

Proactive Health Care

Is it worth it to be proactive in your health care? If your answer is no, then you may want to stop reading this article. If you say yes, then can you be proactive with your health care? If you can, will you do it? If you can't, do you want to learn how to do it? If you answer yes to either question, then please read on.

Being proactive describes someone who gets things done. If you are proactive, you make things happen, instead of waiting for them to happen to you. It means thinking and acting ahead of anticipated events. Being proactive is extremely important for staying healthy and averting illnesses.

If you knew that dementia, cancer, or other illnesses could be predicted with a high level of accuracy in your future would you take a proactive approach or a reactive approach in how you live your life? If you were diagnosed with cancer would you want to know whether the use of chemo or immunotherapy would be effective for you? If you are in remission for cancer are you aware that the recurrence of cancer can be predicted much earlier with new detection tools rather than conventional imaging? ***Living proactively will most likely increase the quality of your life, your longevity, and can help you avoid unnecessary health problems and expenses.***



Our lifestyle is a collection of habits and choices we make repeatedly on a daily basis. Not all choices are good choices but inevitably, they all affect our long-term health. While we strive to live our idealized lifestyle, ***we are beginning to realize that our lifestyles don't necessarily lead to good long-term health and vitality.*** Some of us age gracefully in peace and dignity while others endure old age with depression, anger, and frustration. Although genetics plays a part, how we age is often the results of the choices we have made. The question we all need to be asking ourselves is how much of our health is genetic, how much is choice, and how much is just good or bad luck?

A proactive healthcare approach focuses on what you can do to prevent potential health issues before they occur. A reactive health care approach is based on mainly responding

to the symptoms of the health issue after the disease or illness has been diagnosed. The choices we make play a pivotal role in not only our health but also our health care. By being proactive and getting involved in the decision making process, you and your health care provider(s) reap many benefits. You gain a greater sense of control, increased confidence in making your decisions, as well as better treatment adherence and health outcomes. Too many of us hand the power of our health care over to physicians who we believe will fix us. If the doctor fails to cure what ails us, we get frustrated and feel helpless, like victims of bad luck or bad genes.

Medicine is a service industry, which is exceptional at delivering emergency care. On the other hand, providers are often poorly trained in lifestyle assessment and counseling, and allowed very little time to help patients succeed under the conventional model. It is interesting to note that lifestyle counseling concerning the critical risks of our increasing obesity epidemic is actually getting less and less attention from US physicians. Since this is not going to improve any time soon, proactive supported prevention is the only logical answer.

Although, physicians bring a huge amount of knowledge and scientific data to each individual patient, they still don't know it all. Genomic medicine increases the amount of information by many orders of magnitude and treating physicians are usually not experts in genomic or microbiome analysis. It is not realistic for a physician to be able to identify and integrate genomic information into diagnosis and treatment without highly sophisticated technical support.



When it comes to genomic medicine, what is needed is a computational decision support infrastructure. This system provides support to doctors as they try to interpret a patient's medical history, lifestyle, toxins, family history, genomic and microbiome information and other analysis. This system analyzes risks as well as the preferred therapies for cancer and other chronic disease so health care providers can provide the best treatment possible

to their patients. Today's precision medicine also requires tailored lifestyle prescriptions to increase successful outcomes in preventing chronic diseases and improving wellness as well as regular follow-ups to increase the odds of success in preventative care.

The giants of on-line businesses like Amazon take advantage of knowing a lot about you, your lifestyle, and your purchasing habits. The search engines used by these companies are really artificial learning systems that grow with every keystroke by you and millions of other users. They can then tailor their marketing with greater and greater precision. In medicine the same approach needs to happen. Right now, patients are lucky if their physicians know about similar patients, at the molecular level, in their own private practices or hospitals, let alone be aware of all patients with similar histories and the therapies that have worked throughout the world.

Many people in the US are shell shocked, sedated, sedentary, and addicted to many things that lead to disease. The Precision Medicine approach to cancer is a model for how we need to be approaching all chronic diseases. In cancer, the genetic makeup of a tumor is compared with other tumors recorded in the constantly expanding computer databases, including information about their response to different types of treatment.



Precision Medicine also lets oncologists look into a person's cellular machinery, helping to correct the conditions that could produce disease, and enhance those which support healing and recovery. It minimizes guesswork, matching each individual patient with the most effective approach to treatment, reducing both the side effects and cost of care. Accuracy will continue to improve over time, as private, national and global databases become larger and more refined. You can take the proactive approach and be an active participant in championing your own health and wellness with the help from medical providers and Iris Wellness Labs (www.iriswellnesslabs.com).

Written by Simon Chin, President and CEO