

Why We Must Begin to Practice Wellness

Cal Streeter, DO; Michael Epitropoulos, DC, PhD

Editor's note: "Natural Health and Wellness" is a new column for 2000 and will be collaboration between Michael Epitropoulos, DC, PhD, and Cal Streeter, DO. Dr. Epitropoulos is a 1988 graduate of Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic. He maintained a busy practice in Kalamazoo, Michigan for 10 years before recently relocating to Florida to establish a health center.

Cal Streeter, DO, received his degree from the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1975. He has had a family practice in the field of health and wellness for 24 years, and has worked with chiropractic physicians for most of those years. He is licensed in Michigan, Indiana and Illinois.

Have you limited yourself to pain control, or are you positioning yourself as a wellness provider for the 21st century? People truly are sick and tired of feeling sick and tired. Medical professionals are not getting the job done. Individuals are tired of taking a plethora of pharmaceuticals and undergoing surgery with little health improvement to show for it. Their health continues to deteriorate despite medicine's latest technologies.

For too long, chiropractors have walked on eggshells around the medical community. For the most part, medicine has not - and more importantly, has not wanted to - accept our work as viable, yet we usually have been careful not to offend them, at least in front of our patients. However, attitudes are evolving, and people are learning the truth about medicine's tools and its failure to make inroads in terms of chronic and degenerative conditions.

Medicine's primary tool continues to be toxic and sometimes deadly drugs, yet too many people still have not learned that drugs are not the answer to better health. These are the people we need to reach. As Tonda Bian stated in her book *The Drug Lords: America's Pharmaceutical Cartel*, "The drug companies get fatter on the public's misguided trust, a public who has learned to believe the propaganda. The drug makers continue to discover new drugs for old problems and create new markets for existing ones, but the question remains: At whose expense? At what cost? For what cure?"

We need to take an aggressive stance when telling people that drugs do not create good health and never will, no matter what the drug industry tells them. We must also tell them that although drugs certainly have their role in certain health conditions, taking drugs for every condition (and taking as many drugs throughout our lives as possible) is the drug industry's goal.

Increasing numbers of people are starving for information on how to help the body work naturally on its own. They would like to know how to turn on their body's own healing ability. They don't want more drugs. These individuals are looking for information on natural healing. We are in a pivotal position to embark upon a new century of health care. The opportunity is there for us to become the primary portal for wellness care, because most medical practitioners are falling further into the dark ages of

health care.

Our offices should serve as information clearinghouses on natural health care. Patients cannot find this information elsewhere. How many times have patients asked you why their medical professional did not provide them with the information you are giving them? We should constantly hand out information on chiropractic care; the downside of prescription drugs; vaccination concerns; nutritional information as it relates to dietary changes; vitamins, minerals and herbs; medical politics and natural health care; and how to beat heart disease, diabetes, immune problems, weight issues, fatigue, etc., naturally. The natural health information you have at your fingertips is invaluable.

Do you go out into the community and make this information available through health talks? Don't keep what you do a secret. People want to know where they can go for wellness care. Obtain a list of all the service organizations in your community and write to them making them aware of your availability as a speaker on alternative health care and wellness. You will be kept busy with speaking engagements and new patients.

Have you told your patients lately that you specialize in the detection and correction of vertebral subluxations in order to turn on the body's inner healing ability and help the body work more efficiently? We are now seeing the use of terms such as innate by medical physicians like Dr. Deepak Chopra.

Remember the saying about how what you do and say is made fun of by the medical community ... until they accept it as their own. This is seen as the medical field finally giving some credence to nutrition's positive effect on health, particularly positive information on vitamins and minerals. As I write this, I am listening to CNN and medicine's finding that vitamin C can help stress. Imagine that.

I recently ran across an article by Richard Ott, MD, "The Evolution from Curing to Healing," that should be of great interest to chiropractors. He states:

"Intuitive geniuses will always present new information before the rest of us are capable of getting it. And like the yin and the yang, each age demonstrates a dominant collective paradigm but also contains the perceptive minority who see the other side of things. Unfortunately, we fashion them to be saints or demons and therefore irrelevant to the thrust of our three-dimensional world. While medicine is more art than science, it behooves us to pay close attention to implications of the new sciences. In the old paradigm, the body is a machine. In the new, the body is organized energy."

Dr. Ott concludes by pointing out that the medical caduceus remains a fitting image that shows where we have been and where we are going. The staff separates the perennial pairs of opposites that tend to oppose one another in conflict.

"Ironically, it is also the pattern of DNA, when the reconciliation of complimentary opposites provides the creative nidus for life. As we enter a new phase in the evolution of our healing profession, it may be critical that we reflect on the wisdom of this symbol."

We are in an important position to enlighten patients and medical professionals to wellness care. More and more medical professionals are realizing that they must begin to address wellness and natural health issues, because their patients are demanding it, and because economics always motivates change. A collaborative effort between a chiropractor and a medical professional, with wellness care

for the patient as the foundation, is where our health care system is headed. Some call it the integration of the future.

Dr. Streeter and myself began a collaborative effort between our two offices about a year ago. Through the combined efforts of our two offices, patients receive health and wellness care, which includes consistent natural health handouts from both offices, combined health talks and combined natural health maintenance care. Dr. Streeter emphasizes to his patients the importance of the chiropractic adjustment. When a patient first presents in my office, we begin the VSC (vertebral subluxation complex) correction process. Through contact reflex analysis (CRA), we determine specific system imbalances and recommend specific nutrient support. We explain the importance of the VSC correction process and the use of nutrient support, dietary changes and exercise to support the VSC correction. We then refer patients when indicated to Dr. Streeter, who continues to provide natural health-oriented care consistent with our care plan. The patient continues to receive natural health-oriented handouts and health talks about the many facets of wellness care. The chiropractic adjustment serves as the focal point of this combined care.

Are you educating and motivating your patients toward health maintenance and wellness? Are you getting beyond pain relief? Is your office a clearinghouse for natural health and wellness information? Are your patients really getting the big idea? And are you prepared to see 95% of the population, instead of the 5-7% you are limiting yourself to as you approach the 21st century?

JANUARY 2000