

Home > Community > Disruptors > Telus Health's Dr. Brendan Byrne Talks Digital Health And Successful Aging At...

Community Disruptors Living

TELUS HEALTH'S DR. BRENDAN BYRNE TALKS DIGITAL HEALTH AND SUCCESSFUL AGING AT AGE-WELL CONFERENCE

By Jane Mundy - November 5, 2018 1271



The fourth AGE-WELL 2018 Conference held in Vancouver (October 16-18) brought together more than 400 attendees to discuss "Innovation in Action," which focused on how technology is reinventing and supporting healthy aging.

It was an opportunity for academic researchers, industry innovators, caregivers, government representatives and older adults to network, exchange knowledge and collaborate among AGE-WELL stakeholders. And good news for Canada's older adults: They are finding solutions to make aging easier, while inventing tools to increase their independence and choices.

Keynote speaker Dr. Brendan Byrne, chief innovation officer, TELUS Health, is both a doctor and an entrepreneur. Over the past 25 years, he has explored how digital health can transform information into better health outcomes. He recently launched [Wellness Garage](#), a precision lifestyle medical practice that assesses a client's current risk and then helps them develop lifestyle strategies to optimize their health and prevent disease.

Dr. Byrne immediately got the audience thinking about what aging actually is. "We age right away at a cellular level, or biological aging. The next stage is phenotypic resilience [the ability to adapt successfully to acute stress or adversity] and the last stage is deterioration," he said.

His approach is to empower individuals to take control of their health in order to live longer and preserve function. During his session, he outlined two key factors to reach this goal.

First strategy: Delay disease

The National Council on Aging in 2015 reported that 80 percent of adults aged 65 and older have at least one chronic disease and 68 percent have two or more. Hypertension was the leading chronic condition. Dr. Byrne added that heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's disease and dementia and diabetes (almost one-third of Canadians live with it) are the disease risks



Dr. Brendan Byrne, Telus Health



COMMUNITY

Meet the people who are making a difference in your UNLTD world.

EDITOR'S VIEWS

DIFFERENCE MAKERS

ADVENTURE CAPITALISTS

DISRUPTORS

MEET THE EXPERT

PERSPECTIVES

FEATURE ARTICLES

What You Should Eat To Boost And Maintain A Healthy Brain

Jemma Besson - January 29, 2019

Canadian Comic Rick Green Finds Out How Humour Heals After An ADHD Diagnosis

Amanda Lee - January 28, 2019

How To Stay Calm And Carry On When Dementia Turns Your World Upside Down

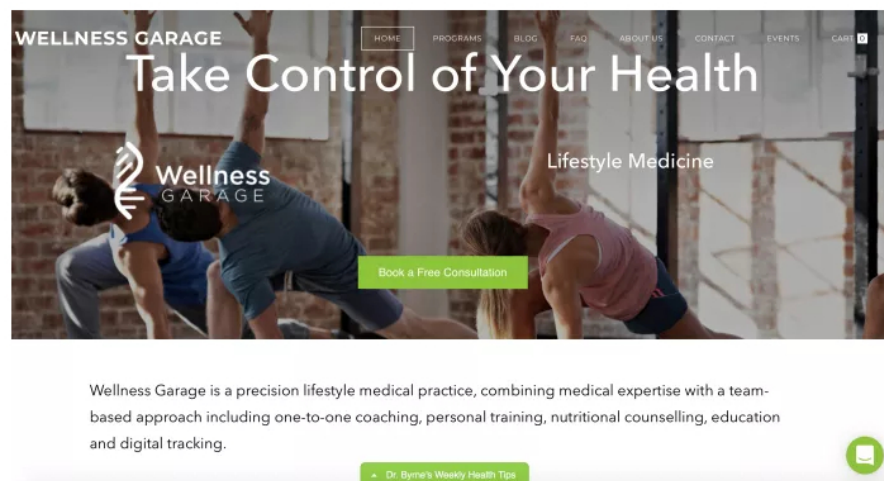
Katherine O'Brien - January 25, 2019

to focus on.

"Health is determined by medical care (11 percent), social circumstances (24 percent), environment (7 percent), genetics (22 percent) and individual behaviour (36 percent). We can change the latter," he quipped. Changing behaviour isn't rocket science. We can change our eating habits, how much we exercise (Dr. Byrne recommends 150 minutes per week combining aerobic, strength and functional exercise), and it's important to get a good night's sleep – more than seven hours. Stress tolerance is crucial, as are relationships and purpose. "Good behaviour equals good health," he said.

Other key lifestyle modifications include, reducing media consumption and the fructose we eat: We need just one teaspoon daily to operate our bodies, but gross over-consumption is driving health damage.

"Eighty percent of premature cardiovascular disease is preventable; one-third of cancer is highly preventable; one-third of Alzheimer's is preventable and 70 percent of type 2 diabetes is reversible." But how can these diseases be prevented?

The image shows a screenshot of the Wellness Garage website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: HOME, PROGRAMS, BLOG, FAQ, ABOUT US, CONTACT, EVENTS, and CARB. The main headline reads "Take Control of Your Health" in large white letters. Below it, the text "Lifestyle Medicine" is visible. There's a green button that says "Book a Free Consultation". The background of the banner shows two people in a gym setting, one performing a pull-up and another assisting. The Wellness Garage logo is on the left.

WELLNESS GARAGE

Take Control of Your Health

Lifestyle Medicine

Book a Free Consultation

Wellness Garage is a precision lifestyle medical practice, combining medical expertise with a team-based approach including one-to-one coaching, personal training, nutritional counselling, education and digital tracking.

Dr. Byrne's Weekly Health Tip

Dr. Byrne helped develop Wellness Garage to help healthcare professionals assess a client's current risk and assist with the development of lifestyle strategies.

Second strategy: Address the biological mechanisms of aging

"Behaviour is still the best medicine we have, and it's vital to measure our biological systems," said Dr. Byrne. He looks at behaviour as a health journey – along the way you take control of your body, have confidence by knowing your body and work to optimize what you have. He noted that 68 percent of health is within our control.

"Eat, Move, Sleep, Chill, Love And Follow Your Bliss"

Our first health "job" is to become familiar with seven numbers that he believes can give us a good shot at mitigating disease.

1. Blood pressure
2. Blood sugar FBS/HbA1c – fasting levels
3. Triglyceride TG/HDL ratio. This is the best marker for insulin resistance
4. GGT liver enzyme. Dr. Byrne cautioned that fructose is more dangerous than alcohol and overconsumption means the pancreas is straining to produce more insulin.
5. CRP – inflammatory marker. The good news is that it can be lowered.
6. A:G ratio – glycerol fat. It's important to know how much visceral fat and lean muscle mass you are carrying.
7. Vitamin D. Though not typically tested, dosage is important. (You can ask your doctor to order a test at a cost of about \$65.)

Elevated Uric Acid Levels Play Key Roles In Everything From Gout To Obesity

Wellness Garage - January 24, 2019

All Aboard The 'Colo-Cab': How One Man Supports His Friends After Their Colonoscopies

John Ellis - January 23, 2019



SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

Email *

☐ Yes, sign me up for the YouAreUNLTD e-newsletter!

By checking this box you are consenting to receive communications via e-mail from YouAreUNLTD. You may unsubscribe at any time.

Submit



Add to that, eat, move, sleep, chill, love and follow your bliss, said Dr. Byrne. As well, he stressed the need to shift away from the concept that age equals sickness: "Let's look more at what we can do as individuals and how we can create a sustainable society and sustainable aging."

TAGS Centre

SHARE



Facebook



Twitter



Like 21



Tweet

Previous article

Why Being A Good Canadian Means Getting A Flu Shot

Next article

Michael J. Fox Foundation For Parkinson's Research Funds Canadian-US Brain Project



Jane Mundy

RELATED ARTICLES

MORE FROM AUTHOR



WHAT YOU SHOULD EAT TO BOOST AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY BRAIN



CANADIAN COMIC RICK GREEN FINDS OUT HOW HUMOUR HEALS AFTER AN ADHD DIAGNOSIS



HOW TO STAY CALM AND CARRY ON WHEN DEMENTIA TURNS YOUR WORLD UPSIDE DOWN



YouAreUNLTD is a new publishing brand designed to disrupt and redefine what it means to get older, by providing Canadians with a fresh voice and the resources they want to age with vitality. We are spearheading a movement to disrupt and challenge tired and outdated assumptions on what it means to get older in Canada.

Contact us: info@youareunltd.com

