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The Power of Lifestyle Medicine

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Welcome

By Saray Stancic, M.D.

I am pleased to welcome you to my new monthly newsletter, "The Power of Lifestyle Medicine". In this brief communication, I hope to be able to share with you information, inspirational stories, and helpful tips to assist and motivate you in your quest toward achieving a healthier and more fulfilling life. I am so grateful to have this opportunity to guide and partner with you on this journey to optimize your lifestyle, and it is my sincere wish that you, too, will reap many of the benefits that lifestyle medicine can provide.

My intention with this newsletter is not to overwhelm you with data, but provide you with direct, easy-to-follow guidelines, supported by sound scientific data, along with real-life stories to inspire and invigorate your resolve to modify your life. In this newsletter, recent peer-reviewed research will be distilled into major points, often accompanied with stories of actual patient experiences.

It is my fervent hope that each month you will learn something new and useful for your path to a potentially healthy and long life. Thank you for joining me on this journey as we move onward together.

Be well,

Dr. Saray Stancic

Inside This Issue

Welcome 1

News 2

What is Lifestyle Medicine? 3

Upcoming Events 5

Available Media 6



News

BURGER KING REMOVED FROM HOSPITAL CAFETERIA

Salty, high fat foods and red meat are key culprits in the development of a number of serious chronic diseases, particularly obesity, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, strokes, and cancer. These foods are also the foundation of fast-food burger franchises. With their propensity for causing disease, they do not support the agenda of an institution dedicated to helping save lives. Therefore, the existence of one such establishment, Burger King, as part of the cafeteria of University Hospital in Newark, NJ raised serious doubts regarding the hospital's goals of sustaining and improving health.

Dr. Saray Stancic has long been struck by the hypocrisy of the institution housing the fast-food restaurant. She initiated a campaign to remove Burger King from the hospital, reaching out to University Hospital's Chief Executive Officer and other leaders in the Newark community, wrote an editorial in the local newspaper, and started a petition on change.org. The petition was signed by over 3,000 people, but still the executive staff of the hospital were resistant to remove Burger King from the premises.

Dr. Stancic enlisted the help of Neal Barnard, M.D. of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) in Washington, D.C. to obtain a copy of the hospital's contract with Burger King. With the support of Dr. Barnard and PCRM, she and a group of individuals concerned about the presence of a franchise whose menu was incongruous with the institution's mission staged a protest outside of the hospital in June 2019.

When the contract came up for renewal this year, University Hospital decided not to continue their relationship with Burger King. The site of the former fast-food restaurant is now a bistro offering a selection of healthy meal options for the hospital's staff, patients and visitors.

We would like to congratulate the executive board of University Hospital for taking a stand to protect health rather than add to the current epidemic of chronic diseases.



Dr. Saray Stancic outside of University Hospital, June, 2019.

“Dr. Saray Stancic has long been struck by the hypocrisy of the institution housing the fast-food restaurant.”

WHAT IS LIFESTYLE MEDICINE?

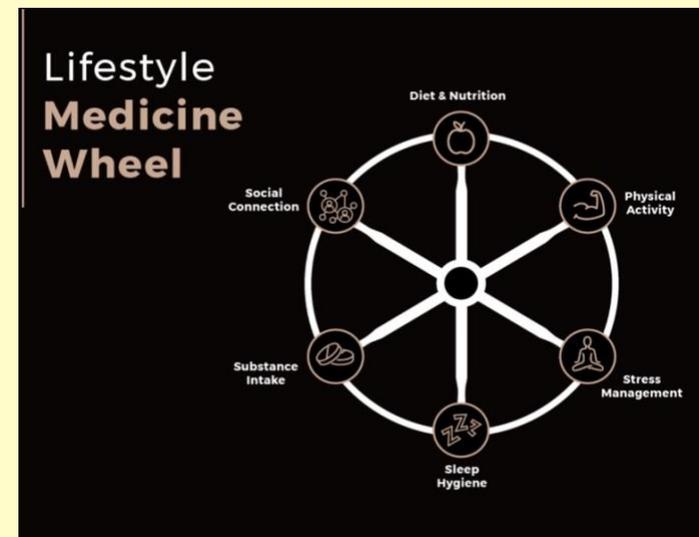
BY ANNE BERTASSO

While Lifestyle Medicine has been recognized for a number of years now, many people are still unsure what it actually entails. Lifestyle Medicine is a relatively new field in the practice of medicine. It is important to note that it is not complementary or alternative medicine. It is based on sound, peer-reviewed, scientific evidence which has established its tenets as powerful factors in the prevention, management and treatment of many of the chronic illnesses that have become so prevalent in today's society.

Many people are unsure what constitutes a chronic illness. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines a chronic illness as a condition that a person has for at least a year and that requires ongoing medical attention and/or limits a person's activities of daily living.¹ These include diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and autoimmune disorders such as lupus. Even obesity, which is seen in more than 42% of American adults, is considered a chronic disease in itself, and its presence is a risk factor for other types of chronic disease.²

With approximately 60% of people in the United States suffering from at least one chronic illness, it has caused an incredible strain on healthcare resources, requiring \$3.8 TRILLION per year in health care costs.¹ With the massive amount of medical care, pharmaceuticals, and invasive surgeries performed in an attempt to treat these conditions, it comes as a surprise to many that most chronic diseases can be managed with relatively simple lifestyle modifications, such as avoiding tobacco products, eating a healthy diet, increasing physical activity, getting quality sleep, reducing stress, and social connectedness. These activities form the "spokes" of the Lifestyle Medicine Wheel covered in the book *What's Missing From Medicine*.³ Importantly, these conditions can be prevented from ever occurring in a large number of people by adopting these changes. In fact, the Nurses' Health Study indicated that 80% of heart diseases and more than 91% of diabetes in women can be stopped using these interventions.⁴

(continued on page 4)



The Lifestyle Medicine Wheel (from the book *What's Missing From Medicine*, 2021).

“...the Nurses’ Health Study indicated that 80% of heart diseases and more than 91% of diabetes in women can be stopped using these interventions.”



WHAT IS LIFESTYLE MEDICINE?

(continued from page 4)

You may wonder why, with all its benefits, lifestyle medicine is not widely used in medical practice. It is gaining strength, but, sadly, most medical schools in the U.S. have a curriculum based on a model established almost a century ago! Physicians are very familiar with the wide range of drugs and surgeries that can be used to treat diseases, but have not received much, if any, education in topics like nutrition and physical activity, an issue we explored in our documentary film *Code Blue*.⁵ The first instinct of many healthcare providers is to treat rather than prevent disease. Since it is capable of both, lifestyle medicine is a critical tool to improve our healthcare system, along with our own health.

References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). *About Chronic Diseases*. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/index.htm>.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). *Adult Obesity Facts*. <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html>.
3. Stancic, Saray. (2021). *What's Missing From Medicine*. San Antonio, TX: Hierophant Publishing.
4. Rippe J. M. (2018). Lifestyle Medicine: The Health Promoting Power of Daily Habits and Practices. *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*, 12(6), 499–512. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1559827618785554>.
5. *Code Blue* [Documentary]. <https://www.codebluedoc.com>.



Dr. Stancic's Upcoming Speaking Engagements

May 21-23

Virtual

Plant-based Prevention off Disease Annual National Conference

[LEARN MORE](#)

July 12

Virtual

Harvard Medical School, continuing education course: Lifestyle Medicine: Tools for Promoting Healthy Change

[LEARN MORE](#)

July 15-17

Virtual

International Conference on Nutrition in Medicine

[LEARN MORE](#)

July 24

Kirkland, WA

Food for the Brain Seminar

[LEARN MORE](#)

July 24

Virtual

2nd Annual International Conference on the Future of Women's Health

[LEARN MORE](#)



Available Media

Code Blue

Code Blue reveals lapses in the current state of medicine and provides a common-sense solution by featuring the practice of lifestyle medicine to prevent, manage, and reverse chronic diseases. The film presents the hurdles to the proposed shift: antiquated curricula in medical schools, confusion in the media, inadequate government policies, and the underlying influences of the pharmaceutical and food industries.

98 mins | USA | Documentary | Stereo | HD | NTSC

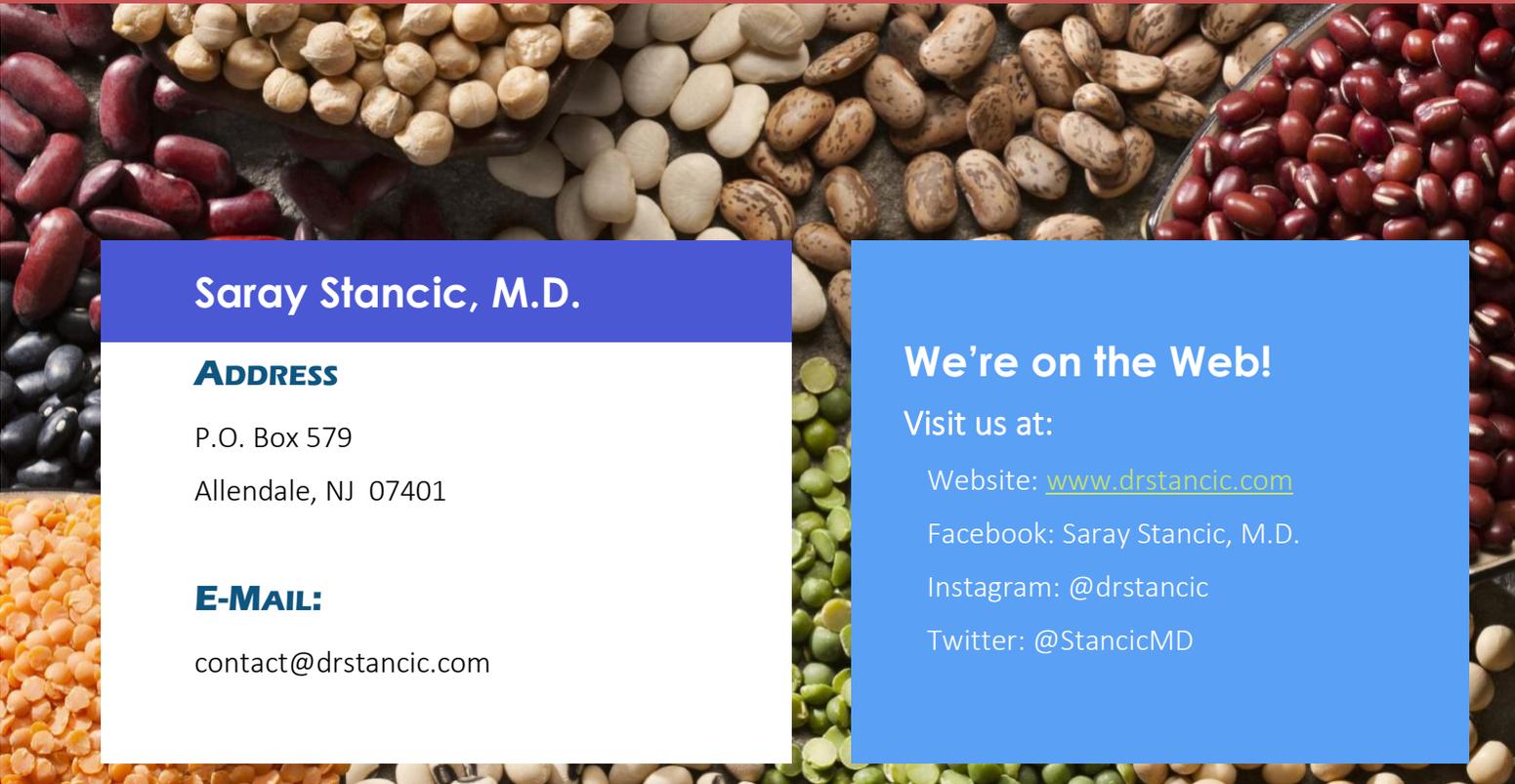
<https://www.codebluedoc.com>

What's Missing From Medicine: Six Lifestyle Changes to Overcome Chronic Illness

In this book, Dr. Stancic shares her own inspiring story and explains the incredible power that specific lifestyle changes can have for those living with chronic illness. Her prescription to prevent, treat, and even reverse chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, autoimmune diseases like lupus, multiple sclerosis, and many others, is what readers will find in this book.

<https://drstancic.com/whats-missing-from-medicine-book/>





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