

Personal Responsibility for Health

Maintaining and improving our biggest asset – Health

- One person can make a difference. Get a yearly physical. Talk to your family, friends, and co-workers about health issues. Ask questions and encourage healthy habits.

Our American health system is based on treating illness and problems rather than wellness or prevention. When we follow through with recommended immunizations and preventative measures such as mammograms, pap smears, blood pressure checks, blood cholesterol checks, colonoscopies, and blood sugar checks, we can institute change to prevent more serious illness.

Don't ask for every test and scan available. Read and learn about illness that has been diagnosed. Some insurance companies have their own online sites to research disease. For medical information that can assist you to communicate with your physician and ask questions. Beware of blogs or fees for information. Not all are reputable. Go to trusted internet sites such as:

www.familydoctor.org

www.mayoclinic.org

www.medem.com

www.medlineplus.gov

www.healthfinder.gov

www.cdc.gov

www.kidshealth.org

www.cancer.gov

www.hivinsite.ucsf.edu

Take notes about your questions for your physician, write down instructions and be compliant with treatment plans

- Take action. Plant a garden. Exercise. Discuss healthy diets with your family and friends. Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Lead by example. Be a role model for your children and grandchildren. Stewardship of the body could include eating smaller portions of better foods. Participate in activities like hiking, bike riding, skating, canoeing.
- Have a vision. Set a goal for healthier living. Manage stress. Lose weight. Quit smoking. Increase your physical activity. Learn something new.

Health for Families and Friends

- Use tools available on line to keep a diary of your own and your families' medical records, immunizations, medications, etc. Share your knowledge and tools with your co-workers and fellow church goers.
- Set up classes at church or work to learn how to buy and prepare healthy foods. Encourage each other to keep up good habits. Share your successes and struggles. Pray for one another. Walk together. Sponsor a healthy living or exercise class at church or work.
- Discuss end of life issues with family before a crisis occurs. Tell your physician and your clergy what kind of care you want. Complete advance directive forms. Support family and friends so their needs aren't overwhelmed by the complexities of the medical system. Call Clergy to let them know when family is in the hospital or have an illness

What We Can Do For the System

- Be informed – How does our health system work? Read and discuss health care with each other.
- Engage in advocacy – We need people of faith to speak up and call for justice. Emphasize the moral imperative of health care for all. Patients have the right to refuse care also.
- Build Bridges - See value in others' perspectives. Approach debate with a willingness to compromise for the greater good.
- Offer Hope – Believe in positive change even in difficult times.
- Call and write your elected officials and let them know you want the same health care benefits that Congress has – no more, no less