



April 14, 2010 – Grand Rapids, MI

Payment

Tomorrow is tax day in the United States. If you haven't paid your taxes by now, tomorrow is the day that payment is due. Every post office will have lines of people waiting to make sure they get the April 15th postmark.

The advantage is that every year, you know exactly when you'll pay your taxes; with your body, not so much. But know this: you will pay for how well you take care of your body. The payment for your lifestyle choice always comes due some day.

If you exercise regularly, your heart and muscles will be stronger and more fit. If you get to and maintain a reasonable body weight, your chances of diabetes, hypertension, and other degenerative diseases are much lower. They're not zero, but you can delay these diseases decades by taking care of yourself. The interest you get on your investment is years of being able to do what you want to do.

However, if you don't invest time in your body now, the due date can be moved up. You may still live a long life, but what kind of life will that be? Limited mobility because you're too heavy? Limited endurance because you haven't built your stamina? Medications or even injections to manage diabetes? Stents and by-pass surgery because of a poor diet and heart disease? Spending your last years in a nursing home instead of your own home?

Work a little bit every day to push that due date as far into the future as you can—exercise, eat better, manage stress. This is one bill you can't avoid paying, but your lifestyle has a great impact on when the payment comes due.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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