
RAWHIDE HEALTH – MEDICINE IN A BETTER WAY

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Meat and Potatoes

by Dr. Dale J. Ross, M.D.

People frequently find me and ask about various aspects of nutrition; which I am always quite glad to discuss. I find that they are often striving to understand what is best for their bodies in the big picture. When it comes right down to personal choice and commitment to healthy decisions though, some are not really doing too much of even what *they* tell *me* is best for *their* health. People will bring me stories or advice from news reports, well-intentioned friends, knowledgeable celebrities, or they are just trying to remember what their grandma told them they should eat. The internet has spawned its own phenomenon of improvement limitation in that you can research out and find ample support for any specific plan, topic, diagnosis, or diagnostic symptom until you are certain that is exactly what you have or should be doing – regardless of whether it is right for you. To be fair the internet can also provide quite a bit of useful information, but it causes a lot of problems in medicine today.

Back on nutrition. Nutrition is what we gain from food we eat. Your diet is what you regularly eat. This is a better understanding of diet than as something that you “go on” or “off” of. Your diet makes up a fundamental part of your life – what do you usually eat, how and when do you have special foods or treats, do you partake in breakfast, drink coffee, when is the last food before settling in for the night? These are all aspects of your diet.

Eating includes diet and covers much more. “Having a meal” and “eating” is socializing, building kinships, and showing love. It is also indulgence, unregulated harm in many medical conditions, and a surrogate for attention. What and how we eat is some of society’s most enduring rituals. Food and eating are so much more than basic sustenance, but fundamentally need to be understood for what we are doing to ourselves with it. This then brings me to what I want to discuss – the nuts and bolts of eating.

Proper food choice balance is a key concept in industrialized America. We have such availability of so much in regard to food that we can develop very poor patterns. Life, family, and jobs further pull many from healthy routines and we do not even notice how far we have gotten from marginally passing, let alone good or outstanding. Our bodies need protein, fat, and sugar in a balanced way to maintain our systems. Over processed chicken parts to include the bone, cartilage, and veins as recently scientifically identified in fast food nuggets does not constitute good nutrition. Skipping breakfast because you do not have time or “I just never eat breakfast” does not help the body, especially when it is then force revved up with coffee, lattes, and energy drinks just to get you to mid-morning without a complete let down. I find people are often instead chasing sugar rush after sugar rush by grabbing whatever is available explaining, “I just have to eat something or I feel so tired/weak/drained/” This can be done very innocently as we have not understood our bodies nor our foods so that we simply do not know how bad we are mistreating the body. We therefore do not understand why it breaks down and resign ourselves with, “It just runs in my family. It's in my genes. What can I do?” The answer is **A LOT!!**

Now, I enter my healthy recommendations with caution and education for the patient to understand the boundaries that I am referring to then when I say, “Good meat is good food.” Steak, eggs, and milk all have phenomenal components in them to assist the body in what it needs to do. This comes with a

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caveat to understand the recommendation for what it is, which is not a free license to stuff yourself and over indulge because the doctor said steak and eggs were good for you. A lifestyle approach to intelligent food preference and activity balance with your choices, in line with the concepts as described in my prior nutrition and exercise articles, is more of the answer. Learn what is good; learn what is harmful; decide what is worthwhile in your life once you know how much better you can feel when you take care of your body machine.

1) Take 15, 20, 45, minutes 3 or even 5 days a week to build your body up. That is as little as 45 minutes in a week; one week has over 10,000 minutes. The vast majority of Americans do not offer their bodies even that little. 2) Look to bring in approximately 25-30 percent of your calories from protein daily; remembering this nonetheless means 70-75% of all of your calories are still coming from fat and sugar. 3) Find the time to set yourself up for good wholesome, rejuvenating sleep of ~8 hours a night. 4) Drink more water and milk and less of anything else that has a direct impact on degrading your health. 5) Think about these things, try them, or go ahead and do what you have been doing that you don't think you have time or money to change. Or 6) Going the second route your doctor and the local ER's can gladly provide you all the prescriptions you need while you are waiting for your first (or next) stroke or heart attack.

Good health is not rocket science; it starts with just 5 or 6 things, the nuts and bolts/the meat and potatoes. It can take some time to make a change. It helps to have a bit of support and direction. The biggest bang for your buck is in what you personally choose to live and die with. If you think you are ready for better in your life and are not sure where to start, find a doc you trust and go have a good long talk with them.

The nuts and bolts, the meat and potatoes, of good health start with you.