do yoga to relieve stress. And you and your family can enjoy the miraculous healing benefits chiropractic is famous for with periodic chiropractic examinations and adjustments when necessary.

You only get one body – take good care of it and it will take good care of you. Good health is not an accident – it's the product of good luck and good lifestyle decisions. You may not be able to control your luck, but you can improve your chances with good lifestyle decisions, so keep moving toward your ideal, and you and your family will have the best likelihood of good health.

Beware the Ides of March ...

Poets, authors and philosophers have recorded their ideas about the beauty and excitement of this time of year – enjoy some lovely and entertaining thoughts about the month of March.

It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade.

- **Charles Dickens**

"A light exists in Spring
Not present in the year
at any other period
When March is scarcely here."

- **Emily Dickinson**

"Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty."

- **William Shakespeare**

"The March wind roars
Like a lion in the sky,
And makes us shiver
As he passes by.
When winds are soft,
And the days are warm and clear,
Just like a gentle lamb,
Then spring is here."

- **Author Unknown**

"Springtime is the land awakening.
The March winds are the morning yawn."

- **Lewis Grizzard**

"March is a tomboy with tousled hair, a mischievous smile, mud on her shoes and a laugh in her voice."

- **Hal Borland**

One swallow does not make a summer, but one skein of geese, cleaving the murk of March thaw, is the Spring.

- **Aldo Leopold**

Spring is nature's way of saying, "Let's party!"

- **Robin Williams**



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