

WHEN ECONOMICS MEETS MEDICINE

Nutrition, Exercise and Cognitive Training for the Prevention of Chronic Diseases Associated with Aging.

Luigi Fontana (*)

*Full Professor of Medicine and Nutrition
University of Brescia and Washington University in St. Louis, USA*

foreword by

Vincenzo Atella

CEIS Director, University of Tor Vergata

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10:30

Sala del Consiglio Building B II Floor
School of Economics, University of Tor Vergata

Abstract: Over the last century thanks to the discovery of antibiotics, mass vaccination programs and the improvement of sanitary conditions, most of the deadly infectious diseases have been defeated. In early 1900's life expectancy at birth was as low as 40 years, and today it is more than doubled reaching 83 years. Unfortunately, not all of these life expectancy gains have been transformed into healthy years. Roughly 90% of EU citizens aged 60 or more are affected by at least one largely preventable, noncommunicable disease (NCDs) like cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. A quarter of all NCDs affect people under the age of 60, in their most productive years, generating huge economic output loss. Risk factors such as insufficient physical activity and unhealthy diet are climbing at an alarming rate. On top of that, the relentless decline in fertility rates offers no remedy to the aging process, with the proportion of 65+ individuals expected to reach 35% of the total population in the next twenty years.

While economists fear for the future, physicians might be more optimistic about this overwhelming challenge. If the dramatic increase in risk factors is to a great extent a matter of social and behavioral factors, it is reasonable to believe that the present alarming situation, at least to an extent, could be reversible. Models of competing risks suggest that disease prevention could provide an opportunity to 'rectangularize' quality-of-life throughout the life course and also address the global disparities in outcomes. A healthy and balanced nutrition, regular physical activity and stimulation of cognitive functions are key aspects of health promotion. Hundreds of scientific studies have shown that these three habits are essential for (1) lowering the risk of developing the most common chronic conditions, (2) preventing frailty and disability, and (3) slowing down the accumulation of molecular and cellular damage. If healthy choices fuel the NCD eradication, an improvement of patient engagement properly guided by physicians will play a key role towards long and healthy lives.

After a short foreword by Vincenzo Atella, these topics will be presented and discussed during the seminar by Luigi Fontana to an audience of economists, epidemiologists, physicians and social scientists. A short discussion session will follow.

If you want to follow the seminar via [WEBINAR](#) please follow [this link](#).

The [WEBINAR ROOM](#) will be open starting from **10:20am** on February 2nd 2018

() Luigi Fontana, M.D., Ph.D. is an internationally known human systems biologist and one of the world's leaders in the field of nutrition and healthy longevity in humans. He is currently a Professor of Medicine and Nutritional Sciences at University of Brescia, Italy and at Washington University in St. Louis, USA, where he co-directs with John Holloszy (one of the top world experts in the field of exercise physiology and preventive medicine) the Longevity Research Program. Dr. Fontana's is the recipient of three prestigious awards: the 2009 American Federation Aging Research (AFAR) Breakthroughs in Gerontology Award, the 2011 Glenn Award for Research in Biological Mechanisms of Aging, and the 2016 American Federation of Aging Research Vincent Cristofalo Rising Star Award. His work has featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and in Newsweek and Time magazines, among others. He was featured in the BBC Horizon documentary Eat, Fast, Live Longer by Michael J. Mosley.*