

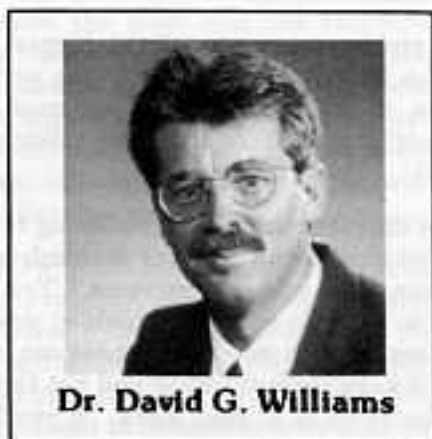
ALTERNATIVES™

For the Health Conscious Individual

Mountain Home Publishing
ISSN# 0893-6026
USPS# 0002-969

(Vol. 1, No. 1)

July, 1985



Dr. David G. Williams

IT FEELS GOOD TO FEEL GOOD!!!

Welcome to *ALTERNATIVES!!!* Each month I will be bringing you information about your health and new preventive ideas and techniques, so that you can not only feel good, but live a happier, fuller, more productive and *I truly believe, longer life.*

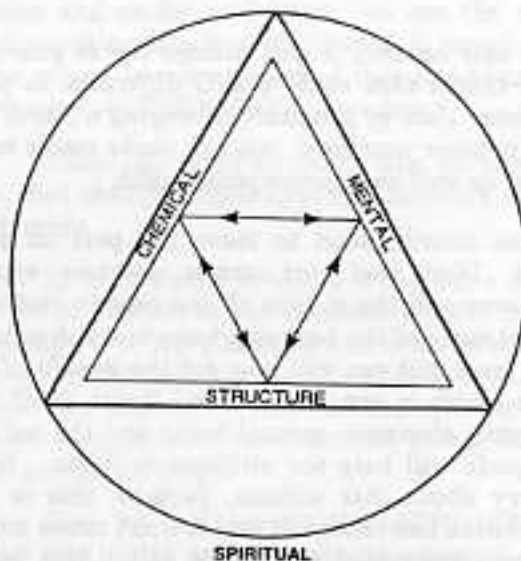
What Is Health?

The best definition of health I've ever heard went something like this: Health is the state of body and mind, in which the body is not consciously present to its owner. To me, this means that when you're healthy, you can think, eat, sleep, move about and enjoy your life to the fullest. To see the truly healthy, you can look to the children, since their bodies haven't seen the abuse nor the wear and tear that most of us have subjected our bodies to and believe me, some of us have needlessly abused our bodies! I told one of my patients the other day that he was burning the candle at both ends; he didn't tell me that he would try to slow down, but instead, he asked me if I knew where he could get more wax! Unfortunately, we all have just so much "wax" and once that is gone, there is not *much* that can be done by anyone to restore what's lost.

Perfect Health Is A Balancing Act

I've learned that health is like a triangle with

three sides, surrounded by a large circle. The sides represent the mental, the structural and the chemical aspects of health. Then, the entire picture is surrounded by the circle that represents the spiritual portion. To have perfect health, all of these parts must be balanced and working in total harmony.



When I was first exposed to this idea, I thought that it would be impossible to balance all of these at one time—and it would be, if it were totally up to us, but the body has one important God-given ability in that it is always striving to repair, strengthen and improve itself.

Vitamins, Minerals and Nutrition Are Not The Whole Answer

It's true that we have to give the body the right building and repair materials for it to do its job, but if you look again at the drawing, it becomes obvious that we are talking about more than just our nutrition. Anything that can influence any one of the parts of the picture can and will influence your health whether you want it to or not. This includes everything that we think, the air we breathe, the water we drink, the

exercise we get, as well as the food we eat. It really gets exciting to think that we can actually change our health and even the quality of our lives by controlling the input to our bodies.

KITCHEN QUICKS

In this column, I will always try to give you easy little things that make a BIG difference in your eating habits. Just by gradually changing a few of the ways you prepare your food, you can make meals more interesting, as well as improve your health.

This month, start to leave the peel on your vegetables. Don't peel your carrots, potatoes, apples, etc. and never pull the strings off the celery. Not only will you get some of the best roughage to scrub out the intestinal tract, but you will now get the benefit of the potassium which is sometimes called "brain food" and will help your alertness, mental being and the sodium in these peels will help the stiffness in joints. Now, don't worry about *this* sodium, because this is not sodium chloride like table salt and it won't cause any of the problems associated with table salt. Also, when you get home from the grocery store or produce market, go ahead and clean and prepare the fruits and vegetables that are eaten raw (like carrots, celery, radishes, cauliflower, apples, plums, strawberries, cherries, etc.), then place them in resealable containers. We've noticed that if they're ready to eat, everyone will eat more of *these* "fast foods" rather than go for the other prepared snacks like chips, etc. which are high in salts and fats.

HOW SLEEPING HURTS YOUR BACK

Has anyone ever told you how you should sleep? We spend at least $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of our life in bed and nowhere have I ever seen where people were taught the proper positions to sleep!

Back problems are one of the biggest health problems in the United States, if not in the world, and it's no wonder, if you'd just look at how most people spend their nights. (NOW—I'm only talking about sleeping here!)

I know that this will be disappointing to a lot of people, but you can't sleep on your stomach and not eventually have a lot of back problems. You should train yourself to sleep on either your side or your back. Now, if you sleep on your side, your knees can be bent, but you should keep them together and not throw one leg up over the chest or to your sides. If you have to sleep with one arm under the pillow then make sure it is fully extended or straightened out, not bent at the elbow and tied in a knot under the pillow.

If you sleep on your back, don't sleep with your arms above your head, but rather at your sides or on your stomach or chest.

I know sleeping habits are hard to change, but in the long run, making a few changes may keep you from experiencing the terrible, debilitating pain associated with low back problems, numbness in the shoulders and arms, neck stiffness and a host of other problems.

If you have a problem staying off your stomach, start off with a small pillow on each side; if you start to roll over on your stomach, it will wake you and remind you. Also, you can use a small pillow between the knees if it is uncomfortable to keep them together.

I can't tell you how many back problems have been corrected just by changing the way one sleeps.

ALTERNATIVES is published by Mountain Home Publishing, Post Office Box 829, Ingram, Texas 78025.
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DO YOU HAVE A HIATAL HERNIA? YOU JUST MIGHT!

Just recently, I had a regular patient come into the office. In the past I had treated her for headaches and a lower back condition. She told me all of those things were fine, but she was having a problem and she wasn't sure there was anything that could be done for it. It seems that recently she started having a lot of pain behind her chest bone, sour stomach, heartburn, indigestion and even some pain in her left arm. When she first noticed these symptoms, she rushed to the emergency room and was given all types of tests for the heart—x-rays, lab work and an examination. Everything showed normal, so she was told that it was nerves and was given a sedative. The same problem continued and now she was not only having a difficult time working while on the medication, but was taking antacids by the handful with hardly any relief at all.

After some routine testing, I found out she had a hiatal hernia. I want you to be aware of just what a hiatal hernia is, because it is so prevalent today, that I don't want you making all the antacid companies rich with your money, when you can spend it on something better for yourself. Some studies have shown that 32 percent of everybody over 50 and 89 percent of those over 90 have a hiatal hernia and I've seen patients with it at all stages, from children on up.

Do you ever get heartburn after eating, or have a tendency to burp your food and stomach acid back up into your throat? Or sometimes, do you feel like you're full to the top after eating only a few bites? Sour stomach? Burning? And does all of this get worse when you sit down or lie on your back? Well, you may have a hiatal hernia.

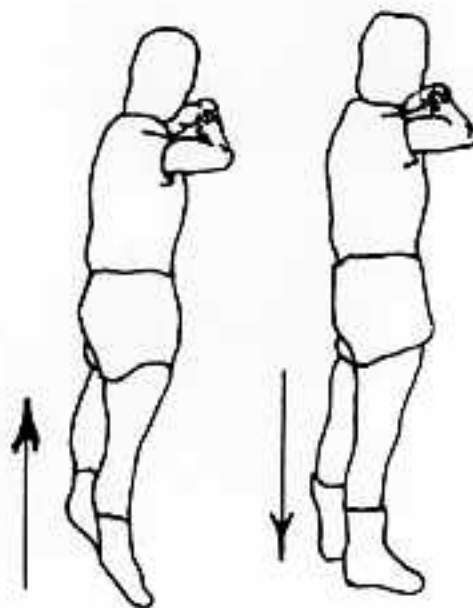
Everybody knows that there is a big dome-shaped muscle that separates the organs in the top part of your chest from the stomach and the other digestive organs in the bottom half. Otherwise, we would be listening for the heart somewhere in the area of the bellybutton after working on our feet all day. Well, in the back part of this muscle, the diaphragm, there is a button shaped hole that allows the food tube, or esophagus, to go from the throat to the stomach. Now, sometimes this hole gets enlarged for one reason or another and if it does, the stomach can worm its way up into the hole—this is a hiatal hernia.

If you are discovered to have the problem now, you are usually told to sleep with the head of the bed elevated, eat smaller meals and take antacids. I also want to mention that there are a lot of you who have probably been through the procedure where you are given dye to drink and then rolled in a hundred different positions, x-rayed a hundred times and then told that either there was no hiatal hernia, or if there was, that you would have to live with it. (I've always wondered who would go through all that trouble, if there was nothing that could be done for it.)

There is something that can be done! It's not a fool-proof test, but some doctors that do screen for hiatal hernia, will have a patient take a deep breath and hold it. The patient should be able to hold it for 40 seconds. If not, and there are no other problems, it is possible to have a hiatal hernia.

If the stomach is stuck up in the hole of the diaphragm, then the first order of business is to get it out. This can be done two ways. I've had my patients with this problem drink about a glass of either room temperature or slightly warm water when they get out of bed, first thing in the morning. (No coffee, no tea, no juice, no cold water—just warm water.)

Then, while standing, you bring your arms straight out to your sides and then bend your elbows so the hands are touching your chest. You stand up on your toes as high as possible and then drop, you should get a pretty good jolt. Drop down about 10 times in a row. Then, while standing with the arms up, pant short quick breathes for about 10-15 seconds. That's it!!!



Now, let me explain what happens (so you'll have something to tell your spouse if he/she looks over and thinks you're trying to fly some morning).

The warm water acts like a weight in the stomach. Being warm, it doesn't cause the stomach to cramp, but instead, relaxes it. When you spread your arms, this stretches the diaphragm and opens up that hole in the back. Dropping down on your heels, jerks the stomach out of the hole and the panting tightens up the diaphragm muscle to close the hole.

If you do this exercise, you need to do it everyday, not just until everything feels normal, as it will also strengthen the area and make it less likely to come back.

Also, there are a few tips you should abide by:

1. First, don't stuff yourself with large meals.
2. Don't sit in some overstuffed soft chair or lie down right after you eat. The stomach will be churning and digesting the food and it will have nowhere to go but into the hole.

If you have problems in the middle of the day, or anytime for that matter, you don't have to wait to do the exercise. Do it at the time the problems occur.

I've mentioned a second way to get the stomach out of the hole in the diaphragm and it will work if the hernia is a stubborn one. I have the patient standing, preferably on a slight incline leaning backwards. Then, I place one of my hands on top of the other with the fingers pointing toward the patient and I gently push my fingers into the patient's stomach area (right under the ribs, in about the middle of the abdomen). I then have the patient breathe in and out four or five times as I gently move my hands over the stomach. Then with a quick, gentle thrust toward the patient's feet, the stomach is pulled down like a cork being pulled out of an upside down champagne bottle (many patients feel like celebrating with champagne after we finish that)!

Oh yes, the lady that I worked on for the hiatal hernia the other day was in the office again having *no problems* and none of the symptoms as before. She made the comment to our office staff and everyone in the reception room at the time, that if anyone had stocks in the antacid companies, she would advise selling them soon because one of their biggest customers, namely her, was no longer buying their products.

EATING WHALE AND SEAL BLUBBER— NO HEART PROBLEMS!!!

A couple of studies show more proof that including fish in the diet can lower the abnormally high level of fats and cholesterol in the blood and greatly lessen the chance of heart attack and heart failure. The inclusion of fish in the diet has been recommended for some time, mainly as a substitute for beef and pork, which have more saturated fat, which contributes to heart disease. Usually, only the lean fish were recommended. New studies have shown that using even the fatty fish, like mackerel and salmon or even using fish oils in the diet, worked much better than the more common polyunsaturated corn and safflower.

For those who can eat an ounce or more of fish a day, the risk of dying of heart disease was 40 percent of that prevailing among men who didn't eat fish at all!

You can bet you will be seeing several products on the market in the near future using fish oil and I will keep you updated on these and their uses. In the meantime, it would be wise to include fish in the diet at least a couple of times a week and more if possible. This latest research probably helps explain why Eskimos have very little heart disease, even while consuming large quantities of whale and seal blubber. They also, in addition to the blubber, consume an average of 14 oz of fish per day.

GET RID OF THE 3 B'S—BURPING, BELCHING AND BLOATING

Probably 75 percent of all the patients I've worked on have had problems with gas or flatulence. This is mostly due to not being able to digest protein adequately. Protein takes a lot of hydrochloric acid from the stomach to be broken down. A deficiency of this hydrochloric acid production is probably one of the most common conditions after age 50, since research has shown that at age 50 the stomach is only releasing 15 percent of the amount of acid that is released at age 25. A more alarming figure is that 35 percent of all individuals over 65 do not secrete any hydrochloric acid at all.

