

## LIFE EXPECTANCY

Modern medicine claims it is responsible for a huge increase in life expectancy in the last century. However, in 1906 infant deaths were common.

In 2006 the figure for infant survival is 99.5%. In 1906 the figure was 86%. This makes the increase in life expectancy figures of questionable value.

A valuable question is '*How much longer do people live after surviving childhood?*' In the last 100 years, the life expectancy of a 65year old man only rose by 4 years. An even more interesting question is '*How many healthy years are we living longer?*' The answer? NONE. People are living longer but are suffering degeneration and illness.

*Why are people living longer?*

In part antibiotics have lowered death from infections – that is until MRSA and Clostridium Difficile became so common. Some scientists think the real reason people are living longer is sewerage and clean water. Some scientists believe the household refrigerator is responsible for us living longer, cutting out many of the 'diarrhoeal' deaths due to contaminated food or food going off.

Death rates have plummeted during three significant doctors' strikes. In Bogota, Columbia in 1976 no doctors worked for 52 days. The death rate dropped by 35%. The same year in Los Angeles County a shorter doctors' strike showed an 18% drop in death rates. In Israel in 1973 a one month strike produced 50% drop in death rates.

Dr. Barbara Starfield's published paper in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the most circulated medical journal in the world, states that the third most frequent cause of death in the USA after cancer and heart disease is doctors.

In this country, BBC news reported in June that John Wernham, an osteopath in Maidstone, Kent still works a 5 day week at the age of 99!

*What can we deduce from this?*

I would infer that medicine is in crisis. The situation is that we do not have a real health service; we have a National Disease Service. In time, the current strategy will bankrupt the UK. Money should be spent on health promotion. Whatever you give your attention to, you will get. As an individual, if you fix your attention on disease, you will not feel well. As a nation, we have to concentrate our focus on making people well.

It is in this way that life expectancy will not only genuinely increase, but the elderly will also be fit and well enough to enjoy their extra years.

Ian Rumboldt,  
Clinic Director,  
Belper Natural Health Centre

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