

HEALTHLINES

Spring 2004 Supplement

What to Eat *by Chad Marschik, C.S.C.S.*

When it comes to food, more often than not, we are faced with too many choices. The average supermarket in North America has 20,000 items. How often do you find yourself wandering aimlessly down aisle after aisle searching for some small item? I will admit there have been times in my life when I passed an item on a store shelf and I bought it, all because I saw an advertisement on television the night before. As a country, if we choose not to use our intellect we will continue to get larger and larger. I do not believe that any of the fast-food restaurants, supermarkets, food manufacturers and the like should be blamed for the high-percentage of “junk food” they promote and sell. You, the consumer, have the responsibility to arm yourself with the necessary knowledge to maintain and/or improve *your* health and well being. Nobody put a gun to your head and said “You better buy junk food or else!”

Most food manufacturers will make every effort to sell you the cheapest product they can develop and successfully market. Businesses are supposed to make money, so it's their job to figure out ways how to do that best. The ingredients they often put in their product, more times than not, will be the least expensive and probably as inferior as they can get away with, in order to maximize their profit. If *you choose not* to buy the unhealthy food that is ubiquitous in the Western Hemisphere then the restaurants, supermarkets, convenience stores, etc...will come up with healthier alternatives.

High-fructose corn syrup, dextrose, sucrose, maltose, and fructose, are all forms of sugar (anything that ends in the suffix *-ose* is a form of sugar). They are an inexpensive food additive. Sugar is high in calories, tastes good and is highly addictive. Who doesn't like the taste of sugar? Here in lies the problem and it's a big one. Sugar has very little nutritional value and therefore produces what I like to call “*fleeting satiety*”. Satiety means a sense of fullness. So if your fullness is fleeting, well, then, you are in for some real trouble!

Food ladled with sugar byproducts will not sustain and/or normalize blood sugar levels. It can't, or at least not for very long. After your sugar buzz wears off (insulin levels plummet to below normal levels), you suddenly have another craving for something, often that something is the sweet junk food you ate just 45 minutes ago. Now repeat this insane way of feeding your body day in and day out for 1, 2, 3, 20 years and then take a look in the mirror. I would bet my life's savings you are either overweight or obese.

Unfortunately, one of the biggest culprits of weight gain is excess soda consumption. My good friend, the Cardiologist Marc Shelton of Prairie

Cardiovascular Consultants, recently stated during his talk at a regional seminar in St. Louis, “Don’t drink your calories!” Most people aren’t aware that the average 12 oz. can of soda has 10 teaspoons of sugar in it (Mountain Dew has around 13 teaspoons)! Would you add 10 teaspoons of sugar to a glass of ice tea or a cup of coffee? I sincerely hope not! Don’t drink soda, sugary sports drinks, juices or the like, *if* you want to manage your weight. Keep it simple, drink water. The famous Holistic Health Practitioner, Paul Chek, founder of The Chek Institute in San Diego, says “You are what you eat!” I couldn’t agree more. If you continually eat bad foods, guess what you are ultimately going to look and feel like? BAD!

I don’t have all the answers as to what each person should eat, how much and how often. I want to give you some general guidelines though that hopefully will allow you to have some sort of format to follow. There certainly are important steps that we can *all* take to ensure continued progress toward managing our weight successfully over a lifetime.

Chad’s guidelines for grocery shopping are as follows:

- 1) The majority of your shopping should take place along a store’s perimeter. Most healthy items such as vegetables, fruit, dairy, grains, meat, nuts, etc... are in the perimeter of the store. Your time spent in the grocery store’s interior should be minimal.
- 2) Choose *certified organic* food whenever possible. Humans need to consume fruits, vegetables, grains, meat and dairy that haven’t been tainted by herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, etc... Free-range, non-hormone injected animals are far healthier to eat.
- 3) Shop frequently, 2 or more times per week. Fresh, untainted food will only last for a few days unless you freeze it. If you are shopping only every other week for food then you aren’t staying out of the interior of the grocery store (review guideline #1 above again).
- 4) Never, ever go down the chip or soda aisle! Name me one benefit of eating any chip or pretzel besides “It tastes good!” Soda is detrimental to ones health and vitality. *Don’t drink soda!*

Chad’s “What to Eat” list!

Note: *This list is not complete; I will periodically review it to determine if there are additional items I choose to add because of its nutritional importance.*

Vegetables

Spinach, any form of lettuce (other than iceberg), cucumber, radish, carrot, parsley, kohlrabi, any “greens” such as turnip or mustard, green beans, kale,

zucchini, brussel sprouts, asparagus, turnip, broccoli, cauliflower, egg plant, celery, onions, garlic, tomatoes, mushrooms, and radish.

Fruits

Blueberries, cantaloupe, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, watermelon (all types of melons), green grapes, red grapes, purple grapes, all types of apples, bananas, dates, prunes, citrus fruit, mango, papaya, guava, pineapple, kiwi, and all types of pears.

Starches

Whole oats, breads (whole wheat, pumpernickel or rye), brown rice, wild rice, darker pastas, yams, potatoes, rye flour, wheat flour, buckwheat, tabouli, and cous cous.

Fats

Walnuts, pecans, almonds, filberts, seeds, brazil nuts, peanuts, olive oil, safflower oil, sunflower oil, canola oil, olive oil, real butter, and avocado.

Dairy

Certified Organic Milk (preferably 1% or 2%), range-free eggs, non-pre-packaged cheese (don't buy Kraft American Singles or the like), *plain yogurt*, and 2% cottage cheese.

Proteins/Meat

Any free-range meat such as beef, fowl, pork, ostrich, lamb, or bison is appropriate. Essentially any seafood is o.k. except farm raised fish. Limit cold water fish such as tuna, shark, etc... to no more than 5 oz. per 100 lb. of bodyweight due to high levels of mercury.

Rotate your foods; never eat the same meal two days in a row to allow your body to reap the nutritional benefit of fundamentally sound eating habits. If a food item comes in a box, can or is heavily marketed, chances are it isn't worth eating.

Food preparation and planning should be far easier now, if you choose to follow my advice!