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A Moral Dilemma

Last week's messages on taxes, deductions, and fast food brought quite a few responses. No one thinks legislating behavior is a good thing, and I definitely agree. But somehow, there has to be a balance, especially when it comes to health. Saying that "our food or drink is good for people when used as part of a healthy eating plan" is fine. But when you know it isn't used that way, what should you do? Do you have any responsibility? Let me give you an example from a related health issue.

The owners of a large grocery chain in Michigan are wonderful philanthropists and have donated money to build a state of the art cardiac hospital; if I ever have a heart problem, that's where I want to go. But here's the issue. They sell cigarettes in that grocery store chain, and nothing contributes to the acceleration of heart disease like smoking cigarettes. If they didn't sell cigarettes, a perfectly legal product, they might not have made as much profit to contribute to the hospital. But they do, and the cigarettes they sell contribute to bringing more patients to the cardiac hospital.

There are no easy answers here. Cigarettes are legal products, but it does create a moral dilemma, doesn't it? I'll give you my solution on Wednesday, but if you want to comment, feel free to let me know your thoughts.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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