

# HEALTH

## BETTER LIFE NEWS

### HOW TO LIVE TO BE 120 YEARS OLD

By Robert N. Taylor

The most fundamental physical desire is to live as long as possible while simultaneously remaining as healthy as possible. That was also the aim of some of the nation's leading health and anti-aging experts gathered together recently by the National Institutes on Aging. Virtually without exception the experts concluded that we can all live much longer lives and in the process of getting older maintain a lot more of our youthful health, stamina and good looks.

While some experts, such as

Dr. Michal Jazwinski, put forth the radical notion that with the aid of some upcoming medical advances life expectancy could rise to 400 years, most experts would not go that far. The most commonly held belief was that by adopting several simple lifestyle changes, the average person could indeed reach 100 years of age and possibly 120. Briefly, here are the top 10 of those suggested lifestyle changes:

**1. Start Now!** As Dr. Huber Warner of the National Institutes on Aging stated, "The problems that lead to aging are cumula-

tive, and the sooner you get started correcting them, the better..."

**2. Eat in moderation!** Overeating over-works and poisons the body. The key is reduce fats and substitute with carbohydrates such as fruits and vegetables.

**3. Exercise regularly!** Exercise strengthens the heart, the lungs and makes the body firm and more youthful. Just 30 minutes a day and at least three days a week will be enough. Exercise also reverses the effects of aging.

**4. Take vitamin supplements!** The best anti-aging vitamins are E and C. They protect you from heart disease and cancer - the number one and number two killers in the nation.

**5. Keep mentally active!** Never stop learning. Read and study. The best mental exercise is to study a foreign language.

**6. Get sufficient rest!** Both the mind and the body must rejuvenate themselves. The body needs sleep and the mind need peace of mind. In other words,

for a certain number of hours each day stop worrying.

**7. Lose some weight!** How much did you weigh at 19? You should not be more than 20 pounds heavier than that now.

**8. Breath deeply, often!** Much of that general feeling of being tired that comes from aging is a result of reduced lung capacity. Practice daily deep breathing exercises.

**9. Take an aspirin a day!** The evidence is overwhelming that aspirin helps clear the arteries and thus reduces the chances of heart attack and stroke. Take an aspirin a day unless you have a medical reason not to.

**10. Have sex!** New York urologist E. Douglas Whitehead puts it this way: Giving up on sex at any age is symbolically giving up on life."

These and more anti-aging steps will be detailed in future columns in this newspaper. Meanwhile, for the detailed "Anti-Aging Guidebook" write the Better Life Club, P.O. Box 28422, Washington, D.C. 20038. The guidebook is free but include \$2.00 for postage and handling.

### VIEW FROM HHS

by Louis W. Sullivan, M.D.



Improving the health of all Americans will ensure better health for African-Americans, but because African-Americans lag so far behind, my department has invested millions of dollars in a number of programs—some of them newly initiated—aimed specifically at helping them bridge the decades-old white-black health status gap.

Many of the health, social services and welfare programs of the Department of Health and Human Services are designed to serve poor and disadvantaged persons. Those programs are being provided additional funding so they can help more people enjoy longer, healthier lives.

I have included an extra \$156 million in the 1993 fiscal year budget to further support my five-point plan to reduce minority health disparities.

The focus of the five-point plan will be on increasing access to appropriate primary and preventive care in urban and rural areas; increasing the supply of health professionals in underserved areas; encouraging early preventive care for children, including immunizations and screenings; improving health to enhance learning; and preventing hypertension through enhanced research and education.

You know about the sundry challenging problems our community faces in relationship to the general population: Our life expectancy is shorter; we suffer disproportionately from many conditions such as communicable childhood diseases, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, stroke, cancer, HIV infection and AIDS; deaths linked to alcohol, drug abuse and violence are too high; and, as individuals, we pay too little attention to preventive steps we could take.

To mention just a few of our special efforts planned for fiscal year 1993:

• Through our Healthy Start Initiative, we are reducing infant mortality by increasing prenatal care

and nutrition for more low-income pregnant women and children;

• Our "Project Awareness" provides free screenings and breast examinations to women in underserved minority communities;

• The Minority Male Initiative assists our young men to overcome special obstacles they face;

• To curb the spread of HIV infection and AIDS, this year the federal allocation is almost \$4.9 billion for research, treatment, income support and education programs. HHS alone is seeking nearly \$4.3 billion and almost \$200 million of that is directly targeted to minority populations;

• 111,000 drug abuse treatment slots, 17,000 more than last year, are being made available;

• \$12 million will fund a new grant to minority educational institutions to improve their research infrastructure; and,

• Funds for 130 new community and migrant health center sites, bringing the total to 1,634 sites.

However, when we examine the health problems plaguing our people, we see that much of the suffering, disability and death is preventable. With the federal government committed to a stronger more active role, prevention becomes a key to overcoming some of the health disparity African-Americans suffer.

This is no "cure-these-own-self" admonishment. These are choices that can make a long-life or early-death difference.

Make a promise each day to choose to be healthier. Choose to visit a doctor regularly. Choose to cut fat, shake salt and reduce sugar from your diet. Choose to eat at least five fruits and vegetables a day. Choose to exercise regularly. Don't smoke and don't abuse alcohol or drugs.

If we all do our part, safer environments and longer, healthier lives will be the payoff.

(Dr. Sullivan is U.S. secretary of health and human services.)

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## PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH COMPANIES ARE NOW TESTING 91 AIDS MEDICINES

WASHINGTON, D.C. — America's pharmaceutical research companies are developing 91 medicines for AIDS and AIDS-related conditions, according to a new survey by the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PMA). The report, "AIDS Medicines in Development," lists 95 research projects involving these medicines under way by 66 pharmaceutical companies.

Because of the increasing incidence of AIDS in women and

the continued incidence of AIDS in children, this annual survey, for the first time, tracked clinical trials that focus on meeting the specific requirements of women and children with AIDS. The survey results show that 50 of the medicines in development include women in clinical trials and 13 include children.

"Pharmaceutical industry research and development to find medicines to treat, prevent and cure AIDS and its related

conditions has never been stronger," said PMA President Gerald J. Mossinghoff. "We hope this report will be useful to all of those working in the critically important area of striving to find ways to cure and, one day, prevent AIDS."

The survey also found that three new medicines have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use by physicians since the PMA's last survey of "AIDS Medicines in

Development" a year ago. This brings to 17 the total approved medicines for AIDS and AIDS-related conditions. Another 11 medicines are awaiting approval at the FDA.

The Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association is a non-profit scientific and professional organization of more than 100 member companies who discover, develop and produce most of the prescription drugs used in the United States.

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