

ASHBY ADVISOR

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Hope you're making great strides in improving and enjoying your life this year. So let's see if we can keep you motivated with some serious news:

Some startling facts on the cost of diabetes in this country: \$174 billion per year. There are about a million new cases diagnosed each year. And about half of that \$174 billion is paid by government programs. Which means that every dollar that goes to pay for diabetes is a dollar more in taxes (or debt) or a dollar not spent on other programs. What to do?

And the answer is: That same old boring mantra you probably hear all the time – eat right, keep your weight under control, and exercise. If you're already diabetic, stay diligent with your meds and watching your glucose level and any other risk factors you may have. Keeping diabetes under control is far less expensive than letting it go unchecked. Medicare is the most under funded mandated government program there is. With aging baby boomers, the costs to us are going to be staggering. So, want to help cut medical costs? Stay healthy.

Here's an interesting study finding: In people over the age of 65, Vitamin E levels were a great predictor of physical decline – those with the lowest levels of E in the blood had the greatest physical decline in general. (Sunflower seeds and almonds are high in E, but also in calories, but also good fats and oils.)

From the New England Journal of Medicine, November 8, 2007, researchers reported that the longevity of protective immunity with many vaccines may be underestimated. In other words, some vaccines may be given too often. A case in point – tetanus shots. Recommended every 10 years. New research shows that after the initial series you may be good for 30 years. Now I hope they look at the frequency and number in childhood to see what our children truly need to reach their goal. The U.S. currently dispenses more vaccines in greater numbers per person than any other industrialized nation in the world. Yet, we're nowhere near the top of the charts for healthiest populations. If we could reduce the numbers needed, the cost savings alone would be substantial.

Quote of the email: Better than counting your years is to make your years count.