

What Will Actually Kill Us

As preppers, we pride ourselves on being ready for anything, especially anything that can kill us.

We stockpile food and other critical supplies; learn first-aid, fire starting and other survival skills and have a plan for just about anything. When those zombies come over the horizon, they will wish they had never seen us.

Even so, we're all still going to die someday. Whether that is because of some zombie eating our brains or something more pedestrian, like a traffic accident, none of us will get to live forever. So, let me ask you, isn't dying of the normal vagrancies of life just as serious as dying from a major disaster?

Even SWAT Teams Are Helpless Against This

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I'd have to say it is. With that being the case, why aren't we preparing for those more normal deaths as well, trying to stave them off as long as possible?

Every year, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) tracks all deaths that occur in the United States and their causes. This data becomes an annual report on the death, which is used in a number of ways by a number of different organizations[1]. Yet I have never heard this report cited, as evidence we should be using to plan ways of preventing our own deaths.

Granted, none of us can fully prevent our own deaths. At the same time, there's no reason to die, if it is at all preventable.

It just seems to me that doing what we can do prevent those personal disasters is just as important as doing what we can to avoid dying from a natural disaster.

So I thought it would be worthwhile looking at CDC's report, with the idea of seeing if there are potential ways of protecting ourselves from those top killers. Here's what I found:

Medical Problems

I'm going to generalize a bit here; mostly because so much of this report deals with killer medical problems. I'd be tempted to write that off to the report being created by the CDC; except that their areas of interest range far beyond just disease. They have written reports on deaths by firearms and vehicular accidents as well.

In the top 10 killers, we find that nine are some sort of disease, and a large part of the tenth one is caused by treating the disease:

- Heart disease
- Chronic lower respiratory diseases
- Stroke and other cerebrovascular diseases
- Lung cancer
- Alzheimers disease
- Diabetes
- Accidental Poisoning – including drug overdoses
- Pneumonia and influenza
- Colon, rectal and anal cancers

- Inflammation of the kidney

HEALTHY HABITS

BODY + SOUL



Good sleep routine

Wake up early

Drink lemon water

Do Exercise- 15 mins

Eat breakfast

Chew More

Have snack time

Cook your own food

Add Omega-3 in food

Bring a water bottle

Avoid added sugar

Sit Straight

Choose GREEN

Monthly Checkup

Sit Straight

Stretch Yourself

Do Interval Exercise



Go to bed early

Switch off phone
before sleep

Read before sleep

Think positive things
before sleep

Make your bed

Do planning

Meditation 15 min

Give Compliments

Avoid toxic people

Do Self-care

Invest in experiences

Listen Music

Save Money

Develop a hobby

Write in journal

I don't claim to be a medical expert, but at first glance, I see several things on that list that are preventable. Specifically, numbers 1, 3 and 6 are all related to overeating and becoming overweight. All it takes, in most cases, to lower the numbers and improve the patient's health is for them to change their eating habits; but few people want to do that.

Another item on that list, lung cancer, is also preventable in most cases. The most common cause of lung cancer is smoking and the second most common cause is exposure to secondhand smoke. While not all cases of lung cancer are caused by smoking; over 90 percent are.

The truth of the matter is that many people die prematurely, due to some sort of preventable health problem or other. I've become more and more aware of that, as I have grown older. For the last several years, I've been working on improving my health, through diet and exercise (neither of which I like). But if I can stockpile food to prolong my life, I can be responsible for how I eat today, rather than waiting until after a disaster to become a responsible eater.

Basically, I'm working on reducing my blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, and triglycerides. Yes, I was diagnosed high on all of those. But the interesting thing about that is that all of them are interrelated and all of them are related to my weight. So, if I get back down to the weight I want to get to, those numbers should all improve as well; improving my overall health.

Granted, there is no guarantee that changing my eating habits and getting some exercise will add another day to my life. Even so, the statistics are on my side and that's enough to make it an acceptable gamble to me.

The other benefit of making these changes is that they will make it easier for me to survive any disaster that happens. At the height of my weight, I was heavy enough that it affected my stamina and mobility. Bugging out, even carrying a light pack, is difficult when you're carrying an extra 50 or 100 pounds. On the other hand, when I get down to my target weight, my legs will be used to carrying all those extra pounds. That should help me if I ever have to bug out.

Cancer

Six of the top 20 killers on the CDC list are one sort of cancer or another and there are a whole lot more, as we continue through the list. While there is no known cure for cancer yet, there are those who claim that there are things we can do to help prevent cancer, in addition to avoiding smoking. More than anything, eating a healthy diet will help prevent cancer.

I know it seems like I'm on the same bandwagon again, but I'm not. In this case, when I'm talking about eating healthy, I'm talking about eating as naturally as reasonably possible. There are a lot of chemicals in much of our food and the possibility exists that those chemicals can be part of the reason why cancer has been on the rise. If you do your grocery shopping around the periphery of your supermarket, buying fresh meat and vegetables, as opposed to processed and packaged ones, you'll be eating a healthier diet, even if you don't change the recipes at all.

Food Cravings

And What They Mean

Craving

You Need



Salty Snacks



Chloride



Soda or Oily Foods



Calcium



Bread



Nitrogen



Sugary Foods



Chromium, Sulfur, and
Tryptophan



Chocolate or Acidic Food



Magnesium

But there's another important thing here; that's sugar. Recent studies have shown a strong connection between white sugar and cancer. That's a hard one to accept, but the evidence seems to be unequivocal.

Cutting sugar out of our diets is important for more reasons than just cancer; but even without those reasons, cancer is a good enough reason on its own. Actually, we don't need to cut it totally out; we just need to cut the amount of it we're eating, bringing it down to a reasonable level.

As I've adjusted my diet, I've noticed that eating one bite of a chocolate bar is just as satisfying as eating the whole thing. The same can be said for one bite of cake or pie. While I want to eat the whole thing, if I take my time eating one or two bites and savoring the flavor, I'm satisfied. And I do it without all that extra sugar and all those extra calories.

Motor Vehicle Accidents

The CDC recognizes accidents involving motor vehicles as being a major killer. Those come in at number 14, the highest rating for any non-medical cause of death, other than accidental poisoning (including accidental drug overdoses). Considering that we're a highly mobile society, I guess that's not all that surprising. But it's not much of an excuse for the 40,000 plus deaths by vehicle accident every year.

The sad thing is, most of those accidents are avoidable. When we break down vehicular fatalities into sub-categories[2], we find the following causes:

- Distracted driving
- Speeding
- Drunk driving
- Reckless driving
- Rain
- Running red lights
- Running stop signs

The sad thing about that list is that every bit of it is avoidable. Granted, you can't control what other drivers do, but you can be aware of it. Being aware of it is the first step in becoming proactive to avoid it.

When I was teaching my three kids to drive, I hammered what I call "Rule 1" into them. That is: "Always assume that the other driver is going to do something stupid." That rule has saved me from an accident on countless occasions. Time after time, I've been able to avoid an accident, because I was already thinking about the mistakes other drivers could make, so when they made those mistakes, I was already leaning in the right direction to avoid them.

Now, I'm not saying that I'm a perfect driver. The truth is, I make my share of mistakes as well. About the only claim to fame, I can make here, is that I don't make those mistakes because I'm not paying attention to my driving. Even then I still make plenty of mistakes. Imagine if I was one of those drivers who wasn't paying attention.

The reality is that we all make mistakes while driving; some avoidable and some not. By being aware of others' propensity towards making those mistakes, we can avoid becoming part of their mistake. Or maybe I should say, by being aware, we can avoid being part of turning their mistake into an accident.

It's called defensive driving and it's something we all need to practice. If you've never taken a course in it, I highly recommend doing so. Either that or do the modern equivalent

and study it online. Either way, start practicing Rule 1 and hopefully, you'll be able to avoid becoming a statistic.

Accidental Falls

If there is anyone type of accident that produces fatalities, other than vehicular accidents, it's falling. This is somewhat of a catch-all group, as it includes industrial falls from ladders and scaffolding, as well as children falling while playing (a result of their lack of coordination), people falling in extreme sports, and the elderly, whose bodies are more fragile.

Amongst all that, at least some of those falls are avoidable. Let's face it, we've all seen people do dumb things, like using a ladder incorrectly, which has led to a fall. Maybe we've been the one to do that. We humans, and especially male humans, take a lot of risks that we probably shouldn't take. When those risks involve heights, we're making sure that when we fall, it will be a hard fall.

It may be impossible to avoid some falls; but that's no excuse for not taking the right precautions to avoid falling, whenever we can. Going up to work on the roof, without the proper safety equipment, isn't a good decision. Nor is cutting the tree limb that you're sitting on. Let's at least avoid the obvious ones, so that if we have an accidental fall, it really is an accident.

Suicide

Surprisingly, we have to get all the way down to number 21 on the CDC's list, to find suicide. Personally, I thought it

would be much higher on the list; but I'm glad it's not. Nobody should have to check out that way.

Of all the means of committing suicide, a gunshot is, by far, the most common, accounting for about 50 percent of all suicides. After that, we find suffocation (hanging themselves) at 27.7% and poisoning at 13.9%. Anyone who is at risk of suicide should be watched and any of these methods that can be removed from their presence should be.

There are also those who make suicide attempts but do not manage to kill themselves. These people use methods that are not as sure as a gunshot or hanging themselves. Often, what they are really doing is crying out for help.

Suicide is an act of desperation. It is done by people who have given up on themselves and given up on life. It's the ultimate act of self-betrayal. But it doesn't have to be. There have been enough people who have been brought back from the brink of suicide to prove that these people can still live a happy, productive life. All it takes is a little understanding and support from those around them.

I don't know you or what you're going through, but I seriously doubt you are at high risk for suicide. Those of us who decide to take responsibility for our own lives and safety aren't prime suicide candidates. But we may find that we are surrounded by others who are. We need to keep an eye on them, all the while being open with those we love so that they can keep an eye on us. Beating suicide is a team effort.

Final Thoughts

After going through the CDC's list, a couple of things really stood out to me. The first was that the vast majority of people die of illness and disease. Of the various diseases listed, cancer came up over and over again. While I didn't take the time to add up all the cancer deaths on the chart, I came away with the impression that there were probably more deaths attributable to the various forms of cancer, than there were to the number one killer, heart disease. The second thing that stood out to me, is that the things we prepare for aren't on the list at all. That's not to say that we shouldn't be preparing for them; we should. But if we're going to be putting all that effort into preparing for something that probably won't kill us, it seems logical to put more effort into preventing those things that will.



CLICK HERE

to find out more on the first aid techniques that will save your life when surviving in the wilderness!

Resources

[1] CBS News on the CDC Death Index – https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/death-index-top-50-ways-americans-die/47/?ftag=ACQ449302a&vndid=6144158171433&fbclid=IwAR0HrSXHd6hxiZq6kANPojSgWYgB1eYUBF48GKo8ymRC-MKNDH0Z4_xIhgw60/

[die/47/?ftag=ACQ449302a&vndid=6144158171433&fbclid=IwAR0HrSXHd6hxiZq6kANPojSgWYgB1eYUBF48GKo8ymRC-MKNDH0Z4_xIhgw60/](https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/death-index-top-50-ways-americans-die/47/?ftag=ACQ449302a&vndid=6144158171433&fbclid=IwAR0HrSXHd6hxiZq6kANPojSgWYgB1eYUBF48GKo8ymRC-MKNDH0Z4_xIhgw60/)

[2]

<https://seriousaccidents.com/legal-advice/top-causes-of-car-ac>

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