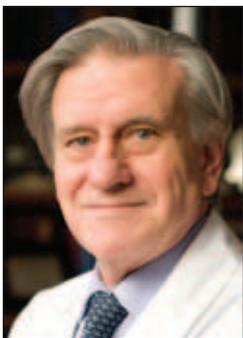


# Promoting Executive Health

# A Focus on Prevention

**An Interview with Dr. Valentin Fuster,  
Director, Mount Sinai Heart; Director, Zena and Michael A. Wiener  
Cardiovascular Institute and of the Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis  
Center for Cardiovascular Health; Richard Gorlin, M.D./Heart Research  
Foundation Professor of Cardiology, The Mount Sinai Medical Center**



Dr. Valentin Fuster

**EDITORS' NOTE** Dr. Valentin Fuster's prior posts include past President of the American Heart Association and of the World Heart Federation. Twenty-six distinguished universities throughout the world have granted him Honorary Doctorate degrees. Fuster has published more than 800 PubMed articles and he has become the Lead Editor of two major textbooks on cardiology. He has been appointed Editor-in-Chief of the *Nature* journal and he is the Editor of the new "AHA Guidelines and Scientific Statements Handbook." Fuster is the only cardiologist to receive the two highest gold medal awards and all four major research awards from the four major cardiovascular organizations. After

receiving his medical degree from Barcelona University and completing an internship at Hospital Clinic in Barcelona, Fuster spent several years at the Mayo Clinic, first as a resident and later as Professor of Medicine and Consultant in Cardiology. In 1981, he came to Mount Sinai School of Medicine as Head of Cardiology. From 1991 to 1994, he was Mallinckrodt Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Chief of Cardiology at Massachusetts General Hospital. He returned to Mount Sinai in 1994 as Director of the Zena and Michael A. Wiener Cardiovascular Institute, and most recently, he has been named the Director of Mount Sinai Heart.

## Why was the Executive Health Program at Mount Sinai formed?

I spent 11 years at the Mayo Clinic, which is where I learned how effective one can be by having a general check-up over a short period of time. Having seen the effectiveness of having a check-up being completed as I saw at the Mayo Clinic and the speed by which it was done by a number of specialists, I thought it should be done in New York.

## Have you been happy with the level of expertise and talent you have brought in?

There are many check-up programs around the country run by good people, but there are few programs that have a team like ours that, to start with, have three professors involved.

This is not a program where you deal with a youngster with limited experience; a number of us involved are senior in the field of medicine.

## Many today suggest that the doctor/patient relationship is being lost. Is there merit to that and does it concern you?

Yes, and it's a problem that affects the young generations because there isn't enough time in training to dominate technology and, as a result, the doctor/patient relationship suffers.

In a program like this, you see a doctor two or three times during the day, but there is technology involved. A program like this overcomes in part the issue because there is a very balanced relationship between a doctor and an individual in terms of health and technology.

## Is there enough discussion and awareness of the importance of preventative medicine?

There is not. I carry a flag of promoting health. In general, we do not accept that we are vulnerable. The concept of prevention is interesting to talk about, but in the daily life of an individual, it's not what prevails.

It's not an easy thing to push forward in a culture in which people accept the way they are and don't see the reality of the importance of their health. ●

**An Interview with Dr. Kevin G. Dunsky,  
Director of the Program for Diagnostic and Preventative Medicine  
(Executive Health Program; [www.mountsinai.org/exehealth](http://www.mountsinai.org/exehealth)) and  
Director of Cardiovascular Institute Practice Development,  
The Mount Sinai Medical Center**



Dr. Kevin G. Dunsky

**EDITORS' NOTE** Dr. Kevin Dunsky completed both his residency in Internal Medicine and his fellowship in Cardiology at Mount Sinai. He worked at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center for five years doing extensive consultative practice, caring for inpatients and outpatients, and serving as the hospital's cardiac consultant for high-risk obstetric patients. In 2008, he returned to The Mount Sinai Hospital and has devoted his career to patient care.

## What is the mission of the Diagnostic and Preventative Medicine program at Mount Sinai, and how has the program evolved?

Our Executive Health Program provides patients with a full day in-depth consultation with a variety of physicians using noninvasive diagnostic and state-of-the-art screening technology to try to identify problems before they manifest themselves. The results of all tests are ready by the end of the day, so they can sit down with the physician to go over all the results and formulate a plan before they leave. We can tailor the day, depending upon the patient.

Generally, the day starts out from head to toe: full blood work; history and physical; full stress echocardiogram; we do a CAT scan of the chest, abdomen, and pelvis; and a routine day will include a visit with a dermatologist and an ophthalmologist, as well as pulmonary and hearing testing.

## What kind of talent do you have running the program?

We have Dr. Valentin Fuster, who is probably one of the preeminent cardiologists in the world, and Urologists like Dr. David Samadi, who has performed over 3,000 robotic prostate surgeries and has been profiled on all major TV news stations in New York. These people are at the cutting edge of technology and preventative medicine.

I've spent a lot of time in this field as well in terms of working on the preventative core curriculum we're using here to target what we're able to detect.

## Mount Sinai is an innovator in building this type of program. Is this offered in other hospitals?

We're definitely unique in the New York area. We've assembled a team that is enthusiastic about the program – you have to have people who believe in preventative medicine, not just in the invasive aspects.

That is where our strength lies – we're looking ahead at the next generation of medicine. Medicine in general is now looking more at prevention, from a societal and medical level. That is why we see this as the new wave of medicine and why we've made such an effort to jump into the preventative arena.

## Is there enough of a focus on prevention?

We have a lot of work to do in the field, but it's critical, and that is where our focus lies. We're all caught up in the new technology, and it may not be as sexy, but we need to focus on preventing disease or find things before that is needed.

That is what drives this program and a lot of the care at Mount Sinai.

## At Mount Sinai, how critical is it to not lose that doctor/patient relationship and is it more challenging today?

It's more challenging, but medicine doesn't work without it, and that is something I stress in my practice and for all physicians in the program. The patient has to have a relationship with the physician – it will not work for anybody if they don't have that relationship. For people coming through this program or my practice, we're accessible to answer questions and phone calls – we'll talk to you today. ●