

ASK THE CHIROPRACTOR

Discuss self-destructive habits with physician

Question: I am concerned about my husband's self-destructive health habits. He smokes cigarettes all day and eats everything in sight. He is overweight and his breathing is labored. My question is why his doctors don't talk to him and tell him the danger he is in?

Answer: Half the deaths in the United States are due to self-destructive behaviors, like your husband's, including smoking and overeating.

About 1.3 million people die each year from conditions that could have been prevented or delayed by healthier habits.

I don't know why your husband's doctors don't discuss his health habits. A study at Case Western Reserve University studied patient satisfaction in discussing behavioral issues.

Only 48 percent of physicians discussed behavioral issues during office visits. Discussing diet, exercise, alcohol, drug use and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases does not put off most physicians.

The study indicated patient satisfaction was much higher for those patients whose doctors did discuss behavioral concerns.

I believe healing comes from inside out. All patients are inevitably responsible for their own decisions on their health behaviors. It is absolutely the treating doctor's responsibility to alert and inform their patients of their potential self-damaging behaviors. The doctor can offer advice for counseling or alternatives to avoid the self-defeating actions.

Your husband may need a greater motivational boost to make his decision to stop his self-destruction. Lead through example of your own integrity and keep improving yourself. Leave alternatives out for him to see or read. Talk to his physicians and request they speak to him about these behaviors.

Quote of the week: "The seasons do not push one another; neither do clouds race the wind across the sky. All things happen in their own good time." -- *Dan Millman*