

7 Things Your Doctor Doesn't Tell You

By Laura Farb, L.Ac., ACN

Unfortunately, insurance and pharmaceutical companies drive our health care system, which doesn't value preventative medicine and preemptively alleviating health care costs. Doctors are short on time, and most have minimal training on nutrition and holistic ways of treating disease, if any. With some education and focus on preventative and maintenance care, people can take more control of being healthy and avoid the need for costly care in the long run.

#1 The Low Fat Fallacy

The connection between dietary fat and disease has become so entrenched in our society that it's spawned a multi-million dollar processed food industry leading to the detriment of our collective health. Dietary fat, saturated or not, does NOT lead to obesity, heart disease or any other chronic disease. Overconsumption of *refined carbohydrates*, starches and sugars is the problem.

Elevated blood sugar from eating too many carbs leads to spikes in insulin, which doesn't allow the body to burn fat from reserves and is also a major source of inflammation in the body. Excess refined carbohydrate and sugar consumption are leading causes of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes, not to mention colds, fatigue and depression. Wholesome fats--not hydrogenated or trans fats—are an essential part of our diet and are necessary for hormonal balance, nerve and brain function.

Eat fats found in nature, including some saturated fat. Avoid synthetic fats found in margarine, processed foods, and man-made oils such as canola, and give your body the building blocks it needs.

#2 Natural health solutions work!

There are natural solutions to nearly every medical condition, which are safer alternatives, actually improve your health, and are void of ALL of the side effects of medication and drugs. Not to mention, they'll save you a lot of money in the long run.

- **Acupuncture and Chinese medicine** is one great solution. It's been around for thousands of years and primarily uses acupuncture and Chinese herbs for any imbalance or disorder *without* side effects. The "side effect" of an acupuncture treatment is feeling a sense of calm! And, Chinese medicine is a great way to get preventative health care before problems become chronic.
- **Nutrition and diet** are essential in health and longevity and are often overlooked by the medical profession. Eating *whole* foods, including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and yes, even food sources from animals, help give the body the fuel it needs and recognizes. Try new foods and vary the things you eat, so you can get a wider array of nutrients. Two

great grains you might want to try are quinoa and millet, which are also sources of protein. And go for a rainbow of colors when choosing your fruits and veggies.

- Supplemental vitamins, minerals, and herbs, which are ideally whole food based, are another important natural solution and a better place to start with than pharmaceutical drugs. Even though we would rather get all our nutrients from food, our soils have been depleted and our modern diet doesn't have the vitamin and mineral content it did even as in the 1950's. Qualified health care practitioners can help you target your nutritional needs without the expense and side effects of medications.

#3 Drugs can shorten your lifespan.

Taking medications, prescription or over the counter, actually shorten your lifespan. The liver and kidneys are primary organs that deal with the detoxification of these chemicals, and chronic use over many years puts a strain on them decreasing your body's optimal function. Look to treat the *causes* of your discomfort, so you're not constantly chasing symptoms. Healthier solutions for what's ailing you are out there.

#4 Water is the source of life.

Proper hydration is often overlooked as one of the most important things you can do to stay healthy. On average, your body loses and needs to replace two or three quarts of water a day. To protect your body's hydration level, simply drink more water with the guide of $\frac{1}{2}$ your body weight in ounces/day. Increase this when you're more active, especially in the summer. With this simple tip, you can keep your energy up and avoid unnecessarily eating when your body just wants water.

#5 Neti Pot as part of your daily routine

Before you reach for antihistamines or nasal sprays, try using a Neti Pot. What's that?! It's a small container made of ceramic, plastic or metal used for irrigating the nasal passages, which works with the flow of gravity using a saline solution. Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of sea salt with enough warm water (not too hot!) to fill the pot for each nostril. Plug one side of your nose with it and let the water pour through the other side. You can use it several times a day or once a week, but best not to do it when you're in the midst of a full on allergy attack. This simple tool is great for dealing with chronic allergies and averting sinus problems, even bronchitis, especially when used on a daily basis.

#6 Sugar is ruining your health.

If you're sick or not feeling well, notice what you're eating. Sugar, not only as sweets and candy but also as refined carbohydrates, soda and alcohol, compromises the immune system and makes it difficult for the body to resist infection. White sugar is, essentially, a legalized recreational drug that's socially acceptable to consume.

And like other drugs, it destroys your health over time, depressing the immune system, disrupting normal brain function, promoting heart disease and directly causing diabetes and obesity.

Ever watch a child before and after he consumes candy or a sugar-laden treat? Hyperactivity, mood swings, and difficulty concentrating are often the results. Refined sugars wreak havoc in the body, and cancer feeds on it. Choose fruit and natural sweeteners such as stevia when in search of something sweet. Also, take note that sugar cravings can signal a need for other nutritional needs such as protein and fat in your diet.

#7 Meditate—start with 5 minutes every day.

Doctors don't usually mention this one, and it's amazingly beneficial for stress relief. Meditation is taking some down time from the constant chatter of the mind. One simple technique is to focus on the breath. Count to 5 with each inhale and again to 5 with each exhale. Start with 5 minutes, gently bringing the mind back if it gets off track. You might also enjoy taking a walk in nature or gardening, swimming or dancing as your meditation. Whatever you do, give your mind a break! Stress is the ultimate cause of disease and when the mind relaxes, the body does, too, and life becomes much more manageable and delightful.

While it takes time to change lifestyle habits, each positive choice you make day-to-day paves the way for better health and for feeling great. Start with an honest assessment of habits that aren't serving you and make a commitment to change them, one at a time. Replace them with activities that inspire you, food that invigorates you, and taking time to rest. Find health care practitioners who can assist you and address your individual goals.

I find nothing more gratifying than supporting people in feeling better through more natural means. Without good health, life's journey can take its toll on us; but with a little bit of consistent effort and support, we can feel strong and energized and fulfill our greatest dreams. Let's find out what's holding you back. If I can assist you in any way, please [contact](#) me. I am happy to help you find solutions that work for you.

Yours in health,

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