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Disease

On a weekend when I'm home, I generally get a cup of coffee and flip channels just to see what the newest infomercials are. This time, I happened upon a Discovery Channel Continuing Medical Education program on bariatric surgery—that covers everything from the lap-band procedure, which is temporary, to a complete gastric bypass, which is permanent.

One of the things that they continually said on the program was that obesity is a disease. I'm not sure about that. How can eating be a disease? I understand their point that uncontrolled eating that resulted in over 100 extra pounds was not healthy. But a disease? It's not like smoking where you can quit altogether—we've gotta eat.

They reviewed some of the people who had surgery and gained back some of the weight. Why did they gain it back even though they had gone to the extreme of having the surgery? Because they never changed their lifestyle. They went back to their old habits, and surgery or not, they gained weight.

We're going to do this the old-fashioned way: eat less and move more. We may have picked up some bad habits, but we are definitely not diseased. It all comes down to one thing:

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

WGUV Straight Talk on Health

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