

The Frightening Statistics of Hospital Infection Rates

According to Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) statistics, approximately 1.7 million Americans contract infections during hospital stays, and 99,000 deaths are attributed to these infections each year! And that's just ONE cause of death directly attributable to the medical system you entrust with your health care needs.

Most of these hospital acquired infections could be avoided if hospitals maintained stricter infection control measures; simple strategies such as washing hands before touching each patient, and making sure bedding is cleaned, for example, go a long way to ensure a safer environment.

The modern health care system as a whole is the leading cause of death¹ in the US. And well intentioned but ill-informed US doctors are the third leading cause of death². Their mistakes claim some 225,000 lives every year.

Knowing what we know about infection rates in hospitals, it is strongly recommend checking yours out. In the above article, Main Street provides a helpful link to Consumer Reports' listing of infection rates at major hospitals³ across the US.

You can review this list and see how the hospitals in your area fare before you plan an elective surgery, for example.

Should you fall ill, either ask to be taken to another hospital, or ask a friend or family member to stay with you to ensure proper hygiene measures are employed.

Americans Pay TWICE as Much for Health Care, but Receive the WORST Quality of Care

This was true in 2008⁴, and over the past two years absolutely nothing has changed.

American medical care is still the most expensive in the world. We spend twice as much for health care, per person, than other industrialized countries. And we're still

¹ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2004/07/07/healthcare-death-part-one.aspx>

² <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2000/07/30/doctors-death-part-one.aspx>

³ <http://www.consumerreports.org/health/doctors-hospitals/hospital-infection/deadly-infections-hospitals-can-lower-the-danger/hospital-infection-rates/index.htm>

⁴ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2008/08/07/u-s-paying-through-the-nose-for-poor-quality-health-care.aspx>

in last place among seven countries surveyed⁵, when it comes to preventing avoidable deaths and providing quality care.

The US also has a drastically different range of life expectancy between people living in richer or poorer states⁶. A 30-year gap now exists in the average life expectancy between Mississippi, in the Deep South, and Connecticut, in prosperous New England.

Sadly, the decline in life expectancy in these worst-off areas are primarily caused by a rise in a number of *preventable* diseases, such as lung cancer, chronic lung disease, and diabetes, highlighting the dire need for proper health education and preventive measures.

The latest Commonwealth Fund report⁷ — which used data from "nationally representative patient and physician surveys in seven countries in 2007, 2008, and 2009" — again ranked the United States dead last, compared to Britain, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand.

According to Reuters:

"The report looks at five measures of healthcare — quality, efficiency, access to care, equity and the ability to lead long, healthy, productive lives.

Britain, whose nationalized healthcare system was widely derided by opponents of U.S. healthcare reform, ranks first in quality while the Netherlands ranked first overall on all scores, the Commonwealth team found."

Ironically, researchers are also finding that Americans are increasingly being over-treated to death⁸. Treatments that buy only weeks of time⁹ are frequently employed when patients are terminally ill, or dying from old age. Meanwhile, medical bills are a leading cause of family bankruptcies.

Again, most diseases and health conditions in the US are treated incorrectly and inefficiently, at *extremely* high cost, and a major part of this problem is *lack of prevention*.

⁵ <http://blogs.mercola.com/sites/vitalvotes/archive/2010/06/25/us-scores-dead-last-again-in-healthcare-study.aspx>

⁶ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2008/05/15/why-is-life-expectancy-falling-in-the-united-states.aspx>

⁷ <http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Content/Publications/Fund-Reports/2010/Jun/Mirror-Mirror-Update.aspx>

⁸ <http://blogs.mercola.com/sites/vitalvotes/archive/2010/06/30/how-americans-are-overtreated-to-death.aspx>

⁹ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2010/05/22/when-93000-only-buys-you-4-months-to-live.aspx>

Focusing our efforts on educating about healthful lifestyle strategies could make all the difference, along with reducing our knee-jerk inclination to treat every symptom with toxic drugs.

BEWARE of July — The Most Dangerous Month for Any Hospital Stay

If you live near a teaching hospital, consider paying attention to these stats.

In the US, medical students graduate and begin their residences in July each year, and as a result of inexperience combined with the sleep deprivation, medication—and other medical errors in teaching hospitals spike upward¹⁰. Additionally many inexperienced interns and residents join the staff.

Nationally, error rates go up by 10 percent in July in teaching hospitals¹¹, a recent study shows, while non-teaching hospital error rates stay more or less fixed.

It is Main Street's advice to investigate whether your local hospital is a teaching hospital or not, and if you do get sick, either request another hospital, or at least be prepared to ask more questions to make sure you're getting appropriate care.

How to Survive in a Diseased Health Paradigm

In January of this year, Reuters reported that the U.S. spent \$2.3 trillion dollars on health care in 2008¹². But although this was slightly less than projected, showing the slowest rise in health care costs in nearly 50 years, it's still dramatically disproportionate compared to what other nations are capable of accomplishing with less than half of what the US spends.

By 2017, health care spending is projected to exceed \$4 trillion. This is largely due to the reliance on a medical system that treats only symptoms and never the cause of disease¹³. The US also tends to over-test and over-treat¹⁴, and it's obvious by now that most Americans are grossly over-medicated¹⁵.

Still, every available index shows that this multitrillion dollar investment is a miserable failure.

¹⁰ <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/WellnessNews/july-month-fatal-hospital-errors-study-finds/story?id=10819652&page=1>

¹¹ <http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/07/07/hospital.deaths.july/index.html?hpt=Sbin>

¹² <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6040MP20100105>

¹³ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2008/09/27/fda-announces-20-dangerous-drugs-you-should-not-be-on.aspx>

¹⁴ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2010/04/01/experts-say-us-doctors-overtesting-overtreating.aspx>

¹⁵ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2008/07/03/why-is-the-u-s-spending-more-than-1-trillion-for-drugs.aspx>

More drugs, more surgeries, and more medical tests do not equal better health. All it does is bankrupt individuals, and the nation as a whole.

Will anything change as the US health care reform takes effect?

The *attitude* toward health care is not being properly addressed. The reform is simply trying to figure out how to keep paying these exorbitant prices.

Preventive measures are still largely ignored.

One could influence this negative trend, however, by changing your own attitude toward health by realizing that some of the best ways to improve your health are very inexpensive. Some are even free.

Take Control of Your Health¹⁶. You don't have to be just another sad statistic.

There are a number of basic strategies you can use to avoid getting sucked into the current disease-care paradigm. Following these guidelines will be a powerful way to avoid premature aging, and improve your health, no matter what your age, so you can avoid having to take your chances in a hospital.

Eat a healthful diet that's right for your nutritional type (paying very careful attention to keeping your insulin levels down)

- Consume healthy fat
- Drink plenty of clean water
- Eat plenty of raw food
- Enjoy some daily sunshine
- Exercise properly
- Get plenty of sleep
- Limit toxin exposure
- Manage your stress
- Optimize *insulin* and *leptin* levels

¹⁶ <http://products.mercola.com/take-control/>