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How Can Meditation Reduce Healthcare Costs?

Simple and free relief to those burdened by high medical expenses



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NEWPORT BEACH, Calif., June 20, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The nation's current healthcare crisis has added a new dimension to the old saying, "Prevention is the best medicine." With rising co-pays, high deductibles, confusion over coverage, and prescription drug headaches, healthcare consumers recognize that getting sick is more complicated than ever.

So if the solution to a dysfunctional system is to avert illness, then what approaches provide proven results? One answer lies in a practice that dates to the origins of human civilization. Scientific research is pointing to the health benefits of meditation. "Major studies show that a significant cause of illness is stress. And meditation is one of the most powerful ways of reducing it," says Dr. Robert Puff, a clinical psychologist based in Newport Beach, California.

From a Genetic Standpoint, Some of Us Are Toyotas and Some Are Fords

Stress isn't the cause of every illness. But many common ailments can be attributed to it. So how are stress and sickness related? Dr. Puff, who has been both meditating and teaching meditation for three decades, compares our bodies to automobiles, where each car's brand is like a person's DNA. Just like we can't turn a Toyota into a Ford, there's not much we can do to alter our genes.

Imagine that everyday, we slam on our brakes continuously, never change our oil, and overlook all maintenance. At first, our bodies may not reveal signs of damage. Over time, however, the neglect will show -- sometimes subtly and other times dramatically. If we are Toyotas, perhaps the result will be a transmission in disrepair. If, on the other hand, our bodies are Fords our transmissions may be fine, but our brakes will no longer function. Similarly, everyone has genetic predispositions particular to him or herself. In the end, we're all going to wear out, but the speed and how that deterioration manifests itself will be different for each person. Regardless of our own DNA, however, reducing stress significantly elevates everyone's chances of living longer and experiencing less wear.

Meditation Gives Our Minds a Break

"We can have intense jobs and deal with difficult matters both in and outside of work. But if we meditate regularly, we can still experience peace of mind regardless of our responsibilities," says Dr. Puff. To illustrate, he provides another analogy. Meditation is like the work breaks we take everyday. If we had to exert ourselves eight hours continuously, without relief, our time at work would eventually become unbearable. But lunchtime and breaks throughout the day allow us to make it through. "Meditation gives our minds time off from constant mental activity. Over the long term, we reduce overall stress, and this, I believe, is one of the main reasons that meditation increases physical health," he says. And major organizations are listening. Fortune 500 corporations and prestigious hospitals hire Dr. Puff to speak about the benefits of meditation. They are acknowledging the research: meditation increases concentration and decreases stress.

During these difficult economic times, companies are struggling to provide medical benefits, and consumers are having to pay more out of pocket. Getting sick is rapidly becoming cost-prohibitive for everyone. "Meditation is simple, effective, free, and has no side effects -- no prescription drug can make those claims," says Dr. Puff.

Dr. Robert Puff, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist, meditation expert, international speaker and the creator of the weekly *Meditation For Health Podcast*, available at <http://www.MeditationForHealthPodcast.com>. To learn more, visit his blog at <http://www.Meditation-Enlightenment.com>.

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