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# The Meaning of Essential

Building Blocks of Your Wellness

## OVERVIEW

- Living In The Age of Convenience
- The Meaning of Essential
- Planning For Wellness
- The Cardiovascular Dilemma

The Meaning of Essential  
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Building Blocks of Your Wellness

# The Age Of Convenience

- According to nutrition experts, the average Western diet contains too much sugar and too little fiber.<sup>2</sup>
- The combination of low fiber and overconsumption of highly refined carbohydrates and oxidized fat contributes to an increased risk of heart disease and diabetes.<sup>2</sup>
- A lifestyle of processed food, combined with depletion of nutrients from our soils, leaves us in a state of relative deficiency.<sup>3</sup>

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# What ARE we eating?

- Taking our country's nutritional concerns one step further, the U.S. population spends over \$300 billion in pharmaceuticals<sup>7</sup> – many of them may contribute to nutrient depletion or health challenges that could be improved with better lifestyle choices.<sup>3</sup>
- A good diet should consist of modest servings of fresh fruits and legumes and sufficient vegetables, lean meats and fish combined with healthy fat choices like nuts and seeds.
- With simple steps, we can help balance our health within the world around us.

# Do nutrients really matter?

A true nutrient deficiency may lead to challenges:<sup>4</sup>

- **Vitamin A deficiency** causes night blindness.
- **Thiamine deficiency** causes beriberi.
- **Niacin deficiency** causes pellagra.
- **Vitamin B12 deficiency** leads to megaloblastic anemia and sub-acute degeneration for the spinal cord.
- **Vitamin C deficiency** leads to scurvy.
- **Vitamin D deficiency** causes rickets.
- **Vitamin K deficiency** causes impaired coagulation.

# Nutrition Related Diseases

- Nutritional diseases, affecting more than 925 million people worldwide<sup>5</sup>, are due to poor consumption of essential nutrients.
- Nutritional diseases are commonly associated with factors of lifestyle such as:
  - Alcohol consumption
  - Lack of dietary fiber
  - Lack of nutrient rich vegetables
  - Low protein
  - Avoiding healthy fats

# What is RDI?



- RDI stands for Recommended Daily Intake and is the minimum daily intake recommended to meet nutrient sufficiency requirements.
  - The actual amounts of each nutrient required to maintain good health in specific individuals differ from person to person.
- Daily requirements were never designed with “optimal health” in mind, only the avoidance of disease.<sup>1,2</sup>

Furthermore, the RDI’s list does not include hundreds of other valuable and essential nutrients necessary for maintenance of health. <sup>1,2</sup>

# The Meaning of Essential

- Essential nutrients are specific nutrients that our bodies do not produce, so we have to consume them through dietary intake.
  - Non-essential nutrients are those the body can make from other building blocks.
- Our bodies require essential nutrients to provide us with energy, to build and maintain body tissues and to regulate our body functions.
  - If we do not consume the nutrients we need, our bodies can not thrive.

# Essential Nutrients: Proteins

- Proteins are necessary for the function of muscles, blood, bone, enzymes, cell membranes and hormones.
- Proteins also help repair tissue and regulate the balance of water and acid.
- Major sources include meat, fish, poultry, eggs, legumes and nuts.
- Eggs are a complete protein, containing every amino acid that the body requires.

A deficiency in protein can cause loss of muscle mass, decline in healthy hormone levels, loss of bone mass and fatigue.

# Essential Nutrients: Fats

- Fats are necessary to supply energy, insulate our body, cushion our organs and support absorption of fat-soluble vitamins.
- If you don't eat enough of the right fats, you are missing the building blocks for healthy metabolism, energy distribution and cognitive health.
- Your brain is 60% fat and requires healthy fats to support mental function.
- Healthy fats should represent 20-35% of our total calorie consumption, from good choices such as avocado, nuts and seeds and fish.

**Fats are  
Good?!!**

Major sources of saturated fats come from animal sources, palm oil, coconut oil and vegetable fats.

Unsaturated fats come from grains, nuts, fish and vegetables.

# Essential Nutrients: Water

- Water makes up 50-70% of our body weight and helps to regulate temperature and remove waste products.<sup>7</sup>
  - Major sources include fruits, vegetables and non-sweetened liquids.
- You should consume adequate water every day—and even more if you detox, exercise, take pharmaceuticals or drink beverages that may deplete your water stores, like coffee and tea.

HEALTH TIP: At the time we feel thirsty, we are already dehydrated and cellular functions are impacted.

# Essential Nutrients: Minerals

- Minerals help regulate body functions, support release of energy and aid in the growth and maintenance of body tissues.
- Without these essential cofactors, you can't turn protein into muscle, cholesterol into hormones, carbohydrates into energy, or build strong bone mass.

## Dietary Minerals

- Calcium (Ca)
- Chloride (Cl)
- Chromium (Cr)
- Cobalt (Co)
- Copper (Cu)
- Iodine (I)
- Iron (Fe)
- Magnesium (Mg)
- Manganese (Mn)
- Molybdenum (Mo)
- Phosphorus (P)
- Potassium (K)
- Selenium (Se)
- Sodium (Na)
- Zinc (Zn)

# Essential Nutrients: Vitamins

- Vitamins promote chemical reactions within cells and are necessary for optimal cellular function.<sup>8</sup>
- Major sources include:
  - Fruits
  - Vegetables
  - Un-refined grains
  - To a limited extent, meat.

## Vitamins

- Vitamin A\*
- Vitamin B1
- Vitamin B2
- Vitamin B3
- Vitamin B5
- Vitamin B6
- Folic Acid
- Biotin
- Vitamin B12
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin D\*
- Vitamin E\*
- Vitamin K\*

*\*Fat Soluble  
Vitamins*

# Knowing the RIGHT amounts matters!

- Water soluble? Fat Soluble?

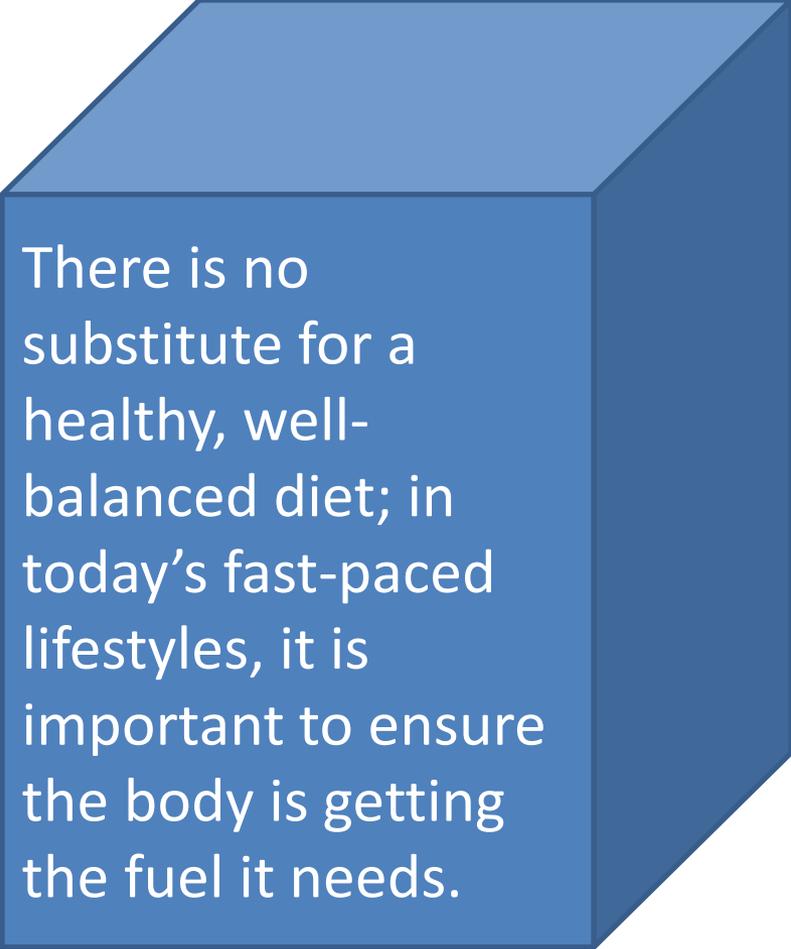
## DID YOU KNOW?

Vitamin A (retinoic acid), a carotenoid can cause vitamin A toxicity when consumed above the RDI for a prolonged period. Beta carotene, found in some colorful foods and alternative sources of carotenoids, do not contribute to vitamin A toxicity.<sup>11</sup>



# What Do Vitamins & Minerals Do?

- Vitamins and minerals help to:
  - Support a healthy immune system
  - Promote the conversion of food into energy
  - Support cardiovascular health
  - Support strong bones
  - Promote mental clarity
  - Maintain normal metabolic functioning
  - Promote healthy growth and repair of tissues
  - Help maintain water and electrolyte balance in the body.



There is no substitute for a healthy, well-balanced diet; in today's fast-paced lifestyles, it is important to ensure the body is getting the fuel it needs.

# What About Carbohydrates?

- Carbohydrates are semi-essential, meaning glucose necessary for energy can be derived from protein and fat, however the vitamins and minerals found in healthy carbohydrates make them indispensable.

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

During the course of the last 57 years, the nutritional density in food is approximately 25% of what it originally was in 1950.<sup>10</sup>

# Effects of Not Getting Enough Nutrients In Your Diet

- If you don't get enough of the essential nutrients and non-essential nutrients your body needs, you could increase your risk of developing health conditions including:
  - Heart disease
  - Dementia
  - Depression
  - Stroke
  - Anemia
  - Diabetes
  - Arthritis
  - Obesity
  - Acne
  - Hypoglycemia
  - Muscle cramps
  - Fatigue and more.

# Planning For Wellness

Dr. Deedra Mason

*As a physician, in care of my patients' wellbeing, I address primary concerns as well as quality of life factors such as sleep, stress and body composition. Looking at the whole patient, not just the presenting complaint, appreciates the totality of symptoms.*

*If we don't resolve poor dietary and lifestyle habits, contributing to many health challenges, our bodies cannot optimize its level of wellness. I have a simple conversation about my "Optimal 7" with all my patients. When it comes to building a solid foundation for health, there are seven nutrients or factors we need to consume every day. Regardless of health concerns or family history, – these are needed daily as a foundation for everyone.*

*Furthermore, these recommendations are in addition to eating healthy fats and protein appropriate to your level of physical activity, maintaining the right amount of sleep, and keeping a continual focus on stress reduction. All of the above are necessary for overall well-being.*

# “Optimal 7”

## The Optimal 7

These three are non-negotiable:



**1**  
Varied and rich sources of vitamins and minerals



**2**  
Diverse sources of antioxidants



**3**  
Healthy omega 3 fatty acids with a focus on EPA and DHA

- 4. **B-vitamins**, like those found in sweet potatoes, are essential and must be consumed on a daily basis.
- 5. **Vitamin D3** food sources may be the single most impactful step you take toward better health.

**Vitamin B and vitamin D sources, along with the non-negotiable 3, make up the Basic-5.**  
Rounding out the “Optimal 7” includes:

- 6. **Probiotics**: bad digestive bugs do not take a day off, so neither should your good ones.
- 7. **Fiber**: choose diverse fiber options with a focus on heart healthy soluble fiber.

# Fatty Acids

- Essential fatty acids cannot be synthesized by humans, as humans lack the enzymes required for their production.<sup>5</sup>

# Amino Acids

- Isoleucine
- Methionine
- Valine
- Lysine
- Phenylalanine
- Histidine
- Leucine
- Tryptophan
- Threonine

# Essential: Omega-3

- For many years, the American Heart Association has recommended that people consume fish that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids at least twice a week.
- Fish oils have been clinically demonstrated to provide a host of benefits that successfully promote cardiovascular health.<sup>2</sup>

*Fish oil helps maintain normal cholesterol, triglyceride and blood pressure levels, helps maintain healthy levels of C-reactive protein, helps maintain normal blood flow and helps enhance mood.<sup>2</sup>*

# Understanding the Fat Myth...

- Fat gets a lot of attention for many good reasons.
- It is important to realize that fats are essential nutrients and support your health goals.
  - The wrong types of fats are associated with an increased risk oxidative damage and may contribute to heart disease.
- Understanding the difference between good fats and bad fats is a step toward better health.

# Good Fats vs Bad Fats!

## GOOD FATS



avocados



salmon



walnuts



olive oil

## Bad Fats

- Oxidized fats are generally known as bad fats, most commonly found in fried and processed foods.
- Trans fats are chemically modified fats that are created by adding hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils, which makes them shelf stable.

Research shows that trans and oxidized fats, not saturated fat, have the most negative impact on heart health.



fatty meat



cheese



ice cream



fried food

## BAD FATS

# A Foundation For Success

Better nutrition means stronger immune systems, less illness and better health.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “Nutrition is the foundation for health and development.”

- Healthy children learn better!
- Healthy people are stronger, more productive, and more able to create opportunities to gradually break the cycles poor health and risky lifestyle habits.
- Better nutrition is a prime milestone to achieving a better quality of life.”<sup>9</sup>

# Take Action For Your Health

- Eliminate “Fake Foods”
- Consume more “Fiber”
- Ensure proper intake of all essential nutrients
  - Proteins
  - Good Fats
  - Vitamins
  - Minerals
  - Water

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