

5 Common Nutritional Myths

by David Nelson

- FATS
- CHOLESTEROL
- GRAINS
- CALORIES
- ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

When a person grows up, they receive education about nutrition from many sources; school, their parents, friends, family, magazines, etc. One source, however, is not as well known and yet is far more influential in many ways. That source is TV and its clutch upon our lives is far reaching. By the time the average 18-year-old graduates from high school, they will have spent more time watching commercials, than in class! TV and the rest of the media have shaped the way we eat as well as think and feel about food. Food, only a short time ago, was considered nutritious and vitality-sustaining, yet now has morphed into a scientifically created, money-driven product. The consequences of this transformation are only now becoming clear and are a direct result of the influence of TV and the mass media. In this article, I will discuss five common myths perpetuated by these peddlers of misinformation.

1ST MYTH:

“Fat is bad for you.”

Over the last century or so, the subject of fat has seemed somewhat closed to those in the health industry. Only recently is

some light being shed upon a major blunder in the handling of research regarding fat consumption. A few weeks ago, the single largest study on fat consumption was completed and found that fat intake was NOT a causative factor in heart disease. This is not a shock for many in the holistic community, since for over a century now, we’ve been in a major battle involving this substance. The debate is whether the consumption of fat is bad for you and whether or not it will lead to degenerative diseases later in life.

FAT’S ROLES IN THE BODY

- ✓ Saturated fats constitute at least 50% of the cell membranes, thus giving them the necessary stiffness and integrity.
- ✓ They play a vital role in the health of our bones, since calcium is only incorporated into the skeletal structure if saturated fats constitute 50% of the cell membrane.
- ✓ They protect the liver from alcohol and other toxins such as pesticides.
- ✓ They enhance the immune system.
- ✓ The heart draws upon stearic and palmitic acid reserves in times of stress.



- ✓ They are rich in vitamin A which is difficult to obtain otherwise.
 - ✓ They have anti-microbial properties that protect us against harmful microorganisms in the digestive tract.
- This list only displays saturated fats roles in the body, yet almost anyone

involved in nutrition tells you to avoid saturated fats. To think logically about saturated fats is to ask the question, “if they are bad for you, how did humans survive so long consuming them?” The fats that should be avoided are the fake ones like trans fats and many of the polyunsaturated fats. Trans fats look more like plastic under a microscope!

2ND MYTH:

“Cholesterol is bad for you and will lead to coronary heart disease.”

Like fats, cholesterol has been given an undeserved bad rap for decades by many in the scientific community. Also, like fat, this is wrong. One of cholesterol’s functions is that it’s a precursor to hormone production and is also necessary for repair in the body. While this subject is far

beyond the scope of this article, I assure you that there is sufficient evidence that supports this. One only has to look in the right places for the information and they usually have nothing to do with the allopathic, drug-driven medical industry.

For more information, see the references at the end of this article.

3RD MYTH:

“Grains are good for everyone.”

With the inception of the original food-guide pyramid, the idea that grains were needed in large amounts became accepted by the general public. The only problem with this idea is that it has been shown that around 70% of the American population don't respond well to grains. This doesn't mean that those people will always have a serious allergic reaction while eating grains. It means that some adverse reactions have been observed in over three-quarters of Americans, with some reactions being as simple as gas and bloating. Others have reported the onset of acne, arthritis-type symptoms, severe allergic reactions, as well as many others.

We only need to look into our past development as humans to understand why we don't respond well to grains. It is generally recognized that humans have only had access to agriculture for around 10,000 years. Before and during that time period, we were hunter/gatherers and only in the last 100 years or so has it been economical to produce and consume grains in large quantities. This leaves us with a problem, if civilization

didn't develop consuming grains, how are we going to effectively digest and eliminate them? While 10,000 years may seem like a sufficient enough time frame to adjust and evolve, this is but a blink of an eye in our history.

4TH MYTH:

“Eat less calories to lose weight and become healthy.”

This is a dangerous mentality that is far too prevalent in the health industry. Yes, if you consume less food, you most likely will lose body weight, irrespective of what type. But it's not that easy. Simply losing body weight is neither ideal nor healthy, since you're not losing just fat. You will also lose much-needed muscle, bone density, water weight, etc.

While there's a lot of conflicting evidence on this subject, due to corporate ties and conflicts of interest, there are some interesting points to look at. First, in some literature, calorie consumption of anything less than 2,000 per day could be considered starvation! Of course, when you fast sensibly, you lose weight! Secondly, you'd be hard-pressed to find any diet that comes close to this number of calories. In fact, if you were to look at most diets, they recommend something around 1,000 to 1,500 calories.

To understand the body's caloric requirements, you have to realize that the body does a lot more than store fat or build muscle. Oddly enough, this type of logical thinking has eluded nutritional researchers for decades. Every process in the human body

requires energy: digestion, absorption, elimination, simply thinking, and breathing, etc. If the basic caloric requirements aren't met, the body will seek out numerous methods to remedy this problem, many of which cannot be considered healthy. One other noteworthy point is that since everyone is biochemically unique, caloric requirements will vary greatly from person to person. This makes broad caloric requirements obsolete and in many cases hazardous to the health of individuals.

5TH MYTH:

“Artificial sweeteners are safe.”

The three primary artificial sweeteners are saccharin, aspartame and sucralose and they are touted as “the safe alternatives to sugar.” All three substances started off as products for unrelated needs and were accidentally discovered as sweeteners. Aspartame was once listed as a possible bio-warfare chemical and was almost used in treatment for ulcers before the scientist left some of the product on his hands. When he licked his fingers to pick up a piece of paper, he accidentally tasted the intense sweetness of the compound he had created. Many negative statements can be said about sugar, but at least OSHA hasn't mandated that you wear personal protective equipment when handling it!

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The Material Safety Data Sheet on aspartame (CASE# 22839-47-0) says that to work with the sweetener, you should wear chemical goggles, protective gloves to prevent skin exposure, a chemical apron and a NIOS/MSHA-approved air-purifying dust mask or mist respirator!

Only hazardous regulated materials require a respirator in order to be handled. Aspartame has been associated with numerous health problems including dizziness, visual impairment, severe muscle aches, numbing of extremities, pancreatitis, high blood pressure, retinal hemorrhaging, seizures and depression. It is also suspected of causing birth defects and chemical disruptions in the brain.

Sucralose is claimed to “taste like sugar, because it’s made from sugar,” which is sort of like saying, “gas tastes like carrots because it’s produced from the ground.” Simply because sugar is used in one of the preliminary steps, doesn’t mean it’s made from sugar. During the processing, 3 atoms of chlorine are used to replace 3 atoms of hydrogen and oxygen. Phosgene, a World War II chemical warfare agent, is also used. Once processed, it creates what’s known as a chlorocarbon, which have been notorious for causing illness in humans. ■

Hopefully this article has, at the very least, made you question many of today’s nutritional beliefs. For more information on any of these subjects I can be contacted via email at davidnelson_exercisecoach@yahoo.com or by phone at 406-861-8174.