

EAT MORE RAW FOOD, LESS PROCESSED 'JUNK'

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As they say, we are what we eat. Our health status is highly dependent on the food we eat. Diet and nutrition are among the factors that impact our health, possibly more than the effect of the genes we were born with.



We used to believe that our long-term health outcomes were mainly determined by our genes, like a preprogramming that could no longer be reversed or prevented. Hence, this was known as the science of genetics. But now, there are more adherents to the science of epigenetics, which literally translates to the science on top (epi-) of genetic or familial tendencies.

One may be born with some genetic predisposition to develop a disease, say diabetes or heart disease, but such will not be expressed unless there are unfavorable environmental factors, mainly lifestyle factors, that will trigger its development. So it's both nature (genes) and nurture (environment) that must both be present for certain diseases to manifest in an individual.

Healthy lifestyle changes

One may have a strong familial or genetic tendency to develop diabetes, but if he or she is careful with his or her diet, exercises regularly, maintains an ideal body weight and makes sure to observe a generally healthy lifestyle, chances are he or she won't become diabetic.

Healthy lifestyle advocate Dr. Max Sidorov authored a book, in collaboration with other doctors in the International Council for Truth in Medicine (ICTM), on how diabetes could be put under control by intensifying healthy lifestyle changes, particularly our diet.

Although I don't quite agree with what he suggests that antidiabetic medicines and other medicines only make patients worse, his pointers on health and well-being are worth sharing.

He and his colleagues at ICTM contend, rightfully so, that modern man is eating a lot of processed foods which he wasn't meant to eat. Our body systems were intended to digest natural and raw foods.

"The more natural and raw food you eat, the faster and easier you will lower your risk of countless diseases and regain your health," he writes in his book.

He advises us to shun "processed garbage food." Instead, we should load our diets with nutritious fruits, vegetables, nuts, sprouted grains and other superfoods like raw unpasteurized milk, raw butter, spinach, spirulina and coconut oil.

Raw as much as possible

Why raw milk? He cites studies showing that the pasteurization of milk, which is intended to kill bacteria contaminants in the raw milk, also kills the beneficial bacteria called probiotics and eliminates all the vitamins, minerals and nutrients present in raw milk. Heating also denatures the proteins in milk, which has been implicated in some medical problems.

So, the golden rule he recommends is to eat and drink everything raw as much as possible. Processed foods should be avoided, and consumers should prefer natural, whole, nutrient-dense alternatives. He realizes, though, that for those whose palates are accustomed to processed foods, changing one's dietary habits is not an easy shift.

A big challenge

He advises: "If you have a craving for some junk, always give yourself an alternative and allow the gradual change to take effect. Take healthy snacks with you, make your own lunch and get rid of all the temptations at home; throw away or donate all the junk food you have at home! And if you go to restaurants, find some local vegetarian ones, and taste for yourself how delicious and filling the meals can be."

Making the shift is really a big challenge, but one just has to make the decision, just like the decision to quit smoking for good. If one is not really strongly motivated to do it, one will most likely backslide at the slightest temptation.

There are also some foods that may trigger inflammation of the cells when taken in excess. Examples are canola, corn, soybean, sunflower or safflower. Take these in moderation, since they may also cause some swelling of the linings of the arteries that can subsequently lead to heart disease and other problems.

How about the regular or whole grain cereals we eat for breakfast, which are supposed to be healthy breakfast meals? Not quite so, writes Dr. Sidorov. They are “sugar bombs filled with inflammatory oils, colors and artificial flavors leading to fat loss sabotage and disease.”

So what else can we eat and drink? We just have to go back to the golden rule—“Eat as much raw food and as little animal food as possible.” If the food is plantbased or tree-derived, it must be good for our body, especially when eaten as raw as possible.

“As long as you eat more raw fruits and veggies, be they organic or nonorganic, you will have better health,” assures Dr. Sidorov.

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