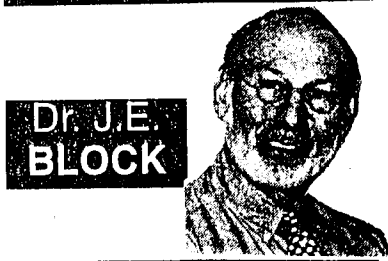


All Things Medical



Thrifty genes

It is not your fault, but that of your ancestors that you have medical problems due to being overweight. Is it evolutionary or "God's Will" that it was not survival of the fittest, but survival of the fattest!

The problem is that through most of evolution, energy intake was less than energy expenditure. Starvation was the rule. So you can imagine that over a million years, with a powerful natural selector (starvation), nature has probably chosen many ways to create a "thrifty genotype", a genotype that will enhance the ability of an organism to survive in times of famine and to pass on its thrifty genes to the next generation.

Only in the last few hundred years has energy intake routinely exceeded energy expenditure. The result is that these thrifty genes, once advantageous, do cause disease now that we live in a time of more than enough food to eat and too little physical activity to burn it off.

Metamucil

According to a recent article in the Annals of Internal Medicine, if

one takes Metamucil or a comparable form such as Wal-Mart's Equate (which costs less than half) before a meal, it will lower your cholesterol as much as if you were taking lots of fiber in your diet. It also may make you less likely to have diverticulosis and cancer of the colon. You may want to remember this: Metamucil tends to gel if you wait too long to drink it after it is mixed. Chitosan, made from the shell of shrimp, works similar to Metamucil, but is much more expensive. Taking fiber, particularly soluble fiber, such as pectin in apples and hemicellulose in other fruits and vegetables may be cheaper and is even more effective.

Splenda sugar substitute

Splenda, a low calorie sweetener that is made from Sucralose and has some dextrose, is now available. It is made from actual sugar and has less than 5 calories compared to an equivalent amount of table sugar, which has 32 calories. A 1 mg (0.4 ounce) package contains as much sweetener as two tablespoons of sugar. It is granular, can be used in cooking and baking and measures just like real table sugar (sucrose). You may be able to get these at health food stores and maybe at supermarkets in the future. It can also be obtained by calling 1-800-777-5363, or visit the website at www.sucralose.com. So far Splenda has none of the side effects of Nutrasweet (Aspartame).