Increasing interest in Judaism, health, and healing, coupled with the recent abundance of religion and health research within the academic community, creates a unique opportunity for reflection. Plans call for a CCAR Journal symposium issue to offer theological, historical, and rabbinic reflections on the intersection of Judaism, health, and healing, alongside a picture of contemporary congregational life.

Implicit within Judaism is a vision of well-being that is grounded in a passionate engagement with life. Community is the backdrop in which we grapple with modern dilemmas while honoring our sacred texts and rituals. Judaism equates care of the soul and care of the body. Jewish healing draws on a deeply rooted wisdom that has much to say about the effects of stress, isolation, loss, and hard times on the body, mind, and spirit.

Writers are encouraged to respond to the following guiding questions:

1) What aspects of Judaism and Jewish life are most relevant to health and well-being?
2) Why and how do Jewish faith and spirituality, and physical and psychological well-being, affect each other?
3) What is happening in our synagogues to foster wellness, and to meet the needs of congregants facing illness and lifecycle challenges? What is happening in our schools and organizations? What are the legitimate expectations of temples and organizations for rabbis serving community members who encounter illness and loss, or wish to celebrate health?
4) Is Jewish religious diversity a factor to consider in the relationship between Judaism and health? Is there an association between one’s level of Jewish observance or involvement and one’s general well-being or quality of life?
5) How are rabbis, cantors, educators, nonprofit and pastoral care professionals trained in Judaism and health issues throughout North American seminaries?
6) How is the field of Jewish chaplaincy evolving?
7) Can connections between religion and spirituality, on the one hand, and physical and mental health and healing, on the other, studied and validated previously in general populations, be successfully extrapolated to the Jewish population? In what ways is a Judaism-health connection similar to connections between religion and health among other faith traditions?
8) How does theology inform our work in the area of Jewish health, wellness, and healing?

Article abstracts should be addressed to Michele Prince at mprince@huc.edu by August 8, 2011. Completed articles will be due by October 31, 2010. Articles should be 2,500-4,000 words in length.