

Critical Medical Decisions You Should Make Before the Collapse

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BEFORE THE COLLAPSE**

Most everyone has some degree of medical concerns. Some aren't so serious, some are gradually progressing and others are serious or could become critical at some point. It's often with our best intentions that we think we might do something about it someday. But then again, how often do we continue to delay any decisions until it's an emergency.

The [list of conditions](#) that some of us simply deal with include near-sightedness, gradual hearing loss, issues related to blood-pressure, and even the beginnings of cardiovascular afflictions and more. None of them appear to be life-threatening in the short-term and most seem more of an inconvenience than a threat.

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Why the Delay?

In some instances it's fear. Every medical procedure and pharmaceutical has side-effects and risks. As people balance the risks versus the benefits it's often easy to take a wait and see approach with the intent that it will be taken care of later.

The [pandemic was another factor](#) that caused many people to delay treatment even when they actively pursued it. In some instances non-critical treatments were simply unavailable, and many people were concerned about spending any amount of time in a contagious "hot-zone" like a doctor's office or hospital.

In other cases the condition was not deemed as serious or something requiring immediate attention just yet. In this instance it wasn't so much a delay as much as it was a waiting period to see if the condition improved or at least stabilized.

But there is one threat looming that could make even the simplest condition a daily challenge: the [collapse of society](#)

and all of the support functions surrounding it.

The End of Modern Medicine

If you look at any society that has suffered a collapse for any reason, [one of the first services to fade away](#) is modern medicine. Much like we saw at the height of the COVID pandemic, hospitals rapidly become overwhelmed and even the most [basic medical needs are compromised](#) or simply unavailable.

As any collapse proceeds the conditions only get worse. It's at times like these that we would begin to wonder why we never did anything about that irregular heartbeat, didn't get that cracked tooth taken care of, and lament not getting Lasik surgery after we've lost our last pair of glasses.

What's apparent is that the simple medical procedures, treatments, and particularly more complex surgical [solutions are no longer available](#). Even beyond more robust treatments like surgeries, we can't even find a reliable pair of hearing aids let alone glasses that match our vision prescription; nor [the medicines](#) that have become critical for managing our daily health.

Decisions to Seriously Consider

The best way to approach this is to stop and think about what medical conditions or concerns you may have, or that your family history indicates as a potential, future concern. Once you've determined the possibilities stop and think, how would you function if you could [never find anyone or anything](#) to cure or correct that condition?

It's at that point that our decisions become more in focus and some of us may determine to take actions now. Here are some of the most common chronic or worsening medical conditions that

can be corrected or at least managed with various procedures and/or treatments.

Vision

Our eyes represent one of our most critical senses. Any injury or condition that affects our vision affects the way we do everything. Even something as simple as a poked eye [makes us stop in our tracks](#) in a frantic attempt to treat it. But then, some eye conditions are gradual if not expected but still can limit our abilities and lifestyle.

▪ Nearsightedness

66 % of the world's population wears glasses with [75% having vision correction problems](#). That's 4 billion pairs of glasses and contact lenses worn by people every year. Now, take those away or at least start to lose most of them. The result is 4 billion people with significant vision issues.

But there is a decision that could correct all of that for many. It's called [Lasik surgery](#) and it permanently corrects nearsightedness..

It's one of those decisions that's easy to make and most people not only return home on the day of the procedure, but many actually return to work. If you are a candidate for Lasik and you are delaying the procedure you may want to reconsider.

Like anything else there are [pros and cons with Lasik surgery](#) so you should evaluate any risks

▪ Cataracts

There's [a medical procedure that can correct most cataracts](#) but even some eye doctors will wait until the cataracts directly affect vision. Waiting for anything might not be a good idea if you're worried about a potential collapse of

everything around you.

If you have been diagnosed with cataracts it's not too difficult to request that you have a procedure even in the early stages. Cataracts don't improve and just your statement of concern should be enough to motivate most doctors to act.

Other eye conditions like macular degeneration [can't be cured](#) with surgery or treatments but doctors will often [recommend lifestyle changes](#) to at least delay and manage the condition. [Those lifestyle changes](#) affect many health conditions so now may be a good time to rethink diet and exercise.

Dermatological Conditions

Most of us don't see a dermatologist unless we have a specific problem or [concern with a skin condition](#). What's worth considering is that most [serious skin conditions](#) are either unnoticeable or don't present sufficient pain or concern to motivate treatment. Melanomas occur frequently and it's not always an obvious change to a mole or tag on the body. Sometimes it's a small, discolored spot or bump.

Even then, moles that have changed in some way are rarely apparent to someone when it occurs on their back or other part of the body rarely seen.

The decision to have a routine full body check up at a dermatologist is not expensive and not invasive and worth the time. Even if it's just to give yourself some peace of mind for the day when that dermatologist may not be available.

Gastro-Intestinal Conditions

Some of us take simple things like constipation for granted or dismiss the annoyance of the occasional hemorrhoid. Unfortunately, [gastro-intestinal conditions and symptoms](#) are common but can indicate severe disease. A routine colonoscopy

is not only recommended every 10 years but the easiest way to ensure you don't have one of the serious gastro-intestinal issues.

The doctor may also be able to perform a quick procedure to remove polyps from the intestine or a hemorrhoid pre-empting any future problems or threats.

A colonoscopy is an out-patient procedure but it usually requires that someone drive you to and from the test. It's a routine test and if you've never had one it's definitely worth considering. Regardless, don't ignore gastro-intestinal distress. Find out the root cause and get it treated while you can.

Hearing Loss

Here's another long and alarming list of statistics. It's estimated that [20% of the world's population has some degree of hearing loss](#). Worse, most hearing loss progresses with time.

There are some procedures that can correct hearing loss to varying degrees but many times the prescribed treatment is the use of hearing aids. But what happens in a time when even something as basic as hearing aids aren't available?

One solution is to simply invest in a pair or more of [rechargeable hearing aids](#). Most can be adjusted to suit an individual's degree of hearing loss. At a time without power [a solar power bank](#) can recharge them.

Dental Conditions

If you've ever seen the movie [Castaway](#) with Tom Hanks, you're familiar with the challenges of an untreated dental condition. In the movie a man is stranded on a desert island after a plane crash, and earlier in the film complains about a

toothache he ignored. It's a dramatic demonstration of what can happen when no medical professionals are available as he knocks out the tooth on the island with the blade of an ice skate.

If you have gone too long without a routine dental checkup it's worth doing. Dental conditions are another medical area that [can present severe problems](#) and [even life-threatening infections](#) without apparent symptoms. See a dentist now in case you never can.

Cardiovascular Conditions

It would seem that anyone with [a heart or vascular condition](#) would already be under the care of a doctor and treating the problem. But here again, some cardiovascular conditions are not apparent or in some instances, dismissed or ignored by the patient.

There are routine heart tests like an EKG, echo-cardiogram and blood tests that can assess many cardiovascular conditions. Additionally, there are common symptoms that indicate the need for some level of treatment now and in the future.

They include:

- **High Blood Pressure**

There are many causes for high blood pressure from diet to activity levels, kidney conditions, hardening of the arteries, smoking and the list goes on. Lifestyle changes and prescription medications are the usual treatments, but the time to determine and deal with the root cause may be best done sooner than later. We'll get into natural solutions for prescription medicines later.

▪ **Heart Palpitations**

Heart palpitations are feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering or pounding heart. Stress, exercise, medication or, rarely, a medical condition can trigger them.

Although heart palpitations can be worrisome, they're usually harmless. Rarely, heart palpitations can be a symptom of a more serious heart condition, such as an irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) that might require treatment. Don't make assumptions. Now's the time to determine the cause and if any treatment is required.

▪ **Irregular Heartbeat (arrhythmia)**

Heart arrhythmias may feel like a fluttering or racing heart and may be harmless. However, some heart arrhythmias may cause bothersome – sometimes even life-threatening – signs and symptoms.

However, sometimes it's normal for a person to have a fast or slow heart rate. For example, the heart rate may increase with exercise or slow down during sleep.

Heart arrhythmia treatment may include medications, catheter procedures, implanted devices or surgery to control or eliminate fast, slow or irregular heartbeats. A heart-healthy lifestyle can help prevent heart damage that can trigger certain heart arrhythmias. Find out now if you have any of these symptoms and engage in the appropriate treatment.

And the List Goes On...

There are a wide range of cardiovascular conditions. Unfortunately, few of them simply go away or improve with time. If you have any suspicion that you have a cardiovascular condition the best course of action is to see a doctor and preferably a cardiologist and have the necessary tests to

determine treatments.

Here again, now is the time to deal with something as serious as the [number one cause of death in the United States](#).

About Those Prescriptions...

[More than 4 billion prescriptions](#) are filled in the United States every year. Some people can't live without them. If you are taking a prescription pharmaceutical deemed critical to your overall health you have few [options if the pharmaceutical industry collapses](#) with the rest of society.

Some short-term solutions are to attempt to stockpile through 90-day prescriptions or larger prescription amounts sometimes available through [Canadian pharmacies](#). The most critical thing may be to look at how a combination of life-style changes and [natural alternatives](#) may be able to support a condition in [a world without medicines](#).

The Importance of Natural Remedies

It's worth [researching](#) and [buying the books](#) that [identify the natural herbal](#) and even [wild-foraged alternatives](#) to some medicines. [Beets are a natural](#) blood-pressure moderator and some plants are [natural blood thinners](#), natural [antibiotics](#) and [offer other medicinal benefits](#).

In a time without the convenience of pharmacies and pharmaceuticals [understanding natural alternatives](#) will become more than a hobby. Take some time to understand how to [find alternatives to any medicines](#) you or your family takes. And make sure you know [how to manage herbal alternatives](#).

The Insurance Conundrum

A big question whenever we pursue non-emergency treatment for

a medical condition is whether or not our (or any) insurance will cover the costs. Typically, any medical treatment or surgery that we schedule is called an “elective” procedure. This means we chose or “elected” to have the treatment or surgery performed.

It comes as a surprise to some that even elective procedures are often covered by insurance. But then again, some insurance coverage will deny payment for the treatment. An elective procedure is essentially any treatment that is not an emergency. If we have a firm diagnosis for a condition, electing to have it treated should be covered by any legitimate insurance plan, but that’s not always the case.

Before “electing” to have a treatment, surgery or procedure, check with your medical insurance company. They may require substantiation from a doctor but it’s worth the time and effort to ensure coverage.

Medical Procrastination is Common

If you’ve put off or delayed a medical procedure or treatment you’re not alone. Nearly 40% of Americans [delayed treatment in 2022](#) due to costs. Some were still concerned about the threat of COVID. It’s also true that some people are rightfully fearful of the risks of any surgical procedure or the side-effects of some pharmaceuticals or treatments.

What’s important is to assess the overall risk. If you’re concerned about a medical procedure, give yourself the time to assess the implications. Then again, stop and think about that time when any medical treatment may not be available. It’s a balancing act for any decision but that’s the mindset of a prepper, and it’s just another survival decision we all have to confront.

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