

ABSTRACTS

Getting to Heart of Lifestyle Medicine

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Coronary artery disease is commonest cause of mortality worldwide. The risk factors are hypertension, cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, smoking, family history. Most of these can be reversed by applying lifestyle medicine. This is scientifically grounded in terms of both cause and treatment effect. As an example, you can reverse diabetes with healthy eating.

The challenge with lifestyle medicine is getting people to take the treatment, namely healthy eating, at least 30 minutes of moderate paced physical activity each day, sleeping for 6-8 hours each night, lowering daily stress, stopping smoking, and keeping alcohol intake to a minimum. Most people know this but do nothing to make these changes in life.

Behaviours can be redesigned to make them healthier and more effective. One tool is using the Tiny Habits approach from BJ Fogg USA. Picking one or two easy to do behaviours that you know will help you to improve your health is where to start. You must have a clear goal of what you want to achieve such as fitting into new clothes by a certain upcoming date – to achieve that involves losing weight. Applying lifestyle medicine around healthier eating, you can pick two small behaviours like slowing down eating, taking more vegetables instead of carbohydrates and start practicing these with each meal. The key factor to success is to celebrate every time you do the behaviour such as a “Fist pump or Smile” (whatever you prefer). Practice makes perfect. Do this every day, each meal, keep a journal and add more behaviours as you move forward. Remember the celebration. It is your emotion / how you feel that will turn these behaviours into habits. Those feelings of joy are what sustain all successful health behaviour change.

In Cardiology practice I teach patients about their risk for heart and chronic diseases, and I show them how to make these changes. I support my approach with tools such as First Beat heart rate variability monitors that measure stress and sleep, useful pillars to improve heart health in all my patients. I start with patient’s physical heart health and after completing testing and any intervention like stenting, the patient’s follow up visit will engage their lifestyle and behaviour design. I will then coach and follow up based on individual need.

Workshop in Behaviour Design and Healthy Habits

PROF. ROBERT KELLY, MD MBA FRCPI FACC FESC FFSEM

This workshop teaches you how to practice Tiny Habits. As a source of reference, I recommend that you read BJ Fogg Tiny Habits book.

If you have questions or would like to learn more, please email me at Robert.kelly@beaconhospital.ie

Lifestyle Medicine a new field of medicine and the European prospectives.

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Lifestyle Medicine - even though the term only recently started being broadly used – has its roots in ancient Greece, thousands of years ago. Hippocrates (460 – 370 B.C.) was the first one to use the term of Lifestyle Medicine, suggesting that in order for someone to have good health, they should just “avoid eating excessive amounts of food and try to exercise even a bit”. So, he set the ground for what we call today, Lifestyle Medicine.

Coming in our days in Europe there is great interest in this new field of Medicine led by the European Lifestyle Medicine Organization (ELMO). The issue of practicing lifestyle medicine with scientific evidence by all professionals remains important, which is a priority of ELMO.

Keywords: lifestyle medicine, ELMO Organization, health, Hippocrates

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Subjective well-being and positive psychology

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Positive psychology relates to prevention, which leads not only to mental health, but also to overall health. Subjective well-being (SWB) is a phenomenon of positive psychology and one of the main indicators of quality of life. It emphasizes the subjective nature of happiness and considers people to be the best judges of their own happiness. Based on the works of Edward Diener and colleagues, the eudaimonic and hedonic aspects of subjective well-being are demonstrated in the example of research interpreting these categories among athletes ("Validation of scales of subjective well-being for the needs of Slovak sports practice: SWLS, SPANE and FS" No. vvgS-2021-1857). This concept of SWB consists of emotional and cognitive domains, such as experiencing frequent pleasant feelings, infrequent unpleasant feelings, and the overall judgment that life is satisfactory.

Creating a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle, including bio-psycho-social and spiritual aspects, leads to inspiring people with good examples from practice, as well. The popularization of scientific knowledge through a popular - educational television series is one of the possibilities for people to build their own path to subjective well-being. The author of the presentation shares her experience of how to get closer to people and connect theory with practice.

Key words: quality of life, healthy lifestyle, attitude, athletes, prevention through media

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Aspects of Sexual Health in Longevity

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The World Health Organization considers Sexual Health a fundamental human right and a part of wellbeing. Consequently, there is a strong bidirectional link between our lifestyle and sexuality, a relationship, which, on long-term, can influence longevity. Factors such as physical activity, diet, and quality of sleep, hormonal balance, relationship quality, social connection or cognitive function are the main influencers of a healthy lifestyle in seniors. Multiple scientific data of the Blue Zones research show that regular sexual activity is part of longevity. Certain lifestyle-related chronic diseases could be early diagnosed through sexual dysfunctions and prevented through regular sexual activity.

The presentation explores the different aspects of sexual health in seniors and how the eight European lifestyle pillars could influence sexuality and longevity.

Keywords: sexual health, hormonal balance, relationship quality, longevity

Workshops: How to structure a lifestyle medicine consultation?

IOAN HANES, M.D.

The lifestyle medicine consultation is based on the approaches of an expert and coach while talking to patients. This plays an important role because of their active involvement in the treatment. We familiarize the participants with the eight pillars of the European lifestyle medicine and with the communication through motivational interviewing according to the stages of changes of the patients.

After a theoretical presentation, the participants are invited to apply their achieved knowledge to real situations. They will be able, at the end of the workshop, to have the practical skills for approaching differently both the chronic patient and their self care.

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Blue Zone: a model to live longer and better

PROF. MICHEL POULAIN, PhD

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Longevity is a phenomenon related to individuals (individual longevity) as well as to populations as a whole (population longevity). For a long time, longevity was a phenomenon studied exclusively at the individual level. Nevertheless, considering the complexity of the phenomenon there is still a long way to go to discover the keys to reach 100 years. Long-living people have always attracted researchers but also the general public through media. The search for the places on earth where people live longer started in the 20th century when some explorers discovered remote areas where the population showed exceptional longevity. However, all of these were later invalidated because of age exaggeration. In 1999, the results of a study which asseverated the extreme longevity of men in Sardinia encouraged demographers to assess the validity of their exceptional ages. Surprisingly, the spatial distribution of Sardinian centenarians according to their place of birth was not

random and an area was identified where the proportion of centenarians was significantly higher. In March 2000, such area was identified on a map, a blue marker was used and, since that time, the term Blue Zone was used to identify the longevity hot spot. Since then, the concept of Blue Zone has been defined as a rather limited and homogenous geographical area where the population shares the same lifestyle and environment, and its longevity has been proved to be exceptionally high. So far, four Blue Zones have been identified and studied with the aim to trace the determinants of their exceptional longevity. With the Blue Zone concept, the chance of discovering more explanatory variables for exceptional longevity is improved. More specifically, researchers try to understand why in more developed populations, so many deaths occur between the ages of 60 and 80 while in the Blue Zone, many people live above 90 years? The lessons learned from the Blue Zone populations could give an answer. The oldest people living therein are examples of healthy ageing, and the information gathered from the Blue Zone populations can be adapted and transferred to nowadays' societies to contribute living longer but healthier. The lessons gathered from the Blue Zones populations are summarized in 7 principles and might be transferred to our advanced and post-industrial societies in order to contribute improving health and well-being. The characteristics of these people living in the Blue Zones, their lifestyle and environment, both physical and human, might be guidelines without being obliged to go and live as shepherd in a remote mountainous area. Today the size of the elderly is increasing but the tendency to exclude old people from the society is growing. Health and loneliness are major problems in our societies. Accordingly, what we observed in the Blue Zones can help to keep the seniors involved in the society and to help all of us to live better and longer.

Outdoor activities for longevity -Blue Zones inspirations

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Longevity Blue Zones are mostly in the mountainous area, which encourages physical activity in a natural way and in nature. The organization of dwellings gives space for gardens. The climate and farming as a hobby or profession create a lifestyle based on nature. That influence the diet, which includes sun-ripened fruits and vegetables, served with plenty of homemade olive oil. Additionally, respecting the age-old practice to stop eating when the stomach is 80% full allows citizens to avoid obesity.

Nature-derived ligands are a key stimulant for the immune system, and nature-derived signals can lower stress levels, which boosts immunity. A lifestyle based on social relationships in communities and close families can help. It supports a person in growing and maturing, teaches responsibility, and helps preserve tradition. Religion connects people to God and influences health and longevity through meditation, relaxing in nature admiring the wonder of creation. And through prayer, which is a simple, centuries-old and easily accessible breathing technique with a scientific basis.

Young people are open and receptive by nature; pointed in the right direction through observation and community and regionalism, they can save tradition. Thus,

promoting the values of traditional lifestyles can promote their health, well - being and positive thinking about their ethnicity. By raising awareness based on modern knowledge, it is possible to increase the efficiency of the immune system and influence healthy and active longevity based on the discovery of mechanisms, including immune mechanisms. Ikaria can be an example for other regions to follow, as it now provides a complex of both environmental and social factors.

Keywords: immunity, longevity, blue zones, Ikaria, Okinawa, nature
