

## Preventing disease may be as simple as changing your diet

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

By CLARE HOWARD

of the Journal Star

Forget about counting calories, feeling hungry and avoiding carbohydrates. Think of food as a powerful drug that can maintain health and reverse disease.

That's the message Dr. Neal Barnard will deliver in Peoria next week. A physician, author and leading authority on eating to combat disease, Barnard will talk about a new diet to fight diabetes, arthritis, weight gain, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and disease.

His book, "Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes: The Scientifically Proven System for Reversing Diabetes Without Drugs," includes information on scientific studies, research and recipes for his recommended diet that is effective in preventing the development of diabetes and other diseases.

"Think of diet as a drug, and this diet is one of the most powerful," said Barnard, adjunct professor at the George Washington School of Medicine and president of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine.

Barnard's lecture in Peoria on June 20 is co-sponsored by the Peoria Memorial Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the Coronary Health Improvement Project at Illinois Central College.

"Komen recognizes we want to be a pro-active leader in disease prevention. This book may be about diabetes, but what he has to say crosses the life span of many diseases," said Linda Maricle, executive director at Komen.

"We have a message people need to hear. We want to save lives, end breast cancer and other diseases, and restore health."

Komen sponsored Barnard's lecture in Peoria last year about a link between diet and breast cancer.

Maricle said the changes she and her husband made in their diets "have impacted our lives."

Barnard's recommended diet includes three major points:

- It is vegan, meaning it excludes all animal-based food including meat, fish and dairy.
- It is low in oils, even vegetable oils including extra-virgin olive oil, canola and flax seed oil.
- It is based on low-glycemic index foods, those that release sugar slowly into the bloodstream. Low-glycemic foods include beans, barley, bulgur, pumpnickel and rye breads, pasta, fruit and yams. Leafy green vegetables are also considered low-glycemic.

Two days after speaking in Peoria, Barnard will speak at an American Diabetes Association symposium in Chicago. The diet recommended by the ADA does not go far enough and does not reverse diabetes, Barnard said.

Accumulated fat in cells blocks the ability to process insulin. The standard recommended diet attempts to compensate for that inability to process insulin. Barnard's new dietary guidelines help cells eliminate accumulated fat and restore the ability to process insulin, he said, noting that even people who are thin can show signs of insulin resistance.

"Our population, overall, has a worse diet than ever before, and kids are in worse shape than ever," Barnard said. "One in three children born today will develop diabetes, which is financially and personally devastating . . . blindness, amputations, kidney failure."

In contrast to these ominous developments, Barnard said more people today than ever before are health conscious.

"Health-food stores in the '60s were places that played folk music. Today, there is an explosion in demand. There are more veggie burgers and dairy substitutes available," he said. "My diet is inexpensive to follow."

His recommendations don't constitute a Spartan diet and do have suggested selections when eating in restaurants.

Schools, Barnard said, are the "dumping grounds for ag commodities. Schools, prisons and hospitals. When dairy prices fall, schools start serving cheese burgers and pepperoni pizza. Our children's health is our lowest priority."

Many American children have early signs of heart disease before they even receive their high school diploma, he said. One in two boys and one in three girls graduating from high school today will develop cancer in their lifetimes.

"Every school should offer a vegan option, and kids will eat it, by the way. Whether it is soy hot dogs, veggie burgers, veggie chili or bean burritos," he said, citing a program in the Broward County schools in Florida.

In the program, students were rewarded for their vegan selections with free bottles of water.

Susan Voigt-Reising, consultant with CHIP, said, "This is a very powerful diet that represents a change in thinking. It flies in the face of traditional wisdom, but it is grounded in science and sound research."

Clare Howard can be reached at 686-3250 or [choward@pjstar.com](mailto:choward@pjstar.com).

- What: A free public lecture and book signing by Dr. Neal Barnard, author of "Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes: The Scientifically Proven System for Reversing Diabetes Without Drugs"

- When: 6 p.m. June 20

- Where: Hult Health Education Center, 5215 N. Knoxville Ave.

### Vegetarian Mixed-Bean Chili Express

6 cloves garlic, minced or crushed  
1 tablespoon chili powder (preferably a dark variety, such as ancho)  
1 tablespoon dried oregano  
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin  
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper  
1 (28-ounce) can low-sodium diced tomatoes  
1 1/2 cups cooked or 1 (15 ounce) can pinto beans, rinsed and drained  
1 1/2 cups cooked or 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained  
1 1/2 cups cooked or 1 (15-ounce) can small red or red kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
3 cups hot water  
1 1/2 cups dry textured vegetable protein  
1 cup frozen whole-kernel corn  
1 large green bell pepper, cored, seeded and chopped  
1/4 cup low-sodium soy sauce  
1 tablespoon hot-pepper sauce  
1 tablespoon onion powder  
1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon sugar  
2 tablespoons cornmeal or masa harina  
Salt to taste

Steam-fry garlic in large, heavy nonstick skillet for 2 minutes. Add chili powder, oregano, cumin and red pepper and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add tomatoes (with juice), beans, hot water, vegetable protein, corn, bell pepper, soy sauce, hot-pepper sauce, onion powder, cocoa and sugar. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 15 to 30 minutes. During the last 5 minutes of cooking, sprinkle cornmeal or masa harina over top and stir thoroughly. Season with salt to taste. Serves 6.

- From "Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes: The Scientifically Proven System for Reversing Diabetes Without Drugs"

I have been vegan for 5 years and have never felt healthier. Not only do I look and feel better than I ever did as a meat eater or vegetarian, but I know that my diet does not contribute to the suffering of so many animals. Unfortunately, even a vegetarian diet leads to animal suffering, as dairy cows and chickens endure tremendous pain and unimaginable conditions in factory farms. Thanks for the article!

### About the Author

From [www.pjstar.com](http://www.pjstar.com):

According to the editorialist, it is time to incorporate the concepts of glycemic index and glycemic load into clinical practice to reduce.

When you decide to follow a glycemic index diet you have to have a list of foods that you can and cannot eat. There are both high and low glycemic.

A diet high in carbohydrates but low on the glycemic index, which measures the impact of carbohydrates on blood sugar levels, may help promote.

Glycemic index diet information from Prevention magazine includes low glycemic index food lists, good carb lists, tips and more.

Source: <http://productsherbal.com>