

# Inactivity – A Core “Disease” of Modern Complex Societies

2021

Thomas A. Burns PhD.

Klamath Falls, Oregon

Humans are designed to be active when awake. Literally, the human circulatory system depends on at least moderate activity to remain efficient, and every one of our trillions of cells in our bodies depends on this system to be nourished and freed from waste. If we consider the hunter-gatherer lifestyle of humans for 96% of our species’ history, we see constant activity foraging for food and moving from one location to another in a nomadic existence.

Now look at what has become the pervasive lifestyle in modern complex societies! Most work and entertainment endeavors have become largely sedentary – to the point where children and young adults now literally twiddle their thumbs as they play games and interact with one another on their “smart” phones. Television invites evening long couch “potatoes,” and access to the internet with computers makes global information, news, and virtual social interaction instantly available from our bent over, seated posture and a few clicks of our fingers. Children are not allowed to walk to and from school; they have to be bused or picked up by helicoptering parents. Adults have to schedule in times of the day and week to devote to exercise. And at the same time, we celebrate and fixate on athletes in a panoply of sports that exhibit extraordinary physical capabilities – a vicarious quest for what the great majority of us have lost.

And we wonder why we moderns have health problems??

It used to be that it was only the elderly who suffered the health consequences of inactivity. Now, as the population of inactive, impaired elder citizens continues to expand, their health challenges are coursing down the age ladder. For a huge proportion of the population, inactivity – together with the excessive ingestion of problematic foods – are the underlying causes of a great many of our physical diseases and psychological dysfunctions – from age 3 on!

And at some level, we modern humans all know this!!

But as residents of modern complex societies, we have so many other invited global social and ecological problems that we sidestep ourselves and dwell in the hope that medical technology or genetic engineering will somehow overcome our core inactivity and ingestion failures.

Good Luck with THAT plan!