A wonderful saying, attributed to Horace and Hippocrates:

ars longa vita brevis…

“Life is short and Art long; the crisis fleeting; experience perilous, opportunities fleeting, experiments treacherous, judgment difficult.”

Maimonides cited this phrase in “Aphorisms of Hippocrates” and “Aphorisms of Moses.”

To me this is the centerpiece of how we need to view our health and how we should view the health of society – it is a serious endeavor and we need to stay attuned to new medical discoveries as well as keeping good healthy practices.

Maimonides composed 10 medical works, the three most memorable - “On the cause of symptoms,” The Art of Cure, and “Commentary of Hippocrates’ Aphorisms.”

I believe the following advice Maimonides that holds true today:

“ The digestive system may be irregular, or one may have a headache or pain somewhere or any other minor ailment. One should not be hasty taking medications. The greatest physicians have advised against it, because one’s nature is adequate. One should follow a healthy regimen. If you medicate minor ailments, you either go contrary to nature or accustom it to being passive . It is best to refrain from interfering with nature when life is not in danger, as medication lower the body’s resistance.”

Here is another pearl of wisdom from the Rambam:

“ A moderate diet, daily exercise, and emotional tranquility are crucial to fend off the onset of illness.” From Maimonides – Regiment of Health.

One last kernel of knowledge:

“The physician should keep the patient’s emotions in equilibrium at all times, free of passions that cause anxiety. Cheerfulness alleviates sickness, and the physician should give the greatest care to the emotions of people, overcome by grief, obsessive thoughts, inappropriate aversions, and diminished pleasure.”

--Steve Goldberg, B’nai Israel Men’s Club