

## Healthy By Choice, Not By Chance

by Dr.\_Michael\_Tobey

"Let your food be your medicine and your medicine be your food"- Hippocrates, father of medicine

There are a few key concepts that must be understood before we discuss wellness nutrition. The goal of any wellness intervention including nutrition is to increase health and well-being. So we must start out with, what is health? Health, by definition, is a state of consistent balanced cell function. All living things, including humans, are composed of individual living cells working together in a self-healing and self-regulating ecosystem to maintain balance, health, and life. Our cells are genetically equipped from birth with the perfect recipe for health. Aside from the occasional genetic defect, our cells are programmed for health and they never malfunction without a physical, emotional or chemical stressor. All health stressors can be divided into two categories: Neglect or abuse. In relation to nutrition, neglect is not eating enough of the proper food to give your cells the nutrients they need to function normally. Abuse comes from eating too much. So what are the proper foods your body needs to be healthy? Great question. The problem is, depending on who you talk to you can get a hundred different answers. Atkins, Pritikin, South Beach; all great diets, all get results, all completely different. For our purpose, I'm talking about what is the proper way to eat to maximize your health, not lose weight. You can be skinny and unhealthy. From a genetic standpoint we are the same today as our hunter-gatherer ancestors from 20,000 years ago. Their diet consisted of 65% plants and 35% animals. The appearance of agriculture and domestication of animals some 10,000 years ago and the industrial revolution 200 years ago introduced dietary pressures for which no adaptation has been possible in such a short time span. Thus an inevitable discrepancy exists between our dietary intake and what our genes are suited to. Our ancestors didn't have exposure to pasta, whole wheat bread, yogurt and other assorted "healthy" foods, much less the Big Mac, soda pop and candy bar. It is no wonder then, that we are seeing a huge increase in Western societies in the past 100 years in coronary disease, hypertension, diabetes and some types of cancers. These conditions are virtually unknown among the few surviving hunter-gatherer populations whose way of life and eating habits most closely resemble those of our pre-agricultural ancestors. Until next time. Choose health. Michael Tobey, DC Bend Oregon, Central Oregon, Bend Weekly

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