

Nutrition advice shouldn't be one size fits all

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We're unique individuals with diverse health, weight and fitness issues. Nutrition needs vary and a "one size doesn't fit all" approach doesn't work. Just because "expert A" swears by low carb, "expert B" extols low fat, and "expert C" insists you must eat your fruits and vegetables at every meal, does not make their advice right for you.

Standard "healthy diet" advice can be downright harmful if you have a disease or condition for which it is counter intuitive. Examples are colitis, Crohn's disease, celiacs, and irritable bowel syndrome, which are conditions in which dietary practices considered healthy, or foods and beverages other people eat and don't give a second thought to, can cause painful and damaging symptoms.

Okay, let's look at some standard nutrition and diet advice and why "one size fits all" recommendations like these may be detrimental for some.

"Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day, preferably at every meal."

Many colitis sufferers are fructose intolerant. Eating fruits, and some vegetables like onions, leeks, green beans, artichokes, and asparagus, which contain fructans can trigger a painful flare because they ferment in the gut. In fructose intolerant people who are missing an enzyme this is bad news. Even worse, eating high fructose corn syrup which is in many processed foods, is an irritant to people with fructose intolerance. There's evidence, see video below, that high fructose corn syrup is bad for virtually everyone and may be related to developing diabetes.

"Eat plenty of fiber, especially whole grains like wheat and wheat bran."

Dr. DeLamar Gibbons M.D., a colitis sufferer and author of "The Self Help Guide To Treat Colitis and other IBS Conditions" found that in nearly all people with bowel disease fiber exacerbated the problem. To add insult to injury (literally) "fermentation of fiber, especially wheat bran, exacerbated the problem greatly. Fiber ferments in the gut (of the fructose intolerant) making harmful chemicals that irritate and destroy tissue."

People who've been on Dr. Gibbons' colitis diet, and been strict, become symptom free. Only then can some tolerate an occasional cup of berries and most vegetables on a daily basis. But during a flare these "healthy" foods often just make things worse.

"Avoid low fiber starches like white rice, white potatoes, white bread, and pasta."

Well, this is fine advice if you're a healthy low carbohydrate dieter who wants to lose or maintain body fat, or you're a diabetic with blood sugar issues. But these foods are actually well tolerated by people with bowel disease because they do not have much fiber and digest higher in the digestive tract. They don't ferment in the gut because very little reaches the small colon.

Also, the colitis diet is Spartan and eliminates fruits, some vegetables, honey, corn and beans, corn products like high fructose corn syrup - which is in nearly every packaged and processed food on the market - corn sweeteners, other sweeteners like fructose, maltose, sorbitol, mannitol, (can you live with no "man at all?"), lactose, levalose, most other foods ending in "ose" including sucralose which SHOULD be table sugar but the food industry often replaces sucralose with a big fructose "no no" corn sweetener. Many sufferers must not eat milk and whey, wheat products, beans, nuts, and seeds, due to irritation of the colon.

Taking away portion controlled servings of those few foods allowed is just unnecessary cruelty. Rather innocuous foods like potatoes and rice may be vilified by most of the low carb diet advocates, but they have their place in many people's diets including athletes, bodybuilders, and some digestive disorder sufferers. The key, as always, is portion control.

"Avoid fats and fatty foods like eggs, cheese, butter, pork, and beef."

This advice is counterintuitive to low carbohydrate diets, bodybuilding diets, and muscle mass diets, (not to be confused with bodybuilding cutting

phases and some effective fat loss diets which limit high fat foods and starchy carbs in order to cut calories).

And unless you're unaware of the fact, the theory that "low fat is heart healthy and aids in weight loss" was based on faulty science. Low fat is bunk, a myth, detrimental to health, and not a superior way to lose weight. Back in the 1950s, Dr. Ancel Keys did his infamous "Six Country Study" in which he tested his theory that fat is bad. The problem is his study was actually of twenty two countries and the majority that didn't fit his theory - because the citizens ate a high fat diet and had lower disease rates - were thrown out and not reported in the study. Keyes manipulated his data to fit his theory. This is not an uncommon practice in research despite being unethical. The medical world, US government, and the food industry ran with it.

Never mind that later studies proved Ancel Keyes wrong. Once big business and politics got hold of what amounted to a lie, it soon was believed to be fact. The truth is just now being discovered, in large part due to Gary Taube' Head." Fats, including saturated fats, are essential to good health. They aid in hormone production, hormone balance, absorption of fat soluble vitamins, building muscle and tissue repair, keeping skin and hair healthy, and much more.

The other "theory" behind low fat diets is that fats at 9 calories a gram are a poor choice compared to protein and carbohydrate at 4 calories a gram. The math is correct, you'll eat less calories by limiting fats and can lose weight, but this is short sighted and overlooks some important facts about fat including the ones listed above.

The other problem with avoiding foods naturally high in fat is that they also are often high in quality protein, calcium, omega 3 fats, essential vitamins and minerals, digest slower than carbohydrates. Protein and fats are superior at suppressing appetite compared to most carbohydrates. Carbohydrates, particularly refined carbs, spike insulin and cause the body to store fat.

"Drink your milk. It's good for you and your waistline."

The dairy industry wants you to buy their products so it's to their benefit to present their products as healthy. Not to mention the majority of dieters will try anything to lose weight. (A good example of a poor dairy choice is Yoplait Light yogurt. Their current campaign presents their product as a healthy food while on your weight loss diet. Maybe for you! Despite this "healthy" product having little lactose it does have high fructose corn syrup and when I ate one without bothering to read the ingredients it caused me considerable colitis pain).

Thirty to 50 million Americans (adults and children) are lactose intolerant. Milk is not healthy nor good for these people. "Lactose intolerance is a condition caused by a lack of an enzyme called lactase, which, in turn, causes the body to be unable to digest lactose, a sugar found in milk products." Add to that the fact that many adults do not need milk to get their daily allowances of calcium and vitamin D and you get a number that puts fear into the dairy industry. Milk has no unique nutrients you cannot find anywhere else. You don't need milk. Even infants are fed human breast milk or formula, not cow's milk. All milk is good for is making cheese, yogurt, casein and whey proteins (if you can tolerate them. So many bodybuilders complain that these products give them diarrhea and digestive upsets there's an ad out about an alternative protein product).

(Note: cheese, cottage cheese, and yogurt are allowed on the colitis diet because unlike milk most of the lactose is removed in the process of making them. Fats are also shown to be soothing to the gut.)

The diseases and / or conditions covered here are not unique in the need for going against the grain nutrition-wise. Nor does this article thoroughly cover this subject in regards to digestive disorders. The point is, standard, party line, pat advice about WHAT YOU SHOULD EAT should never be blindly followed. Again, we are all unique individuals with diversely different health issues, goals, and nutrition needs. Just because "expert" A swears by low carb, and "expert" B extols low fat, and "expert" C insists you must eat your fruits and vegetables, does not make their advice right for you.

Before you implement any nutrition or diet advice please check with your physician. And take any advice you read, see on television, hear from friends and relatives, or read online, with a grain of salt and healthy skepticism.

High Fructose Corn Syrup Not Sexy! by Austin Wellness Nutrition

Find out the truth about high-fructose corn syrup and it's effect on the diet, obesity, health and fitness of your body. Dr. Vincent Bellonzi is a chiropractor and is certified in Clinical Nutrition. He has been in practice for over 12 years. He received his Doctorate from Los Angeles College of Chiropractic in 1991.

Gary Taubes, an award-winning writer for Science, the New York Times Magazine and other publications, came to Stevens to discuss his

controversial new bestseller, Good Calories, Bad Calories which argues that much of what we have been told about the relationship between body weight, diet and exercise is wrong.

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