



Your best PRESCRIPTION

Our own Dr. Tedd is leading the charge as two major medical associations encourage doctors to prescribe the medicine that aids more ills than any other: **Exercise.**

WHAT IF I told you I could write a prescription for a medicine that would do all of the following: lower blood pressure, blood sugar and weight; improve cholesterol, sleep, and bone and heart health; and decrease the risk for cancer? Imagine one prescription that could do all of those things and more. Would you be interested? I bet most of you would.

Well, that prescription really exists. There's just one catch: You'll need 30 minutes each day to take it. Yes, the "medicine" that I'm talking about is exercise.

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Studies linking a physically active lifestyle to good health are numerous and profound. Many scientists, including several here at the Cooper Clinic in Dallas, have spent their entire careers studying this interaction. Yet the majority of Americans don't get nearly enough exercise.

Understanding the need for our sedentary nation to get off its collective duff, physicians have been less than effective at getting patients active. Busy medical practices can make conversations about exercise mostly superficial, but there are some determined folks who would like to change that.

Bob Sallis, M.D., is a family medicine doctor and president of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). Ron Davis, M.D., is a preventive medicine doctor and president of the American Medical Association (AMA). Both want to make a difference in our nation's health. They understand that health is determined to a large extent by lifestyle choices, including physical activity. They also understand that many doctors feel either overwhelmed or inadequate when it comes to prescribing exercise to their patients.

To change this attitude, they are launching the "Exercise is Medicine" initiative on Monday. It aims not only to raise public awareness of the need for a physically active lifestyle, but also to help drive home the medical importance of exercise to physicians and other health care workers. "Why physicians are so quick to accept research data on expensive medications while essentially ignoring even stronger data on the benefits of physical activity is at the core of this program," Sallis says.

What the new "Exercise is Medicine" campaign will do:

- Raise public awareness of the need for a physically active lifestyle.
- Drive home the medical importance of exercise to physicians and other health care workers.
- Instruct physicians in writing prescriptions for exercise.

Go to exerciseismedicine.org to learn more.



exercise — the easiest, cheapest and most effective medicine around.

The initiative reiterates the effectiveness of exercise as a therapy for treating numerous health conditions. It also instructs doctors on how to write exercise prescriptions — something that most physicians have little, if any, experience doing.

As the baby boomers begin to enter



I'm excited that my USA WEEKEND column is one of the first to announce this monumental initiative. I'm also proud that these two medical powerhouses are coming together to advocate for

their senior years, more and more are looking for ways to fight the aging process. It's an age-old quest: Ponce de Leon was looking for the fountain of youth when he came to America hundreds of years ago. But it's like a friend of mine says: If Ponce de Leon wanted to find the fountain of youth, he should have been looking for a gym!

Sallis and Davis understand the importance of physical activity, which is why they hope to make this initiative stick with both the public and the medical community. **W**

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