The 30 Pound Club
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July 25, 2010 – Valley Forge, PA

"It's Not Such a Wonderful Life"

Let's imagine you're looking ahead at your life at your current weight. No, make that a higher weight, because that's what the statistics show—the research on walking, cycling, and weight training shows that if you don't get and stay active, you'll gain weight over the years.

You've lost muscle mass and you have no level of fitness whatsoever. Walking up more than one flight of stairs is a flight of fancy; you'd be out of breath after one flight. You can no longer make even nine holes of golf; hiking, camping, swimming, and tennis are just memories. Simply walking around the house makes your feet and knees hurt.

You have diabetes. You're probably losing your vision. Certainly you're losing feeling in your fingers and toes. It's tougher to pick things up because you can't feel them to grip them, and hobbies you once enjoyed are impossible now. Caring for yourself in even the most basic ways gets more difficult all the time because you've lost so much strength and flexibility. You worry that soon you'll need assistance taking a bath, and you're afraid the help you need is going to get even more intrusive after that. And what if you fall? You know you couldn't get up on your own.

Your blood pressure is high but under control with several medications. Your cholesterol is normal, thanks to the medications you take for that. The meds make you tired—as if you weren't tired already from carrying around all those extra pounds. And the way prescription prices keep going up, you don't know how long you'll be able to afford them all.

You probably sleep with a CPAP machine because of sleep apnea. Why? You stop breathing and your brain gets deprived of oxygen, forcing you awake. You're fatigued all the time because you never get a really good night's sleep. Cranky? Yes, but who wouldn't be? Nobody understands.

Now Back to Today

This glimpse of the future could go on and on, but that's not my purpose. What I want to point out is that it doesn't have to be that way—consider me your Clarence, Angel Second Class. Today you may be racing toward that outcome, but you can change course. There are many things you can't control—childhood diseases, your genetic inheritance—but you can control most of your health. Degenerative diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer are mostly related to lifestyle. Your body weight is the common denominator that affects every one of those conditions. That's why getting your weight under control is so important.

Change your lifestyle, change your life—make it wonderful.

One and Done.

Straight Talk on Health

Tonight, I'm interviewing Mrs. Michigan Stephanie Hunt on my radio show. Stephanie is also the spokesperson for the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD); her son, Donnie, has Rubinstein-Taybi syndrome, a rare genetic disorder. We'll talk about that as well as what it's like to represent Michigan in the upcoming Mrs. America

contest. Be sure to catch this special episode of *Straight Talk on Health* at 7 p.m. in the Eastern Time Zone on WGVU-FM 88.5 or 95.3, or listen live via the Internet by going to www.wgvu.org and clicking on "Listen Live" in the gray bar at the top.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

WGVU Straight Talk on Health

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The health information in this message is designed for educational purposes only. It's not a substitute for medical advice from your healthcare provider, and you should not use it to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. It's designed to motivate you to work toward better health, and that includes seeing your healthcare professional regularly. If what you've read raises any questions or concerns about health problems or possible diseases, talk to your healthcare provider today.

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