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Health-e-America

by Raymond Francis

The health of the American people is in a long-term downtrend. As our health continues to deteriorate, this will have profound implications for the future of our country. Something must be done, but what?

The Problem

Right now, more than three out of four Americans have a diagnosable chronic disease. Sixty-four percent of us take medications on a regular basis. Our ever-increasing disease-care costs have resulted in the most expensive health care system in the world—putting a growing and unsustainable burden on our government and businesses. We spend more on health than any country in the world. Yet in *World Health Report 2000*, the World Health Organization ranked America's health as number 15 among 25 nations. An unhealthy America will not be able to sustain its once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, technology, and world affairs. We have all been taught that everyone gets sick, but getting sick is neither natural nor unavoidable. Health is a choice. But, the very thought of *not* having to get sick is alien to our culture; most people think it's impossible. We must teach our people that health *is* possible and how to choose it.

The Chronic Disease Epidemic

Consider one chronic disease—as a mother sits anxiously with her child in the doctor's office, her fears being confirmed. The child is diagnosed with adult, type 2 diabetes—adding one more child who has to accept disease as a lifestyle. The mother is in a state of shock wondering about her child's future. The statistics are not good. Diabetes is our leading cause of blindness, kidney failure, limb loss, a major cause of heart disease, and the sixth leading cause of death.

Until recently, this disease was known as adult-onset diabetes. It occurred mostly in people over age 50. Twenty years ago, only 2 percent of all new cases were in people between ages 9 and 19. Today, that number is approaching a staggering 50 percent. From 1990 to 1998, there was a 70 percent increase in the number of 30 to 39-year-olds with diabetes. It has been estimated that over the next 25 years the number of Americans with diabetes will increase from 16 million up to 50 million. The cost of treating diabetics will increase to \$1 trillion per year. This means diabetes alone will double our current disease-care costs! And it is not just diabetes. The incidence of virtually every chronic disease continues to increase.

In 1995, the American Health Foundation (AHF) down-graded the health of American children from a C- to a D. They recommended, "Mandatory, comprehensive and long-term school health education programs . . ." They further recommended that this education start in kindergarten and suggested a Saturday morning television show to teach children responsibility for maintaining healthy bodies. Dr. Ernst Wynder, President of the AHF, said, "Much of the health care cost the country is facing is based upon expenditures that could be avoided if preventive or 'lifestyle' medicine were practiced early in life."

Since AHF's call for action, the health of our children has continued to deteriorate. Diseases such as asthma, diabetes, childhood cancers, mental retardation, and attention deficit syndromes continue to increase dramatically. There are growing concerns in the medical literature about the increase in illnesses

that put children at risk for poor health outcomes, thus limiting their ability to enjoy healthy and productive adult lives.

Obesity among children has doubled in the last twenty years and American children are the fattest in the world. As this trend continues to skyrocket, so does the emerging epidemic of childhood adult-diabetes. More than 20 percent of our teenagers are overweight. Studies have shown that teenage obesity damages lifelong health, including doubling the risk of early death from heart disease. Obesity is just one of many illnesses and symptoms of poor health that are plaguing our children. A recent study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that at least 40 percent of children ages 5 to 8 already have measurable heart disease risk factors.

Americans with asthma jumped 61 percent between 1982 and 1994. Mortality from asthma jumped 45 percent between 1985 and 1995. Asthma is now the leading cause of school absenteeism. Cancer now kills more children than any other disease. Add in other diseases like allergies, autism, and attention deficit disorder and you are left with the likelihood of the next generation suffering from even greater ill health than the present one. In fact, that is exactly what animal studies predict will happen.

Generational Effects

In the 1930s, researcher Dr. Francis Pottenger discovered that the health of one generation affects the health of the next. Pottenger found that animals fed a natural diet lived healthy lives, generation after generation. However, when the animals were fed cooked and processed foods—the kind of food we eat—they would get sick with a variety of ailments, including allergies and dental problems, within three to six months. When these animals reproduced, many of their offspring were born sick. As they grew, they developed a variety of chronic and infectious diseases, including thyroid deficiencies and respiratory, gastrointestinal, heart, and vision problems. When this generation reproduced, almost 100 percent of their offspring were born with allergies. Many were no longer able to reproduce. Some of the animals became vicious and dangerous; they killed other animals. None of the animals eating a natural diet developed these problems. Dr. Pottenger concluded that animals "can be so reduced in vitality by just one year of a diet considered adequate for human consumption that it may take them from two to three years to recover from the injury, if they can recover at all." That is the bad news. Here is the good news: Dr. Pottenger found that feeding these sick animals good diets enabled them to recover their previous good health in three generations.

Today, we are seeing similar "Pottenger effects" in our own society. About 20 percent of our young can no longer reproduce. Some of our young are violent and dangerous; then we wonder why children are killing children—all without questioning their diets. Many families have grandparents who lived into their 90s, their children into their 70s, grandchildren who are dying in their 50s and 60s, and great grandchildren who are plagued with asthma, allergies, birth defects, cancer, diabetes, dyslexia, poor eyesight, and thyroid, gastrointestinal, and heart problems. This is why we must start *now* to teach our children how to choose health before health deteriorates even further. Pottenger proved it is possible to rebuild health and eliminate disease.

In 1997, a study in *Pediatrics* concluded that only 1 percent of young people ages 2 to 19 ate a healthy diet. Here is an example of what a better diet can accomplish: In the early 1980s, 803 New York City schools switched to serving a low sugar and low food-additive lunch. At the start of the experiment, these schools ranked 11 percent below the national average in SAT scores. At the end of the four-year experiment, their SATs had increased to 5 percent above the national average. In addition to this unprecedented increase in SATs, absenteeism and disciplinary problems decreased. The children became more intelligent, healthier, and better behaved by making only modest improvements to just one meal. Imagine the possibilities for America if all three meals were better, and not just for four years, but for a lifetime.

Unfortunately, almost all of the health information supplied to schools today comes directly or indirectly from biased, food-industry sources—thus indoctrinating children in the use of nutritionally deficient, processed foods. No wonder the health of our children continues to deteriorate. *Health has not been and cannot be improved with this kind of misinformation.* The focus must be on improving health, not on selling products.

The Solution

Offering a solution—**Health-e-America Foundation**—a nonprofit, educational foundation. *Its mission is to reverse this catastrophic decline in health by teaching every school child in America how to be healthy.* Health-e-America will utilize the uniquely effective approach to teaching health that I have developed and used over the past 15 years. Founded in cellular biochemistry, this concept of health is based on one disease—malfunctioning cells—with two causes—deficiency and toxicity. This simple concept is easy to understand, providing a profound level of comprehension and compliance.

The foundation plans to provide a continuum of know-ledge on how to choose health in grades K through 12. This is a monumental undertaking. We need experts in children's education and electronic media to produce entertaining and motivating educational materials. We need to bring these materials to the schools in a way that will win acceptance. It will cost *millions* of dollars, but it will save *trillions*. People give donations for medical research not realizing most of this money is wasted because the researchers are answering the wrong questions. Almost none goes toward prevention. This is why decades later and \$100 billion in research after President Nixon declared "war" on cancer, cancer is worse than ever.

Prevention is the answer and funding is needed. Every great journey starts with the first step. Please help us to turn some of these steps into leaps. Open your heart and give as generously as you can. Become part of this great cause, this historic opportunity to begin reversing our epidemic of chronic disease. Send your tax-deductible donation to: Health-e-America Foundation, 777 Grand Ave., Suite 205, San Rafael, CA 94901. With warm and heartfelt gratitude...

Raymond Francis is an M.I.T.-trained scientist, a registered nutrition consultant, author of Never Be Sick Again and Never Be Fat Again, host of the Beyond Health Show, Chairman of the The Project to End Disease and an internationally recognized leader in the field of optimal health maintenance.

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