

# What you can do *now*—to reform health care!

EIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE ACCLAIMED BOOK, *A RETURN TO HEALING*

## 1. Start with yourself; healthy lifestyle comes first.

Lifestyle strategies such as diet, exercise, adequate sleep, stress reduction, weight control, avoidance of toxic exposures, and emotional and spiritual balance in life are always the *first line of defense*.

## 2. Insist on prevention—at all levels.

Ask your legislators to put into effect the set of preventive measures recommended in *A Return to Healing*. These will greatly reduce costs by making Americans much healthier through their lifetimes. (Note: such programs should accompany any effort for single-payer health insurance.)

The list includes:

- a. Fund programs that make exercise universally available and attractive to Americans.
- b. Tax junk food; subsidize sustainable agriculture and healthy, organic foods.
- c. Require disclosure to patients of *all* treatments backed by evidence.
- d. Broadly support preventive screens.
- e. Ban direct-to-consumer ads for drugs; advertise healthy lifestyle.

## 3. Attend an integrative clinic your area.

Integrative and CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) centers are becoming more common nationwide. Seek one out and make sure the entire family uses the new medicine.

## 4. Support research into CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) solutions.

Now is the time to greatly accelerate federally funded research (including comparative effectiveness research) into CAM at the NIH's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, whose work is still an embarrassingly small portion of the NIH's overall budget. Public funding is crucial, because the private sector will only fund research that lends itself to patents or to profits.

## 5. Demand that insurance policies cover complementary and alternative medicine.

Now is the time modernize insurance coverage so that it extends the integrative medicine revolution to everyone. Most non-invasive, natural, or CAM treatments are not covered. This drives up costs for everyone! Make sure our legislators understand that the new medicine saves lives and money.

## 6. Radically reform the FDA.

With the FDA's credibility at its worst ever, there has never been a better time to enact legislation to reform it from the ground up. Support the American Association for Health Freedom, whose Reform the FDA Petition is available for signing at [ReformFDA.org](http://ReformFDA.org).

## 7. Support single-payer health insurance for all Americans (conditionally).

Government-sponsored single-payer insurance, or some equivalent—such as the so-called “public insurance option”—makes sense on its own terms, and we should all support it in principle. But even more advanced reform is needed: Our “disease-care” system is wasteful, counterproductive, inefficient, prone to corruption, and even lethal. Do we really want to pool the health care insurance premiums of the entire population so as to better finance *this* system while leaving its other assumptions unchallenged? No. Single-payer is necessary reform—but alone is not sufficient.

## 8. Support the patient's *right to freedom of choice and the right to know*.

Because of monopolistic practices, patients are not informed of all the treatments known from evidence to benefit their condition? What's the point of extending insurance to all Americans if they're blocked from making choices outside the old paradigm—indeed, services and products that much of the population now demands and believes in, and that are well-evidenced.

For further information, see:

**A Return To Healing: Radical Health Care Reform and the Future of Medicine**

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