

# Health is simply smart economics

By Carole Hoffman

Today, with our country in economic crisis, we are all cutting back wherever we can. We've given up our thoughts of buying that new car, driving less to save on gas, eating out less often and nixing that new pair of shoes we've been eyeing. These are all effective cost saving behaviors to help us get by in these difficult economic times. But there is more we can do for a greater impact our own personal economics and on a national level as well. Prevent disease!

With the cost of healthcare so exorbitant and out of pocket medical expenses often adding up to many thousands of dollars, few of us can afford to get sick. Add up how much you pay for medications on a monthly basis. Wouldn't you like to be able to put that money into savings instead?

Have you noticed how much of your paycheck goes to healthcare? The gross demands we have placed on our national healthcare system,

because of our ill health, have allowed these costs to go through the roof. By doing our part to keep ourselves healthy we will need these services less and over time, health care costs will come down.

If you could significantly reduce your risk of developing disease, would you? You can, and here are a few simple suggestions how:

Eat organic, locally raised foods. Yes, they cost more in the short term. But because organic foods do not contain the multitude of harmful, disease causing chemicals other foods do, organic foods reduce your risk of disease and improve your health. This means your savings in healthcare costs will far outweigh the extra expense. Here in Chatham, we are blessed with many organic and sustainable farms that offer much healthier food options for us.

Drink plenty of pure water. I know, you've heard it many times before. But how many of us actually



do drink a couple liters of water each day? Water has been shown to reduce and even help to heal many health conditions, from back pain to heart disease, and headaches to hypertension. Keeping the body hydrated is one of the most effective, easiest and inexpensive ways we can avoid paying the high cost of healthcare.

Don't forget to breathe: Because it's automatic, we don't think about it.

Breathing helps to keep our body alkaline and oxygenated, further preventing disease. By taking a few minutes several times a day to consciously breathe deeply, we can increase the body's state of health. But breather beware! Pure air is the key. If we're breathing toxins, such as from room deodorizers, cleaning products or scented candles, we are harming our health.

Consider alternative healthcare options: Though often not covered by insurance and requiring an immediate outlay of cash, in the long run they are often much more economical. Just a few sessions of alternative therapies are often all that is needed to relieve a medical condition that may otherwise add up to significant expense. As they say, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!"

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