

Wednesday, January 17, 2001

Mrs. B
Address
San Diego, CA 90001

SYNOPSIS

This is your Personal Health Profile. It contains medical information that can help three of four people like yourself understand what can be done to live the next ten years in a healthier, more enjoyable way. Fortunately, because most serious health problems today are strongly influenced by health habits, there is usually a lot you can do to improve your likelihood of living a long, happy, and healthy life.

In this profile we have taken your information and measurements and compared them with information collected by the United States Public Health Service in their famous Framingham Study. This comparison addresses the question of whether you are doing as well as you might in terms of your long term health and, if not, how you might improve.

We have calculated your Health Age, the age at which your risk factor measurements place you. In your case, this is older than your actual age. In the attached letter, we show how we came to this conclusion. We show you what benefit might be obtained by risk reduction and how to accomplish it. You will end up understanding the choices you have for improving your future health. We hope that you will use this information as the first step to a longer, healthier life.

Wednesday, January 17, 2001

Dear Mrs. B,

This report evaluates your susceptibility to heart disease, stroke, and certain common cancers. It is based on information you supplied and measurements we took on Monday, January 14, 2001 at Kaiser Permanente's Health Appraisal. Your Personal Health Profile is predictive and preventive. It is a supplement to medical care, not a substitute for it. Information in this report is specific for you. Growing older brings on some health risks by it reduces others, so being a 38 year old woman is itself a significant factor.

For instance, breast cancer is a disease typically occurring in mature women, not young girls and not men. The single most effective way to reduce the threat of breast cancer is breast self examination. Learn this, from your doctor or from the free booklet available by calling the local chapter of the American Cancer Society, and do it regularly every month for the rest of your life. All you need know is whether you feel anything different from what was there the month before. Medical experts can then determine whether the change is significant or not. Your doctor's examination or mammogram, important though each is, is old news in six months, just as today's newspaper will be. Only you can be there every month to give yourself the protection of current information

Height
Weight

You are 67 inches (5 feet 7 inches) tall. At 256 pounds, with a heavy frame, you are significantly overweight. Your excess weight gives you a 20% chance of developing serious heart disease within the next 20 years. Moreover, this weight increases your chance of developing new risks with aging, especially high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, and diabetes, as well as worsening any you now have. The reasons for obesity are complex. The only simple thing is that it always is the result of eating more calories than your body needs. If you want permanent weight loss, it will be the result of combining increased physical activity (long distance walking is excellent) with behavior changes in terms of food selection and preparation. This is a concept different than "going on a diet." An organized approach with outside help is often necessary for long term success. I suggest you call 858-573-0090 and look into the weight programs at Kaiser Permanente's Positive Choice Center. Depression can underlie weight problems. If you sense this, you can discuss treatment options at your second visit to Health Appraisal.

67 inches
256 pounds
Heavy frame

Cigarette
Smoking

Whereas anyone who is overweight is likely to see it as a social disadvantage, smoking has been skillfully advertised as a social grace. This, plus the fact that many find it enjoyable and relaxing, has made cigarette smoking a major public health problem in the United States. It is the main cause of emphysema and is strongly related to the development of coronary artery disease (heart attack). It is also the main cause of lung and bladder cancer. On a lesser scale, it is also known to cause premature wrinkling of the skin. The fact that you smoke about 25 cigarettes a day poses a measurable hazard giving the mortality risks normally present in a woman more than 10 years older. If you want to stop smoking, and do so, you could end this increased risk for heart disease within a short time, and that for lung cancer within several years. If you need help stopping, call Kaiser Permanente's Positive Choice Center at 858-573-0090.

25 cigs/day

Lung
Function

Measuring how much air (Vital Capacity) you can hold in your lungs and how fast you can move it (FEV_1) often lets us detect lung damage early. Because chronic lung disease takes years to develop, these two measurements may give you an opportunity to improve the way your lungs will work in future years.

VC = 2925 cc
Pred = 3214 cc

The total volume of air you can move, your pulmonary vital capacity, is 2925 cc which is less than normal and presents a measurable risk, making your health age 0.6 years older than it otherwise would be. It would be wise to discuss treatment of your below normal vital capacity with a physician if you have not already done so. Public health authorities advise that you be immunized against influenza yearly, because influenza is a dangerous illness for people with impaired lung function. If you could improve your vital capacity to normal through stopping smoking, weight loss, medical treatment, or exercise, you would improve your Health age by 0.6 years.

Blood
Pressure

Next, it is time to consider those measurements having predictive significance for your heart. The first of these is blood pressure. Understand that high blood pressure and nervousness are two different things. Because both are common they are sometimes present in the same person.

123 systolic
80 diastolic

Your blood pressure is 123/80. This is normal and of course is reassuring. It makes sense to have your blood pressure checked every year or two.

Pulse Another measurement having predictive significance for premature heart disease is the rate at which your heart beats, particularly in men, though no one yet understands why there is a gender difference. In both men and women pulse rate is a function predominantly of physical conditioning and the way external stresses affect you. Regular exercise improves pulse rate both by improving one's physical condition and because of its de-stressing effect.

73 heartbeats per minute

Your resting pulse rate was 73 heartbeats per minute. This is quite acceptable.

Blood Fats A high cholesterol is bad for your heart, but what level is high for you? The answer depends on measurements other than just your cholesterol level. Your cholesterol can not be interpreted without more information than just the cholesterol count itself. Most people don't know this.

Total = 235mg
HDL = 50mg

Your total blood cholesterol is 235 mg. This is elevated. We have also measured the protective HDL component of your cholesterol. The HDL portion is a newly understood, protective, component of the total cholesterol. HDL is just one of the factors important in interpreting total cholesterol levels. Your protective component is reduced at 50 mg. Taking this and the other key information into account, your overall cholesterol status presents a greater than necessary risk. This worsens your Health Age by 2.9 years. During your second visit we will check that this cholesterol elevation is not the result of untreated hypothyroidism, nor a side effect of certain medications. You should be aware that elevated total cholesterol typically can be lowered by weight loss, a low cholesterol diet, or new cholesterol lowering medications. Whichever your doctor recommends, go back for follow-up to be certain the treatment is working. High cholesterol is often a lifetime problem so lifetime attention may be necessary. You could make your Health Age 2.9 years younger by getting your cholesterol down to 180. Fortunately, current treatments are effective and simple.

Blood Sugar Elevated blood sugar levels are closely linked to heart disease. In fact, diabetics live shortened lives because of premature aging of their blood vessels. Since the blood sugar of a normal person returns to fasting levels within two hours of eating, we depend absolutely on your statement that you have neither eaten nor drunk anything containing calories in the two hours prior to blood drawing.

95 mg

Your blood sugar level is 95 mg, which is normal.

SUMMARY

We now have completed a review of all factors causing susceptibility to the three major causes of death in this country. First we gave you background information, then your measurement and its significance, and finally we pointed out what action would be required to improve your health and showed what degree of benefit could be obtained. Our goal is to help you grow older in as good a state of health as possible. No one wants to grow older dealing with the results of a stroke, heart attack, or lung cancer, especially when they might have been prevented by early action.

Let's tie all this together now and come to a conclusion. In the United States a healthy, low risk 38 year old woman has a 99% likelihood of living at least another 10 years.

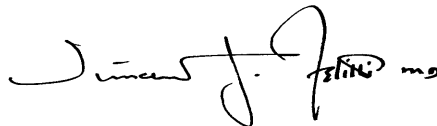
You have a 88% likelihood of living at least another ten years.

Health Age

This is not desirable. Your Health Age is more than ten years older than your actual age. While no 38 year old woman will be happy with this projection, the good news is that this Personal Health Profile has given you the information you needed to pursue an opportunity you might not have known about. You should review this report to see how you can improve your health. It makes sense to work on the worst risks first. If you were to follow all the advice given, you could improve your Health Age significantly.

We hope that this risk analysis will help you obtain maximum benefit from your regular medical care. You have our best wishes in this endeavor. We look forward to seeing you back for retesting after some changes have been made.

Sincerely yours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vincent J. Felitti M.D.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Vincent J. Felitti, M.D.

P.S. Because you are at increased risk for coronary heart disease, you should be aware that there is evidence that selected patients can benefit from one aspirin every other day for a lifetime. Discuss this with your doctor if you have not already done so. And, finally, keep wearing seat belts. We doctors see the difference they make.