



Health TIPS

REAL FOOD – REAL GOOD

Getting the food your body needs can be a real challenge these days. A visit to the supermarket confronts one with a bewildering arrange of food choices – some good, some bad and most in-between.

Australia is fortunate to have many good food options but there are also many bad food options as well. A bad food is one that either one that is very low in nutrients like many high sugar foods, or that has an excess of undesirable nutrients like high salt or saturated fat.

Judging by the high prevalence of chronic disease it must be that most people do not get the good food they need based on established associations between nutrition and chronic disease. For example, the rising prevalence of type 2 diabetes is being caused by poor nutrition, obesity and lack of exercise.

Food is meant to give our bodies the nutrients we need to grow, maintain, repair and survive. With the plethora of industrialised or processed food these days something is going wrong and we are not all getting the food we need to promote health and prevent disease.

Eating a variety of good foods, as nature designs, means we get a wide mix of nutrients and rarely too much or too little of any one nutrient. Eating lots of processed foods generally does not achieve this and we end up with too little of some nutrients and too much of others. Our bodies do not cope and conditions exist for disease to be created. Many people do not understand this and so continue with too many bad food choices and opt for convenience, habit and taste ahead of good food choices that actually create health.

There are many competing options and opinions about food. It can be confusing especially without having correct food and nutrition knowledge. It is not rocket science either and good food is always good. The trick is to get the balance right – not too much of foods you don't need and more of the foods you do. A new Deakin University study shows that only 15% of men and 22% of women eat the recommended 5 serves of vegetables a day. Why don't most people get it about good food? Partly it is the power of the industrialised food machine telling us what we should eat which is compounded by our own lack of knowledge and motivation about making good food choices.

The typical western health compromising diet has got most people in its grip with its fare of highly processed foods, refined grains, and lots of simple sugar, fat and meat but too little wholegrains, vegetables and fruits. In its wake comes obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer that is keeping our hospitals full to the rafters.

Want to eat smart and avoid being another hospital statistic? Then choose fresh, real and unprocessed foods that are mostly plant-based. The more meat you eat the greater your risk of heart disease and cancer. Choose real food and your body will find it real good.

Compliments of Wayne John.

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