

“Nutrition as Protection” - By Candace Corson, M.D. Health and Wellness Educator

In America today, we have a health crisis directly linked to a new kind of malnutrition: calorie-dense and yet grossly deficient in protective micro-nutrients from whole, minimally or unprocessed plant foods.

Unique in human history, we are now seeing an epidemic of chronic disease at ever younger ages, challenging the best of physicians. Two major additions to daily intake would vastly improve our longevity and quality of life at all ages:

- 1) THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP: Phyto-Nutrients from whole-plants (vegetables, fruits, berries in wide variety for synergy: see www.choosemyplate.gov going from a minimum of “7-13” now to Half your Plate
- 2) Essential Fatty Acids in proper balance, plant sources best.

1) “Quenching the Fire” ~ Why Fruits and Vegetables? THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ANY CHANGE YOU MAKE. This is foundational to the body and brain function.

Even the good foods we eat, immediately become harmful free radicals (“lipid peroxides”) as they are rapidly oxidized and damaged by the process of burning our fuel at the cellular level in the absence of a strong protective shield: “Anti-Oxidants” or Phyto-Nutrients or micro-nutrients from whole plants.

Fruits, vegetables and berries provide the mandatory source of synergistic, complex “anti-oxidants”: the protective shield against cell breakdown due to free radicals (“sparks”) we are obliged to produce by having to breathe oxygen and burn our fuel at the cellular level to produce the energy of life. The damaging “sparks” from burning fuel, cause damage called “oxidative stress” at the rate of some 10,000 damaging hits to EACH CELL, PER DAY. This causes early aging and degenerative disease, when not quenched on an ongoing basis by the necessary source of damage control: fresh plant produce. Note that isolated, fragmented “vitamin” molecules don’t contain the co-factors and thousands of unique phytonutrients required by the body synergistically. Good science all over the world shows that fragments simply do not provide the same protection, and why would they? They are missing the 100’s of thousands of nutrients needed. That is why the old recommendation of 5 - 9 fresh whole fruits and vegetables a day, was revised upward to a minimum of 7- 13 servings, equal to 5 CUPS of fresh produce of a very wide variety. and now to half your plate at each meal.

This forms a vast network of anti-oxidants that are synergistic, working together as an effective shield against oxidative stress and cell damage. To get this wide variety of fresh produce every single day, it’s wise and cost-effective to add a high-quality, research-supported whole-food concentrate, to anchor and enhance the very best we can do at our tables and on the run.

Bottom line: Eat a wide variety of multiple servings of fresh fruits and vegetables every day to protect against inflammation, toxicity, heart disease, premature aging, cancer and other degenerative diseases. This practical, smart and simple concept will enhance your well-being, longevity, vitality and quality of life, at all ages. “Our grandmothers were right.”

RESOURCES:

Book: “Whole” Rethinking the Science of Nutrition, T. Colin Campbell, PhD, 2013

DVD: “Forks Over Knives” is excellent/ the companion “Forks Over Knives Cook Book”, NY Times best seller

Book: “Hungry for Health” (and “Hungrier for Health” more advanced) – by Susan Silberstein, PhD, Oncology Nutrition Expert

Nature Medicine, Journal April 2013: the impact of nutrition on gut flora and Heart Disease

Book: “The Good Gut” - by

Drs. Sonnenburg, PhD's

2) The GOOD fats Omega 3 Essential Fatty Acids, "EFA's"

Few people today get the right kinds of fat needed to make a cell membrane (lipid bi-layer) that functions properly. These include omega-3's from: walnuts, flax seeds, sea vegetables, deep-sea fish (salmon, cod) and land animals who ate green food (not corn or other grains!). This means the base of their food chain is green plants (as designed) allowing them to concentrate the omega-3 that is FROM THE PLANTS. Grain-feeding has unfavorably altered the good fat to bad fat ratio in our bodies over recent decades, leading to a host of serious, long-term health problems. Plant-based nutrition is protective: Good sources: Flax-seeds (whole, from high-quality health-food stores) are a very economical source of good fats and protective fiber (lignans); walnuts; avocados; deep-sea fish (NOT farm-raised, which will not work); free-range (preferably organic) eggs & meat, if used at all. Toxic Fats to Avoid entirely: Trans Fats ("hydrogenated"): Zero tolerance Processed foods routinely add this toxin for "shelf life." Often labels say "No trans fats" (but the ingredients list will show they're present anyway). David Katz, MD of Yale teaches: "Step away from the box – so nobody will get hurt." Out of balance fatty acids: one of our major long-term health problems today, contributing to inflammation and poor receptor function at every cell membrane. The implications are huge. Bottom line: plant omega-3 fats are anti-inflammatory and promote normal brain function. We can think and feel better over time: good fats and primarily Plant Foods.

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