Study Shows Lifestyle Choices Have Significant Impact on Multiple Chronic Conditions, Significant Implications For Reducing Costs

In a study recently published in the Journal of Preventive Medicine, Adams and colleagues showed a linear association between a number of modifiable risk factors and multiple chronic conditions, making those modifications a key to health care cost savings and to preventing a wide range of conditions.

St. Louis, MO (PRWEB) October 05, 2017 -- In a study recently published in the Journal of Preventive Medicine, Adams and colleagues showed a linear association between a number of modifiable risk factors and multiple chronic conditions, making those modifications a key to health care cost savings and to preventing a wide range of conditions.

The data analyzed for the study, https://authors.elsevier.com/a/1VpFeKi2pme9H, were from the publicly available 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and included 483,865 non-institutionalized US adults ages 18 years old or older. Chronic conditions included asthma, arthritis, heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cognitive impairment, cancer other than skin, and kidney disease. Risk factors included obesity, current smoking, sedentary lifestyle, inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption and sleeping other than seven to eight hours, while depression, hypertension, high cholesterol, and diabetes were considered in each category.

Previous research by Thorpe and colleagues had estimated that the care of adults with four or more chronic conditions (17.1% of all adults in the study) is responsible for 77.6% of all health care costs in the U.S. today.

The potential savings by reducing just two risk factors (diabetes and hypertension) and their related comorbidity was estimated previously by Ormond and colleagues at $9 billion annually over one to two years and closer to $25 billion a year after 5 years or more, factoring in possible complications.

True Health Initiative founder, Yale University Prevention Research Center Director and study co-author David L. Katz, MD, MPH, FACLM, pointed out that in addition to costs, another implication of the study results is an individual’s access to healthcare if they have one or more of the chronic conditions.

“Although insurers decide what qualifies as a pre-existing condition, all the chronic conditions used in this study except cognitive impairment are commonly included,” he said. “Individuals with a pre-existing condition could be denied coverage or face higher premiums. While having a pre-existing condition might not affect coverage for adults eligible for Medicare, over half of all adults with multiple chronic conditions are ages 18 to 64 years.”

American College of Lifestyle Medicine President George Guthrie, MD, MPH, FACLM, said the study confirms the necessity for addressing the root cause of chronic conditions.

“The evidence shows that the risks for chronic disease are rooted in lifestyle choices,” he said. “More than ever, it is important to emphasize lifestyle medicine as the first treatment option for preventing, treating, and in some cases, reversing the cause of chronic conditions. If we can help people with chronic conditions, we can add years to their life and life to their years, as well as lower the ever-increasing costs of healthcare for everyone.”
ABOUT THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF LIFESTYLE MEDICINE: ACLM is the physician-led professional medical association for clinicians dedicated to the advancement and clinical practice of Lifestyle Medicine as the foundation of a transformed and sustainable healthcare system. More than a professional association, ACLM is a galvanizing force for change. ACLM addresses the need for quality education and certification, supporting its members in their individual practices and in their collective desire to domestically and globally promote Lifestyle Medicine as the first treatment option, as opposed to a first option of treating symptoms and consequences with expensive, ever increasing quantities of pills and procedures. ACLM members are united in their desire to identify and eradicate the cause of disease. Learn more at www.LifestyleMedicine.org. Board certification in the field is available through the American Board of Lifestyle Medicine. Visit www.ablm.com for details.

ABOUT TRUE HEALTH INITIATIVE: True Health Initiative (THI), founded in association with the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, is the global voice for lifestyle as medicine. It was established to make evidence-based fundamental truths about healthy, sustainable living and eating common knowledge. Through unity, we will change the global understanding of the lifestyle practices that most likely help people live longer and live healthier, free of chronic diseases. We are supported by a growing coalition of more than 370 experts including physicians, scientists, nutritionists and authors from more than 35 countries.
Contact Information
Jean Tips
American College of Lifestyle Medicine
+1 214-240-1872

Leslie Casey
True Health Initiative
214-684-1348

Online Web 2.0 Version
You can read the online version of this press release here.