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DIET -- a dirty word

We have been discussing healthy eating for several weeks, as well as the rationale for reducing one's salt intake. Now I will delve into weight-reducing strategies. The worst thing that can be done is to place a person on a diet. A diet implies that this is a *temporary* change in eating habits -- enough for them to lose weight and, perhaps, satisfy their goal. In over 100 research studies, it has been shown that 94 percent of individuals placed on a diet are back at their original weight, if not *more*, within two years. Therefore, the word diet should be stricken from our vocabulary if one really wants to lose weight and keep it off.

Let's talk about prudent eating

or, better yet, a healthy lifestyle. If this is done correctly to include eating right for your metabolic and blood type, searching for the abnormalities in your body such as high or low blood sugar, increased cholesterol, triglycerides, homocystine, etc., one will not lose weight, but enhance the quality and quantity of one's life.

Of the various diets, such as that designed by William D. Kelley (Metabolic Type), or Low Fat, or High Fiber, or Low Carbohydrate, or High Protein, or The Zone, or Atkins, my current favorite is the 40-30-30. The 40-30-30 is 40 percent fresh fruit and vegetables, 30 percent slightly steamed fruit and vegetables, and 30 percent everything else to include fish, fowl and red meats.

What about taking extra vitamins in a diet? In the last year, much negative research has been written on these, particularly about using the vitamins as antioxidants. Two studies were published in the "New England Journal of Medicine". One study explained the failure

of antioxidants to decrease the usual rate of closure of coronary artery stent, and the other with folks who took the antioxidant vitamins C and E and a statin cholesterol lowering drug which revealed that those who took vitamins failed to lower their lipids as well. In addition, there have been several studies, including that in "JANA" by my Georgetown classmate, Rita Ellenthorpe, M.D. She demonstrated the blood tests (lipid peroxidase and antioxidant levels) that determined premature hardening of the arteries were worse in those who took vitamins compared to fresh fruit and vegetables.

The fresh fruit rationale is due to the fact that they contain the full orchestra of micronutrients (minerals included) rather than just parts and pieces of the orchestra, such as drums or the woodwinds. The whole orchestra is much more effective in bolstering our antioxidant system.

Next week, more about fat loss, rather than just weight loss, and a discussion of DIABESITY.



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