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Being proactive describes someone who gets things done. If you are proactive, you make things happen, instead of waiting for them to happen to you. It means thinking and acting ahead of anticipated events. Not only is it a great method for avoiding many of life's problems down the road, but it can be extremely important for averting health disasters.

A proactive approach focuses on eliminating problems before they have a chance to appear while a reactive approach is based on responding to events after they have happened. While we all try to live our idealized lifestyle we are beginning to come to the realization that often our lifestyles don't necessarily mesh with long-term health and vitality.

Boiled down, lifestyle is a collection of habits, things we do repeatedly on a daily basis. Some habits are good and some aren't so good. All of them, however, influence our long-term health. That's really very good news if we adopt a proactive stance since it means that we have control over what our relationship with health or chronic disease is likely to be.

We play an essential part in not only our health but our health care. By being proactive and getting involved in the decision making process we, as well as our health care providers, reap many benefits. You not only gain a greater sense of control and increased confidence in decisions but better treatment adherence and health outcomes, something both you and your provider want.

Too many of us hand the power of our health care over to physicians who we believe will fix us and if the doctor fails to cure what ails us, we get frustrated and feel like helpless victims of bad luck or bad genes. Medicine is a service industry, which is exceptional at delivering acute emergency care. On the other hand physicians are poorly trained in lifestyle assessment and counseling and are given very little time to help patients succeed under our present model. Since this is not going to improve any time soon proactive supported prevention is a logical solution. It is interesting to note that lifestyle counseling concerning the critical risks of our increasing obesity epidemic is getting less attention today from US physicians.

Today's medicine requires tailored lifestyle prescriptions to increase successful outcomes in preventing and reversing chronic diseases and improving wellness. Those lifestyle prescriptions also need follow up on a regular basis to increase the odds of success in prevention and cure.