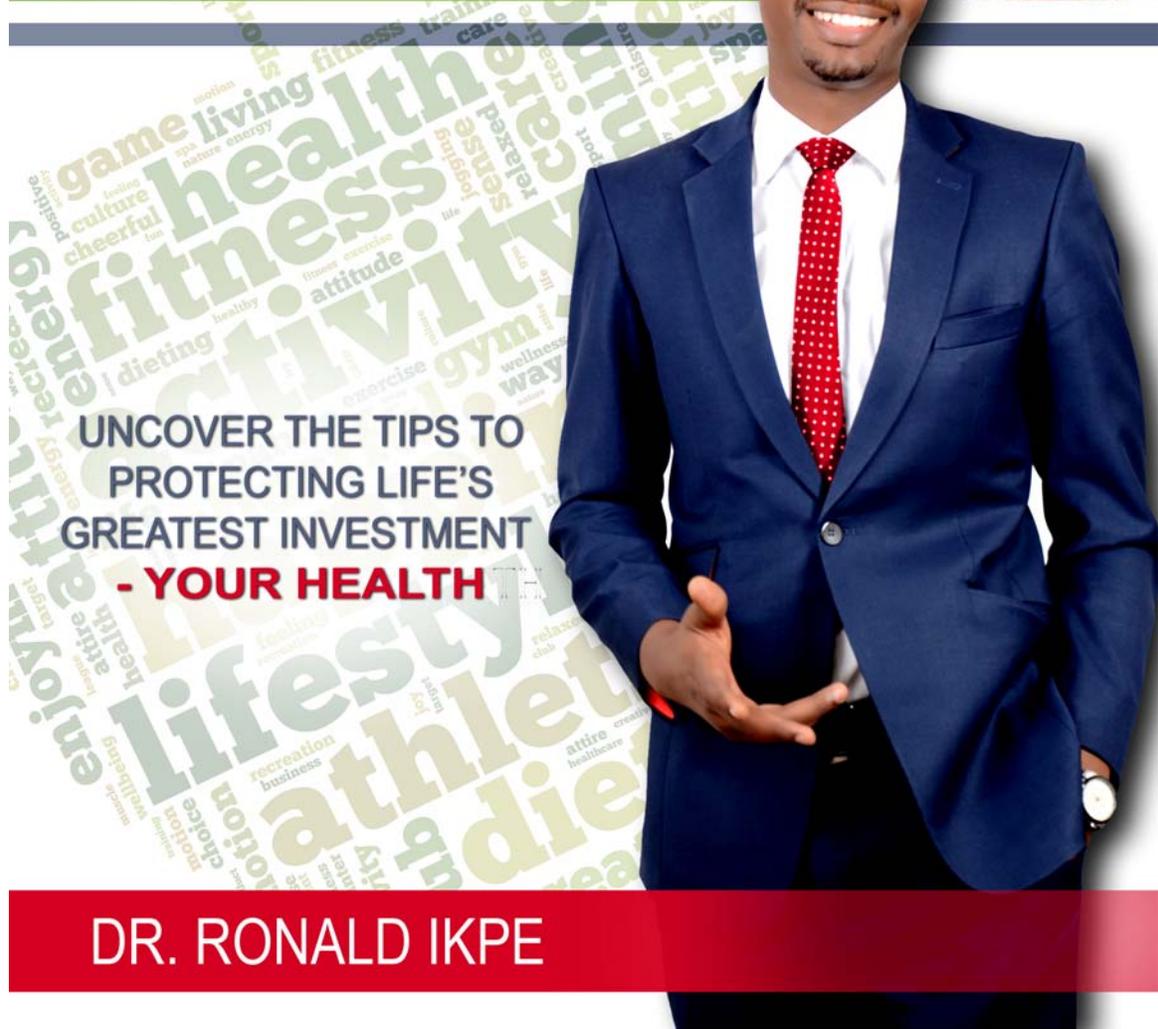


1351 TIPS — to a — HEALTHIER LIFE



UNCOVER THE TIPS TO
PROTECTING LIFE'S
GREATEST INVESTMENT
- YOUR HEALTH

DR. RONALD IKPE

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Investments – Your Health

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Table Of Contents

[Preface](#)

[Foreword](#)

[Introduction](#)

[1-Cancer and Cancer management](#)

[2-Children's Health](#)

[3-Communicable Diseases](#)

[4-Diabetes](#)

[5-General Health and Well Being](#)

[6-HIV/AIDS](#)

[7-Hypertension](#)

[8-Men's Health](#)

[9-Nutrition](#)

[10-Pregnancy](#)

[11-Sexually Transmitted Infections](#)

[12-Women's Health](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

[References](#)

[About The author](#)

Preface

This book is a product of my interactions with patients in the clinics. They reflect the advice I offer to them on a daily basis in the course of my medical practice. Being a doctor exposes you to a lot of illnesses ravaging the world ranging from HIV/AIDS, STIs, hypertension to Diabetes Mellitus, Cancers to mention just a few.

Many of us will remain healthy well into our old age. Some people will however become sick and die before others of a similar age. To a large extent, this a matter of chance, environment and heredity.

You can actually stay healthy by making positive lifestyle changes and having regular checkups so that diseases can be picked up early and treated when the chances of a cure is higher. This book offers you those tips. In this era of abundant information, you might wonder if there is a need for a book like this. My resounding response is, 'Yes, more than ever!' as health conscious individuals, you should have a comprehensive, portable source of information and advice.

I sincerely hope and believe that anyone who comes across this book will find it an easy guide that can lead them to a healthier lifestyle.

Dr. Ronald Ikpe. (MBBS)

Foreword

When God said in the Bible that my people perish for lack of knowledge, it has become more relevant and apt in our contemporary society as ignorance has killed more people now than the diseases in question.

This is obvious when you look at the poor knowledge of illnesses in our environment, their causes, risk factors, appropriate health seeking behaviours and methods of prevention.

Unfortunately, our communication media have been taken over by non professionals and quacks who have ended up in misleading the public with half truths and outright falsehoods all in the bid to make fat income.

The coming of 1351 Health Tips will definitely help in bridging this gap.

Having gone through the book myself, I am delighted therefore in recommending it to the general public for health enlightenment.

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Introduction

The results of hospital statistics nationwide have highlighted the enormity of the health problem placed by diseases like elevated blood pressure (Hypertension), diabetes mellitus, cancer not forgetting HIV/AIDS, Sexually transmitted Infection amongst others.

We are a diverse group of people with many varied interests, concerns and activities. Today, however most of us share an active and serious interest in achieving and maintaining good health. It is a well known adage that says health is wealth and prevention is better than cure. There is a focus on preventive medicine because it costs less in preventing the onset of an illness rather than treating it.

Think of the loss of man hours, loss of production time, reduced efficiency not forgetting the financial implications on both family of the sick and relatives especially in a country like ours where the extended family setting is still valued. Staying healthy should be a priority of every individual.

We as doctors have the responsibility of educating the public on various health issues and challenges because we realize that the gap between what the people know about their health is actually very huge and the consequences alarming hence the need for a book like this to bridge that gap.

I have decided to provide you and your family with high quality, timely and useful medical information in the form of short health tips that is geared to your needs and help you find ways to stay healthy and prevent disease.

To make this book even more helpful, I have divided it into small core chapters that focus on one area at a time in clear, concise and understandable language. A tip a day can do a lot for your health if you imbibe them and at the end of the book, you will find a health questionnaire to help you assess your chances of staying healthy.

I hope this book also will encourage you to form a partnership with your doctor for a common desired goal: many years of good health for you and your loved ones.

Chapter 1: **Cancer**

Cancer simply put is the uncontrolled growth of body cells. There is a breakdown in the control mechanisms of cell multiplication. Basically, almost all our cells need to be replaced regularly. Some are dividing every hour, some in a few days and some cells live for years.

The cell multiplication control genes may undergo a mutation thereby leading to uncontrolled cell growth. The growth may be harmless (benign) and less likely to spread or harmful and likely to spread (malignant). When cancer cells invade other tissues, it is called a metastasis. It may take a long time for a cancer to show symptoms hence the need for early detection and treatment via regular check ups.

Once cancer has spread, it is usually incurable however treatment can improve the quality of life. The major causes of mutations are viruses, chemicals and radiation. Several viruses have been linked to cancer. For example Hepatitis B virus (HBV), Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Smoking is the most common cause of lung cancer, tongue cancer, esophageal cancer.

Chemicals such as benzene, coal tar, rubber can cause cancer of blood cells (leukaemia), bladder cancer and liver cancer. Radiation from sunlight has been linked to skin cancers.

These factors do not always cause cancer in everyone who is exposed to them. In part, this is because some people are genetically more or less susceptible to a particular risk factor.

People always ask: what are the chances for a cure? We answer: the key to curing some of these cancers lie solely in early detection and treatment. Success in treatment is less likely if the cancer has spread. Advances have been made and are still being made in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Cancer Tips

Breast Cancer

- 1) Risk factors for breast cancer are gender (female), increasing age, maternal relative with breast cancer, nulliparity, late age at first pregnancy.
- 2) Every woman should learn how to perform self breast examination monthly. It helps in detection of breast lumps which can be cancerous.
- 3) If you feel any breast lump, please go see a doctor for urgent medical attention.
- 4) A high fat diet has been shown to be related to breast cancer. Watch your diet.
- 5) A lump or hard area in the breast may be an early warning sign of breast cancer. See a doctor.
- 6) A swelling or sore that does not get better in any part of the body may be a warning sign of cancer.
- 7) A bloody discharge from the nipple is not normal. Visit the hospital.
- 8) Yearly mammograms are recommended starting at age 40 and continuing as long as the woman is healthy.
- 9) Clinical breast examination about every 3 years for women in their 20s and 30s and every year for women 40 and over.
- 10) Have regular checkups and cancer screening tests.
- 11) Appropriate intervention is often effective in avoiding fatal outcomes following diagnosis of breast cancer.

Cervical Cancer

- 12) Human papilloma virus is a necessary cause of cervical cancer being present in 99.9% of cases.
- 13) Women who are sexually active, with multiple sexual partners, and multiple pregnancies have greater risk of having cervical cancer.
- 14) Women are encouraged to undertake a screening test for cervical cancer called a pap smear once every 3 - 5 years.
- 15) Increasing incidence in cervical cancer has been attributed to poor awareness about the risk factors, changes in lifestyle
- 16) There is a vaccine available against human papilloma virus, the cause of cervical cancer. See your doctor and get vaccinated today.
- 17) All women should have a cervical smear at the beginning of sexual activity and then every three years thereafter.

- 18) Early marriage, early sexual intercourse, early childbearing and repeated childbirth are associated with an increased risk of cervical cancer.
- 19) Pap smears are recommended annually for all females who have had sexual intercourse. Early detection is key to treatment.

Fighting Cancer

- 20) Most cancers are treatable as long as they are detected early and appropriate therapy commenced.
- 21) Keep open – flame grilling of meats to a minimum, as this practice produces cancer promoting compounds.
- 22) If you have been diagnosed with cancer, your treatment options include surgery, radiation, hormone therapy or chemotherapy.
- 23) Eating a healthy nutritious diet is extremely important during cancer treatment as well as for recovery after treatment.
- 24) Eating smaller meals more often may be helpful especially if your appetite is poor during cancer treatment.
- 25) When having a meal, try to eat the protein portions first. You need a lot of protein because of the high metabolic demand on the body.
- 26) Proteins help your body fight infection and also body repair as well as prevent unintentional loss of muscle mass
- 27) Diets high in fats such as fatty meats and low in fibre will predispose a person to develop colon cancer because of reduction of "good" bacteria.
- 28) Fruits and vegetables are an excellent source of fiber, vitamins, minerals which help defend against certain diseases.
- 29) Maintaining weight may be a struggle for some people with solid tumours due to metabolic demands caused by the cancer. Eat right.
- 30) It is better to consume antioxidants naturally in foods and to avoid supplements.
- 31) Side effects may be experienced during cancer treatment. If they persist or worsen, consult your medical provider.
- 32) Common side effects of cancer treatment are nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, poor appetite, constipation, gas bloating and altered sense of taste.
- 33) Avoid high fat, heavily spiced and very sweet foods. This helps the nausea and vomiting.

- 34) Sip clear liquids throughout the day to avoid dehydration during your treatment.
- 35) If you have diarrhoea, increase your fluid intake and consume foods rich in sodium and potassium, such as bananas to replace lost minerals.
- 36) Avoid carbonated drinks, it helps reduce the incidence of bloating.
- 37) Practice food safety when handling your food to avoid food borne infections because cancer weakens the immune system.
- 38) Avoid raw, undercooked animal products including meat and eggs. They are potential sources of infection.

- 39) Avoid damaged, rusted, dented or swollen canned foods. They may be spoilt or harbour disease causing germs.
- 40) Wash all your fruits and vegetables thoroughly. You can use salt to wash them.
- 41) Wash your hands before and after preparing and eating foods.
- 42) Cook all meats until well done.
- 43) Wash the tops of canned food and drink items before opening.
- 44) Soya is a good source of protein and also has a lot of other health benefits.
- 45) Include generous amounts of lycopene rich tomato products in your diet. Eat cooked tomatoes at least two times a week.
- 46) Stop forgetting that intimacy is still important. Maintaining an intimate relationship with your partner can be therapeutic.
- 47) Stop taking medical advice from friends. They wouldn't know the details involved in your treatment.
- 48) You should have regular checkups after your treatment to know whether the cancer has come back or worsened.
- 49) Remember to take your medications as prescribed. This might be the treatment for the cancer or to help reduce the symptoms or side effects.
- 50) You should report any new symptoms at once to your doctor after discharge example blood in urine or bleeding from the anus.
- 51) You don't have to cope with your fears alone. Feel free to ask for help from friends, family and your medical team.
- 52) Take time for simple pleasures of life such as a bath, manicure or pedicure.
- 53) Take time for simple pleasures of life such as a bath, manicure or pedicure.

- 54) Before treatment, make sure your body is well nourished as the treatment can take a toll on you.
- 55) Keep in mind that our memory function and energy level will fluctuate according to your treatment and medications.
- 56) Nourish yourself spiritually through prayer or guidance from a religious leader.
- 57) Continue your current sports activities as much as physically possible.
- 58) Listen to relaxing music that can bring about serenity around you.
- 59) Read uplifting books especially motivational and inspirational.
- 60) Consider complimentary therapies such as massage, aromatherapy, acupuncture, yoga to help relieve stress and other symptoms.
- 61) Pay attention to how you are feeling and get plenty of rest, good nutrition and take time for personal care.
- 62) When buying tomatoes, look for the very red ones, they are rich in lycopene which is a very good antioxidant.
- 63) Exercise is key during and after cancer treatment because it can help you regain your strength, relieve stress and maintain a healthy weight.
- 64) Always consult your doctor before you start any physical activity.
- 65) When exercising during or after cancer treatment, start slowly and increase gradually.
- 66) Moderate physical activity can also help build your appetite, improve your digestion and regulate your bowel movements.
- 67) Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- 68) Walking is one of the easiest ways to stay physically active.
- 69) Water activities may be a good choice if you find it difficult to walk or do other activities.
- 70) Evidence suggests that diets high in fibre are associated with a reduced risk for cancer.
- 71) Fibre helps move waste from the body more quickly and thus contributes to good digestive health. Eat more fibre today.
- 72) If you are increasing your fibre intake, make sure you also increase your fluid intake.
- 73) Adopt a fighting spirit. It keeps you going.
- 74) Its ok to discourage false cheerfulness and to share how you are feeling with friends and family.

- 75) Seek support from family and friends.
- 76) Be an active participant in your treatment and recovery process.
- 77) Make positive changes in your lifestyle that will improve your outcomes such as quitting smoking and getting good nutrition.
- 78) Find something to laugh about each day. Good humour is healthy for the body and soul.
- 79) Weight loss is a common problem for individuals undergoing cancer treatment.
- 80) Participation in a support group can help you learn from the experience of other cancer survivors.
- 81) Have a support group or family to help with preparing your meals.
- 82) Cancer is totally preventable with good healthy lifestyle and regular screenings.
- 83) Fats are important. They provide energy, produce hormones and help as carriers for some vitamins.
- 84) Cancer often affects the taste buds commonly ability to taste sweetness.

Self Examinations

Here are some self examinations you can do to identify early signs of cancer.

1) Breast examination

Do this to check for any lump or change in the shape, size and feel of your breasts. Ask your health care provider to teach you.

2) Testicular examination

This looks out for any changes in your testicles that could be indicative of cancer. Ask your doctor to teach you.

3) Skin examination.

Look out for skin changes and abnormal growths like warts.

There are other screening tests that can be done. Your doctor will usually order them when necessary.

Chapter 2: **Children's Health**

The desire of every couple is to have a child. Children make us happy, they are the apple of our eyes, they make family interesting and worthwhile. When a child becomes sick, the whole family is sick including mother, father, mother-in-law amongst others.

Children are fragile especially at the newborn stage when parents tend to worry about the health of the baby. Today, it is common and advised to immunize your child against the killer diseases. Immunizations are key to your child's health. An immunized child is less likely to fall ill.

The tips below cut across care of the newborn, good hygiene practices, immunizations and their importance, common infectious illnesses and some home emergency tips on caring for a child with fever and convulsions to make the journey through childhood less cumbersome for you.