

HESH GOLDSTEIN
“HEALTH TALK” MODERATOR, K-108 RADIO
100 NORTH BERETANIA STREET SUITE 401
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
Tel: (808) 258-1177; E-Mail: heshgoldstein@hotmail.com

Doctors: The Third Leading Cause Of Death in the US.

By: Hesh Goldstein

Astounding, isn't it? Yet, Dr. Barbara Starfield of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health points this out in an article published in the July 30, 2000 issue of JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association).

All of these are deaths per year:

- 12,000 – unnecessary surgery**
- 7,000 – medication errors in hospitals**
- 20,000 – other errors in hospitals**
- 80,000 – infections in hospitals**
- 106,000 – non-error, negative effects of drugs**

These total 250,000 deaths per year in a patient by a physician's activity.

To make matters worse, another analysis concluded that between 4% and 18% of patients experience negative effects in outpatient settings with:

- 116 million extra physician visits**
- 77 million extra prescriptions**
- 17 million emergency room visits**
- 8 million hospitalizations**
- 3 million long-term admissions**
- 199,000 additional deaths**
- \$77,000 billion in extra costs**

The high cost of the health care system is considered to be a deficit, but seems to be tolerated under the assumption that better health results from more expensive care. However, evidence from a few studies indicates that as many as 20% to 30% of patients receive inappropriate care and an estimated 44,000 to 98,000 among them die each year as a result of medical errors.

This might be tolerated if it resulted in better health. But does it? With the obesity epidemic increasing in staggering proportions, with our alarmingly high rates of heart disease, cancer, stroke, arthritis, type-2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, constipation, hardening of the arteries, infertility, and so many more degenerative diseases, one really has to ask why isn't the medical profession healing us? The answer is simple: because your doctor treats the symptom, not the cause.

Like most people in our society, I grew up believing in the medical myth. I always believed that health came from the doctor, the drugstore, and the hospital. Did it ever dawn on me that illness might be a messenger?

No, just like it probably doesn't dawn on you.

Through the years, especially after becoming a vegetarian and eliminating saturated fat from my diet (saturated fat is found in anything that walks, runs, flies, crawls, swims, and milk products), I came to the realization that while doctors and medical technology play important roles in health care, they are not end all as far as health is concerned. When you combine factors like the food we eat, how we exercise, the way we express our feelings, the attitudes we hang on to, and our lifestyle, these play a far greater role in the quality of health we experience than even the most sophisticated medical technologies.

Look at what the medical myth has created: a focus on intervention rather than prevention, corporate health-care expenditures exceeding corporate profits, and dissatisfaction and frustration with our nation's medical system. We spend more money on health than any other country in the world, and yet we are the only country in the industrialized world that does not guarantee minimum health care to our citizens. What's even worse is that we lead the world in medical malpractice suits while falling further behind in infant mortality rates, life expectancy, and other indicators used to measure the health of a people. A hospital is one of the few places in the US where a person can starve to death unnoticed, only 25% of the accredited medical schools in the country have a single course in nutrition because course curriculums and research are funded by the pharmaceutical companies, McDonald's opens franchises in the hospitals, and we take better care of our cars than we do our bodies. Does that seem right to you?

How long do we remain on the outside looking in to our own health and then expect the medical system to rescue us? When will we realize how false and destructive the belief that the more we spend and the more technology we have, the healthier we will be? When will we see that throwing more money on prescription drugs does not improve our health but gives us more adverse reactions to deal with? When will we realize there may be other approaches we can depend upon? When will we finally reclaim our health and take it out of the hands of others?

I'm no different than you. I grew up not knowing that the Standard American Diet (SAD), based as it is on high-fat meat and dairy products, refined foods, rancid oils, and enormous quantities of sugar deriving nearly 40% of its calories from sugar, and the acceptance of consuming alcohol and tobacco smoke creates problems that even the most expensive medical technology cannot repair. But, there came a point that I said that enough was enough and made a change.

I eliminated these things from my diet and lifestyle and was forced to deal with change and the conditioning that I was forced to accept for 36 years. In the first three months of going "through the looking glass", I lost 25 pounds, shed allergies that plagued me my entire life, and saw my energy level and endurance go through the roof.

Now, after almost 31 years of my lifestyle change, at the ripe 'ol age of 67, I take no medication, have a blood pressure of 112/72, a cholesterol level of 130, I play 4 on 4 half-court basketball 2 hours a week, I race walk at least three times a week, lift weights, have been a practitioner of martial arts for 25 years, and have an outlook about life that I never had before.

If I can do this, so can you. Don't be afraid of change. Put your life back in your hands.

