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Why Health Care Will Never Be Equal

By N. Gregory Mankiw

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EVERY morning, I take a small white pill that makes me think deep philosophical thoughts about the American health care system, the value of life, and the relationship between man and state. No, it is not some illegal psychedelic left over from the 1960s along with my tie-dyed T-shirts. But if you bear with me, I bet this pill will have the same effect on you.

The pill is a statin — a type of pharmaceutical developed over the last few decades to lower a person's cholesterol. My father died of cardiovascular disease, and unfortunately I inherited his genetic predisposition. Yet I am hoping that modern medicine will help me avoid his fate. So like millions of middle-age men, I take my little pill every morning.

Here is the question I ask as the pill passes through my lips: Is it worth it?

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