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Author: Kathi J. Kemper

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Chronic Disease? Healthy Habits in a Healthy Habitat – research on dietary therapies

Kathi J Kemper, MD, MPH, Editor-in-Chief

Director, Center for Integrative Health and Wellness

Professor, Pediatrics; Dietetics; Nursing

Columbus 43210

United States

Phone: 336-577-7210

E-mail: Kathi.Kemper@osumc.edu

This issue's editorial takes a different turn as three recent books have raised numerous research questions for the complementary and integrative medicine research community. All three focus heavily on diet and all three are written by physicians: 1) Terry Wahls, MD an internist at the University of Iowa who writes about her recovery from progressive multiple sclerosis in The Wahls Protocol; 2) Steven Grundy, MD, formerly professor and Chairman of cardiothoracic surgery in California and now director of the Center for Restorative Medicine in California, who writes about his clinical approach to reversing chronic diseases and obesity in The Plant Paradox; and Dale Bredesen, MD, an academic neurologist with hundreds of peer-reviewed research publications and now director of the Buck Institute in California, who writes about his approach to reversing Alzheimer's disease in The End of Alzheimer's. All three endorse common sense healthy habits as part of a comprehensive, holistic approach to chronic disease:

- Managing stress (through meditation, yoga, journaling, or other mind-body practices)
- Optimizing sleep (7-9 hours; if red flags, consider sleep apnea and get it evaluated)
- Energetic exercise (both 30-60 minutes of cardio at least 5 days a week + strength training at least twice a week)
- Social support, avoiding isolation
- Finding and nurturing a sense of purpose and meaning in life
- Avoid deficiencies of essential nutrients, e.g. vitamin D, iodine, magnesium, zinc, B vitamins, and omega-3 fatty acids

This advice is not controversial and would likely be endorsed by the American Heart Association and American Cancer Society.

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