The “segula” of Maimonides to enjoy good health

The indisputable reality is that our health depends on two major factors: 1. What the patient does to care for his health or to affect her own health. 2. What affects our health and is beyond our control. Of course, that which we can not control is in the hands of HaShem. Therefore, praying and asking HaShem to protect us from diseases and harmful physical conditions, and to help us heal ourselves when we are not well, is the most important factor in this equation.

We Jews believe that there is a strong interaction between the physician and HaShem. Being a doctor is one of the noblest professions, since this professional is like a proxy of God. In my own words: HaShem heals us *through* the doctors. When the surgeon operates, we believe that HaShem is guiding his hands.

That is why unlike other religions or cults, it is mandatory for us to visit the doctor periodically and put ourselves in the physician’s hands to preserve our health. □□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□

Keeping ourselves in good health requires, first of all, routine medical controls, and especially when we have, or we suspect we have, any symptoms of a possible disease.

Maintaining a good health also involves keeping ourselves away from bad habits. For example, smoking. If I smoke, I can not expect HaShem to protect me from the consequences of tobacco. And I cannot expect the doctor to perform miraculous treatment on my lungs, while I’m still smoking.

In addition to avoiding bad habits, we also need to acquire “preventive” habits.

Many of those “segulot” to prevent diseases were formulated by

haRambam, Maimonides, 800 years ago.

Maimonides, who in addition to being a great rabbi was also a famous physician, wrote an entire chapter on preventive medicine in Mishne Tora, Hilkhot De'ot, chapter 4. Anticipating the modern concept of "preventive medicine" by eight centuries, Maimonides referred to: diet, sleeping habits, physical exercise, hygiene, etc.

We'll start by looking at what he said about eating habits.

The first thing we must improve, according to Maimonides, are our eating habits. Maimonides teaches us that we should eat in moderation. Eat to live and not live to eat.

In De'ot, chapter 4, halakha 2 Maimonides refers to overeating, in Hebrew, akhila gasa, that is, gluttony: *"One should not eat until his stomach is full, but up to three-quarters of his total satisfaction."* In other words, it is not bad to stay a little hungry after we finish eating. It is actually a desirable habit.

We live in a time when most of us B"H do not have major problems with having food on our tables. In the United States, for example, the main problem related to public health is not malnutrition (lack of food). It is overeating, obesity, what has become epidemic and is said to be the number one health risk factor for millions of people.
Maimonides said it explicitly in 4:15: *"Overeating (akhila gasa) is toxic to the body of any person. It is the main source of all diseases. Most diseases that afflict a person are caused either by eating harmful foods or by filling the stomach and overeating, even healthy foods. This was already suggested by King Solomon in his book of wisdom (Mishle 21:23): "Whoever cares for his mouth and tongue, keeps his soul from anguish". "Cares for his mouth," meaning, avoiding eating harmful foods or overeating. .. ".*

I leave for the end the phrase that I consider to be the most

comprehensive and practical of all Maimonides segulot, as far as the habit of eating.

4: 1 *“Do not eat unless you are hungry.”*

SEGULA: Repeat these words of Maimonides in Hebrew: לעולם לא יאכל אדם אלא כשהוא רעב ולא ישתה אלא כשהוא צמא Eating healthy and avoid overeating will help us to enjoy a good health.

(*To be continued …*)