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Twenty Years

You know your health status and how you feel today. It may be great, good, or leave something to be desired. Is this the way it's going to stay, or are things going to get better or worse? We don't really know, but there's a way to examine the question. Ask the next 10 people you think are older than you how they feel. You'll find out several things.

First, some people you thought were older may actually be younger than you are. That should tell you a lot about taking care of yourself.

Second, people love to talk about their health, maybe more than you want to hear. They may have abundant energy with no serious medical problems, or they may describe aches and pains they have today and never had 20 years ago. They may give you a litany of medications they take and diseases they have.

Think about what they told you. Aside from eliminating accidents, which can't be predicted, what conditions were the result of diet, exercise, excess body weight, or smoking? If you've read the message for awhile, you know that heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, joint problems, and other conditions are the result of lifestyle. That doesn't mean that genetics aren't involved, but environment trumps genetics almost every time.

What could they have changed 20 years ago that might have changed the health they have today?

Now that you have that information, what health habits can you change—either add or delete today—that will reduce or even eliminate the health challenges you may have in 20 years?

What are you waiting for? In other words:

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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