

3C Prevention Health Exam

**Narrater: Lin Shinn-Zong, Superintendent,
Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, Neurosurgical Authority**

“Are you over 40? How do you stay healthy after 40?” People tends to believe that only the sick visit doctors, but that is an outdated notion. One of the TCM classics, Huangdi Neijing (Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic) mentioned that “The best measure is to treat diseases before they happen.” Since our current health insurance system focuses on treatment after contacting diseases, for the sake of being healthy, routine physical check-up is a must.

Let’s take a look at health in terms of 3C prevention. What is 3C? It refers to three diseases: Cerebrovascular disease (CVA), coronary artery disease (CAD), and cancer. With three decades of practical experience, neurosurgical authority, Superintendent of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Lin Shinn-Zong reminds the public not to ignore common minor symptoms. When people experience dizziness, they tend not to investigate it further. If the dizziness turns out to

be a manifestation of cerebrovascular occlusion, the consequence can be fatal.

A Mr. Chen from Madou, Tainan, is Supt. Lin’s diehard fan. He drives local patients to and from Hualien for Supt. Lin’s treatment. Supt. Lin asked him once, “you always drive patients here, how about your own health?” “I feel dizzy from time to time,” Mr. Chen replied. Supt. Lin immediately arranged further tests for him. The tests revealed a blockage in one of his blood vessels in the brain. After Mr. Chen returned home, he and his wife packed his luggage and came to Hualien in preparation for surgery. Timely discovery equals timely treatment.

“Everyone claims that medicine has advanced, but I say medicine has not. Stroke was common in adults in their 60s back when medicine was not as advanced, and now that medicine is so advanced that stroke is common in adults in their 50s,” Supt. Lin said. “Brain diseases are the toughest to treat, stroke



Utilizing highly advanced technology in health examination is beneficial in preventing 3C—Cerebrovascular disease (CVA), coronary artery disease (CAD), and Cancer. The photo depicts the 256-slice CT scan of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital that has low radioactive dose, short testing time, and can scan the entire heart within two heart beats, producing precise and accurate images.



The photo shows a positron emission tomography (PET) scan.

in particular. People tend not to recover fully after a stroke. The only way to avoid stroke is to prevent it from happening.”

In fact, it is possible to prevent tragedies from happening by having routine physical exams for 3Cs. All drivers know that their car must undergo routine auto maintenance after reaching certain mileage, and the range of maintenance differs depending on the mileage driven, including retiring certain car parts. Our body is the same. To maintain a healthy body and mind, routine check-up is inevitable.

Chen Wen-Sung, a lawyer in his eighties, was a senior Tzu Chi volunteer. In addition to voluntary services, he would use his expertise in law and serve in the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital. Every month he would visit Hualien to assist the hospital with human trial reviews.

As healthy as he was, Chen suddenly experienced instability while walking and involuntary tremors in his arms and legs. He visited general neurology, neurology, neurosurgery, rehabilitation, geriatrics and had a full examination, but still failed to identify the cause. He even began to experience signs of memory loss. When the symptoms were severe, he had to rely on a cane to walk.

In Nov. of the same year, Chen, as usual, participated the monthly REC meeting in Hualien. During a break, he

visited Supt. Lin in his office to catch up. He mentioned in their conversation his physical discomfort for the past year. Supt. Lin, alarmed, asked his friend to arrange another full body check-up. According to his judgment, the cause behind his symptoms may very well be hydrocephalus, or water in the brain. After undergoing lumbar peritoneal (LP) shunt, Chen gradually recovered.

Chen admittedly said that he did not disclose his conditions to his family because he did not want to trouble them. During his visits to hospitals, his conditions was thought to be signs of senile degeneration, Parkinson’s disease, and even Alzheimer’s disease. He had already lost all hope of recovery, not knowing that his affinity as a Tzu Chi volunteer would inadvertently shed light on the root of his problems.

“Passing the age of 40, your skin starts to wrinkle. We can see the wrinkles on our skins, but what about the wrinkles on our organs? You can’t see it!” Supt. Lin encouraged everyone to have routine check-ups, identifying underlying problems hidden within our body with highly advanced medical equipment and devices. For example in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), one can perform a full-body scan, or specific regions such as cerebral, cervical, lumbar, and abdominal targeting CVD, brain tumor, lumbar, joint, prostate cancer,



The superintendent of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Lin Shinn-Zong encourages the public to arrange their 3C health check-up to safeguard their own health.

breast cancer and so on. A computed tomography (CT) or positron emission tomography (PET) scan can be used to identify early stages of lung cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, malignant lymphoma, and cerebral degenerative diseases.

When it comes to CVA and CAD prevention, the 256-slice CT scan can be used in cardiovascular testing, and MRI to identify any signs of cerebrovascular abnormalities. The 256-slice CT scanner only needs on average 0.27 sec to complete a rotation, which means it scan an entire heart within two heart beats, with less than half of the radiation dose. Furthermore, it produces incredibly

detailed two-dimensional or three-dimensional images, making it an effective tool in testing coronary diseases and lung cancer.

When it comes to aging, 40 years of age is a crucial watershed. Supt. Lin said, "We need to commit to a light diet, or a vegetarian diet, coupled with daily exercise routine 30 min. or longer. Marathon runners have three times brain stem cell counts than those who do not exercise!" There is a chance to delay aging by adopting light or vegetarian diet and monitoring blood lipids, blood pressure, and blood sugar; that and routine health check-up, no more red lights in your path to healthy life.