



February 28, 2011 – Grand Rapids, MI

Five Plus One

I think it's fitting to end American Health Month by sharing something Dr. Pam Zelasko sent to me that she found in a CNN Health Report (1): the top five things you shouldn't keep from your cardiologist—or any doctor, in my opinion. I'm going to do them in reverse order and add one more. Here we go

Tell your doctor:

5. If you haven't really stuck to your diet or exercise program.

Fess up to make sure your doctor knows where you are today.

4. If you're going through hard times.

Stress increases the release of damaging hormones. This isn't the time to put on a happy face; be honest about what's going on in your life.

3. If you've skipped your medications.

I harp on taking supplements consistently, and the same applies to any meds your doctor has prescribed for you. Find a way to always remember.

2. If you've undergone tests from other doctors.

Keep a file with copies of all your tests from every doctor. Take them with you on your appointment. It can save time and prevent duplication.

1. If you're taking any dietary supplements.

This is especially important if you're on medication. I'll address this one in an upcoming Saturday message, but don't ever hide what you take from your doctor.

Now here's my number one, the single most important thing not to hide from your physician: **chest pain or discomfort.**

You may be afraid that something's wrong. I get it, I've been there. But your physician isn't the one to be hiding it from—or anyone else for that matter. If you hide this one, you could end up dead. What good does that do you? Do you think the family and friends at your funeral will talk about how brave you were not to say anything, or how stupid you were? Will they be proud or angry? Think about that before you decide to tough it out.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

References:

1. <http://bit.ly/fHfBcp>

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