
Preface

Lifestyle—the manner in which people live—is fundamental to health, wellness, and prevention of disease. It follows that attention to lifestyle is critically important to effective and successful health care. But here is the challenge: Health-care professionals receive very little, if any, formal training about lifestyle counseling and, therefore, are ill equipped to incorporate lifestyle issues into clinical practice.

In response, “lifestyle medicine” is evolving as a means to fill this knowledge gap. Strictly speaking, lifestyle medicine approaches health and wellness by harnessing the power of lifestyle-related behaviors and influencing the environment we live in. In more colloquial terms, lifestyle medicine addresses how we should live in order to be healthy. This is more than a trite semantic, more than just conjoining two words *lifestyle* and *medicine* to create yet another discipline to learn in an already overburdened system of health care. Rather, it is a formal approach that promises to enhance and strengthen a reinvigorated health-care system that is still outpaced by the epidemic proportions and complexity of chronic disease: obesity, diabetes, depression, hypertension, and cancer, among others.

Lifestyle Medicine—A Manual for Clinical Practice presents this formal approach in a pragmatic context. This is a manual that provides clear and succinct text on nearly all aspects of lifestyle medicine. The approach is both explanatory and pragmatic, providing case studies and bulleted translation of academic information into clinical practice recommendations. There is an emphasis on scientific evidence wherever possible as well as expert opinion by those who practice lifestyle medicine. There is a “how to” rationality to the book, consistent with a premise that any and all health-care professionals should, and perhaps must, incorporate lifestyle medicine. We include a checklist at the end of the book that summarizes key points and provides a practical tool for routine patient encounters.

The book begins with a set of introductory chapters that detail the why’s, what’s, and wherefore’s of lifestyle medicine in current clinical practice. Next, a portfolio of paradigms, tools, models, and programs that are critical to this formal approach are provided. These chapters begin with generalized discussions but then migrate into specific descriptions on healthy eating, physical activity, sleep hygiene, behavior, smoking cessation, managing substance abuse, and alcohol moderation. To complete these discussions, chapters are included on integrative medicine, transculturalization for adapting recommendations to different regions and ethnicities, and the need for community engagement. Finally, specific disease states are presented within a lifestyle medicine context to provide clear explanations and examples of how to implement lifestyle medicine, including cardiometabolic risk reduction (obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and dyslipidemia), cancer, depression, musculoskeletal disorders, neurodegenerative conditions, chronic kidney disease, liver disease, gastrointestinal disorders, chronic pulmonary disease, and AIDS. We suggest that the reader not only spend time on each chapter in succession but also prepare to refer to relevant chapters when needed for specific patient management issues.

Will this book enhance and improve your clinical practice? Yes, we believe it will, by better understanding key principles and implementing the proposed formal approach.

What can be expected as a result of this enriched clinical practice? With widespread implementation of lifestyle medicine, we anticipate better clinical outcomes in chronic disease pro-

cesses, introduction and facilitation of lifestyle education and training, more lifestyle-centered research with practical metrics and findings, and an overall improvement in the epidemiology of chronic diseases across local, national, and perhaps even global scales. We hope you share our vision for the future of medicine and need to optimize health care by actualizing principles of lifestyle medicine, for your own personal benefit, for the benefit of your patients, and for the aggregate benefit of a society in need.

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Lifestyle Medicine

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