



December 5, 2015 – Grand Rapids, MI

Why Now?

In the last two messages, I've challenged you not to waste the entire month of December before changing to a healthier lifestyle after January 1st. Why now? Why didn't I just wait until the New Year when everyone is "ready"? Maybe the latest report from the CDC will put things in perspective.



Researchers from the CDC and Emory University analyzed data from NHANES studies conducted between 2005 and 2012. They were interested in finding out how many people with high LDL cholesterol were taking medication and making lifestyle changes. There were a lot of results reported in the paper but I want to focus on just a couple.

About half the people who should be taking cholesterol-lowering medications are taking them and about 40% say they're making lifestyle changes such as exercising, eating less fat, and losing weight. When the data are broken down by LDL levels, as LDL goes up, those taking medications and making lifestyle changes goes down.

The profile of those who should be taking medications is: they're between 40 and 65, overweight, have high blood pressure, and they're prediabetic or diabetic. They have known for years what they should be doing and aren't doing it. At one time, I was in that category myself. If half of those who should be treated are not, some 78 million adults, it stands to reason that some of you are in that category right now and have been for many years.

Why change now? If you won't make an attempt right now to change your lifestyle, what makes you think three weeks is going to make any difference? These conditions don't sneak up on us; they've been there for years. There's no time like the present. I know you can make at least one change, whether it's with what you eat or how much you exercise. If you really want to reduce medications or not start them to begin with, you have to change your life.

If not now, when?

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: MMWR 64(47);1305-11.

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