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Television presenter Andi Lew and her chiropractor husband Dr Warren Sipser are hoping to spark a wellness revolution with their new book, *7 Things Your Doctor Forgot to Tell You*.

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Dr Warren Sipser and Andi Lew in their Melbourne wellness clinic.

Photo: Peter Haskin



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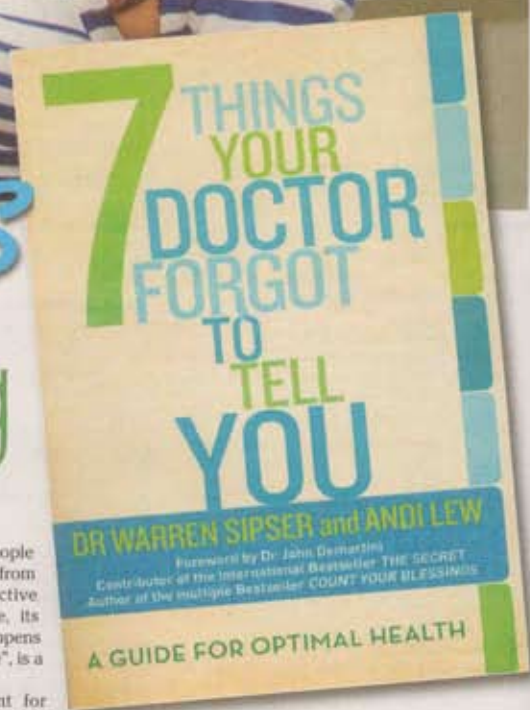
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Photo: Peter Hudson

Seven steps to healthy living



Chiropractor Dr Warren Sipser and his TV presenter wife Andi Lew are hoping to spark a wellness revolution with their new book, *7 Things Your Doctor Forgot To Tell You*. **Darren Levin reports.**

THE mean streets of Johannesburg may seem like a strange place for a career epiphany. But working as a volunteer paramedic in his native South Africa set Dr Warren Sipser, 31, on a different medical path to the norm.

"It was very violent, third-world trauma, but it set a really great platform for me to understand when a person is incredibly ill and needs crisis care compared to when a person can be proactive," he recalls.

"It matured me as a person because you're dealing with life and death. It makes me incredibly grateful for what I'm able to do now as a holistic wellness practitioner, rather than to just patch people up."

It was in South Africa that Dr Sipser - now a chiropractor - saw the firsthand effects of iatrogenesis (complications caused by medical error), a phenomenon that is particularly pronounced in countries with overburdened health-care systems.

"It was very confronting to learn that hospital errors kill more people in the world than cancer and heart disease. Working as a paramedic, it wasn't a question of it being believable or not - I experienced it, I was part of it, it didn't happen through a lack of caring, it's just what happens."

"He still gets flashbacks from it," his TV presenter wife Andi Lew, 35, chimes in.

The pair are sitting in the treatment room of Dr Sipser's Elwood practice; a space adorned with green for its "soothing" qualities. Earlier this month they launched their first book, *7 Things Your Doctor Forgot To Tell You*, a user-friendly guide to achieving optimal health. Five years in the making, the book

aims to shift the way people look after themselves - from a reactive to a proactive approach. In this sense, its first chapter, "Health happens by choice, not by chance", is a good starting point.

"Hospitals are meant for people that are desperately ill," Dr Sipser says. "People are becoming more and more unwell through the course of their lives. By the time they seek medical care, they're so sick, there's nothing they can do."

We have the best drugs and the best doctors. But as a nation in the modern world, we're getting sicker and sicker. So people are looking for preventive measures and proactive things, rather than to wait until it's too broke to fix it.

Andi Lew

Co-author, *7 Things Your Doctor Forgot To Tell You*

"Often the testing is more damaging and invasive than it needs to be. But that's because people have lead unhealthy lifestyles until that point."

"We have the best drugs and the best doc-

tors," adds Lew. "But as a nation in the modern world, we're getting sicker and sicker. So people are looking for preventive measures and proactive things, rather than to wait until it's too broke to fix it."

FAR from a dry medical account, *7 Things Your Doctor Forgot To Tell You* is an easy-to-digest guide that covers a range of health-care issues from nutrition to side effects, natural remedies to the power of perception. Each chapter is self-contained, so readers can take in the book from cover to cover, or pick and choose the chapters most pertinent to them.

"It's about taking a person on a step-by-step journey," explains Dr Sipser. "These topics are the ones that are most prevalent today and often are the most misunderstood. We wanted to remove all the stigma and dogma about them, so people can have an easy way of accessing them."

Lew's perspective was crucial in this sense. While she's been a qualified chiropractic assistant for the past five years, she's best known for co-hosting television shows, including Network Nine's *Shopping For Love*, as well as a four-year stint on radio with

Mix101.1 in Melbourne. The book is dotted with Lew's personal experiences, including a crippling battle with sciatica - a painful lower back condition - which she endured as a young adult.

"As a dancer I had bouts of sciatica weekly and would right off days just lying in bed hoping that the pain would go away or thinking that I could stretch it out. But nothing ever helped," she recalls.

"It was a chance meeting with Warren, where he offered to check me and adjust me, that changed my life from that day on and I felt compelled to pay it forward."

It's no surprise then that Dr Sipser sees his wife as the driving force behind the book. The pair met at a Maccabi party in 2001, and will celebrate their five-year anniversary in December.

"With a scientific background, sometimes I complicate things," says Dr Sipser. "Andi has a good understanding, but can approach it from a lay perspective. That's very important because the people making health-care decisions today, from my experience, can become overwhelmed."

"There are so many wares sold on the internet - from bioidentical hormone therapy to a range of nutritional. Even in the supermarket, people just feel confused. We really needed to give them key things and a real guideline as to how they can improve their quality of life very easily so as not to overhaul their lifestyle."

The book is inspired by the tragic death of Dr Sipser's young sister, Stacey, from cancer.

"I come from a medically dominated family and my sister passed away when she was young. That was because the medical model failed her," he says.

"That led me into something that was naturally based and chiropractic is the most effective and largest of the primary health-care professions that doesn't use drugs or surgery. So the knowledge was there and Andi pushed me to put it on paper."

DR Sipser, who grew up in a family of specialist medical professionals, hopes the book dispels some myths about his profession. As one of only 10 chiropractic paediatrics in Australia, he is passionate about the holistic benefits of chiropractic care and is about to complete a masters in pediatric chiropractic, making him one of just a handful with that qualification in the world.

"People don't get sent to my clinic for what you normally think chiropractic is for. I get people with learning difficulties, infertility issues

and babies with colic, and to them chiropractics is about that too.

"It's the third largest health-care profession behind medicine and dentistry and yet it's very misunderstood. There are only 3000 chiropractors in Australia. It's still very small, but so effective."

As for a companion volume to the book, the couple say they've toyed with some ideas.

"People ask whether it'll be *8 Things Your Doctor Forgot To Tell You*," jokes Lew.

"Because Warren has just about finished his masters in pediatric chiropractic, I'm pretty sure it'll be important to write a book that's skewed to kids."

7 Things Your Doctor Forgot To Tell You is available in bookstores or via www.rackpoolpublishing.com.au. \$24.95.

Your doctor may have forgotten to tell you ...

1. Health happens by choice not by chance.
2. Your body self-heals and regulates.
3. The benefits of chiropractic care.
4. Nutrition fuels our vitality.
5. Side effects are still effects.
6. There are alternatives to vaccinations.
7. Perception is everything.

Photo: Peter Haskin



The book covers a range of health-care issues from nutrition to natural remedies. Photo: stock.achg



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