

IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

- * YOUR HEALTH HISTORY
- * CHOOSING A CALENDAR SYSTEM THAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU
- * CHECKBOOK BALANCING 101



ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE!

YOUR HEALTH HISTORY

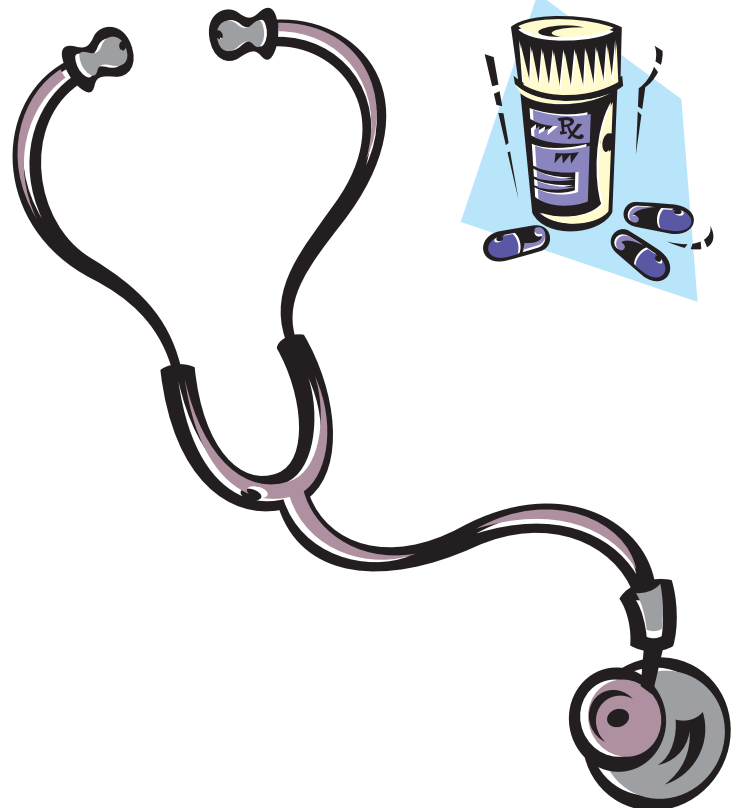
Not long ago I was at my doctor's office for a routine check up and I had to fill out an extensive pile of paperwork. I have to admit I was a bit peeved as I detest filling out forms. When I saw my doctor I asked him why this paper mill procedure was necessary. He admitted that a lot of people were grouching, but said that the requirement was established for a very good reason – he reminded me that every time he sees a patient, even one he's seen many times before, it is likely that the state of their health has somehow changed.

One form asked about my family history of heart disease, diabetes, and so on. I have to admit that I barely filled any of it out, both out of annoyance and pure ignorance. I truly had no idea about most of my immediate family's health history. I know romantic stories about my grandparents, such as my grandfather dying of a "broken heart" after my grandmother passed away. Was this a real ailment? Does this mean he had a bad heart? If so, was it congestive heart failure, caused from high blood pressure? What caused his heart to "break" – was it grief or a pre-existing condition?

My doctor was telling me this for my sake and for the health of everyone I know and love! What the heck is the health history in our families, and how do we get all of that information, with accuracy, especially if most of them are deceased? You may not know all of it, but I suggest getting the best possible answers now.

Family History:

Health can be a very private matter, be sure to always use care and respect when inquiring after your loved one's wellness issues. If you run into sensitive areas of questioning, often times other relatives can be of assistance in providing answers.



YOUR HEALTH HISTORY

Use the simple form below to ask your family members about their health. Include the following people: parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles – be sure to indicate paternal or maternal and the approximate age of diagnosis. Remember that as much as you love your step-relatives, their health history is not relevant in terms of genetic predisposition for disease such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, etc.

CONDITION(S)	RELATIVE(S) AFFECTED
Alcohol/drug use	
Allergies	
Arthritis	
Asthma	
Bladder disease	
Bleeding disorder	
Blood clot in leg or lung	
Cancer	
Depression	
Diabetes type 1	
Diabetes type 2	
Eating disorders	
Genetic disease	
Glaucoma	
Gout	
Gynecologic problems	
Heart disease	
High blood pressure	
High cholesterol	
Hypertension	
Intestinal disorder	
Kidney disease	
Low white blood cell counts	
Mental illness	
Migraine headaches	
Neurological disorder	
Obesity	
Premature death	
Prostate health	
Stroke	
Suicide attempt	
Thyroid disease	
Other	

Keep this document in your medical files and be sure to give one to each of your medical providers. This chart will provide you with information about the health of your family tree, and inform your doctors. The more knowledge you have, the more you can do to optimize your own health.*

*I gathered this list of diseases and disorders from going to different specialists around town, as well as by surfing the web. I know there is even more in depth research into each area (believe me, I could have detailed every single thing that can go wrong with your heart, but I thought I would keep it simple for you.) For example, here is an insurance website which provides a comprehensive list (31 pages) of diseases/disorders that you can use to research your family members if you choose:
<http://tinyurl.com/qr4vt>

CHOOSING A CALENDAR SYSTEM THAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU

Most of us have some kind of calendar system, whether it's in our heads, on a PDA or scattered in some paper format all over our home. When it comes down to getting that time management monster conquered, what is the right organizing system for you?

To keep your schedule tidy and your time management system successful, you will need some sort of organizer. It's up to you how you want to keep it - it can be paper or digital, whichever you prefer. I recommend using the following chart to help choose one that's best for you.

Type of product	This is best for you if:	Benefits	Cons
Paper planner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are visual and can't stand technology. You tend to remember appointments more when writing them down You want design options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holds everything in one place: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> yearly overview week to week note pad for to-dos address book Margin of space to the left to jot down your tasks for the day/week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can get heavy Doesn't always fit in hand bag You have to clip on the alarm, and it can fall off. Here is an example of one of the alarms: http://tinyurl.com/prg63
PDA (like a Palm or Pocket PC, (PPC))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You do well with technology and appreciate gadgets You respond well to auditory memory stimulation If your needs are for an organizer that will manage your schedule, remind you auditorally of appointments, tasks, to-dos, contact, write up word documents, jot down hand written notes, such as a phone number, or a movie to rent, read books on an airplane, receive, send email, and much more - this is right up your alley! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Download your calendar, Download contact information, Recipes – http://tinyurl.com/rlrp9 (both pocket PPCS & PDA) Download books Download games Grocery lists Palm: http://tinyurl.com/o6sh2 PPC: http://tinyurl.com/ncgqw Download tasks Download to-do lists Use Microsoft Word Directions – www.mapopolis.com Use email All you need is in one place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you prefer paper, this will not be your cup of tea It can be costly You will need to replace it every year or two to keep up with technology It is fragile It may be too confusing for some
Outlook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You already use it on your home or office computer and are used to it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize your email into multiple accounts Send reminders to yourself to follow up on emails Color code your calendar Set up tasks that will keep you on track for projects that you are working on You can jot down notes as you think of them Set up appointments Can be synched with PDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can only take it with you if you have the right electronic device, such as a PDA, or a laptop plus Wireless network. It is not available on line – you can't go to a web page and check your email If you have a slow network connection, it doesn't work very efficiently

Whatever time management tool you choose it will only work if you use it.

For maximum efficiency you should check it at least three times a day:

1. Over your morning cup of coffee/tea, scan your day for appointments, phone calls to make, etc. Also review your to-do list for the day.
2. Over lunch, review your to-do list and cross off things you have accomplished, apprise yourself of things left to do for the rest of the day.
3. Before bed, scan the next day, and move items from your to-do list to the following day.

CHECKBOOK BALANCING 101

Dear Leslie,

I always dilly dally when it comes to balancing my checkbook. I'm great about reconciling my credit card account because I want to go over items before I pay the bill. But I don't feel that same urgency about my checkbook. It's dangerous because I can't correct mistakes in a timely fashion.

--Concerned about my Checking

Dear Concerned about my Checking:

There is a reason why you're not balancing your checkbook, and I think I know what it is: PROCRASTINATION. I have a feeling you are leaving the task until the last possible second. We'll examine the possible reasons why in a minute, but first let's look at the nuts and bolts of how to tackle the task at hand...

Balancing your checkbook comes in two stages: using the registry that is attached to the check book you carry with you and then reconciling it with the one when you get your bank statement. I suggest balancing your check book as you go.

Luckily, with the internet this can be accomplished easily. You can get your "virtual bank statement" online as it progresses towards the end of the month, and you can match your check book against what is online. At the month's end, you will be caught up and won't be overwhelmed by balancing the entire check book with the bank statement. By doing a little at a time, it makes the job less daunting and much more manageable.

Here's the meat of the bigger issue: there is always a reason behind why we put off accomplishing a task like checkbook balancing. It's important to look inside yourself, or talk with someone else and identify the 'demon' that is standing between you and success. It could be that your task is too overwhelming, or you can't find time, or just that you hate to do whatever it is!

If it's lack of time that's getting in your way, here are a few suggestions:



- Just find the time! – I know I make it sound easy, but there is always a way to move one thing and replace it with another. Try taking a chunk of time that you usually reserve for doing something enjoyable in the evening and go through your checkbook instead. Make the thing you wanted to do a reward. (see the second to last suggestion)
- Take your checkbook with you to appointments - such as to the doctor's office – this should give you between 10-30 minutes to work on it between the time you are sitting in the waiting room and then again waiting in your private room.
- Treat yourself – Give yourself a reward after you complete the balancing of your checkbook, such as watching your favorite show on TV, a bubble bath or a cookie!
- Go to fresh surroundings - such as a café, to accomplish this task– a change of scenery can be a wonderful thing! (This suggestion came from a time management class I recently taught!)

Balancing your checkbook may never be your favorite activity, but by:

- 1) Identifying why it's hard for you,
- 2) Breaking it into manageable chunks of work, and
- 3) Establishing a reward system,

I guarantee it will become much less of a chore!