

Salt & Light

Spring 2008

The Newsletter of the Social Concerns Ministry Team

You are the salt of the earth...
You are the light of the world...

Educating and informing the church body in light of biblical principles

Mt. 5:13-14

Editorial Note:

In our last issue of *Salt & Light*, we addressed some of the issues surrounding today's health care system. In this country, we not only have a health care crisis, but a **health crisis**, as well. Obesity, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and many other chronic diseases afflict millions. Medical technology alone will not solve these problems. We need to pursue healthy lifestyles, with nutrition being the cornerstone of healthy living.

This issue of *Salt & Light* discusses the role of nutrition in healthy living. As Christians we have a great responsibility to take care of ourselves. Our first article addresses the biblical view of this responsibility. The second article stresses the importance of training our children in proper nutrition through our example. With 1 in 3 children born in 2000 now expected to develop diabetes in their lifetimes, we have a responsibility to teach our children how to take care of their bodies.

If you heed the advice in the next article (10 Types of Food), you'll be on your way to healthier eating. And our last article addresses the organic food issue, and may answer some of the questions about why buying organic may matter more than we think.

Biblical Responsibility for a Healthy Body

From: Gary Stewart, John Kilner, et al., *Alternative Medicine* (Kregel)

A biblical view of health includes physical, mental, and social well-being but also adds the spiritual dimension. God's will is for people to have "good health, just as your soul prospers" (3 John 2)...Many things contribute to good health: a proper diet, exercise, sleep, stress reduction, and good relationships with other people and God. Common sense, along with a growing body of research evidence, shows that these are important for healthier lifestyles and the prevention of various illnesses....

Scientific developments, of which medicine is a part, have improved public health and sanitation. New technology and drugs have led to complicated medical practices that only trained physicians seem able to understand.

However, a negative side-effect of these developments has been the belief that health and illness are purely physical in nature. The importance of other influences on health, such as diet, exercise, emotions, and spirituality has been neglected. We think that we can live life as we want and the physician can

fix any problems that result. The technological advances in medical intervention and the technical abilities of the physician have distorted the role of medicine. Some have viewed medicine as humanity's savior. In the process, individual responsibility for health has been overlooked....

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

1 Cor 6:19 NASB

The biblical view of responsibility for health is God-centered rather than self-centered. Our bodies are gifts (or better, loans) from God for which we are responsible to care—they have been purchased by the blood of Christ. They are not our own to do with as we please. Instead, by faith, we should pursue good health to glorify God, serve others (Rom. 14:7-8; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 5:15; Phil. 1:20-26), and participate in everything that God has given us to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17). Only in this context will believers be able to experience the abundant life Christ has offered (John 10:10).

Although health is ultimately from God (Ps. 103:1-5), each individual bears a great responsibility for his or her own health. †

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Prior issues of *Salt & Light* available at www.wbc.org

Children's Illness Is Epidemic from Poor Nutrition

From: Dr. John Lee's Medical Letter, May 2001 (www.johnleemd.com)

Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation (www.ppnf.org)

Poor nutrition is causing an epidemic of serious illness in our children, including diabetes, heart disease and osteoporosis. I kid you not. Obese children who don't exercise are showing signs of heart disease as young as age five, and are getting full blown Type 2 diabetes in their teens. Osteoporosis, normally a disease of old age, is showing up in teenage girls, and is probably caused by drinking too much soda pop. (The phosphorus in the soda causes the body to leach calcium from the bones to buffer its acidity.)...

Children will become healthier when parents become healthier. Parents who are chronically rushing home late from work and grabbing

some fast food for dinner damage the health of both themselves and their kids. Parents who insist on keeping soda pop in the refrigerator because they can't live without it, will have kids who also can't live without it from a very young age. Parents who just have to have sugary cereal or yogurt for breakfast in the morning, a candy bar in the afternoon, and a dish of ice cream after dinner every night, will find that their kids also just have to have sugar morning, noon and night.

Eating habits are an area where parents can make a sacrifice for their children by being good role models. If parents are eating whole grain toast and an egg for breakfast,

their kids will. If they're eating an apple for a snack and drinking water to quench their thirst, their children will do the same. Granted, it can be a challenge once kids start going to birthday parties and over to friends' houses to convince them that sugar- and fat-laden foods aren't good for them, but if you're consistent and firm in your message, they will at least follow your lead at home. I'm very aware of how difficult it can be to maintain good eating habits when you're juggling work and family, but good nutrition should be near the top of your priority list, because it will affect your children's well-being for the rest of their lives. †

10 Types of Food You Should Avoid

From: BL Publications · NHL Ministries, Beth M. Ley, Ph.D., www.blpublications.com/html/body_foodstoavoid.html

Did you realize most health problems are a direct result of our lifestyle choices? One third of all cancers in the United States are due to improper nutrition -- too much fat, too little fiber and not enough fruits and vegetables. By simply integrating more of these (healthy) foods into your daily diet, and by cutting back on the most harmful food choices, you'll be one (huge) step closer to a healthier, disease-free life.

Of course, one should always keep in mind that good nutrition doesn't necessarily lead directly to great health. Be sure to integrate exercise into your lifestyle and keep stress to a minimum.

10 Types of Food You Should Avoid:

1. Sugar

The foods from which sugar was originally derived (sugar cane and sugar beets) contain all of the nutrients (chromium, zinc, B vitamins, fiber, etc.) required for the body to properly metabolize the final isolated chemical we know as sugar (sucrose). Without these nutrients which are eliminated in

processing, the body is greatly stressed. Sugar consumption is associated with weight gain, obesity, Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, immune depression and much more.

2. Hydrogenated fats

These "fake" fats (such as margarine, Crisco and anything referred to as hydrogenated or

partially hydrogenated vegetable oils) are made by altering the natural chemical structure of a vegetable oil (liquid at room temperature) to act more like a saturated fat

(solid at room temperature). In the process, the natural "cis" chemical configuration changes to a nasty unnatural "trans" configuration. This is very difficult for the body to process and it ends up getting stuck in our arteries and veins, even to a greater extent than a cholesterol

molecule would. Cholesterol is natural and the body knows how to metabolize it in small amounts. Studies now show that these non-cholesterol containing hydrogenated products actually increase cholesterol levels in individuals more so than if the person would have eaten the butter!

3. Pop and other man-made "non-foods"

Just 12 oz. of soda contains 10 teaspoons of sugar, plus phosphoric acid which robs your body of minerals contributing to an acidic

4. Aspartame and other man-made artificial sweeteners

Upon ingestion, aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal and Spoonful) is metabolized to two amino acids (phenylalanine and aspartic acid)

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"The major causes of illness and death in the U.S. are related to what we eat... including heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and other chronic problems."

Dr. D. Mark Hegsted,
Harvard School of Public Health

Why Organic?

From: National Integrated Health Associates, www.NIHADC.com

Some food facts to consider:

- A. **Modern agriculture methods utilize fertilizers** that are largely composed of nitrogen and phosphorus—mostly from chemical sources. These fertilizers grow a good-looking fruit or vegetable but the density of the vitamins and minerals contained in the foods is lessened.
- B. **Commercial fertilizer** is only one of the culprits responsible for the degradation of the nutritional value of our foods. Because of commercial fertilizers, the fruits and vegetables can be grown on the same soil year after year without changing the outward appearance of the crop. However, soils used under these conditions eventually become depleted of their trace minerals. The result is fruit and vegetables with fewer essential minerals.
- C. **Organic growers must rely on fertilizers** which re-supply the lost minerals to the soil. Fruits and vegetables grown under organic conditions where no chemical pesticides are used must rely on the health of the plant to minimize pest damage to the crops. This requires an ample supply of minerals in the soil available to the plants. Therefore, the organic crops can

be expected to have a higher nutritional content of minerals.

D. **Vitamins are often produced by the plants in the latter stage of ripening.** When fruits and vegetables are picked early and are expected to ripen on the way to the market, the mineral and vitamin content of the food is decreased. Organic foods are often more seasonal and are picked and shipped closer to ripening.

E. **Finally, the organic growers do not use commercial pesticides during growth.** When the soil becomes more and more depleted of the minerals, the plant becomes more vulnerable to pest infestation. Larger amounts of pesticides are required. These chemicals are incorporated in our foods and, since they are foreign to our bodily systems, they must be detoxified by our liver to render them harmless. To some who have compromised detoxification systems or who have allergic-type reactions to these foreign insect poisons, the pesticides become harmful or poisonous to the individual. These people have learned they can eat only organic foods. Organic fruits and vegetables may not look as large or as unblemished as their

commercially grown counterparts, but it is what is inside that counts: the vitamins, minerals, and the absence of commercial insect poisons.

F. **Eat organic meats and fish.** Commercially grown meats and poultry where hormones, antibiotics, and other chemical enhancers are routinely given may not be as healthy to eat as organically grown animals since these chemicals wind up in the meat. In addition, commercially grown animals do not forage for their food, but are fed grains that help to fatten the animal. While this fat may help with the taste of the meat, the increased saturated fat is not healthful and the type of fat eaten increases the risk for inflammatory conditions. Some poultry growers use arsenic to destroy the thyroids of the chickens, for fattening and bringing the chicken to market faster. Of course you eat the arsenic laced meat. Fish can be farm raised or wild. If fish are in polluted water, the meat will contain the pollutants of the environment (i.e. mercury). If fish are farm raised they are fed unnatural diets, often grain and meat by-products; the fish flesh is a different color and taste. †

10 Types of Food You Should Avoid

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and methanol. When the temperature of aspartame or aspartame gas containing products exceeds 86 degrees F, the methanol (which is wood alcohol) converts to formaldehyde and then to formic acid, which in turn causes metabolic acidosis. (Formic acid is the poison found in the sting of fire ants.)

The U.S. Congressional record states, "Aspartame makes you crave carbohydrates and will make you FAT." Dr. H. J. Roberts, diabetes specialist, stated that when he got patients off aspartame, their

average weight loss was 19 pounds per person. It is NOT A DIET PRODUCT!

5. Fried foods

These are loaded with trans fatty acids which damage your arteries, spike your blood sugar and cause weight gain.

6. White flour and other refined grains

The processing of whole wheat to white flour removes up to 90% of at least 22 different nutrients including B vitamins, vitamin E, iron, calcium, magnesium, chromium, zinc, copper, amino

acids and unsaturated fatty acids. Stick to WHOLE grains that contain everything that God intended them to provide us. (Also avoid foods made with white flour such as most store-bought pasta, crackers, etc.)

7. Processed meats

Added chemicals and the trans fatty acids they contain actually increase your blood sugar and cholesterol, decrease your ability to regulate your blood sugar and increase your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, heart disease,

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stroke, etc. In addition, most are also high in fat.

8. Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal

These popular refined convenience foods are high in sugar, low in fiber, low in nutrients and offer very little besides calories. Whole grains (from which these cereals were originally made) may easily contain 40-50 different nutrients, although many of them may be in trace amounts, they are nonetheless of critical importance for us to metabolize these grains. Up to 90% of these are lost in processing, and enrichment of 9 to 11 or even 17 of these does little to make up for what was removed. The fiber removed from these carbohydrate foods, causes our blood sugar to jump sky high, which when dropping an hour or so later, leaves us feeling more hungry than we were before we ate, and sleepy as well.

A much better choice would be steel-cut oats which provide soluble fiber (such as beta glucans) that

helps lower bad cholesterol while improving good cholesterol and stabilizing blood sugar levels. However, the mainstay of our breakfast should be protein (such as soft or hard boiled eggs or fish) to help stabilize our blood sugar for the day.

9. White rice

Brown rice and wild rice are much better choices as they have many nutrients that can't be found in white rice. They also have a lower glycemic index meaning brown and wild rice have less of an impact upon increasing our blood sugar after eating them compared to white rice. This is most likely due to the fiber content differences. One

serving of white rice has approximately 1 gram of fiber. Brown rice has 2 grams and wild rice has 3-4 grams per serving.

10. Be wary of "Fat Free"

Many foods naturally contain some fat. Removing the fat also removes some of the flavor so in order to make these foods palatable, companies often add sugar, salt and artificial flavors. Check and compare the labels yourself. Because fat provides a natural satiation response, without it, we often eat MORE! and can end up consuming more calories than we would have if we would have eaten the natural stuff! †

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