

### Volume 09, Issue 39: A Proactive Approach to Health (Part II)

Your health is your wealth. It is something you want to be intentional about investing in. We are continuing to consider ways of taking care of ourselves proactively, rather than waiting for health issues to arise. We are talking about things that relate to lifestyle. Things that are related to stress levels or poor nutrition or lack of exercise. If we can take care of those things proactively, we can reduce our risk of a lot of health issues down the road. This is a much better approach than waiting for ourselves to get sick and then starting to take care of ourselves.

Last week we talked about practicing safe sun exposure and consistently eating a healthy diet. Let us now consider one more area, before delving into a few other areas to be proactive about in taking care of our health with regards to lifestyle changes.

### ***3. Move Your Body***

Physical activity is typically left for a select few yet we all need to exercise regularly for physical health. You don't have to go overboard or go to the gym if that's not something you enjoy, but choose a daily exercise routine that suits your fancy and stick with it. Repetition and consistency is more important than how long or how hard you work out each day.

I enjoy taking a long brisk walk outside, which I combine with weight/resistance training 5 times a week. Some people enjoy jogging/running, others aerobics classes or dance classes, others weight training or resistance training at a gym or at home. Other people enjoy swimming or other forms of sports such as football or tennis or basketball for fitness. What's your preference? You must have at least one that you do consistently as an investment to your health.

The World Health Organization recommends that we get at least 150 minutes of moderate cardiovascular activity a week or a minimum of 75 minutes of vigorous cardiovascular activity each week. A walk can count if your heart rate is high enough. A brisk walk, jogging or running is good for cardiovascular activity but a well rounded exercise regiment should include more than just cardio. Include some weight training and/ resistance training in your workout.

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A lot of women shy away from weight training especially because they think they are going to bulk up like men. That can't happen unless you are going way overboard with your weight training, like lifting very heavy weights for several hours each day. The World Health Organization recommends that an average adult does at least two sessions of weight training a week. This is important because as we age we tend to lose muscle mass. It's a normal part of aging. Another normal part of aging is losing bone density. We can slow that process down with weight training.

It doesn't matter what age you are, you could be in your twenties or thirties. It's never too early to start preserving your muscle mass and preserving your bone density. If you are a beginner, you should always start with a professional, learn the proper moves so you don't get injured.

For the older folk, since we lose muscle mass as we get older, it's necessary to do more resistance training than aerobic exercises. Most people focus on cardio and steer away from weight/resistance training. If you are in your forties or fifties or older, don't cut out aerobic exercises but be sure to do quite a bit of weight training and resistance exercises as well to maintain, build and replace your muscles. I have learnt from other people's experiences that it's really hard to get muscle tone after the age of 45. You would have to work doubly hard compared to what you might have done in your thirties in order to get strong muscles. So the earlier you can start weight training, the better for you.

Let's continue with some of the other areas of proactively taking care of our health in the next post. Look out for more of these fun stuff in part III, and as you read, be sure to position yourself for the lifestyle changes you need to make to proactively take care of your health. Remember, your health is your wealth.

For His Glory,

Lillian Chebosi

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