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Is a plant based/vegetarian diet the new hand washing of chronic disease prevention

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Abstract

Until the early 1900s infectious diseases were the most common causes of death and almost all medical procedures were complicated by infections. The surgical mortality rate was over 50% and hospitals were unsanitary places that were often called “death houses.” In 1847 Ignaz Semmelweis showed that hand washing could prevent infections and dramatically reduce the mortality rate from puerperal sepsis in new mothers. This finding should have revolutionized medicine, obstetrics and surgery, but instead it was ridiculed, and ignored for almost 70 years. History is repeating itself; the most common causes of death now are chronic lifestyle-related conditions that can be reversed by lifestyle changes such as an evidenced-based diet, regular physical activity and effective stress management. In particular, the scientific evidence that supports eliminating animal products from the diet and eating whole plant foods is strong and solid yet most health care professionals ignore or reject this information. Millions of people continue to suffer and die from entirely preventable conditions. This is slowly changing with new approaches such as lifestyle medicine and personalized medicine.

Biography

Jennifer Rooke is the Medical Director of Advanced Lifestyle Medicine and author of the soon to be published Lifestyle Interventions to Prevent and Reverse Hypertension. Lifestyle Medicine is a new approach to health care that uses lifestyle interventions such as evidenced-based nutrition, physical activity and stress management to treat and prevent disease. Rooke has practiced medicine for over 27 years and is board certified in both Public Health/Preventive Medicine and Occupational Medicine. Dr. Rooke is a fellow of both the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, and the American College of Preventive Medicine. Dr. Rooke serves as an Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Community Health and Preventive Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine and in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine at Emory University. Visit her website www.advancedlifestylemedicine.com

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