

Powerful Patient 2008 week 40

Host: Joyce Graff, WebTalkRadio.net

Learning to Control Your Health Risks

According to several estimates, 75% of the U.S. Health Care dollars are spent managing people with preventable chronic health problems: diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Very little is spent on prevention. We speak with a North Carolina internist who is using a new risk assessment tool to motivate his patients to make constructive changes to prevent such diseases.

1) About Our Guest

Dr. David Michael, M.D. has been practicing internal medicine in North Carolina for the past twelve years. He has been using Know Your Number for over a year and recently started implementing it into his clinical practice.



David Michael, M.D.

2) About Know Your Number

Know Your Number® from BioSignia provides a calculation of a patient's risk of preventable chronic diseases: diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some cancers. It includes both Modifiable and Non-modifiable risk factors, and provides an action plan that focuses on the most important modifiable factors for the patient to work on.

<http://www.knowyournumber.com>

“Know Your Number removes the emotional defensiveness the patient has when the doctor advises them on steps they need to take to improve their health.

“After years of caring for a patient with a serious health issue such as obesity, talking about it again often becomes uncomfortable, sometimes omitted. This tool takes a difficult topic of discussion and turns it into a team activity where I become a coach.”

With Know Your Number, the patient gets a detailed report that shows their specific risk levels by disease compared to their peers. This benchmark can be used to show the progress they've made after the initial visit. Doctors can also easily run the Know Your Number test without complicated software or hardware as it's a Web-based system that only requires the Internet.

Using BioSignia's assessment tool as a playbook, Dr. Michael has been able to foster team-like relationships with his patients. The non-confrontational evidence that derives

from using Know Your Number provides an effective tool in bringing preventive care to the forefront. Dr. Michael now observes his patients engage in the state of their health, which is a different reaction than before.

Dr. Michael says Know Your Number is an invaluable tool for physicians for several reasons: 1) It provides disease prevention with objective data typically already collected during a physical; 2) It assesses current level and potential improvement, not just fear motivation; 3) It compares patients among data/risk to age/gender matched peers; and 4) It's easy brings preventive care and patient's ability to change into the discussion to implement into any clinical practice.

3) About Modifiable Factors

By changing your Modifiable Risk Factors and getting them back into the normal range, you can significantly impact your overall risk of these diseases. Having an actionable plan changes the physician from a dictator ("You must make these changes or else!") to a coach ("If you focus on these areas, you can be in much better shape next year.")

We discuss Dr. Michael's approach to helping his patients make "baby steps in the right direction," especially with regard to smoking, fats, and soda pop,

"Because of all the benefits, it's not surprising that patient feedback has been very positive so far," adds Dr. Michael. "And this tool is a major step in the direction of changing the sick care industry to a health care industry."