

WELLNESS RESOURCE

Newsletter of the Wellness Resource Medical Clinic

www.wellness-resource.com

Edition 3- The Nutrition Edition

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Let your food be

medicine and your medicine be food. These were the words of Hippocrates, the father of medicine, spoken in 400 A.D. and are as true today as they were then. The food we typically eat in this country is far from medicine (see the movie Super Size Me for some sensationalism about the subject). The healthcare and pharmaceutical industries seem to say "have your cake and eat it too" (pun intended) by focusing on symptoms and offering up "cures" in the forms of more medicines, treatments and procedures with little regard for looking at the root causes of disease.

In January 2005 the 6th edition of the U.S. dietary guidelines were published (see www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/). Their main message is not glamorous - eat more vegetables and exercise more. The guidelines certainly reflect the growing obesity epidemic in our country (60% of the population is considered overweight).

And what about nutritional supplements and vitamins? Since the passage of the Dietary Supplement Health Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994, all botanical agents, amino acids, natural hormone products, vitamins and minerals are considered nutritional supplements. The dietary guidelines state that "nutrient needs should be met primarily

through consuming foods" but "in certain cases fortified foods and dietary supplements may be useful" but "cannot replace a healthful diet".

My interest in supplements and their role in optimizing health can be summarized by the product



"Cure-all" (i.e. Lemon Balm). A list of some of the reported uses includes Herpes, Graves Disease, abdominal

distension and flatulence, and insomnia. One product supplier lists 64 medical uses for Cure-all. Where is the line between fact and fiction? Have the many reported uses, anecdotal reports, and questionable potency and purity of many supplements placed them in the "snake oil" category?

Here goes my feeble attempt to give you THE FACTS ABOUT SUPPLEMENTS. Please see the accompanying page regarding 8 of the most common supplements in use today.

I hope any comments you may have would be shared with all of our readers on the message board of the Wellness website.

First- Beware of claims.

The DSHEA states that claims made about these products may pertain only to structure and function (such as (continued on page 2)

What is an allergen?

By Patti Byron, Laboratory Director

An allergen (also known as an antigen) is defined as any substance that can cause an immune (or allergic) response. Allergens consist mainly of proteins (such as gluten in wheat) but can also be elements (such as metals) and manmade substances (known as xenobiotics) such as gas, diesel, insecticides, perfumes and dyes. The immune system "sees" these microscopic allergens which identifies the substance to our immune system. This interaction allows our immune system to "remember" the allergen and mount a more rapid immune response on repeat exposure. This is important when fighting viruses, bacteria, parasites and fungi but it is a undesirable response when the immune system reacts to the allergens found in nondangerous things such as foods, weeds, trees or animals.

Along with environmental controls, immunotherapy (allergy shots) can allow most people to live



symptom free, even when allergens are present. Our environment presents increasing numbers of new and unique allergens (due to pollution, urban sprawl, ornamental plants, animals, etc.) which has resulted in increasing numbers of patients battling environmentally triggered illnesses.

Let your food be

medicine (continued)

"supports prostate health and function"). Marketing and advertising of these products often pushes the limit, creating unrealistic expectations.

Second- Insure potency and product quality. This is easier said than done. Unlike prescription drugs with strict FDA oversight, there is no federal regulations specific to supplements. Thus most supplements have wide variability in product quality and potency. Contamination or adulteration and product consistency is uniformly not controlled for or regulated. For example, chalk-like fillers, numerous food-based inactive ingredients (corn, wheat and soy) and even heavy metals have been found on chemical analysis of supplements. One study involving Glucosamine found that products with the word "complex" in their name tended to have less of the active ingredient or ingredients. Another study looking at Ginkgo biloba found that 7 of 9 brands lacked one or more of the necessary active ingredients.

So what are you really supplementing yourself with? One analysis of the 10 most commonly purchased brands concluded that price per daily dose was the best predictor of consistency in quality benchmarks- the higher the better (but consider that the most expensive drug or supplement is the one that does not work!).

The bright side of potency and product quality is that some manufacturers are making strides to define standards and potencies for their products.

GMP certification (Good Manufacturing Practices) attempts to insure rigorous standards of potency and quality. Other regulating bodies of the supplement industry which govern quality and potency are National Nutritional Foods Association, NSF International, US Pharmacopoeia (USP) and Consumer Labs (CL) certification (see www.consumerlabs.com for product reviews). Look for these certifications from your supplier of supplements. As more standardization of the nutritional supplement industry takes place, we can expect more quality research regarding the effects of these products and what they really do.

Third- Know what you need, know what you don't need. The dietary guidelines clearly state that

1. Over age 50 - increase Vitamin B12 intake
2. Childbearing age women or women who are pregnant- increase iron intake and Vitamin C intake.
3. Women planning to get pregnant or in their first trimester of pregnancy- Increase folic acid intake.
4. Older adults, people with dark skin, or minimal sunlight exposure- increase Vitamin D intake.

(continued page 3)

Taking the gimmick out of a diet.

Cheri Swanson, Certified Nutritionist

Diet books make a lot of money for the author, but can be disappointing to the reader. Let's explore three of them.

I believe we need to eat food as it comes naturally. I don't eat nonfat or lowfat foods because that usually means they are processed foods.

~Cheri Swanson

Atkins Diet by Robert Atkins

Low carbohydrate, high protein and as much fat as you like. In the beginning the weight loss is actually water weight. I personally have not seen anyone able to stay on the diet very long.

South Beach by Arthur Agatston

No calorie counting, no food weighing, no mandatory exercise. The diet has three phases:

Phase 1: Lean proteins, low glycemic veggies, low fat cheeses, nuts and eggs.

Phase 2: Adds in low glycemic fruits and whole grain breads.

Phase 3: Maintenance phase. Advocating dairy and whole grain can be difficult due to food sensitivity or allergy. He also advocates margarine! Any "food" that won't mold, whether it has trans-fat or not is to be avoided. I am against all artificial sweeteners (Continued on page 3)



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Let your food be medicine...(continued)
Those patients with specific illnesses, allergies, dietary restrictions, or poor eating habits may also benefit. I take a joint preparation which has helped spare me from constant knee pain.

I was told in medical school that people in the U.S. have the most nutrient rich urine of all living organisms! Despite this, I think it makes sense to optimize your body's building blocks and your immune system through good nutrition and supplements. In consult with your provider, seek after quality supplements which have your specific needs in mind. Be Well!

Kevin Hegewald MD
Medical Director

Healthy rats... and humans?

Another study published by a team of European scientists found that rats which were fed only organic foods were much healthier by measurements of sleep, immune function and ideal body weight than those rats fed the conventional processed, inorganic food.

"We used to think that as long as food had adequate nutrients then it was all equally good" states Dr. Brandt, one of the lead authors of the study. This is not the whole story- as many people already have experienced, eating organic makes you feel better.

For the whole story go the following web link:
<http://www.darcof.dk/research/health.html>



Taking the gimmick out of a diet (continued)

Use Stevia or Xylitol instead.

The Zone by Barry Sears

40% carbohydrate, 30% protein, 30% fat at each meal. Dr. Sears teaches that moderating your insulin levels is the key. Each meal has a low-fat protein the size of the palm of your hand plus vegetables and fruit. Two snacks a day made up of string cheese, nuts and fruit.

Again, I have seen very few people who seem to stay on the diet. If tolerated I think brown rice, couscous and quiona (pronounced keenwa) added in 3/4 of a cup servings help you stay on program.



I believe we need to eat food as it comes naturally. I don't eat nonfat or lowfat foods because that usually means they are processed foods. We all need some saturated fat. For those who can't eat butter there is non-hydrogenated coconut oil. The best I have found is Tropical Traditions organic, expeller pressed coconut oil.

Remember each person has a different metabolic blue print. Food sensitivities can be a real reason why people don't have success with these popular diets but can be conquered through elimination and/or rotation diets and allergy treatment.

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ALLERGIES?

Wellness Resource Medical Clinic... On-line



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