**The Pastor and His or Her Health**

**By Pastor Owen Jack**

God’s desire is that Ministerial Workers will “prosper and be in good health even as their souls prosper.” 1 John 3:2. He promised that if we follow the laws of health, none of the diseases that affect the unbeliever will affect us. Exodus 15:26.

**Suggestions for Preventing Diseases and for Maintaining a Good Quality of Health**

1. Eat a balance diet every day. Eat a plant based diet consisting of nuts, grains, fruits, vegetables, and provisions. Eat foods low in sugar and fats and high in fiber. Eat the right food in the right amounts. Overeating or eating things that are not good for us is a sin. You may be able to hide many things about your personal life, but if you are overweight or you have a big stomach you cannot hide it. When your appearance disagrees with your doctrine, it’s embarrassing to teach and preach temperance and self-discipline. Besides, it’s harder to get your work done while carrying those extra pounds everywhere you go. “Many of our ministers are digging their graves with their teeth.” (Testimonies, vol. 4 p. 408).

Don’t eat and drink or eat after seven at nights, it will cause you to get a big stomach, fat around your waist line and it also affects your sleep.

1. Exercise four to five times a week. You can walk for one hour, go to the gym or plant a kitchen garden. Exercise is important for the maintenance of good health and to prevent diseases.
2. Take adequate rest. Many Adventist ministers are workaholics. They are addicted to work. Ensure you get eight hours of sleep every night. Try to go to bed before ten o’clock every night. Take your days off every week and rest. Take your vacation to rest and have fun. Although Jesus only had three and a half years to get his work done, He made sure that His disciples got their rest. On several occasions, He took them aside for the purpose of resting. Let us remember that overworking is a sin. God wants healthy, living servants, not dead sacrifices.
3. Learn to manage stress and find ways to relieve stress. Ministry is stressful work. Seventy percent of all ministerial workers experience periods of major stress. Female pastors experience significantly greater personal strain than male pastors. Too much stress leads to burnout. Burnout is caused by physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion resulting from constant involvement with people:- having to do more than you can get done. You are caught between the expectations of the Conference and your congregations. We can prevent burnout by: trusting and depending on God, by remembering that the battle is not ours but the Lord’s, by reminding ourselves that we are loved and accepted by God, and by being optimistic.
4. Drink six to eight glasses of water daily.
5. Get at least five minutes of sunlight and lots of fresh air.
6. Trust in God at all times and under all circumstances.
7. Abstain totally from that which is bad and use moderately that which is good.
8. Maintain a merry heart – smile and laugh frequently.
9. Get a physical check up at least every two years. Most problems can be treated successfully if detected early.