WHAT'S NEXT BLOG

Life at Nuance, Professional development

At the end of the day…everything we do either helps or hurts our health.

Brenda Hodge | Chief Marketing Officer

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Even the smallest decisions you make every day have the power to affect your health. Whether you're skipping breakfast, staying up late to catch up on work emails, getting to yoga after work, or loading up on lean protein… everything we do either helps or hurts our health. Take a moment to consider how every decision you make has an impact on your wellbeing.

While attending the CHIME conference last month, one of the keynote speakers shared a statistic that struck me: "80% of healthcare costs are self-inflicted. We are contributing to chronic disease by what we eat, drink, and smoke."

That really got my attention. Not only did I realize that we as individuals can help curb chronic disease, but at that point, I was also about 30 days into an anti-inflammatory diet . I'd been struggling with back pain and my doctor suggested this approach to food would help. On this anti-inflammatory diet, there are a number of restrictions on what I can eat. I cannot eat dairy or sugar or soy or wheat or gluten or anything highly processed. I have always enjoyed sweets and junk food as a form of entertainment, so this was a major mind shift for me. But I had also read a book that gave me one simple axiom: Everything you eat either helps your health or hurts it. I'd never thought of food as that binary. Surely, I thought, some foods would be neutral? But, indeed, food either makes you stronger or it interferes with your body's ability to process the nutrients you need.

And then there's sleep…or the lack thereof. Sleep is fundamental to our health and yet most of us don't get enough sleep. My husband and I have been having a disagreement for 30 years on whether I can make

up on the weekends for the sleep I missed during the week. That's my optimism coming through; I think I can catch up, but in fact, regularly getting only five or six hours of sleep is hurting my health.

At the end of the day…everything we do either helps or hurts our health, and I am learning that all of these seemingly small decisions matter. I never want to take my health for granted, and so I am taking better care of myself in recent months—and I'm encouraging all of us to take a moment to consider how every decision we make has a positive or negative effect on our health.

Tags: Helping others, Leadership principles

About Brenda Hodge

Brenda leads all aspects of Nuance's marketing function working to develop the go-to-market approach, building the Nuance brand to drive growth, and expanding client relationships to increase loyalty. She joined Nuance from Optum where she most recently served as Chief Marketing Officer for the Provider Market segment. Brenda's career spans multinational sales and marketing leadership roles at companies such as GloStream, Allscripts/Misys Healthcare Systems, and SAS Institute.

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