

Appendix 6: Nutrition

By Becca Chambers

Good nutrition is much easier, more enjoyable, and essential for health and quality of life than most people realize. Nutrition is one of the cornerstones of good health. The average American is deficient in numerous essential nutrients necessary for the formation of the intricate and complex system of thousands of different molecules that build and operate your body. A healthy diet doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive, time consuming, bland or dull. In fact it is much more varied and interesting in taste and texture than the nutritionally bankrupt diet of your average American. The biggest culprit? In a nutshell, processed foods, and the industrialized agricultural and food processing conglomerate of mega corporations that put these foods in front of us at every turn. However, we all need to take responsibility for this situation as these corporations would not exist without people buying their products.

When you go to the supermarket, I suggest you walk past most of the interior aisles, stroll around the outside, enjoy the colors, textures and huge variety in the produce section. Fill your cart with fruits and vegetables of any and all sorts, pick up some protein including nuts and seeds, and small amounts of dairy and other animal proteins, and some whole grain and bean products. When you get home, depending on what you've chosen, you may not even need to cook much of it or prepare it in any way that takes more than 5–10 minutes. This simple and easy approach that anybody can follow will pay off in endless health benefits. Of course, if you want to prepare more elaborate meals, marvelous, but you should not use the excuse that you don't have time to eat right. A couple of pieces of fruit and a handful of nuts is an excellent, extremely healthy, nutritious, fast (could even be eaten on the road if necessary), and inexpensive breakfast or lunch.

Any improvements in your diet are good. For those who are motivated to go further and to reap the increasingly greater benefits, a general principle in the search for the ideal diet is to look at how we originally evolved to eat. Most health oriented diets espouse this basic approach: *The Maker's Diet*, *Eat Right For Your Blood Type*, *The Cave Man diet*, *The Zone*, all recommend whole foods over processed foods. Highly processed foods are a recent development, especially evolutionarily speaking. Research on people following the diet of our closest non-human evolutionary ancestors, the great apes and gorillas, shows remarkable health improvements in a short time. These primate ancestors ate primarily raw fruit with some nuts, seeds, vegetables and other small proteins sources. Do not be scared of the sugar in fruit. It is substantially different than the processed sugars that you should avoid as much as possible—including “high fructose corn syrup,” a highly processed and very unhealthy corn derivative—and will not cause an unhealthy surge in insulin levels. Additionally, fruit in its natural form, comes loaded with of all sorts of other essential nutrients.

For numerous reasons, including your personal health, the environment and survival of the planet, and for humane treatment of domesticated animals, I recommend a predominately raw, vegetarian diet of whole foods for most people. Some people will do better on other types of diets depending on their specific issues, but this is generally a health promoting diet for most people. Many people are not ready for this diet, and that is ok, one can begin to effect change at any level: if you start by adding some fruits, vegetables and nuts to your diet (cooked or raw), you will be helping yourself and the world.

A raw, whole food, mostly vegetarian diet delivers vastly more nutrients than the processed “junk food” that many people eat. Processed foods, high in processed sugars such as “high fructose corn syrup” or processed cane sugar, soy and corn derivatives (endemic in processed food) not only contain very few nutrients, but they actually cause a drain of nutrients from your body as you metabolize them. Raw foods also contain natural enzymes that help your body digest and absorb the nutrients in the food. These enzymes and some other nutrients are destroyed by the heat from cooking.

Another benefit is that the lower you eat on the food chain the less toxins you will be exposed to. This is one of the most effective and inexpensive ways to reduce your exposure to dangerous toxins in our environment, such as heavy metals like mercury. As you move up the food chain, at each step there can be as much as a 20 fold increase in the concentration of toxins. Animal proteins, especially large predatory fish such as tuna and swordfish, are many steps up in the food chain and therefore carry highly concentrated loads of toxins.

Michael Pollan, Jane Goodall, and many others have written eloquently of the disastrous effect on our environment of industrial monoculture agricultural and farming practices. Heavy pollution, the loss of natural environments and species, and the vulnerability of the whole system to disease and collapse, are a few of the most pressing issues. The appalling conditions that most domesticated animals raised for human consumption suffer are abhorrent. You can personally influence these situations with your food choices.

The benefits to you and all you love, your family, yourself and your world, are there for you to reap. You need only to throw off the chains of brainwashing, habit and negative thought. It can be hard to change the habits of a lifetime, and people often eat and make food choices for subconscious emotional reasons so it may take persistence, effort and perhaps the aid of energy therapies to change, but the reward is worth it.

Homeopathy and whole body vibration can help people shift ingrained eating patterns; to move to eating with conscious thought for their health and long term happiness, rather than harming themselves with subconsciously driven cravings for immediate gratification, regardless of the long-term dangers and effects.

I want to make special note of a specific book called *Potatoes Not Prozac*, by Kathleen DesMaisons, Ph.D., which in my experience is immediately effective for alleviating mild to moderate depression and especially middle of the night insomnia. Designed to increase the low serotonin levels associated with these problems it is simple, healthy, rapidly effective (sometimes the day you start) and has zero side-effects. The idea is to eat three meals a day of protein plus carbs to increase the blood levels of tryptophan, the amino acid precursor of serotonin. After dinner wait three hours while eating nothing (this is the hardest part for me, but when I saw what a difference it made I had lots of incentive), and then eat a small to moderate amount of carbs plus oil/fat without any protein. The late night carbs trigger the conversion of the tryptophan into serotonin, the oil acts as a slow release agent so the effect lasts all night, and the lack of protein at night helps the tryptophan cross the blood brain barrier, resulting in good dreams and sleeping well all night long. And if you miss the late night snack (I tended to fall asleep before the three hours was up), you can try it when you wake up in the middle of the night. If it is not too many hours past your last meal it will still work. For more details read the book (see Bibliography).

It is unfortunately true though that, with our depleted soils, industrial agriculture practices and stressed bodies requiring increased nutrients to heal, it is almost impossible to get sufficient nutrients for optimal health through diet alone. Confusing matters, recent and often quoted studies have shown vitamin or nutrient supplementation to be ineffective in improving health. These studies are fatally flawed however in that they generally are looking at vitamins and nutrients in isolation. It is critical to use whole food supplements. An orange contains over 50 important nutrients that work in conjunction with Vitamin C. Testing the efficacy of Vitamin C alone is akin to trying to build a house with nails but no hammer.

I recommend as a basic supplement, Dr. DeOrio's "Superfuel" nutritional powder. It is made from over 100 whole food sources and herbs, and contains an incredibly large array of nutrients and support for different organs and systems, all in one supplement (see www.bodyvibeusa.com). I have had remarkable success helping people with many different problems with this one supplement.