

We ought to be appalled!

BY DR. SUSAN MAPLES

Here's a real-life, dreadful story about the declining health in America that might motivate you to act.

During the last thirty years, the bulk of prescription and non-prescription drugs have been profitably developed to treat the symptoms of our all-too-common systemic diseases, rather than prevent or cure them.

Meanwhile, we are virtually the only country that allows TV-to-consumer drug advertisement, and our "trusted" conventional physicians are the sales agents, complying with public demand. Prescribing makes for speedy doctor appointments, which plays into the hand of our profit-seeking, insurance-based health care climate.

Have we all been brainwashed to think treating symptoms with pills takes the place of making lifestyle changes that prevent — or cure — diseases? While we are busy covering up symptoms with modern chemistry, we forget that every drug goes to every cell in our bodies, and disease occurs at the cellular level; the long-term consequences keep us sliding downhill.

And perhaps worse, our cover-up drugs create passivity: They keep us from having to modify our behavior to prevent or cure deadly diseases like heart disease, diabetes, sleep apnea, cancer, depression and acid reflux.

Take for example the world's top selling prescription drugs: Lipitor, Zocor, Nexium, Prevacid and Zoloft. The first two aim to lower cholesterol, the next aims to decrease stomach acid and the last aims to combat depression. What do they have in common?

- They all mask disease symptoms
- They all pose significant health threats when taken long-term



- They all hold people in a passive position, preventing them from making lifestyle changes that might potentially cure the disease
- They all generate billions of dollars in profit for pharmaceutical companies, on the backs of continued illness.

Traditional dentistry is somewhat like this too. Fillings, root canals, crowns, extractions and gum disease treatments are merely procedures to repair the defects caused by underlying oral disease, often tied to systemic and lifestyle-related causes.

Shifting from sick-care to optimal health requires interdependent relationships with trusted physicians and dentists— ones that help us identify the cause of our decline and modify our lifestyle to help us reclaim our awesome life! The

professionals that we choose to build our health care relationships make a massive difference in our outcomes.

At this point, 20 percent of Americans are looking for something better than traditional disease care. Medical and dental professions are not even close to meeting that demand, so, it's okay to expect more than a prescription: stay curious and keep asking, "Why?" Remember, it's up to you to put together a health care team who will help lift you back to optimal health.



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