

A Short Guide to a Long Life.

David Agus—2014.

Introduction: The Power of Prevention.

- More inferior rating still is that many of my patients could have prevented their cancer or other life altering disease if they had done a few things differently earlier in life.
- Michael Polan's books: food rules, in Defense of food: an eater's manifesto.

Part one: what to do.

Chapter 3: automate your life.

- Your body loves predictability. Did you get up today at the same time as yesterday? Will you eat your next meal at roughly the same time you ate that meal yesterday? One of the best ways of reducing stress on the body and keeping its preferred, balance state of being is to Maine a regular, consistent routine on a daily basis, 365 days a year, to the best of your ability.
- The four chief areas where you can make great strides in honoring your body's homeostasis are your sleep – wake cycles, eating times, periods of physical activity, and schedule for taking any prescription medications.
- Your body won't just show signs of hunger, it will also experience a surge in cortisol, the stress hormone that tells your body to hold tightly to fat and to conserve energy. In other words, if you don't eat when your body anticipates food, it will sabotage your efforts to lose or maintain an ideal weight.

Chapter 6: know your grocer.

- Short of being a farmer who knows exactly what is in season, you can learn all the information you need to make smart purchases just by chatting up your local grocer. The people who stocked the produce section, for instance, will tell you what just came in, where it came from, and how it was farmed.

Chapter 7: grow a garden.

- This should be a mandatory rule for anyone with children, especially young ones. I know of no better way to teach principles of health and good eating than to show kids what real food looks like in the growing phase. This will force you to learn what blooms in May versus what crops up in December. And there's nothing you can buy in the grocery store or even at your farmers market that compares nutrition wise with food you pick a few feet from your kitchen and use immediately for cooking or just eating raw.

Chapter 11: practice good hygiene, in bed and out.

- If you don't have access to water, then use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Some studies have shown that people who wash their hands at least five times a day with 35% less likely to catch the flu than those who lathered up less.

Chapter 13: maintain a healthy weight.

- Here's another way to look at it: each pound of weight lost equals a 4 pound reduction in the knee load for every step you take.

Chapter 14: get your annual flu shot, even if you never get sick and have never gotten the flu.

- How many people would show up at the immunization clinic? Sadly, people still cling to the false notion that the flu vaccine has side effects that it doesn't work, that it can cause the flu, or that it contains toxins or poisons. Malarkey. Most disturbing of all is that the people who seem to harbor these irrational notions are often the most educated. To say I never get a flu shot and I never get the flu, is like declaring, I eat cheeseburgers and fries every day, don't exercise and I've never gotten fat or had a heart attack.

Chapter 16: get off your butt more.

- One of the first studies ever done that pointed to the value of regular physical activity—“regular” meaning throughout the day—came out of a comparison of London's double-decker bus drivers and ticket takers in the 1950s. The ticket takers, who climbed up and down stairs all day as part of the job, has a much lower incidence of heart attacks than the bus drivers, who sat most of the day.
- If you think you are doing your body good when you fit in an hour-long workout before or after a long day at your desk, think again. Even two hours of exercise a day will not compensate for spending 22 hours sitting on your derriere or lying in bed.

Chapter 17: Jack your heart rate up 50% above your resting baseline for at least 15 minutes a day.

- On average, there are 100 billion neurons in each of our brains, and they love a good physical workout. Studies now show that older people who still do vigorous exercise, play competitive sports, or just walk several times a week protect their brains white matter from shrinking.

Chapter 18: start a sensible caffeine habit.

- So enjoy your coffee or tea and avoid the more process jolts. Come back on caffeine in the afternoon, especially after 2 PM. The body needs time to process all the caffeine so it won't infringe upon restless sleep. You need a pickup late in the day, and then at least opt for key since it has less caffeine. Or go for a walk.

Chapter 21: inquire about statins if you are over the hill.

- Statins have the power to change the whole environment by lowering inflammation—a biological process that can run a mock and trigger all kinds of dysfunctions and illness.
- When a body has high levels of inflammation makers, it means that it's encountering harmful stimuli, which can be any number of things from germs to damaged cells to irritants. To protect itself, the body triggers inflammation, and elaborate response involving the vernacular system, the immune system and various cells within the injured tissue. Researchers are now discovering bridges between certain kinds of inflammation in their most dangerous diseases, including Alzheimer's disease, cancer, autoimmune diseases, diabetes and accelerated aging process.

- We know now that the real underlying reason for cardiovascular events may not be all about cholesterol, and that chronic inflammation is likely the cause. We also note that statins may not be all about preventing heart trouble. Since 2008, numerous other studies from impressively large controlled populations have demonstrated that statins can significantly lower our risk of dying of anything—cancer included.

Chapter 22: take a baby aspirin.

- A daily low dose of aspirin, 75 mg.

Chapter 23: abide by screening and bolster vaccination recommendations.

- Together they represent almost 60% of deaths from cancer. If you are a man, prostate specific tests can identify prostate cancer early the wrist simple blood sample.

Chapter 25: deal with sickness smartly.

- Zinc, not vitamin C— is about the only thing proven to reduce the duration of a cold. Let the melody mouth, they won't be of any use if you chew and swallow them. The zinc needs to be absorbed by your oral blood vessels. Shoot for 75 mg a day.

Chapter 28: strengthen your core and maintain good posture.

- Maintaining correct posture may be one of the best-kept secrets for achieving a longer, healthier and more enjoyable life. We know that poor posture can lead to a wide assortment of neck and back problems. It is often caused by a weak core, which is one of the primary risk factors for back problems— at every age. Poor posture can also cause headaches, TMJ, arthritis, poor circulation, muscular aches, difficulty breathing, indigestion, constipation, joint stiffness, fatigue, neurological problems and poor physical function in general.
- But the risks don't end there. It's well-documented that people with what's called Hyperkyphosis-- a posture that's hunched over, with the head and shoulders rolled forward— are two times more likely to die from Poland there a problems in 2.4 times more likely to die from a disorder characterized by a narrowing and hardening of the arteries due to plaque buildup than those with normal posture. What's more, these individuals are 1.44 times more likely to die of any cause than those with healthy posture. Even people with a mild degree, are more likely to die sooner.
- Barry Mina posture also plays into our emotional state. Because posture is often linked to our facial expressions, it can subconsciously drive our emotions: only stand tall and erect, we exude confidence. This in turn helps us to feel good about ourselves and have an optimistic outlook. All roads to perfect posture start with a steady core. You do not need a chiseled sixpack, or engage in exercises that work this area.

Chapter 33: protect your eyes and ears.

- Do you protect your eyes on join the sun? The longer you can keep your eyes clear and your ears sensitive to sound, the longer you can enjoy seeing and hearing without medical intervention.

Chapter 37: eat more than three servings of cold water fish a week.

- Coldwater fish, such as salmon, sardines, tuna, trout, anchovies etc. are excellent sources of high protein, healthy fats and naturally occurring vitamins and minerals.

Chapter 41: never skip breakfast.

- This old adage will never die. After fasting all night long, your body needs a metabolic jumpstart to begin the day. We know that people who eat breakfast are just plain healthier in general and rarely have issues with weight.

Chapter 44: stretch.

- Individuals aged 65 to 84, falls account for 87% of all fractures and are the second leading cause of spinal cord and brain injury.

Chapter 47: have children.

- This rule won't be for everyone, but here's one reason why it's worth entertaining the idea: you'll be more likely to live longer than your childless counterparts.

Chapter 48: comply.

- Noncompliance is one of the biggest problems in healthcare today, according to a 2005 Harris interactive report, roughly half of all prescriptions for drugs to be taken on an ongoing basis are either not completed or are never filled out in the first place.
- Medicines for high blood pressure or high cholesterol are the most likely not to be taken.

Chapter 50: have the toughest conversation.

- A number of tools are available today to guide you through conveying your wishes under a worst-case scenario. A good place to start is the Prepare website, designed by researchers from the San Francisco VA medical Center and the University of California.

Part two: what to avoid.

Chapter 57: sunburns.

- Your skin weighs approximately twice as much as your brain.

Chapter 58: insomnia.

- The brain is much more active at night than during the day. If you lose just one and a half hours that your body needs for one night, your daytime alertness will go down by about a third. In fact, we can make do longer without food than without sleep. The side effects of poor sleep habits are many: hypertension, confusion, memory loss, inability to acquire new knowledge, obesity, cardiovascular disease and depression.
- 65% of Americans are overweight or obese, a percentage that takes on special significance when an estimated 63% of American adults do not get the recommended eight hours of sleep a night.

The average adult gets 6.9 hours of sleep on week nights and 7.5 hours on weekends, for daily average of seven hours. How much are you getting? Do you have fewer than 1460 dreams a year, the average for somebody who sleeps well?

- For far too many people in the modern era, sleep deprivation is a badge of honor. That's why one of the first questions I ask my patients who are afraid of the fatal diagnosis is simply the following: how are you sleeping?

Chapter 61: eating more than three servings of red and/or processed meats a week.

Chapter 63: absence of downtime.

- Too many of us try to cure our fatigue with infrequent vacations rather than scheduling downtime into immediately throughout the weeks of the year.

Chapter 65: porting your medical information.

- In the fall of 2008, Google predicted a flu outbreak through weeks before that centers for disease control. How? It tracked how many people were searching for words like fever, chill and flu and where they were. This online sharing, in turn, led Google's early and correct prediction as millions around the world created patterns in their online searches that could be detected.

Part three: Dr.'s orders.

- Diabetes screening: have your hemoglobin A1C check if you have a family history of diabetes, a BMI greater than or equal to 25, or history of gestational diabetes.