



Health and Wellness Pavilion

Yankee Dental Congress 2019

NUTRITION & WELLNESS TIPS

Sponsored by: MDS Health & Wellness Committee



Answers to Nutrition and Wellness

Question 1: True or false? If you want to lose weight all you have to do is eat less and exercise more.

Answer 1: **False, calorie restriction alone doesn't equate to weight loss!**

The rise in calorie trackers would lead you to believe that if you burn more calories than you eat, you will lose weight. Right? On the contrary, all calories are not created equal. Two hundred calories of chocolate does not equal two hundred calories of salad. You can't out workout a poor diet, even if you burn those two hundred calories off at the gym.

It is also important to note that our bodies are primal and respond accordingly. Calorie restriction and skipping meals sends the message to our body that we are in a state of famine. Your body will switch into survival mode and will slow down your metabolism, increase cravings, and hold onto any calories that you do consume. Severe calorie restriction will actually impair your thyroid and cellular function. In turn, you are actually more likely to gain weight.



Pro Tip: Stop counting! Focus on eating high quality, whole foods such as vegetables, fruits, meats, nuts, and whole grains. These are all nutrient dense options that will keep you full and energized for hours, so you don't find yourself looking for a snack shortly after eating. If you stock up on the good stuff there is no need to count calories, skip meals, or over exercise.

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Question 2

Which of the following foods are healthy for everyone and can be consumed as much as you'd like.

- a.) Apples
- b.) Spinach
- c.) Chicken
- d.) None of the above

Answer 2: D. There is no food, including fruit, vegetables, and lean animal protein that is a healthy foods for EVERYONE.

Many weight loss programs lead you to believe that consuming unlimited amounts of fruits, vegetables and lean protein is the key to a healthier you. However, there are two main issues with this thought process.

The first is that while fruit and root vegetables have the benefit of nutritious phytonutrients and fiber, it also contains lots of natural sugar. Sugar is sugar, even the natural kinds. Excessive consumption of fruit and root vegetables can result in a blood sugar rollercoaster of highs and lows. This stress on your body and adrenal gland leads to more cravings and overeating.



Pro Tip: Aim to eat a protein, complex carbohydrate, and healthy fat with each meal or snack. For example, rather than eating just an apple, add some nut butter. This will avoid the blood sugar spike and crash, while keeping you fuller longer.

The second flaw in this thought process is that different foods work for different people. We'd like to believe that spinach is healthy for everyone and we should get it into our diets as much as we can. However, even the healthiest foods can actually be detrimental to your body if you have a food sensitivity. Regularly consuming foods that you are sensitive to has significant impacts to the gut. Overtime this can result in impaired immunity, poor absorption of food, malnutrition despite eating well, an increased number of sensitivities, leaky gut, bacteria and pathogen over growths, and liver congestion. There is also a strong correlation between consuming food sensitivities and a long list of serious illnesses, mood disorders, and autoimmune diseases. Thus, just because it is a "health food" doesn't mean it is a healthy choice for you.

Pro Tip: Identifying and avoiding your personal sensitivities can avoid all of these symptoms and negative effects. Consider taking a food sensitivity test that detects the foods and food chemicals that are causing non-allergic immune and inflammatory responses in your body.

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Question 3

True or false? You should avoid egg yolks because they raise your cholesterol and cause heart attacks.

Answer 3: False, Eating cholesterol doesn't raise your cholesterol.

Many of us grew up avoiding foods that are high in cholesterol in fear that they would increase our cholesterol levels and lead to heart disease. Newer research has proven that there is no connection between the consumption of eggs, heart attacks or strokes. In fact, cholesterol is a critical component of proper hormone balance.

While that myth was laid to rest, others began to question the link between choline, a vitamin found in egg yolks, and heart disease. This led to the egg white craze during the 1990s. Again, recent research determined that choline is a beneficial nutrient for maintaining a healthy liver, adrenal gland, and neurological system.



Pro Tip: Eat the yolks! This is a fabulous source of vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, vitamin B complexes, calcium, zinc, phosphorus, antioxidants, and omega 3 fatty acids. This will also help you to avoid the thickeners, dyes, and chemicals added to prepackaged cartons of egg whites.

Question 4

Which product contains the least amount of sugar and is the healthier option?

- a) 1 can of Red Bull energy drink
- b) 1 cup of Strawberry Low Fat Dannon Yogurt
- c) 1 cup of Breyers Vanilla Ice cream



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Answer 4: B, but watch out as low fat products commonly equate to high sugar or added artificial sweeteners!

The yogurt has 23 grams of sugar compared to the 26 grams in the ice cream and 27 grams in the Red Bull. Relatively speaking this is a pretty small difference and a whole lot of sugar. Many of us would like to think that low fat yogurt is a healthy option. But 23 grams of sugar is about four teaspoons of sugar in the yogurt alone, before you consider adding fruit or granola.

It is critical that you read labels and know what you are eating. We've been told that dietary fats cause heart attacks and obesity and that the main issue with sugar is that it is empty calories. On the contrary, excess sugar in your blood can lead to inflammation, insulin resistance, high levels of triglycerides and cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, weight gain and obesity. In an effort to keep low fat processed foods delicious companies are adding more sugar and artificial sugar to products.

Pro Tip: Work to limit your consumption of sugar to five teaspoons a day or less than 10% of your daily food intake. There are over ninety different kinds of added sugar on the market today so it is important to know how to spot them on your food labels.

Question 5

True or false? The main predictors of a healthy lifestyle are nutrition and exercise.

Answer 5: False, health is the accumulation of everything that feeds your mind, body and soul.

It's hard to deny that nutrition and movement play a critical role, but the components of health do not end there. Holistic health is the accumulation of everything that feeds your mind body and soul. In addition to the food you eat, this includes:

- Relationships with friends, family, and partners
- A fulfilling career
- Financial stability
- Spirituality, whether religious, meditation, or yoga
- Daily movement
- Hobbies and interests
- Joy, comfort, affection and laughter
- Sense of adventure or creativity



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Despite eating well and exercising regularly you may not feel vibrant and alive in the absence of a strong community, passion for work and a sense of purpose. True health is rooted in a balance and satisfaction in all of these components.

Pro Tip: Take a few minutes at assess all aspects of your wellness. The categories of importance are unique to each individual so focus on the areas that are most important to you. Rate yourself on a scale of one to ten on how fulfilled you feel in each area. Now that you are more aware of the gaps in all of the areas that contribute to your overall health make an action plan to address these areas. Pick two specific actions that you can commit to and schedule them into your week. For extra accountability you can share your action plan with a family member or friend.



Question 6

True or false? Self-care practices are only effective if you have 30 minutes or more to practice each day.

Answer 6: False, self-care and wellness practices are beneficial even in increments as small as 30 to 60 seconds.

It is extremely easy to get caught up in the craziness of our modern day world. Balancing work responsibilities, family life, a social life, and general health practices can be a lot. It's easy to lose sight of our health and self-care practices. However, failure to focus on supporting your own health can limit your ability to fulfill your work and personal commitments to the best of your ability.

Pro Tip: Make a list of your favorite self-care practices and the things that bring you joy. Make a point to spend 10 minutes a day practicing one form of self-care and one thing that brings you joy.

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Need some inspiration? While it's not all encompassing, here is a great list of self-care practices:

Movement such as yoga, stretching, walking, running, cycling, fitness class or going to the gym.

Mindfulness practices such as meditation, visualization, breathing exercises, goal cards, or gratitude journaling.

Body work such as massage, chiropractic adjustments, reiki, cranial sacral therapy or reflexology.

Relax by taking an Epsom Salt Bath, making a foot soak, reading, coloring, enjoying a warm beverage and some quiet time, gratitude journaling, or diffusing essential oils. (Note watching television was not included in this list!)

Anything that brings you joy: Getting some fresh air in nature, hiking, hanging out with friends/family, chatting with your long distant friends/family, playing with a pet, going on an adventure, playing an instrument, cooking, making something creative, going to a concert, watch a funny video or comedian, or partaking in your favorite hobby.

Sleep is indeed a form of self-care. Getting 7-9 hours of sleep each night provides your body time to perform necessary restorative functions and provides you the energy to do all of the things you love.

An example of how your day could look:

Okay you might be thinking *"That all sounds great, but I'm already extremely busy. I don't have time to add all of this into my day."*

Not to worry! You are not alone in wishing there was more time in the day. The good news is that self-care does not need to take a lot of time and can easily be incorporated into your existing schedule. Here is an example of a day packed with self-care practices. There is no need to implement ALL of these ideas. The following page is more to show you how easy it is to make time for two or three moments of self-care throughout the day.

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Morning

- **Wake up** (15 minutes earlier than you do now)
- Drink 16 ounces of water
- Stretch/yoga for 5 minutes
- Mindfulness practice for 5 minutes
- **Shower/ Get ready for the day**
- **Breakfast** sitting at a table

Work

- Practice some deep breathing exercises while **driving to work**
- **Throughout your work day and meetings**
 - Sneak in some movement
 - Create a standing desk
 - Have a walking meeting
 - 1-5 minutes at the end of each hour:
 - Stand up!
 - Go for a walk around the building
 - Stretch
 - Walk to fill up your water bottle
 - 1 minute breathing exercise
- **Lunch** not sitting at your desk
 - Make a point to pause work, emails and technology

After Work

- Practice some deep breathing exercises while **driving home**
- Get in some **movement**
 - Go to the gym or a fitness class
 - Go for a walk with your dog or family
 - Do some yoga or stretching at home
- Enjoy **dinner** sitting at a table with no work or technology distraction
- **Evening activity**
 - Spend time with family or friends
 - Practice Self-care
 - Monthly body work appointment
 - An activity that brings you joy
- Go to **bed** early enough to get 7-9 hours of sleep

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