

Why Nutrition is such an Issue Nowadays

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Introduction. If I eat three healthy meals a day why should I even think of using supplements? This seems logical. Eat well and you will get everything you need from your diet and will stay healthy. Sadly it is no longer correct. For our parents that may have worked, but things have changed.

Materials and methods. Once upon a time vegetables were grown in your garden and animals grew up in fields. I say “once upon a time” but it is only 40 or 50 years ago that this was basically true.

Now we find that vegetables are grown in depleted and often contaminated soils. They are nurtured with chemicals to get best production but the trace elements that are so important to our long term health are not in the soils to begin with and soon the plants cannot put them into the vegetables and fruit that we buy. It is a difficult place to begin the food chain. Next we pick fruit before it is ripe. This is so that it will store and so that it will transport well. For example, apples are picked green. The nice red apples we buy in supermarkets need to be looked at a little carefully. If they are red on one side and green on the other then they may have come straight off a tree but if they are red all around then they have been picked green, stored, and then put into a carbon dioxide chamber to force them to go red so that they will look good on the shelf!

A friend of mine bought a cucumber hothouse operation but when she was looking at businesses she considered an orchard. In the disclosure information she noticed that part of the price was for stock and there were apples that had been in store for nearly 4 years. She said that they were obviously no good and she would not pay for them but the owners insisted that they were fine and when the market was right they would come out of storage, go through the CO₂ chambers and go into the shops.

This is scary because we know that in that case the apples will have the nutritional value of cardboard. In fact with the higher roughage in it the cardboard may be healthier for you!

You eat apples for the vitamins and minerals and the antioxidants. An apple a day keeps the doctor away. If you take an apple from the supermarket though and cut it into quarters and the phone rings so you go to answer it then when you come back 10 or 15 min later the apple is often starting to brown already. If you have an apple straight from the garden and you cut it in half and put it in the fridge while you go to work then when you come back in the evening there will be some discoloring but it will still be basically good.

Results. Why is this? It is because an apple, in its natural state, is full of antioxidants and other good things. The antioxidants stop the air from causing the apple to go brown. The store

bought apples have little or no antioxidants because of being picked before they could ripen properly and the nutrient we in the apple and then because of the transport and storage of the fruit.

There was a time when fruit was only available in season. Now it is available all year around though the Bananas on offer may be local today, from Brazil in a few weeks time and from Asia a couple of weeks after that. Getting fruit from all over the world to you has a cost beyond the financial purchase price. Over and over again we see newspaper articles that tell us in horror that oranges that we eat for vitamin C were tested and found to have no vitamin C, carrots with no vitamin A, all sorts of fruit and vegetables that are not giving the basic nutrition that they are designed to give.

You do not need all the science to tell you this, just eat a piece of fruit or vegetable that is home grown, like a tomato, and compare to what you can get from the shops. The home grown one is special but that is because it is unusual. It is the way things are meant to be. The difference in flavour is also directly matched in a difference in nutritional value. The food we are eating is just not supplying the nutrition we need.

Meat has similar problems but they are more based around feed lots and animals and birds not living a natural life. They are fed on formula foods designed to promote fast growth and to avoid sickness that may come from living in crowded conditions. Many meat products are tainted with growth hormones, with antibiotics, and with a range of other chemicals that have been pumped into them. I think this is all fairly clear. The issues around cooking foods in a way that destroys the little nutrition that is left in the food has been talked about enough that I expect we are all aware of it. A few years ago the Cambridge University Nutrition Department did a study on getting the right foods to give full nutrition from just food. Sadly their results told that the diet required was so strict that no one could stick to it. Worse though was the discovery that with the depleted level of nutrition available in the foods available people would need to eat a volume of food to get the goodness that was so much that they would be eating excessive calories and the nutrition diet would be a weight gain diet.

Conclusions. This is such a huge problem that something must be done about it and I am sure that something will be done. In the mean time, until answers are found to these problems, it is wise to supplement your diet with good quality nutrition supplements to keep yourself healthy.

References

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