

The War on Me

Written by Ginny Grimsley

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By: Letha Hadady, D.Ac.

Politicians arguing on the campaign trail carve up crucial issues of health and well-being by reducing them, especially Medicare and Medicaid, to numbers. Republicans would privatize Medicare, turning over this essential safety net for our seniors to private insurance companies. Have you dealt with one of your insurance companies lately?

Obamacare, passed into law by a Democratically controlled Congress, cuts some \$700 billion from Medicare by limiting payments to doctors and hospitals. This will add to the list of hospitals and clinics going broke and to the physicians who refuse to accept patients who are on Medicare. Medicaid, which pays not only for services to the poor but nursing care for the elderly, is already in the tender grip of the hard-up states and is being slashed.

Politicians forget that everybody suffers from reduced health care. Germs and their attendant illnesses don't care about the numbers: If I am sick, you are likely next in line. A hospital that must cut its cleaning staff will spread illness not only to its own patients but to the public. When it comes to health care, we are all in this together—which is why we must individually do more to protect ourselves, our families, and everybody else.

Last winter I retreated to my favorite hotel in the Florida Keys to finalize my most recent book, *Naturally Pain Free* (Sourcebooks, July 2012). While sunning at the pool I noticed a strange bite on my arm — from a flying insect or a spider? The bug bite was not warm or itchy, but I began to feel slightly feverish. After two decades running an alternative health practice based on traditional Asian medicines, I know trouble when I feel it. I quickly consulted a local physician who, even before the test proved positive, assured me I had contracted MRSA, the most dangerous of antibiotic-resistant staph infections.

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Left untreated, MRSA can eat into flesh, and once it enters the bloodstream it is deadly. Rampant in hospitals, superbugs such as MRSA presently account for 100,000 deaths annually in the United States alone. Superbugs may be passed on at the pool, beach, gym, or yoga class. Pets can catch MRSA and pass it on to their owners. The Infectious Diseases Society of America warns, "because bacteria are constantly evolving and outsmarting the drugs used against them ... we are losing the ability to fight lethal infections."

I passed on my infection to my lifelong partner (with a kiss and by sharing bedsheets,) but I learned not only how MRSA is treated but how to avoid it, which I incorporated into Naturally Pain Free. Personalized prevention (at home and in public) is the first defense for any illness and there are many natural therapies you can try that don't require a prescription.

How's your blood pressure? A little on the high side? You have lots of company. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 67 million Americans have hypertension but less than half are being treated. The condition can and does lead to discomfort, strokes, and heart attacks, the No. 1 killer of men and women.

Fortunately, you can lower your blood pressure by making a few dietary changes, doing simple, non-challenging exercises, and adding a few time-tested herbal remedies to your daily routine. (The information is available on my website, <http://www.AsianHealthSecrets.com>.)

Whether on my website, Facebook, or call-in radio shows, I am often asked for advice about curing or ameliorating pain -- backache, headache, carpal tunnel syndrome, toothache. The best answer is to take measures to ensure the body does not need to generate pain to call your attention to an underlying illness. However, an almost universal treatment to mitigate pain is centuries-old: acupuncture.

Many people suffer migraines. The most effective remedy addresses the source of head and neck pain, including tension, digestive problems or muscle spasm. But a tea made with Chinese chrysanthemum flowers will also help. For eyestrain headaches I often recommend a tea made with nourishing Tibetan goji berries.

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This season, notices for flu shots seem to be in every pharmacy and even supermarkets. Here is a simple preventive for colds and flu: Gargle twice a day with a couple drops of Australian tea tree oil in a half-glass of warm water, and swab the inside of the nose with a Q-tip and tea tree oil.

There is talk of politicians waging a war on women. I say it is a war on men and women — on you and me. While personal prevention is the first shield against illness, we also must have easy access to affordable medical care in order to treat illnesses and avoid spreading them.

Tell the politicians by voting in November. But first, vote for yourself by practicing the art of self-defense.

About Letha Hadady

Letha Hadady is globally renowned for her expertise in traditional Asian and alternative health. The author of five books, including her latest “Naturally Pain Free,” Letha has made extensive appearances on TV, talk radio and the internet. Letha is an adjunct faculty member for New York Open Center, and The Renfield Center for Nursing Education, Beth Israel Medical Center in New York. She has led stress-management workshops and acted as a natural product consultant for Sony Entertainment Inc., Dreyfus, Ogilvy & Mather, and Consumer Eyes, Inc. in New York. Her website is <http://www.asianhealthsecrets.com>.