

Chatting with The Good Dr. Laura Shook
December 2009

If you've been reading my articles for any length of time you probably know that I'm a huge advocate of better living through living better. It takes very little for me to hop up on my soap box and start talking about how what you put into your body directly affects the health of your body. "You are what you eat" Do you want your moods, blood sugar and hormone levels, your heart, blood vessels and brain function to be a bag of chips and a diet pop or would you rather they be a sandwich made with whole grain bread and a cup of tea?

"It's your body, use it or lose it" is another of my favorite soap box lectures. Walk, dance and play. Dig in your garden, walk with a friend, skip rope or swing on a swing-set. Your bones, muscles and nerves, your moods and hormones, your cardiovascular and immune systems all benefit when you move your body with some frequency. Remember that it is important to begin any fitness program at your own beginning level. For some that beginning might be gently squeezing a ball under the supervision and watchful eye of a trained physical therapist. Others might find their "Use it or lose it" beginning when they buy walking shoes and step outside.

My newest soap box lecture is this "If you or a loved one has hearing loss or declining cognitive health (reasoning, intuition, and memory), please GET A HEARING TEST A.S.A.P (as soon as possible)". Did you know that anyone with type II diabetes is at risk for hearing loss due to inner ear nerve damage? Did you know that the symptoms of hearing loss can mimic the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease? The depression, anxiety and feelings of isolation associated with hearing loss can be mistaken for the depression, anxiety and disorientation of Alzheimer's. Do not allow the reduced ability to communicate, a consequence of hearing loss, to be confused with the reduced language comprehension of Alzheimer's disease. In 1996 a study conducted by the University of South Florida found that 94 percent of respondents suspected of having a memory disorder actually suffered from untreated hearing loss.

Hearing tests and hearing aids have made huge advances since my grandmother's days. The hearing aids of the new world are small, sleek and computer programmable to compensate for specific ranges of hearing loss and very individualized hearing needs. (See www.hearingplanet.com for more information)

All this hopping from box to box has worn me out. I'm ready for my nap but first I'll take a little walk, stretch my muscles and have a light and nutritious lunch. Be happy and be well. Sing, dance and play. Eat well and thrive. Drink plenty of clean water. Have a pleasant and safe holiday season. And NEVER underestimate the importance of recreation.

Dr. Laura L. Shook is a chiropractor with an office located near downtown Wichita KS. Her office will be closed December 21, 2009 and reopen for business On January 4, 2010. She can be reached by phone at (316)267-6522 or by E-mail to gooddrlaura@cox.net