



Introduction

Our healthcare system exists in a state of crisis.

It took a radical change in my own medical practice before I fully appreciated the tragic consequences of relying on this system to keep us alive and well.

Without malice or intent, it plays Russian Roulette with patient lives, because it is primarily designed around solving problems, not preventing them. Physicians must compress their services into a ten-minute diagnosis and treatment regimen.

Patients feel compelled to jump through hoops for “permission” to get those ten minutes. The general public is unaware of advancements that finally make it possible to capture and arrest the diseases most responsible for cutting life short.

Of course, we serve patients best by helping them avoid catastrophic illness. Yet our current system is a barrier to just that. The devil lurks in the details of myriad signs, symptoms, behaviors, and nuances that are rarely uncovered in the imposed ten-minute window.

Patients arrive with serious problems that often could have been averted with education and early intervention. And this defeats the point of healthcare. Here we are with remarkable knowledge, tools, and opportunities to get *ahead* of problems. Instead, we chase after them.

For a long time, I ignored any medical journal with *prevention* in the title. Fine publications, but the word “prevention” put me to sleep. For most of us, prevention doesn’t refer to action, but to a *do-nothing* or *stop-doing* position.

“Don’t eat the whole cheesecake!”

“Don’t sit on your butt all day!”

“Don’t play with matches.”

Good advice, but only the tip of the prevention iceberg. True prevention is about *doing*. It’s a hunt, a vigilant, proactive search and seizure. It means an extensive investigation to find diseases lurking in patients, even in those

currently enjoying glowing health. It's making sure they *stay* that way.

I began weighing the pros and cons of a medical practice that would not rely on the system to dictate the level of care or amount of time I could give to patients. I wanted a practice that gave prevention a new meaning.

Taking direct, focused action *now* by using the state-of-the-art in health screening technology, and using the best available treatments when needed, is the key to stopping potential killers and sustaining or restoring health.

It was a leap of faith within a healthcare system that is neither willing nor able to invest in high-level preventive care. The unknowable factor was how patients would respond to care that went beyond what was included in their benefits package—that required a change in perspective—that meant being an assertive collaborator instead of a submissive patient. It was astonishing and affirming how quickly patients stepped up to the plate.

My practice today is the result of a long-held conviction that each of us is responsible for our own healthcare. When we abdicate that responsibility to insurers, employers, policy makers, and bureaucrats, we put our lives in the hands of institutions that do not exist to serve us. I consider that a very stupid reason to die.

I would like to help you avoid that fate by arming you with insight, information, and inspiration that puts *you* in control of the content, quality, and cost of your healthcare. It is not difficult or time-consuming; you just need to be ready to look at things in a different light.

First, I'll ask you to face the truth of how your own biases, our healthcare system, and society all conspire to keep you in a passive role.

This sets the stage for Part Two, where a survival guide arms you with state-of-the-art methods for outsmarting the diseases most likely to cross the paths of you and your loved ones. New medical breakthroughs will continually change the opportunities for early disease detection and intervention, but you will be right there on the front lines, primed for action.

