



7 Assumptions that Drive Too Much Medical Care

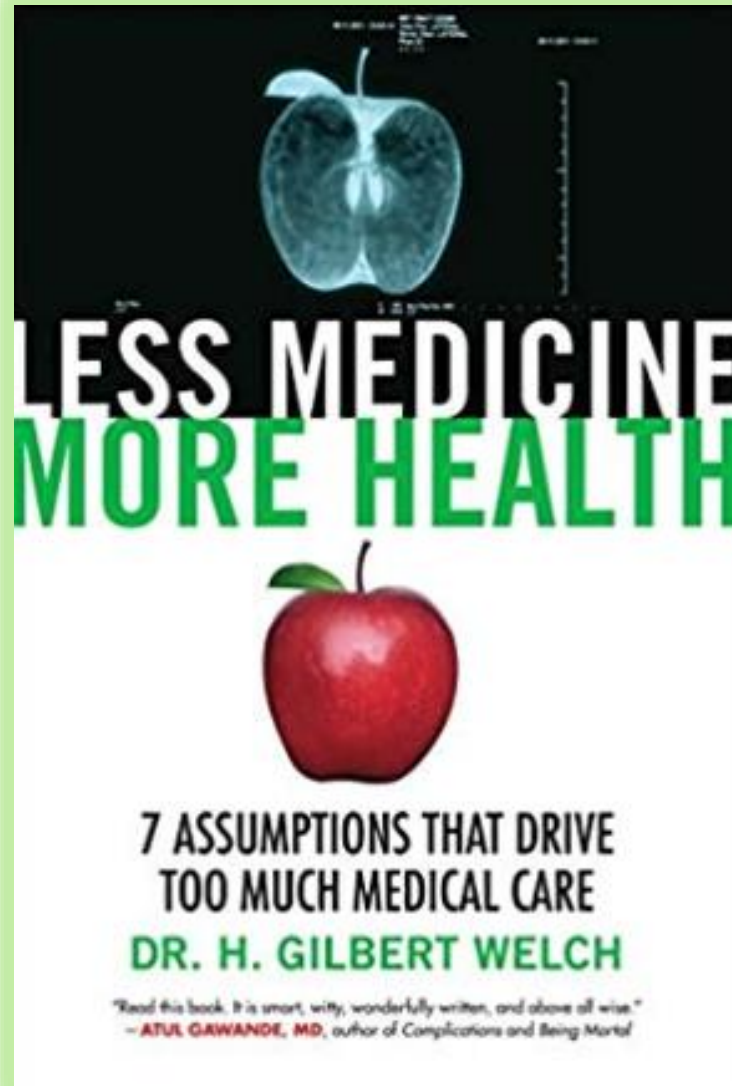
Agenda

- Less Medicine – More Health
- 7 Assumptions that Drive Too Much Medical Care
- Medical Care
- Informed Consent
- What is Health?

Disclaimer

- During the Spiritual and Physical Health Transformation seminars you will learn about the benefits of a plant-based diet. Perhaps you've seen one of the compelling documentaries out there or read one of the compelling books. More likely than not, you've known someone who has done well by their own health by improving their nutrition. And now you want to learn how you too can be healthier by eating a more whole food, plant-based diet.
- Upfront, we need to tell you that you shouldn't dramatically change your diet without consulting your physician, particularly if you are on medication or have significant medical issues. Changing your nutrition can change your body so quickly that some medication (particularly diabetes medications) needs to be monitored and adjusted within a short period of time. Be smart about changing your diet and seek professional consultation for whatever your personal situation may be!

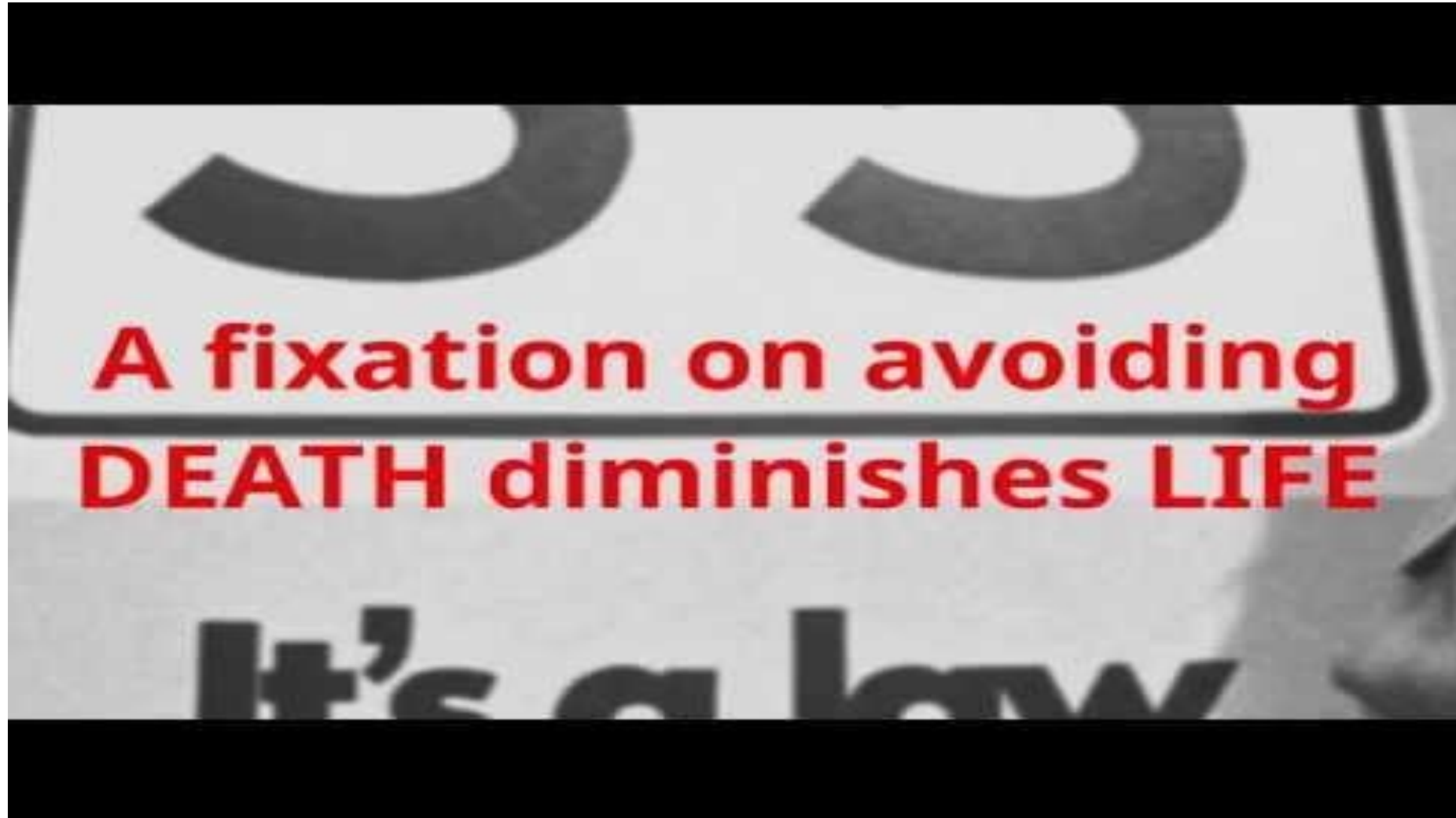
Less Medicine – More Health



Dr. Gilbert Welch

- ▶ Family Medical Doctor
- ▶ Researches and writes about the medical system, cancer screenings and much more.
- ▶ Books:
 - ▶ Less Medicine – More Health
 - ▶ Overdiagnosed
 - ▶ Should I be tested for Cancer
 - ▶ Know your chances

Less Medicine – More Health



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prNX2CjFF2I>

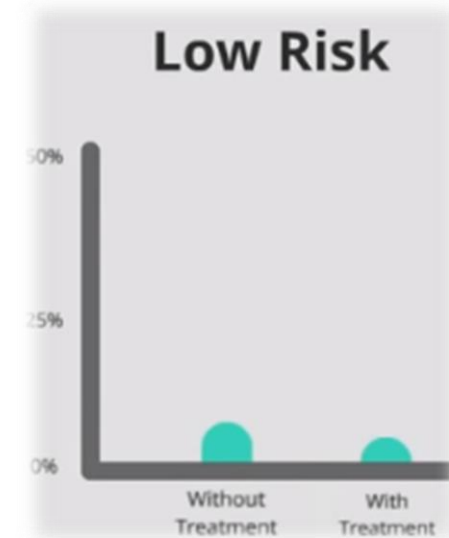
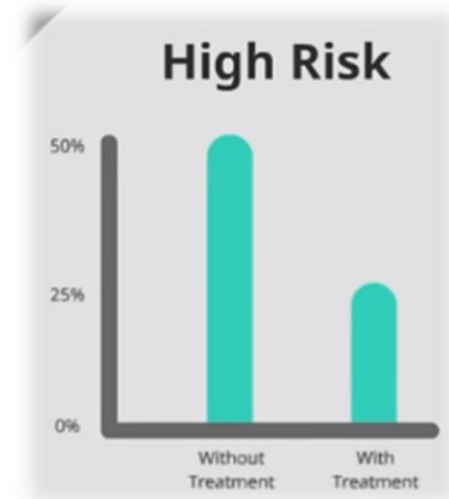
7 Assumptions that Drive too Much Medical Care

- Assumption # 1 – **All risks can be lowered**
- Assumption # 2 – **It's always better to fix the problem**
- Assumption # 3 – **Sooner is always better**
- Assumption # 4 – **It never hurts to get more information**
- Assumption # 5 – **Action is always better than inaction**
- Assumption # 6 – **Newer is always better**
- Assumption # 7 – **It's all about avoiding death**

Assumption # 1

All risks can be lowered

- ***Disturbing Truth:*** Risks can't always be lowered – and trying creates risk of its own.
- Medical Care can reduce some risks. The efforts is most likely to be successful when the risk is high.
- All of our interventions pose some harm.



Assumption # 2

It's always better to fix the problem

- ***Disturbing Truth:*** Trying to eliminate a problem can be more dangerous than managing one.
- It is often better to manage a problem (i.e. heart disease) with healthy eating, physical activity and a few good medications than to “fix” the problem with invasive surgery (i.e. stents, balloon, wires, etc.)
- Managing many medical problems is often safer than trying to fix them.
- It is hard for us to make people who feel well, feel better.

Assumption # 3

Sooner is always better



- ***Disturbing Truth:* Early Diagnosis can needlessly turn people into patients.**
- Think through what's been considered 'the barnyard pen of cancers' that includes birds, rabbits and turtles. The goal is to not let any of the animals escape the pen to become deadly.
 - Birds – most aggressive cancer. The ones that have already spread before they can be detected.
 - Rabbits – The rabbits may be able to be caught if you build up enough fences. These are the cancers that may be helped by early detection.
 - Turtles – The cancers that aren't going any where any way. Screening finds lot of turtles. The problem is - you never want to be treated for a cancer that is never destined to bother you.
- While early diagnosis makes sense in selective settings, its widespread acceptance has been a recipe for making people sick. Turns people into patients.

Assumption # 4

It never hurts to get more information

- ***Disturbing Truth:* Data overload can scare patients and distract your doctor from what's important.**
- The value of information seems to be the central tenant of today.
 - Thousands of bits of metabolic data
 - Millions of pixels of imaging data
 - 3,000,000,000 data points in your genome
- We need to distinguish between data and useful knowledge.

Assumption # 5

Action is always better than inaction

- ***Disturbing Truth:*** Action is not reliably the “right choice”
- The most dramatic action in medical Care is surgery, all surgery involves trauma.



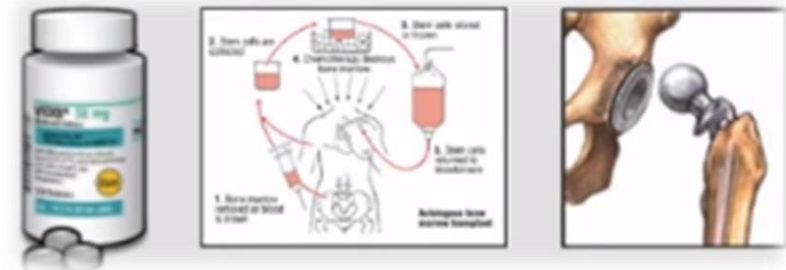
That is why we say you need to recover from surgery. Trauma to the protective layer of skin can lead to infections.

- The CDC now considers a broad category of infections (can cause strokes, heart attacks and blood clots).
- The reality is that our actions can impair the body’s ability to heal. Sometimes doing nothing is inevitably the right thing to do.

Assumption # 6

Newer is always better

- ***Disturbing Truth:*** New interventions are typically not well tested and often wind up being judged ineffective (even harmful)
- Examples include – Vioxx, Bone Marrow transplantation for metastatic breast cancer or metal on metal hip replacements.
- Do you really want to beta test software or buy a new car model in it's first year.
- We want an old drug, a procedure that is known to work and a medical device with a track record.



Assumption # 7

It's all about avoiding death

- ***Disturbing Truth:*** A fixation on preventing death diminishes life.
- If life is really all about avoiding death, then why do we climb mountains, why do we swim in the ocean, why are we not driving the speed limit? The answer is because other things matter.



Medical Care

- **Seeking medical care is NOT the most important thing you can do for your health!**
 - Medical care can do a lot of good in selected settings.
 - Acute care (acutely ill or injured) medicine is critically important.
 - In today's medical care system we exaggerate its benefits and understate its harms.
- *Another Assumption:* Specialists are always better.
 - Disturbing Truth – Specialty care is typically more invasive and chaotic and can miss the forest for the trees.
- *Another Assumption:* Doctors always know what they are doing.
 - Disturbing Truth – Doctors are human, and the science of medical care is imperfect and will always be

Informed Consent

- **Informed consent** to medical treatment is fundamental in both ethics and law. Patients have the right to receive information and ask questions about recommended treatments so that they can make well-considered decisions about care. Successful communication in the patient-physician relationship fosters trust and supports shared decision making.
- The process of informed consent occurs when communication between a patient and physician results in the patient's authorization or agreement to undergo a specific medical intervention. In seeking a patient's informed consent (or the consent of the patient's surrogate if the patient lacks decision-making capacity or declines to participate in making decisions), physicians should:
 - (a) Assess the patient's ability to understand relevant medical information and the implications of treatment alternatives and to make an independent, voluntary decision.

Informed Consent (continued)

- (b) Present relevant information accurately and sensitively, in keeping with the patient's preferences for receiving medical information. The physician should include information about:
 1. The diagnosis (when known)
 2. The nature and purpose of recommended interventions
 3. The burdens, risks, and expected benefits of all options, including forgoing treatment
- (c) Document the informed consent conversation and the patient's (or surrogate's) decision in the medical record in some manner. When the patient/surrogate has provided specific written consent, the consent form should be included in the record.
- In emergencies, when a decision must be made urgently, the patient is not able to participate in decision making, and the patient's surrogate is not available, physicians may initiate treatment without prior informed consent. In such situations, the physician should inform the patient/surrogate at the earliest opportunity and obtain consent for ongoing treatment in keeping with these guidelines.

What is Health?

- **Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease.**



Determinants of Health

- **Medical care is only one of multiple determinants of health. Its an important point. Let's consider the other nine:**
 - Gender
 - Genetics
 - Income and social status
 - Education
 - Employment and working conditions
 - Physical environment
 - Social support networks
 - Culture
 - Personal Behavior (the most modifiable)

The Pros and Cons of Mammograms



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9Poy19UPKM>

Some Cancers regress on their own



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkBmCn4UwXM>

PSA Testing and Prostate Cancer



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WocLvpfFcA>

Wrap up

- What is one thing you can do today to strengthen your faith?
- What is one thing you can do protect yourself and your family?
- Questions?

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead