

Nutrition Matters

An anthology of feature articles
by students in Writing in Nutrition
Fall 2008

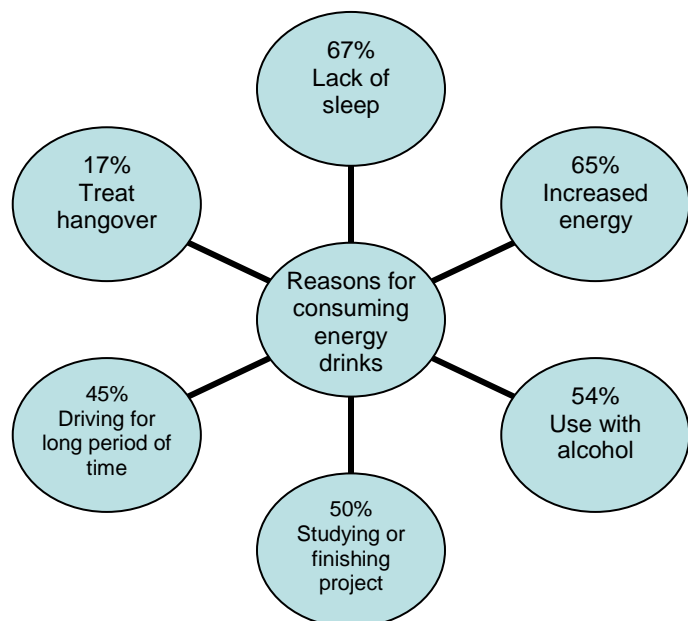
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Caffeine- the legal addiction

Whether your drink of choice is Monster or Rockstar, Jolt or Bawls, you may want to read this before partaking in another can of your favorite boost and /or fix of caffeine. Energy drink companies claim a lot of things when they advertise their products, such as, alertness, improved cognition, increased energy, and so on. However upon researching the information and claims, I found more adverse effects than benefits.

First though I thought you might like to hear that you are not alone in your choice to drink energy drinks, because, well, they are everywhere. With over 800 different kinds to choose from and vending machines and retail places all over campus providing a constant supply of caffeine, they are hard to avoid. But sometimes following the crowd isn't necessarily a good thing. Based on one study I found, 51% of college student reported drinking one or more energy drinks per month. Of that 51%, slightly more were female. Close to 3/4ths of that 51% drank energy drinks that contained sugar. According to this study there were 6 main reasons for consuming energy drinks: Lack of sleep or insufficient sleep, to increase energy, using at parties in combination with alcohol, studying or finishing a project, driving for long periods of time, and to treat a hangover. 16-20% of the students surveyed consumed energy drinks for at least 1-5 of the situations, and 7% consumed them for all six. As the



number of situations increased so did the amount of consumed drinks. Would you like to hear about the side effects this study reported? Well 29% of students experienced jolt or crash episodes, 22% got headaches, and 19% had heart palpitations [1].

Caffeine and sugar are the main ingredients in most of the energy drinks available on the market. Although these ingredients are fine in moderation, most people don't consume them that way. With the average can having 100mg of caffeine per serving, that's more than your mom's morning cup of coffee. Caffeine itself is also a stimulant drug and you can build up a tolerance to it, making you need more and more every time to get the same effects of that first taste. It can cause jitteriness, stomach problems, headaches and sleep problems [2]. Caffeine is a diuretic (making the drinker have to go to the bathroom more often than normal), which can lead to body water loss. It can also make your body lose calcium, which isn't good especially for teens and young adults who need all the calcium they can get. Caffeine can also aggravate existing heart and stomach problems (remember those heart palpitations??) [2].

Many cans of energy drinks are actually 2 servings, but they don't tell you that. So when you think you are getting only 120 calories you are really getting 240, and there are much better ways than an energy drink to get that amount of calories. All these extra calories and sugar just lead to weight gain (and no, guys, not muscle weight gain), if you're not an athlete and eventually a trip to the dentist. The high doses of caffeine and sugar cause adverse effects of insomnia, nervousness, headaches, tachycardia (increased heart rate), and in rare cases seizures and possible death [3].

Many energy drinks now have additives such as ginseng, guarana, taurine, etc. This is where many of the claims for improved functioning come from. However none of these ingredients are present in enough amounts to cause benefits or adverse effects [3]. To make

matters worse most of the cognitive effects of these drinks is due to the massive amounts of caffeine (which far exceed the amounts needed to promote the cognitive functioning) [1,4]. Some drinks claim that the combined effects of caffeine and taurine (an amino acid), have an effect on short term memory retention. This is not the case though. [1]. Some of the additives that are in energy drinks are not even approved by the government, and because their doses are unknown can possibly cause interactions with drugs and other things [2]. The vitamins and minerals that are also being put in aren't enough for your daily requirements and getting them from a balanced diet and natural sources is always better.

Along with all the health aspects of consuming energy drinks there is also the cost to think about. An 8-12 oz can for three dollars is to me a rip off. You could have trail mix or granola bars and a bottle of water for half that price and you are getting significantly less calories and sugar and way more nutrients. The cost then goes up even more when you are consuming them with alcohol, because alcohol isn't exactly cheap either.

So, if you are now thinking to yourself I should really lay off the energy drinks and just try to sleep when I'm tired, then good, you were paying attention. However you don't want to just quit cold turkey. Caffeine is a drug and you have to wean off it like you would any drug (unless you feel you would enjoy the withdrawal symptom..... most people however would prefer to avoid them). So cut them out one drink at a time and eventually you'll have cut them out all together. Energy drinks aren't horrible if they are consumed in moderation and in conjunction with a well balanced diet. But most people drink them when they haven't eaten or slept normally in two days and need to stay awake yet another night to study for their physics final at 8am. So my question to you is: why not just get some sleep? It is free after all and you're body will be much happier!

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By Stephanie Palmer

Dairy: Can't Live With It. Can't Live Without It.

So its girl's night and you are hanging out with all of your friends relaxing on the couch with a movie and some popcorn, but nothing goes better with this fun, snack-filled evening than the perfect dessert...ice cream. Everyone is ready to dive in to this delicious, creamy indulgence, except you. You could have that bowl of ice cream, but you will most certainly pay the price later. Lactose intolerance may seem to be holding you back from your favorite foods, but this is not the end of your relationship with dairy. We have the answers for you.

What is lactose intolerance?

For every food we eat, there are enzymes in our bodies that digest and break it down so that we can use the food's nutrients. This also lets what we don't use exit the body in a healthy way. Without necessary enzymes to break down foods, the body cannot process them and as a result we get sick and feel extreme discomfort. The enzyme that breaks down sugars (lactose) in dairy products is called lactase. Lactose intolerance occurs when this enzyme is missing or inactive. The absence of working lactase prevents individuals from consuming any dairy product made from milk that still contains lactose.

Is everyone who is lactose intolerant born with the condition? Or can it develop later in life?

Lactose intolerance is a condition that many preterm babies are born with and typically grow out of by developing working lactase enzymes later in life. Unfortunately, while individuals can grow out of the condition, others can develop lactose intolerance in later stages of life. This can occur from a variety of factors including limited consumption of dairy products. By not

consuming milk, soft cheeses, and other dairy products, lactase enzyme production is slowed and the body is less able to handle consuming these products.

Are there substitutes for dairy products for lactose intolerant individuals?

Since lactose intolerance is so common in the population today, there are many dairy substitutes sold in regular grocery stores everywhere. The most commonly consumed is lactose-free milk or Lactaid. Lactaid milk is regular milk that has had the lactase enzymes (the enzymes that lactose intolerant individuals are lacking) added to it. By adding the lactase enzymes to the milk, the problematic lactose sugars are already broken down, making it safe for lactose intolerant individuals to consume. (Remember, it is not the milk that is the problem, but the lactose.) An interesting fact about Lactaid is that because the lactose sugar is broken down into simple sugars by the added enzymes, Lactaid tastes sweeter than regular milk. Lactose-free milk is the other milk substitute for regular milk because instead of having added lactase enzymes in milk, the lactose is just removed from it before selling. Either is perfectly acceptable for lactose intolerant individuals.

Other than for milk, there are dairy substitutes for other products as well that those who are lactose intolerant can take advantage of. If Lactaid does not work as a milk substitute, other milk replacement options that do not contain lactose include soymilk, rice milk, and hemp milk. Lactose free ice cream is also a product that is becoming more and more popular. This is an ideal substitute for those feeling left out during that girl's night ice cream binge. It is a safe way to enjoy the creamy ice cream taste and texture without feeling abdominal pain or discomfort afterward.

Are there any regular dairy products that lactose intolerant individuals can eat?

There are a few regular dairy products that are safe for lactose intolerant individuals. Although some soft cheeses, like mozzarella, may be difficult for lactose intolerant individuals to digest, hard cheeses, like cheddar and Parmesan, tend to be more easily tolerated. The aging process is what causes cheese to harden, and with aging comes the destruction of lactose in the cheese. This is why hard cheeses are safe for lactose intolerant individuals. Also, and newly discovered, yogurt is an obvious lactose-containing dairy product that is good for those with lactose intolerance. Because of the active cultures (healthy bacteria that help with digestion), yogurt is safe and even beneficial for many people who are lactose intolerant. While it does not help the body to digest normal amounts of other dairy products, the bacteria in yogurt does facilitate the breakdown of the yogurt itself in the body of a lactose intolerant individual, which is what makes yogurt safe to eat. Small amounts of milk may be safe to consume with meals if eating yogurt regularly. These and other products give hope for those who are lactose intolerant that dairy is still accessible to them in some forms.

Is there a cure for lactose intolerance?

There is no permanent cure for lactose intolerance that has been developed as of yet, but those with the condition can temporarily prevent the effects of eating lactose-containing products. Taking a lactase pill immediately before eating lactose-containing products is what prevents the negative side effects. This way, the digestive enzymes needed to break down the lactose are already in the system and ready to break down the food consumed after them. So yes...for many lactose intolerant individuals this means they can indulge in real ice cream or nice cheesy pizza every once in a while.

Are lactose intolerant individuals at risk for any nutrient deficiencies?

Vitamin D and calcium are the major nutrients from dairy products that people tend to under-consume, but there are plenty of ways to avoid deficiencies in these nutrients. Dairy items like Lactaid, yogurt, and cheese are all acceptable sources of calcium. Taking a daily multivitamin and mineral will also satisfy your needs for both vitamin D and calcium, so there is no need to worry about deficiencies with lactose intolerance.

So next time you think about diving into that bowl of ice cream, stop and think about substitute recommendations made here. Know that you can satisfy your craving for dairy without paying the price afterward.

By Alissa White

Feeding Your Picky Eater

Everyone has probably known a picky eater at one time or another. They could be a child, a sibling, a friend or even a romantic partner. It can be frustrating dealing with them at times, especially if you are preparing their food. How are we supposed to deal with them? Are these picky loved ones getting proper nutrition? What should you avoid doing with picky eaters? Questions like these probably plague mothers, wives, concerned friends and boyfriends/girlfriends of picky eaters frequently. Thankfully, someone wrote this article to help with these troublesome but lovable people.

Things to Avoid Doing around Picky Eaters

It is a good idea to make sure we are not trying anything to help that is counterproductive. Punishing and/or fussing over pickiness are both bad ideas. A picky eater will be more willing to try new foods if they feel comfortable while they eat and punishing/fussing will destroy any hope of comfort during eating time. Also, if you know a picky eater, you should definitely not display picky behavior around them, or your picky eater may become even more picky! Bribes and rewards should be avoided as well; eating should remain a stress free time, free of unnecessary expectations. Rather, when your picky eater does try a new food, you should express happiness that they are trying a new food, encourage them and ask them how it tastes. Again, the less stress there is at mealtimes, curiosity about new interesting looking foods becomes much more probable.

Some Tips for Dealing with Picky Eaters

If you have more control over a picky one's diet, you should monitor their food intake to make sure they are eating from all of the food groups. If they are not, care should be taken while addressing the lack of a certain food group, as getting angry or nagging will be counterproductive. New nutritious food should be slowly introduced (introducing too much at once is not good- it might be intimidating to your picky eater). Introducing new foods once every other day would be a good idea. New foods should be encouraged, not forced; remember, you want your picky eater to be comfortable so he/she can be more curious. Teach some nutritional facts highlighting the nutritional benefits of the new food. If the "picky one" does not try the new food, be patient and serve it again later; preparing the new food in different ways could help as well. The more exposure to new foods a picky eater has, the more familiar the food will be and the more likely he/she will try it. Making sure there are foods that a picky eater likes, as well as new foods is a good idea- it is not good for anyone if your picky eater does not eat much.

If he/she refuses to eat, do not make more food for them because then you are reinforcing picky behavior and enabling picky eating. Their choices should be preparing some of their own food or waiting for the next meal/snack-time. You do not want to reinforce picky behavior if you consider it to be a problem. Avoiding high calorie drinks like soda during meals would be useful as these drinks would fill up a picky eater, maybe decreasing the chances of trying new foods. If the foods look more appetizing, picky eaters will be more likely to try them. Try looking for delicious looking recipes online or in a cookbook- the more delicious looking, the better.

Tips for Snacks

Combating pickiness does not have to stop at the dinner table- fruits, nuts and other nutritious snacks should be made available and encouraged. Snack-time is a good opportunity to try to introduce new foods. As mentioned before, keep both new and familiar snacks available just in case. Let a picky eater know that you understand they are picky but the opportunity to try new foods is there.

How Sneakiness and Deception Can Be Your Best Friends When Dealing With Your Picky Ones

Another good idea is to add small amounts of nutrient dense foods like wheat germ to foods; although, extreme caution should be taken to ensure that the taste of the food is not altered- picky eaters have a sensitive sense of taste that is quite troublesome. Deception can be a wonderful gift to those trying to ensure picky eaters get proper nutrition. A blender could come in handy; adding vegetable purees to soups and sauces or sneaking different fruits and/or yogurt into shakes/smoothies is a great way to add more nutrition into a picky eater's diet. Again, getting as much nutrition into foods without creating a suspicious tasting food takes some skill but is not impossible by any means. It is worth some experimentation, the Internet is full of blender recipes just waiting to be tried.

“Carnivores”?

Dealing with picky eaters may be more difficult the older they become because these bad habits get reinforced over time and their food preferences become too few and too strong. Unfortunately, I have experienced this first hand. Many of my friends (especially female friends) are self proclaimed “carnivores”- they tend to eat very little from the vegetable and fruit food groups, especially the vegetable food group. They are completely in control of their diet,

so they are the hardest to influence and possibly the most troublesome to deal with. Hopefully, they can include more variety in their diet as time goes on... otherwise, it may be necessary for their future husbands to take responsibility that they get more variety! To prevent picky eaters from getting to this frustrating stage and compromising their health, steps should be taken to identify picky eating early and combat it, but gently (and if you think you have the skills, with some clever and loving deception).

Everyone probably knows at least a few picky eaters and wishes they would not be so difficult. Hopefully this advice will help prevent the development of future “carnivores” and help everyone deal with their picky counterparts. Remember to be patient- introducing new foods is usually a slow process. This picky problem is best dealt with using the powers of patience, understanding and perhaps some deception but only because you care so much!

By Alan Chua

Food Allergies Holding You Back? Think Again

There you are at the local cafe standing in line for your daily coffee, when the guy you have been thinking about for weeks has finally made eye contact with you. He walks over and casually strikes up a conversation about how the shop has switched their Styrofoam cups to something more eco-friendly. Before you know it, he asks you to dinner on Friday night and without even playing hard to get you say yes. But as you exchange numbers, you remember your food allergies and the anxiety you have about eating out starts to grow.

First dates are hard enough and the most popular date in America seems to involve dinner. So while most people are trying to decide what to wear, you are sitting at home worried about where you are going to eat and if the night will end with you lying in a hospital bed suffering from an allergic reaction. I myself know exactly how you feel. I have celiac disease and cannot eat any food that contains gluten; this includes anything with wheat, rye and barley. Believe me, I used to hate picking up a snack at the convenience store let alone going out to dinner. But luckily over the past several years, restaurant awareness for food allergies and intolerances has greatly increased. Restaurants are now training their workers on how to handle food allergic customers. Many restaurants have even incorporated gluten free items into their menus, along with advice on how to deal with peanut, soy, shellfish allergies, etc. So before you pick up the phone to call your date to tell him your “sick” take some mental notes and become more prepared and confident when dining out.

You will have more control of your dining experience if you are the one picking the restaurant; pick an establishment that caters to your specific dietary needs. There are many chain restaurants that offer gluten free meals including; Outback Steakhouse, Not Your

Average Joe's, PF Changs, Legal Seafood or Uno's Chicago Grill. Also many restaurants such as Chili's and The 99, include their ingredient information on their website and list all of the eight major allergens in their products. Another great aspect of chain restaurants is that food preparation and ingredients are the same in each and every establishment, so waiters and managers will easily be able to tell you exactly what is in their food.

The key is to do research before you go. If you know where you are eating, you should call ahead and talk to a manager. Let them know your specific allergen and dietary needs, explain cross contamination and common dishes that the allergen may be present in. By calling ahead you may be able to figure out something you can order before you get there, this way you will not need to make a big deal about your allergy in front of your date. You also will ensure that you have a safe meal and peace of mind before you even leave the house.

There is always the scenario when your date picks you up with a restaurant already in mind... still do not panic. You can casually bring up the fact that you have food allergies and some restaurants may be harder to eat at than others, and he should be willing to work with you. When you do get to the restaurant, ask to speak to the manager and explain your situation. The establishment should be more than willing to accommodate you, but if they cannot your date should try and be understanding and suggest to go somewhere else. If he or she refuses to leave, then they are not worth your time anyway.

Another tip is to try and have some standard menu items on your mind that are generally safe or that can easily be adapted to suit your specific needs. For instance, customers with peanut allergies have to make sure that their food is not being cooked in peanut oil and this should be expressed to the waiter. Someone with celiac disease may be able to order a cheeseburger without the bun and a baked potato with salt and butter. The

patron could also order a plain steak that has not been seasoned or marinated. Chicken that is cooked in olive oil with steamed veggies on the side may also be a good option for food allergenic diners.

Communication is key when dining out with food allergies. Express any concerns or worries that you may have to your waiter and make sure that they check ingredients with the chef. Also, many companies now make dining cards that the waiter can give to the chef that outlines a specific allergy. These index size cards also list alternate names for the allergen and common ingredients that the allergen may be present in. Some of these cards will even provide menu options to the chef. A great benefit to this is that you can be very discrete while being very precise about your specific allergy.

Always be prepared to handle your allergy in case of an emergency. Make sure that you carry your epi-pen as well as any other medication that is necessary in the event that you were to undergo an allergic reaction. Remember that food allergies are nothing to be embarrassed or ashamed about; they are extremely common and make you who you are. Also know that you are not inconveniencing anyone with your food allergy; it is a medical condition that needs to be taken seriously. So embrace your differences and it may even be a great conversation starter on your first date!

By Christina Botelho

Helping Your Child Maintain a Healthy Weight

Pleasantly plump, chubby, chunky? These are all words some of us may use to describe overweight kids. No matter what kind of label you place on it, the truth is clear. Childhood obesity is a major concern and the problem is growing just as fast as the waistlines of American adults. Just like adults, kids are eating more and moving less. When a person takes in more calories than he or she can use, the body holds onto them as excess weight. Most adults understand that excess weight can harm their health. It's hard to imagine that the same risks apply to the cute, chubby little boy that lives down the street. How can a child be at risk for developing heart disease or high blood pressure? He's a kid! He'll slim down eventually, right? Don't be so sure.

Just as adult obesity has reached epidemic proportions, so have the rates of childhood obesity. The current generation of children has been nicknamed the "supersized" generation. (1) The increased consumption of fast food, soft drinks, and excess calories has contributed to this growing problem. Inactivity doesn't help the situation. With the amount of time kids spend either playing video games, watching television, and playing on the computer combined with physical education cut backs in school, it's no wonder these kids are having trouble maintaining a healthy weight. A combination of these factors as well as genetic, behavioral, and economic factors, and not one single factor, is thought to influence obesity in children. (2)

What's the Big Deal?

Although teasing and self image are concerns for overweight children and their parents, the health related problems associated with obesity during childhood has become a main focus in pediatrics. The prevalence of childhood obesity has doubled within the last 20 years (2) and

since obese children are likely to become obese adults, the importance of maintaining a healthy body weight during childhood is crucial. Not long ago, Type 2 diabetes was called adult onset diabetes and was almost unheard of in children. The reality is that many children are now being diagnosed with this disease. Overweight or obese children are at a high risk for developing Type 2 diabetes (either during childhood or later in life), cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, cancer, stroke, and osteoarthritis. More and more children are also physically inactive, with the draw to video games, computers, and television being more appealing than playing outdoors or participating in sports. This is also likely to continue into adulthood, and considering that most adults do not participate in physical activity, intervention is indicated and necessary.

What is the best way to address childhood obesity? Childhood is a critical time for growth and development both physically and psychologically. Children who have low self-esteem or who are victims of teasing are likely to suffer from physiological stress, which can affect their grades, social interactions, and may carry into adulthood. (3) Self-esteem and a positive body image are important factors to keep in mind when discussing obesity with a child. It is important for the parent not to criticize the child but to encourage and support small gradual changes that positively impact the child's life. Most experts recommend prevention of additional weight gain rather than a weight loss program for most children.

Helping Children Maintain a Healthy Weight – Follow the Leader!

Children learn by example, so one of the best ways to instill the values of proper nutrition and physical activity is to participate yourself. Practicing portion control is one of the best ways to discourage eating more calories than are needed. Allow a child to stop eating when they

are no longer hungry so that they can learn the cues their bodies give them when they have had enough. A “clean plate” is not a necessity to ensure that your child has eaten enough of their dinner. Making sure that meals are eaten at scheduled times, at the table is extremely beneficial for encouraging healthy eating patterns. Family meals should not be encouraged while watching television. Meal times can be an important bonding experience for a family.

Planning family activities will encourage exercise and physical activity for parents and children alike. Go for a walk after dinner, go to the park to play on the weekends, go on a bike ride, or just play outdoors in the backyard. Most adults could also benefit from less time in front of the television or computer. Put a time limit on these activities, no more than 2 hours per day on the computer, playing video games, or watching television.

It is also important that children develop a healthy relationship with food. In order to do so, they should learn that all foods, even cookies and cakes, can be incorporated into a healthy diet. There are no “good” or “bad” foods. It is much better to describe foods as foods we eat all the time, such as fruits and vegetables, and foods that we eat sometimes, like birthday cake and ice cream. It is also very important not to encourage the use of food to provide comfort or use as a reward. Many people carry emotional eating into adulthood, contributing to obesity later in life.

What’s the Bottom Line?

Introducing children to good nutrition as early as possible is beneficial to ensure they develop healthy eating patterns they will take with them as they reach adulthood. A parent or guardian’s influence is one of the most important influences in developing a healthy diet. Lead

by example. Keep the family active by encouraging physical activity. Chances are your health and waist line will benefit too!

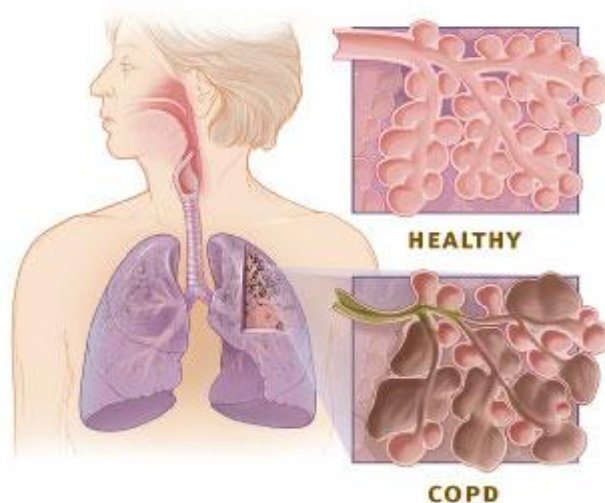
By Amy Deacon

Just a spoonful of...oxygen helps the... food go down?

Imagine being so tired from breathing that you don't have the energy to eat. You know that eating will help give you energy, but the very thought of biting, chewing, and swallowing food just took the last bit of energy right out of you. Every breath is a struggle and every bite is a hurdle. This is what it is like to suffer from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

Approximately 16.4 million people in the United States suffer from COPD. Mostly caused from smoking, COPD narrows the airways and inflammation leads to the destruction of the lungs. Healthy airways and air sacs (alveoli) in the lungs are elastic, they try to bounce back to their original shape after being stretched or filled with air, like a new elastic would do. This elastic quality helps retain the normal structure of the lung and helps to move the air quickly in and out. There are two major categories in which fall under the heading of COPD, chronic (obstructive) bronchitis and emphysema.

If you have an excessive cough with mucus (sputum) production for at least three months in at least two consecutive years than you could have chronic bronchitis. The excessive cough is



attributable to increased mucus production. The increased volume of mucus also makes it harder for the breathing tubes to be kept clean, which often results in bacterial infections and airway obstruction.

In emphysema, lung damage results in alveoli not being able to stretch and recoil, as they have become stiff. This results in air being trapped in the alveoli, which then hinders the main function of the lung, which can be summarized as the oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange. The clean oxygen is delivered to the cells and muscles in the body, where the carbon dioxide (CO₂) is removed from breathing. People with emphysema often report chronic cough, shortness of breath, and limited exercise tolerance.

If according to Mary Poppins, sugar helps the medicine go down, than what is the solution for helping food in COPD? What many people do not know is that by changing their eating habits, the stress of eating can be relieved. It just so happens that whatever Mary Poppins says, if you suffer from COPD, you should do just the opposite! Ms. Poppins suggests a spoonful of sugar, but this would place a burden on lungs that are deteriorating. "Why," you ask? Carbohydrates, such as table sugar, fruit, cake, breads and pastas, produce carbon dioxide as a waste by-product when they are broken down (metabolized) in the body. This causes your lungs to work harder to expel the waste.

Restricting the amount of carbohydrates is just part of a bigger picture that I'm sure Bert the Chimneysweep could sketch on any sidewalk. Increasing protein consumption can help build your immunity to help fight lung infections. Some foods suggested are chicken, turkey, and other meats; the combination on rice and beans; and milk products. Ways to increase your protein consumption would be to add ground meat to soups, and milk to meat for meatloaf, or

casseroles. Make foods that call for the use of eggs. Enjoy puddings and custards for a high protein dessert. However, keep these items in focus as to your weight.

Try to lose those extra pounds. The fat in your abdomen is crowding your diaphragm making it even harder to breath. Eating a healthy diet can help you lose weight. Do not take it to an extreme however. Becoming underweight can be detrimental to your lung health as well. When you are not eating properly, or not eating enough, your body starts to break down the muscles in your body to obtain the energy needed for survival. Without proper muscle mass, including your lung muscles, the act of breathing becomes more of a chore.

Keeping adequately hydrated keeps the mucus from building up. You don't need to drink all the water in the river that Bert and Mary sail down, but a helpful suggestion would be to carry a water bottle around with you, so you are free to drink throughout the day. Eight cups of fluid per day are recommended.

Minerals such as magnesium and calcium will help people with COPD relax and contract their muscles. Foods containing magnesium would be dark leafy greens, whole wheat, nuts and seeds. Calcium containing foods include dairy products, kelp and broccoli. Phosphorus and magnesium work together to create energy, also known as ATP. Vegetables and seafood are food items high in phosphorus. This is important to people with COPD, especially those who do not consume a proper amount of calories. Vitamin D and K help patients rebuild bone strength and help fight against osteoporosis. Consume foods such as dairy products, fortified Vitamin D orange juice, and foods like spinach to supply these vitamins.

By eating small calorie dense meals more often throughout the day, you can help maintain nutritional health. Keep these tips handy, and if you really struggle eating and

breathing, take a bite- chew and swallow, then take some oxygen, if oxygen is prescribed.

Breathing in this extra oxygen raises low blood-oxygen levels, easing the strain on your body and making breathing easier. The oxygen helps break down the food. Proper nutrition cannot cure the irreversible COPD, but could have you back to singing

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious in no time! COPD is a complex issue with many nutritional implications. For further information please contact a registered dietitian with your questions.

By Stacey Nelson

Restaurant Report Card

It's report card time for some of the biggest restaurant chains in the United States. We will help you sift through all the menus in order to find out which restaurants are offering the healthiest meals and which ones are feeding you junk.

A

The first A of the year goes to Chick-fil-A. This is by far the healthiest option when it comes to fast food chains. With only the sausage biscuit (530cals) and a few of the milkshakes breaking the 500 calorie barrier, the sandwiches are ½-1/3 the size of some of the industries more notorious burgers such as the Quarter pounder with cheese from McDonalds. They also offer salads, fruits, and many 0 cal drinks. With the ability to substitute fruit in for sides and the availability of brochures at each location, Chick-fil-A earns an A for great service as a fast food chain.

A-

Coming in with an A-, is Subway. With a wide variety of sandwiches under 300 calories, and many soups, salads, and other healthy sides, it's no wonder why subway is a tasty and healthy place to eat at. However, Jared isn't always telling the whole truth when it comes to dining here and eating well. While all of those low calorie meals on the menu may look nice, looks can be deceiving. Most of the calories listed just happen to leave out the cheese, mayo, and other sauces. All of these condiments come with the majority of sandwiches automatically. Keep an eye out for the cookies and chips which are placed right at the counter and within your grasp. All in all Subway really does offer a great selection of healthy choices, but it is up to you to make those healthy decisions.

B

Boston Market will receive a B for offering some very healthy possibilities on the menu, but rarely promoting them. There seems to be a dark side to every light side possible on this menu. For instance you could start with turkey or white chicken, both are a lean and healthy way to start making your plate, however there are also calorie loaded pieces of meatloaf and dark-meat chicken. There is a wide variety of healthy vegetables to choose sides from, but mashed potatoes with gravy and Mac and cheese are some of the top sellers. Free cornbread with every meal isn't helping either. Again, like subway, the healthy choices are there and it's up to you to make the smart choices. Only this time those choices are hiding behind a wall of fatty and high caloric meals.

C

With very few choices for kids and not many healthy choices for anyone, Burger King comes in with a C. They recently added apple fries to their menu, improving their overall selection, but only slightly. Their kids menu is made up of French toast sticks, hamburgers,

mac and cheese, and chicken tenders. None of which are great for the overall health of your children. If you're looking to grab a quick bite with your kids I would stay away from burger king. Burger King still has not gotten rid of trans fats. They have pledged to remove all trans fats from their menus by the end of 2008, but, so far, little headway is being made in that department.

D

On the Border is looking like a pretty bad place to go for both children and adults alike is. While they have a very festive appearance and try to make it an enjoyable family experience, they seem to be forgetting about what they are putting into your stomachs. With a wide arrange of children's meals to choose from your children will be happy, but their waistline will not. With a free sundae included with each kid's meal you can expect your child to be consuming something in the neighborhood of 1,200 calories and up to 150g sugar depending on what they have to drink. It doesn't look much better for adults either. Something has harmless sounding as fish tacos, will contain around 1,900 calories. Do yourself and your family a favor by avoiding On the Border.

D

Also receiving a D this year is fellow southwestern eatery Chipotle. While they use a nice variety of fresh vegetables in their burritos, the colossal size of them ruin any health benefit one may have gotten. The burrito's can easily top 1,000 calories and then you still have chips! Another thing going against them is that their nutrition information is difficult to obtain. While you can search for "chipotle nutrition" online to find the web page, there is no link from their main webpage to their nutrition fact sheet. If you can find the nutrition fact sheet it can be a bit misleading. They have broken down every single item so that you know the nutritional content of everything going into your burrito. Just remember most of the time that whole menu is going to be in your burrito! If you go to Chipotle try and eat until you know you've had enough and not until you are sick. Try wrapping up half of your burrito to save as a meal later, or better yet bring someone and share it.

F

T.G.I Friday's is the worst of the worst. I was unable to even find a link to total calories of their dishes. A place that has most of their dishes covered in Jack Daniels BBQ sauce, or fried to no end, doesn't sound like an extremely healthy place to go. Also by providing no nutritional information to the public you have to start wondering how bad that food is. If most other restaurants have this information readily available, than most likely T.G.I Friday's doesn't want to let their dirty little secret out about how many calories they are stuffing into you when you come to eat there. The advice concerning T.G.I Fridays is to just avoid it.

By Stephen Fang

Strive to Look like Paris Hilton.... I Mean Starve...?

Thanks to our oh-so-entertaining media, we now have a clear image of what everyone is supposed to look like right? Aren't we all supposed to be 5' 7" and wear a size double zero? Absolutely not. Most individuals look past the concept of eating nutritious foods to stay healthy and help their bodies function properly. The outward appearance and the need to squeeze themselves into a pair of pants two sizes too small consumes people and is the main drive for weight loss, whether carried out healthily or not.

Excess food makes people fat. So just stop eating altogether. Yeah, that works for a while; the body is not receiving enough nutrients from the one cracker you eat all day and starts to burn muscle and fat for energy. You will lose weight, definitely; however, what most do not know is that once the amount of calories the body needs is dramatically cut, your brain goes into starvation. Once the body goes into a starvation mode every single piece of food that is eaten is stored in case of "hunger emergency". How does the body store energy? Most of the time as fat.

Congratulations, you just starved yourself just to gain the weight back, and maybe even pack on a few extra pounds more than you had before. So here is the burning question: What is a fast AND healthy way to lose weight?

Well, truthfully, there are no "fast" ways to lose weight. Put it this way, the faster you lose the weight, the easier time you will have gaining that weight back. Remember that saying, "Good things take time"?

A combination of eating healthy and exercising daily will have you on your way to losing unwanted extra baggage. Although you may not lose 30 pounds in 14 days, the only thing you will gain is a healthy and nutritious lifestyle that will help get you and keep you in shape.

All right, so, what are some helpful and important recommendations?

EAT FOOD! It is the only way your body can receive vital nutrients. Change your eating habits. Instead of only eating two or three times a day, waiting to the point where you are so hungry you end up binge eating, eat multiple times a day. Start by eating a well-balanced breakfast, loaded with as many food groups as you possibly can. For example, one cup of Special K cereal with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup skim or low fat milk, 1 cup of fruit salad, and a piece of toast with a tablespoon of peanut butter is a great way to start the day and kick-start your metabolism.

Those that eat a healthy breakfast daily stay slimmer. The word breakfast literally means breakfast. After a full night's sleep without any food, the body is craving nutrients to start up your metabolism for the day.

Think of your metabolism as your body's powerhouse of energy. It is a bunch of chemical reactions that happen to keep cells healthy and our bodies working properly. The food we eat is our energy source and is broken down by enzymes (special proteins that speed up reactions in the body), to release energy for use. The higher your metabolism is, the more energy your body can burn and use for needed daily functions.

Snack throughout the day, and keep your body satisfied. Substitute your Snickers and Kit Kat bar for a yogurt with sprinkled granola, or cut up vegetables with some low fat dip. Nuts are a great source of protein and an easy "munchable" snack for in between meals. By eating five to six times a day, not only are you less likely to overeat at larger meal times, but you are

also raising your metabolism. Remember, the higher your metabolism, the more energy your body burns, which is a step closer to weight loss. We live in a world where the portion sizes are triple and quadruple the size they should be. Listen to this: salads are a low fat, low calorie meal up until it is drowned in salad dressing. Then, sometimes it is more calorie containing than a cheeseburger. Weird huh?

Ok, so in losing and maintaining weight, diet is very important but it is not the only factor that contributes. Exercising goes hand-in-hand with healthy eating habits. How do exercise and diet really help with weight loss? Let's break down the mechanism of the body.

Weight Loss = Energy Expenditure > Energy Intake. What on earth does this mean? In order to lose weight, the amount of energy your body uses should exceed the amount of energy your body ingests from food. The best way to do this is to exercise every day. Aim for 45- 60 minutes 4-5 times a week. That may seem like a lot but recent studies have shown that those 45-60 minutes do not have to be done consecutively. You can burn just as much energy by breaking that exercise up into three 20 minute walks, jogs, or any of your favorite modes of movement. Switch it up a little, make it fun. You can jump rope for 20 minutes, jog for 20 minutes and swim for 20 minutes. Make your exercise routine something you will enjoy and not feel as a hassle to complete every day.

How many calories should you be eating every day? Truthfully it varies, depending on your activity level. If you are a female, take your current weight and multiply it by 10, guys multiply by 11. This is a rough estimate of the number of calories you need to eat everyday just to maintain your current weight, without factoring in any physical activity. You can lose about 1 pound per week just by cutting 500 calories out of your energy intake each day.

When you start to add the exercise into your daily routine, you will burn off extra calories that lead to weight loss.

It may take a little longer to see results and a change in your body with a healthy diet and an exercise routine, than limiting yourself to just a celery stick a day. But why not see results by actually eating and doing fun physical activities? You will adopt a new way to approach a healthy body, inside and out, without being restricted and feeling like you are on a diet for the rest of your life. Your weight loss results are more likely to be permanent when done at a slower pace.

Just remember, more often than not, those individuals who put themselves on a very restricting diet fall off the bandwagon and end up gaining the weight back. Everything is always better in moderation. Do not think of it as going on a diet, think of it as going on a “healthy eating lifestyle”. When you keep your body satisfied by eating multiple times a day, you are less likely to gorge yourself at lunch or dinner.

Diets do not work, but a lifestyle is a way of life, literally.

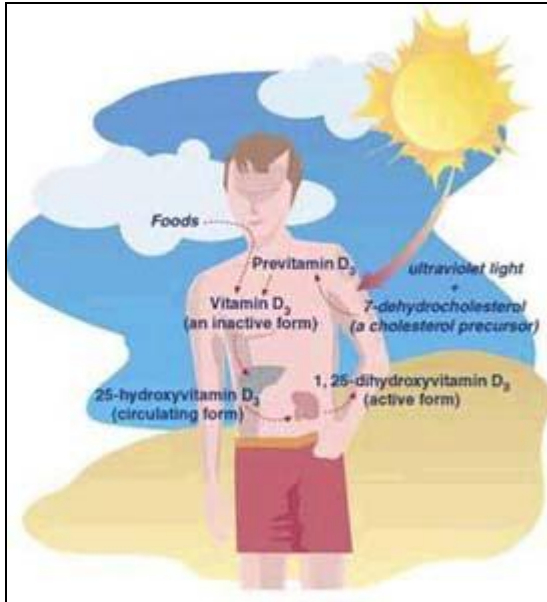
By Mandy Sadri

Boning up with Age

We all know that vitamins are needed for health, but how much do we know about specific vitamins, like vitamin D, and its role in our health? How about vitamin D and bone health? Not sure? Haven't heard a huge discussion about it? Don't feel alone. Many people aren't sure what how much Vitamin D they should take, where they can get it, and what vital role it plays in bone health.

As women age they become more susceptible to bone loss. When women have experienced menopause they have a large reduction in the amount of estrogen hormone produced in their body. While the outward symptoms of menopause are very visible, a silent and harmful symptom is occurring inside the body with the bones.

Estrogen plays a large role in the pre-vitamin, called a precursor, of vitamin D to the bone's usable form. Without enough of the usable form of vitamin D, the bones cannot correctly absorb calcium. This is why you may have seen a lot of calcium supplements on the shelves now proudly display, "With Vitamin D" on the bottle. That is because vitamin D and calcium work hand and hand to prevent bone loss and women who are 50 years and older especially need to make sure that they are taking vitamin D with their calcium. So where can you get Vitamin D from?



What Does Vitamin D Do?

Vitamin D is essential for promoting calcium absorption in the gut and maintaining adequate serum calcium and phosphate concentrations to enable normal mineralization of bone and prevent low amounts of calcium in the bones. It is also needed for bone growth and bone remodeling done by cells called osteoblasts and osteoclasts. When there is not enough Vitamin D present bones can become thin, brittle, or misshapen. Vitamin D sufficiency prevents rickets in children and bone softening called osteomalacia in adults. Together with calcium, vitamin D also helps protect older adults from osteoporosis.

How do I know if I have a Vitamin D deficiency?

Serum concentration of 25(OH)D is the best indicator of vitamin D status. It reflects vitamin D that you produce when your skin is exposed to sunlight and vitamin D that is obtained from food and supplements. Be aware that serum 25(OH)D levels do not indicate the amount of vitamin D stored in other body tissues. Vitamin D that circulates called 1,25(OH)₂D is generally not a good indicator of vitamin D status because it has a short half-life of 15 hours

and serum concentrations are closely regulated by parathyroid hormone, calcium, and phosphate. Levels of 1,25(OH)₂D do not typically decrease until vitamin D deficiency is severe.

Sources of vitamin D

Vitamin D is converted to its active form, D₃, also called cholecalciferol naturally in our bodies through our livers and our kidneys. We are able to convert a precursor hormone naturally produced by our bodies to vitamin D when our bare skin is exposed to sun's UVB rays for at least 20 minutes a day. This works fine May through October anywhere in the United States above Atlanta GA, but for the rest of the year, and anyone that wears sunscreen through the summer you could become deficient in vitamin D.

Vitamin D also has a few food sources and is available in supplements. It can be found in some fatty fish like salmon and mackerel or fortified milk, orange juice and cereals. Getting enough of the daily amount of 400 IU is hard to do through food sources so Vitamin D supplements are the most definite way to ensure adequate amounts of vitamin D are in your daily diet.



Food Sources of Vitamin D

Food	IUs per serving*	Percent daily values
Cod liver oil, 1 tablespoon	1,360	340
Salmon, cooked, 3.5 ounces	360	90
Mackerel, cooked, 3.5 ounces	345	90
Tuna fish, canned in oil, 3 ounces	200	50
Sardines, canned in oil, drained, 1.75 ounces	250	70
Milk, nonfat, reduced fat, and whole, vitamin D-fortified, 1 cup	98	25
Margarine, fortified, 1 tablespoon	60	15
Ready-to-eat cereal, fortified with 10% of the DV for vitamin D, 0.75-1 cup (more heavily fortified cereals might provide more of the DV)	40	10
Egg, 1 whole (vitamin D is found in yolk)	20	6
Liver, beef, cooked, 3.5 ounces	15	4
Cheese, Swiss, 1 ounce	12	4

How much Vitamin D should you take?

Women aged 50 and above should be taking at 400 IU (International units) per day.

Women who have bone loss may need to take more, but you need to consult your doctor first.

Many of the supplements come in dosages of 400 IU and 1000 IU.

Just like not having enough Vitamin D in the diet, too much vitamin D can have negative side effects. It is recommended that women do **not** take more than 2000 IU per day along with their calcium supplement. All people that start any vitamin, mineral, and herbal supplement should first check with their doctor to make sure they will not interact with any other medications.

Here is a table listing Vitamin D needs based on age from the National Institute of Health's Office of Dietary Supplements

Age	Children	Men	Women	Pregnancy	Lactation
Birth to 13 years	5 mcg (200 IU)				
14-18 years		5 mcg (200 IU)	5 mcg (200 IU)	5 mcg (200 IU)	5 mcg (200 IU)
19-50 years		5 mcg (200 IU)	5 mcg (200 IU)	5 mcg (200 IU)	5 mcg (200 IU)
51-70 years		10 mcg (400 IU)	10 mcg (400 IU)		
71+ years		15 mcg (600 IU)	15 mcg (600 IU)		

As a bonus vitamin D is also known for its beneficial roles in neuron, immune, and mental health.

Taking supplements of vitamin D along with your calcium supplement will help to prevent bone loss and keep your bones as young as you feel.

By Darcie Sosa

* All tables and more information on vitamin D supplement made available from National Institutes of Health – Office of Dietary Supplements.

A Pain in my...Head!

Have you ever said to yourself, “this is the worst headache ever? All I want to do is find a dark, quiet hole to lie down and never come out of.” If yes, you may be experiencing a migraine headache.

The cause of a migraine remains unknown, but may be due to chemical changes in the brain, and/or dietary and lifestyle habits, which cause the blood vessels, in the brain, to become dilated and inflamed, causing severe pain. Whatever the cause be, there are number of things that will trigger a migraine to occur.

Most wanted list

Being aware of what can trigger a migraine may help to prevent them from happening. Often these triggers are combined with more than one. Common triggers include:

- **Hormonal changes.** The exact relationship is unclear, but fluctuations in estrogen may cause the onset of a migraine. Women have reported occurrence of migraines immediately before and during their periods, as well as during pregnancy and menopause, which corresponds to a major drop in estrogen.
- **Stress.** A hard day or week followed by lying down on one side of the head may trigger a migraine. Managing stress is important to reduce the frequency of attacks. Try deep breathing or taking a break from a stressful situation. Adapting methods to reduce stress can be a great tool in preventing a migraine.
- **Food.** Many foods play a role in migraine occurrence. Avoiding certain foods (see below) can help prevent a migraine. Skipping meals can also contribute to a migraine attack.
- **Sensory stimuli.** Bright lights, loud noises, and unusual smells can be a trigger.

- **Sleep patterns.** Too much or too little sleep can contribute to a migraine headache. Going to bed and waking up at the same time may reduce likelihood of a migraine.
- **Environmental changes.** Weather, pressure, changes in season, and altitude may play a role.
- **Physical activity.** Intense physical exertion may cause a migraine attack. Regular exercise may help to reduce the duration and frequency of a migraine. Avoid working out in extreme heat.

Food, Food, Glorious Food!

We have to eat to live, but what if what you are eating causes you to have the worst pain? Food is one of the most common triggers of a migraine. Food triggers are usually combined with other known triggers, like stress and/or hormonal changes. Use this chart as a guide to find which foods in your diet may be triggering a migraine.

Food Item	Known Triggers
Fruits	Figs, raisins, papayas, avocados and bananas (especially if overripe), red plums.
Vegetables/Legumes	Beans (broad, fava, garbanzo, pinto, lima, and navy). Peanut butter, nuts. Sauerkraut, string beans, raw garlic, snow peas, olives, pickles, onions
Breads/Grains	Breads, cakes, pastry containing yeast. Breads, crackers, pastry containing cheese or chocolate.
Dairy Products	Cultured dairy products (sour cream, buttermilk, yogurt). Aged and unpasteurized cheeses (blue, Gouda, mozzarella, etc).
Meat, Fish, Poultry	Aged, canned, cured, or processed meat. Any meat prepared with meat tenderizer, yeast, soy sauce. Avoid deli meats containing nitrates/nitrites
Beverages	Hot chocolate. Alcoholic beverages (especially red wine and beer). Caffeine (may trigger in some people and may be helpful in others).
Miscellaneous	Monosodium glutamate (MSG), yeast/yeast extract, meat tenderizer, nitrites/nitrates, anything fermented, pickled, or marinated, vinegar (except white).

Be a Detective!

In order to find which foods or triggers are causing your migraines, you have to pay very close attention to not only your dietary habits, but your lifestyle habits as well. Here is a list of tools to use to help you find what may be initiating your migraine:

- **Keep a diary.** Writing down the frequency and occurrence, time of day, feelings and emotions before the migraine strikes, foods you ate that day or the day or two before the migraine began, sleep patterns around the time of the migraine, the weather outside, and level of physical activity around time of migraine can all be important and crucial to finding what your triggers are. Having this diary will enable you to go back and look at each time a migraine occurred, therefore making it easier to find relationships with each episode. Finding these similarities will get you one step closer in being able to prevent a migraine before it happens.
- **Try an elimination/rechallenge diet.** This involves eliminating the known trigger foods from your diet and then reintroducing them back in one at a time, keeping track of frequency, intensity, and duration of the migraine. Keep in mind that it may be a combination of foods that trigger the migraine.

A migraine headache can be immobilizing and most of all painful. Being aware of your triggers may make it easier to prevent and catch a migraine from occurring. If migraines persist and/or worsen, consult a healthcare professional to seek medical treatment.

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By Kara Siedman

Stapling Our Stomachs, A Guide to Being the Biggest Loser!

Time out! Eight medicine size cups of clear liquids a day for a whole month after surgery? The price we will pay to someday have the body of Carmen Electra. I know from experience, second hand experience, just how awful it is to be practicing what is commonly known as anorexia nervosa. I watched my mother for four and a half weeks unable to move from pain and only allowed to sip on clear liquids including flat diet sodas, sugar-free jello, broth, water, apple juice and so on. When she took too large of a sip it would come right back up into the cup from where it started.

In the next couple of weeks she began experimenting with semi-clear liquids. Her diet consisted of small medicine cups filled with skim milk, carnation instant breakfasts, anything she could tolerate put into a blender, mashed potatoes watered down with skim milk, blended yogurt and cottage cheese. I was extremely proud of her at this point because for a month and a half she had not eaten a single slice of solid foods, yet her appearance still remained the same.

After a month and half of a liquid diet, my mother decided, along with the consent of her physician, that it was time to move on to soft-solid foods. Her first meal consisted of cooked eggs (not fried), cooked soft veggies and cottage cheese. Although she felt hungry, her stomach was unable to have the capacity to store all of this food at once, and she experienced severe nausea and throwing up until everything was out of her system. It was important for her to remember that her stomach was now the size of a golf ball, and although she felt hungry she was going to have to adjust to eating proportions that were $\frac{1}{4}$ the size of what she was used too.

At the end of her recovery from her surgery, about two months into recovery to be precise, my mother was ready to enter into her low-fat solid food diet. Protein was an important factor in her diet, especially after recovering from surgery to heal in a nicer manner and prevent side effects such as hair loss. Some foods that provided some much needed protein included egg whites, low-fat cheeses, skim milk, chicken, turkey and fish, legumes, and oatmeal and cream of wheat made with skim milk. It became imperative that my mother pay attention to the micro and macro nutrients she consumed such as protein, iron and zinc to promote a healthy lifestyle post-surgery.

Another asset to her new solid diet was the fat intake she was consuming. It was important for her as she was rapidly shedding pounds that she paid attention to her fat and calorie intake. It is effortless for an individual to experience weight loss surgery and then regain all the weight back because they were not strict with their diets. Although it is important to eat some fats and calories, my mother was told to limit herself to small portions of high fat foods including regular mayonnaise, sour cream, avocados, cream cheese, butter, whole milk, peanut butter, muffins, ice cream, salad dressings, sauces, oils, tonics and fried foods.

Eight years ago my mother underwent gastric bypass surgery standing tall at 5'1" and weighing in at 205 lbs. Presently she is about 5'0" and weights about 140lbs. She looks wonderful and loves the feeling of being able to reach down and tie her shoes. She is very active, and it is essential to remember that weight loss surgery is not "the easy way out", but it does require for individuals to pay extremely close attention to their diet and remain healthy in other aspects of their lifestyles including physical activity, not smoking, limitations on alcohol intake and the list continues. Your physician has been trained, educated, certified, and has become an expertise on what they do, so it is important to listen to them because they actually

know what they are talking about! Overall, by following the guidelines of your doctor and living a healthy lifestyle, your post-surgery diet will turn from misery to miraculous!

By Kirby-Rose Carpenito

When Having a Baby, Don't Eat Gravy

So you've just found out the exciting news; you're having a baby! It will now be your job to not only feed yourself, but to also fill the appetite of your unborn baby. Now what exactly should you or should you not eat? Are there certain foods that will increase the chance of a healthy and easy-going birth? Let's start with what foods you may want to stay away from when gearing up for pregnancy. When creating a new diet plan know that it is not only the actual foods that must be considered. Three harmful things found in common foods are mercury, listeria and toxoplasma. Mercury is a metal found at high levels in certain fish. Listeria is a bacteria that grows in refrigerators and Toxoplasma is a parasite that thrives on raw meats and un-washed fruits and vegetables. (1) It is obvious that when pregnant you should avoid these toxic elements in your food. It is important to stay clear of raw or undercooked meat, poultry, fish or shellfish. This means you must put down the sushi rolls! Avoid eating refrigerated smoked seafood, (salmon, whitefish, mackerel) and meat spreads.

Although milk does a body good and builds strong bones, do not consume raw or unpasteurized milk when pregnant. Soft cheeses are another food to mark off on your "do not eat" list. Do not consume cheeses such as feta, brie, camembert, or panela unless they are pasteurized. Try to stick to skim or non-fat milk to acquire the daily calcium needs without the fat content. Lastly, you are going to have to give up those cold processed lunch meats! I realize Americans love their ball games and hot dogs however, it may not be the best food choice for your unborn baby. Remember to not become scared of food in general. Pregnant women can still consume the right kinds of pasteurized milk and cheeses, cleaned fruits and vegetables, cooked fish, and prepared meats.

Now that we've gone over the wrong foods to eat when pregnant, let's get to the good stuff! As with any other human being, your baby needs the proper nutrients to become a healthy and active child; even before birth. It is essential that pregnant women take in 400 to 600 micrograms of folic acid every day. This amount can be obtained from taking a vitamin or by eating foods such as sunflower seeds, peanut butter, beans, spinach, broccoli, potatoes, nuts and corn. Just to name a few! (2). When pregnant, women should eat 7 or more servings of fruit and vegetables combined. This is because fruits and vegetables are good sources of fiber, minerals, and nutrients such as Vitamin C and A, folate and iron. Whole grains such as enriched pasta, bread and cereal contain iron, B vitamins, minerals and fiber. It is important that women who are pregnant eat anywhere from 6 to 9 servings of whole grains each day.

Remember how milk makes ones teeth and bones strong? The same message applies to a mother and her unborn child. Consuming up to 1,000 milligrams of dairy products provides a mother and her baby with the necessary amount of vitamins A and D, B vitamins and protein. When choosing dairy products select low fat or non fat or turn to dark green leafy vegetables or tofu for calcium. As for calcium, a pregnant woman should be taking in about 1,000 milligrams of calcium a day. And finally we arrive at the subject of meats. Pregnant women should be eating up to 60 grams of protein each day. This comes out to two or more 2-3 ounce servings. (1) Proteins help the body to build muscle, tissue, enzymes, hormones, and antibodies for you and your baby to fight an infection. Pick meats that are low in fat such as lean meat, fish, or chicken without the skin. Iron is another essential nutrient to be absorbed during pregnancy. While pregnant, a woman should consume about 30 milligrams of iron a day. (1) The increase in iron helps to keep an increased blood supply during pregnancy healthy. If too little iron is consumed, the mother may develop anemia.

Another key ingredient to a healthy pregnancy is water. Yes, water. It seems obvious that anyone should be drinking 6-8 glasses of water a day however, it is essential for pregnant women. Water helps to carry nutrients from the mother's food to the baby and also prevents dehydration of the mother. Do not under any circumstances consume alcohol while pregnant. Alcohol will enter the baby's blood stream through the umbilical cord and can cause birth defects, brain damage, and can cause slow growth. As for caffeine, it is a stimulant that causes irritability and nervousness and is a diuretic. Not to mention, it sometimes causes a low birth weight in babies. Some believe it is okay to consume small amounts of caffeine while others believe it should be avoided all together. When creating a diet plan for pregnancy, just be smart! If a certain food isn't that healthy to you regularly or doesn't contain an abundance of vitamins and nutrients, don't eat it! Stick to healthy lean foods that promote growth and well-being. Being pregnant doesn't mean "eating for two" in the sense that one should obtain twice the calories of whatever they please. Pregnant women should only be eating about 300 more calories a day than when on a regular diet plan. Bring your baby into a healthy and happy world!

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