Two words: chronic disease.

Diseases that lasted a year or more and require ongoing medical attention, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity and stroke.

The World Health Organization projects chronic disease will cause 90 percent of all deaths in industrialized countries like the US, Canada, Germany, Australia, China. The list goes on.

Here in the US, where we spend more money on health care per person than any country in the world, more than half the population has at least one chronic condition and these chronically ill patients account for a whopping 90 percent of our total annual health care spending.

So what can we do?

Now a problem as complicated as chronic disease will require many different approaches. But here’s one word.

Prevention.

Every HIV infection prevented saves us three hundred fifty thousand dollars.

If we increase the use of preventive services such as low dose aspirin, tobacco screening and alcohol abuse screening.

Save billions of dollars.
What if we help more people live a healthy lifestyle that can reduce heart disease and diabetes by 80 to 90 percent? Priceless. Not only can more widespread prevention efforts help control health care spending, it’s also bound to create a healthier, happier, more productive society.