

YOUR HEALTH MATTERS



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– Carol Taylor

Book Reviews

**Reviewed by Carol Taylor, Executive Director
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Your Health Matters. What a perfect title for a book about the United States’ health care system. For those of us who live with various forms of Lupus, the health care system is our daily friend, or sometimes, our worst enemy.

The authors show us in the book what all people with chronic diseases already know; that we are responsible to take care of ourselves, and we must cooperate with the caregivers who treat us. The key to living with disease is to eat well, get proper exercise, and follow the medical regimen recommended by caregivers. *Your Health Matters* makes a compelling argument that these same principles can be applied to reform the entire health care system.

During the past 40 years, in a single generation, the US moved away from a system of self-reliance to one of entitlement. Of course, there is a proper place for others to come alongside suffering people, but that is far different from what we see today. In fact, it is one of the key reasons why health care costs are soaring. When an insured person goes to the doctor or hospital, they do not know the cost of the service because they pay only a small office co-payment. They have come to believe that they are entitled to every possible health care service, and that others should pay their bills.

That is why each of us must come to grips with what our own health care costs. We must be full participants in working out a cure or treatment for what ails us. The emerging consumer-directed health care system, as described so well in Chapter 23 of the book—“Tomorrow’s Doctor Appointment”—is exciting and holds great hope for those who care about the long term effects of health reform.

As well, the authors provide a rational examination of other key issues like the truth behind infant mortality and life expectancy statistics. These are far more affected by cultural issues like diet, exercise, and family status, than they are by the health care system. Medical providers deal with the outcomes of bad diet and poor decisions; they don’t create the problems.

The authors have written a book for everyday Americans. It reads like a novel, but the story is deadly serious. Everyone of us needs to read *Your Health Matters*.

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Carol Taylor is the founding Executive Director of the African American Lupus Foundation Inc., in 1990 and the sole owner of Carol Taylor Associates Inc., a management, consultant and training firm. Carol graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Masters Degree in English Education and Curriculum in 1982. Doctors diagnosed that she suffered from Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) in 1985. After five years of treatment, with Lupus in remission, Carol became active and performed volunteer counseling of other women with Lupus, especially African American and other women of color.