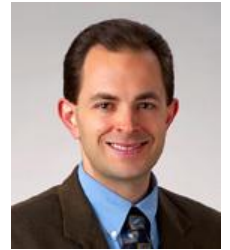


# In Good Hands

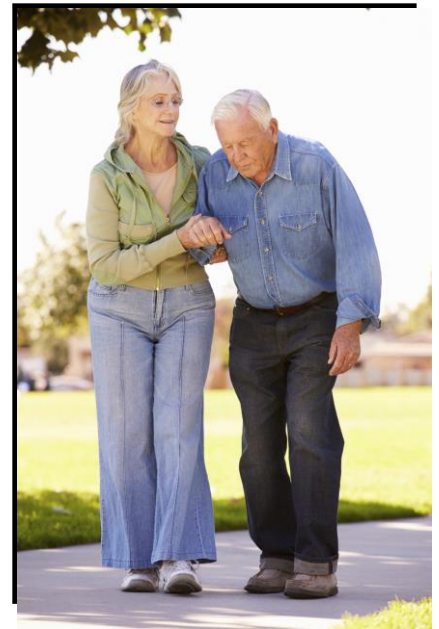
A Newsletter for the Friends and Patients of Dr. John Falkenroth, D.C.  
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“Fear does not prevent death. It prevents life.” ~ *Naguib Mahfouz*

## New Study Shows Americans Are Living Longer... But There's a Catch... *Some use the fact that we are living longer as proof we are also healthier. Research now indicates this is not the case....*



### Also this month:

- ✓ **Some Teens with a Healthy BMI May Still Be at an Increased Risk for Cardiovascular Disease as Adults!**
- ✓ ***Yoga Isn't Just Good for Your Body, It's Good for Your Mind Too!***
- ✓ **Inspirational Story of the Month: Thai Man Feeds 80 Stray Dogs Every Day.**

**D**o you want to live longer? If that question were asked in a poll, the vast majority would not just say, “yes”... they would probably SCREAM IT!!!

It's understandable. The fear of dying is one of the most common fears people have. That's why most people have been happy to see that the average lifespan has increased quite significantly over the last 40 years.

In fact, from 1970 to 2010, the average lifespan for men in the United States increased 9.2 years, from 67.2 years to 76.2 years, and the lifespan for American women increased from 74.6 years to 81 years. This seems awesome at first glance, but new research shows that even though both men and

women are living longer, they are also living with more disability.

According to Dr. Eileen Crimmins, the AARP Professor of Gerontology at the University of Southern California Davis School of Gerontology, *"We could be increasing the length of poor quality life more than good-quality life... There are a number of indications that the Baby Boomer generation that is now reaching old age is not seeing improvements in health similar to the older groups that went before them."*

Dr. Crimmins' work shows that less than half of the increase in the average person's life observed between 1970 and 2010 can be described as "disability-free years."

These findings have significant implications for policymaking, such as proposals to raise the retirement age for both Social Security and Medicare eligibility in the United States.

So, the question has changed...

**Would you like to live longer if it meant pain, poor health, and disability?**

Only you know your answer to that question. But there is good news...

This does not have to be a zero-sum game. Living a long life and maintaining your health and vitality are not mutually exclusive.

In other words, it is possible to reach your 70s and 80s without suffering from a lot of the pain, disability, and health issues that can plague others.

Sure, genetics plays a role in all of this. But your genes often play less of a role than most think.

See, many experts agree that most health issues are preventable, and it's estimated that up to 70% (or more) can be prevented through lifestyle changes like eating a healthy diet, exercising, and managing and reducing stress.

The biggest problem seems to be human psychology. We are creatures who tend to solve problems instead of preventing them in the first place.

Everyone knows the saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

While this statement is 100% accurate, it is only accurate in the proper context.

Many things should be left alone when they are "working." But there are many things in your life that will last a lot longer if they are taken care of. That is, if they are properly maintained, then they may never actually become broken.

For example, consider your car. Simply changing the oil as recommended by your vehicle manufacturer will help keep your car on the road. If you don't change your oil, it may not matter while the car is still new, but as time goes on, not only will your car's performance degrade, but you may find yourself spending a lot more money on car repairs.

The human body is not as simple as a car, but the same philosophy holds true. When you were in your

early 20s, didn't it seem like you could eat anything you wanted and stay up late without it affecting you in a negative way? Try doing that in your 30s or 40s or 50s and you'll definitely feel it the next day and sometimes over the next several days.

The better you take care of your body—that is, the more you do to maintain it—the fewer health problems you will have as you grow older and the more likely you will live up to your genetic potential.

As we've covered in previous issues, there is an aspect of your genetic make-up that can be changed by how well or how poorly you live your life: the epigenome.

The epigenome is a part of your genetic material that helps determine which genes are expressed and which genes are suppressed. The epigenome is affected by external factors like what you eat, how you live your life, and what you are exposed to in the world.

So, not only do eating right, exercising, reducing stress, and other healthy lifestyle choices help you live up to your genetic potential, those good habits may even improve it!

Here is something that is universally true: life is short.

It goes by in the blink of an eye. No matter how long you live, it is short. One-hundred years put in the context of the history of the universe is a drop in the bucket.

And time waits for no one. Which is why this is so important. It is extremely important to live life to the fullest. It is important to have fun and to be happy. One of the best ways to do that is to be healthy and pain-free.

Taking small steps every day to eat healthy food, exercise, reduce stress, and keep your body functioning at its best can have a major impact on your life today... and when you are 80... or even 100.

**Don't forget, if you ever have any questions or concerns about your health, talk to us. Contact us with your questions. We're here to help and don't enjoy anything more than participating in providing you natural pain relief.**

**THANK YOU...** 

*Thank you to those of you who referred your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors to our practice. When we see your name as the person who referred a new patient, we get reassured that you're happy with your experience at our clinic. Thank you for your trust and thank you again for your referrals.*

# **Thai Man Feeds 80 Stray Dogs Every Day!**

What is a hero? To many, a hero is the baseball player who hits a game-winning home run or someone who takes a public stand for a just cause, regardless of the impact it has on their career or livelihood.

But, there are many heroes you've probably never heard of because they do not seek notoriety—they simply help others because it's just the right thing to do.

Michael Baines is one of these heroes.

Here is his story...

Michael owns a restaurant in Thailand, and he got used to seeing the countless abandoned and stray dogs that lived on the streets. For a while, Michael, like most people, just ignored them.

Then about five years ago, everything changed.

That's when a pregnant stray dog made her way to the back of his restaurant. Michael knew he had to do something, so he began taking care of her. He connected with the animal, and from that moment on, he decided that he was going to make a difference in the lives of the stray and abandoned dogs in his town.

He could no longer just walk by a suffering dog anymore without doing something to help, so he started feeding the strays he came across, and soon enough, he was feeding 80 per day. Yes, that's 80 dogs every day.

Michael makes a mixture of dry dog food, white rice, steamed fish, and oil and makes numerous stops around town to feed the dogs he finds. As you can imagine, this is not only time-consuming, but it's also costly.

It costs about \$1,000 USD per month to feed this many dogs. Michael does get some help in the form of donations from some of the locals, but he also pays part of the bill out of his own pocket.

Baines has many supporters, but he also has some who are opposed to what he is doing... telling him that helping the starving dogs in the streets is only exacerbating the problem of stray dogs in the area.

Baines is quite candid about why this problem exists in the first place. He says that it's not the dog's fault one bit, but that it is some of the people in his own community who are 100% responsible.

All these poor dogs are out there suffering because they were once pets that for whatever reason, lost their home. Maybe they got out and their owners never found them (or looked). Or maybe they were abused and ran off. Or maybe they were discarded for no longer being a cute puppy.

Sure, everyone has a great excuse, but in reality, there are no excuses. These are living things that deserve better.

Worse, many of these abandoned dogs were not spayed or neutered. So now they breed in the streets, creating more dogs without a home.

Michael notes, "It is a nice 'job' but sometimes very emotional and frustrating, as you see many dogs that is in very bad shape. I do this from my heart and the payment is to meet these lovely dogs and feel their love. That is priceless and worthwhile."

While some may brush off Michael's efforts as futile, given the number of stray dogs roaming the streets in his town alone, he says, "Even if I cannot save them all, I think: for just that single dog I helped—I did [make] a change."

**If you know anyone with back pain, neck pain or sciatica, encourage them to call us. We love helping our patients and their friends and family through their tough times and getting them feeling better. Remember that early treatment is key to a full and complete recovery. Don't wait until you can no longer move!**

## Did You Know?...

### **Some Teens with a Healthy BMI May Still Be at an Increased Risk for Cardiovascular Disease as Adults!**

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a person's weight in kilograms (kg) divided by his or her height in meters squared. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) defines normal weight, overweight, and obesity by BMI rather than the traditional height/weight charts.

Because research has shown that a higher BMI during adulthood increases a person's risk for a host of health problems, a team of researchers used long-term data collected from 2.3 million individuals from their teen years through late adulthood to see if BMI during adolescence is predictive of future health issues.

Their study, which was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, indicates that even teens with a body mass index considered normal may have a greater risk for cardiovascular problems later in life. For teenagers, a normal weight is one that falls within the 5th and 85th percentile for their age group. Those whose BMI sits between the 85th and 95th percentile are overweight and those in the 95th percentile or higher are obese in comparison to their peers. In this study, the data shows that teens in the 50th to 74th percentiles, which is considered to be normal weight, had an elevated risk of cardiovascular death in adulthood when compared with those in the lower percentiles. (Additionally, those who are considered overweight or obese as teens are more likely to experience health problems as they age, possibly because they're more likely to remain overweight or obese in adulthood.)

The authors of this study noted that they've also observed a trend of increasing BMI among teens over time, indicating that more are placing themselves at greater risk for cardiovascular disease as they grow older. They no doubt would stress the importance of teenagers creating healthy lifestyle habits while they're young (like eating healthy foods, staying away from junk food, not smoking or drinking alcohol, getting enough sleep, exercising, maintaining healthy vitamin D levels, etc.) so that it's easier to live a healthy life when they're adults.

## Tip Of The Month

### **Yoga Isn't Just Good for Your Body, It's Good for Your Mind Too!**

In a time when most people are looking to improve their physical fitness, yoga is an option with a long list of health benefits. Here are just a few that go beyond improved strength, flexibility, and balance:

- **Improves reaction times and cognitive tasks.** Researchers found an immediate benefit to brain function after a single 20-minute yoga session. Dr. Neha Gothe writes, *"It appears that following yoga practice, the participants were better able to focus their mental resources, process information quickly, more accurately and also learn, hold, and update pieces of information more effectively than after performing an aerobic exercise bout."*
- **Reduces stress by inhibiting inflammation.** In a study that involved caregivers who commonly experience a high level of stress, researchers found "a reduced activity of those proteins linked directly to increased inflammation" among study participants who performed twelve minutes of yoga a day for eight weeks.
- **Helps manage chronic pain.** The National Institutes of Health's Dr. M. Catherine Bushnell reports that those who practice yoga have better function in several areas of the brain, including those involved in pain modulation.
- **Decreases depression symptoms in pregnant women.** Pregnant women who participated in a mindful yoga routine that focused on poses for the pregnant body experienced improved mood and a stronger attachment to their developing babies. With 1 in 5 women suffering from major depression during pregnancy, researchers believe that mindful yoga may be one of a few alternatives to treating mood disorders during gestation.

**Remember, we're always here to help you and your friends and family get pain relief and maintain your independence and the active lifestyle that you all deserve. After you're done with this newsletter and the enclosed flyers, please pass them on to someone you know who has back pain, neck pain or sciatica. Thank you.**

*The information contained in this newsletter and in the inserted flyers is solely advisory, and should not be substituted for medical advice. Any and all health care concerns, decisions, and actions must be done through the advice and counsel of a healthcare professional who is familiar with your updated medical history. We cannot be held responsible for actions you may take without a thorough exam or appropriate referral. If you have any further concerns or questions, please call our office at (831)475-8600.*