Editor’s Letter

Weighty Issues

February 22, 2007 By Hilary Beard

For years, I’ve observed with alarm the number of African-American males, particularly prominent ones, who pass on while they’re still young from preventable lifestyle-related causes, often related to excess weight. In 2006 alone, R&B singer Gerald Levert, 40; baseball legend Kirby Puckett, 45; and keyboard artist Billy Preston, 59, transitioned long before their average life expectancy of 69. So many of us appear to be unable to make behavioral changes to preserve our quality of life and longevity.

In this issue, we help our readers figure out whether they’re at risk for weight-related disease; whether they’re phat (pretty, hot and thick) or fat (unhealthy and potentially in danger). Fortunately, former presidential candidate Al Sharpton, 52, didn’t wait for a crisis before shedding extra pounds. We detail how the political activist dropped 90 pounds and how he exercises his body, his discipline and determination to keep it off.

Many of us use holistic health practices to support our well-being. As we observe National Colorectal Cancer Awareness month in March, *Real Health* examines the belief common among alternative practitioners that we can prevent diseases, including colon cancer, by “tuning up” our large intestine. Another popular prevention strategy is eating more uncooked foods. Raw food proponents claim not only that this lifestyle assists weight loss and helps heal chronic disease, but that the food really is good. Try tasty recipes like nut meat chili, guacamole and new moon fruit stew.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/Editor-s-Letter-11354-9143