

Healthy Wednesday Club

Newsletter Issue 14

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I never cease to be amazed at the personal stories of satisfaction and relief that come from people who are making healthy improvements to their lifestyle. There was a lovely story from a woman on Saturday who used USANA nutrient products and had an almost instant sense of improvement. My understanding of how the body works leads me to think that much of that response is a placebo response to emotional barriers. That is not a criticism, I think that is fantastic. This woman's initial body response to the products was positive enough for her to shift into a positive mindset and lift the performance of her immune system.

The ability of the body to have an energetic response even before something has had a chance to get into the system is well researched and evidenced through muscle testing techniques. Even better is that I know from other research that if this woman continues with the nutrients that there will also be additional benefits for her system as the nutrients contribute to her metabolism.

This led me to think of some of the misunderstandings we are hearing about the meal replacement program. One of our customers proudly declared that once she didn't even need to have the replacement shake and was able to miss the meal all together. This is not what a healthy lifestyle is about. That is what starving yourself into thinness is, but it is not healthy. So, in the article on page 3 there is a brief explanation about why each meal – whether a healthy low GI meal or a replacement shake – is needed to keep the bodies healthy processes in balance. Check it out.

When you have an "I Hate My Job" day, try this:

On your way home from work, stop at your pharmacy and go to the thermometer section and purchase a rectal thermometer made by Johnson & Johnson

Be very sure you get this brand. When you get home, lock your doors, draw the curtains and disconnect the phone so you will not be disturbed.

Change into very comfortable clothing and sit in your favorite chair. Open the package and remove the thermometer. Now, carefully place it on a table or a surface so that it will not become chipped or broken.

Now the fun part begins. Take out the literature from the box and read it carefully. You will notice that in small print there is a statement:

"Every Rectal Thermometer made by Johnson & Johnson is personally tested and then sanitized"

Now, close your eyes and repeat out loud five times, "I am so glad I do not work in the thermometer quality control department at Johnson & Johnson."

(Thanks to H. H. for this irreverent contribution)

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FABULOUS LOW GI FOOD

Dairy free low GI snackbar

Ingredients:

2 cups rolled oats (as unprocessed as possible)
1/3 cup dried apricots
1/2 cup chopped dates
1/4 cup sunflower seeds
3 tblspns honey (or golden syrup)
2 tblspns ground cinnamon
1 tblspn coconut or vanilla extract
1 cup soymilk
1 eggwhite (lightly beaten)

Preparation:

- Preheat oven to 180C
- Place all ingredients in large bowl. Mix well.
- Line a 20cm square cake pan with baking powder
- Press mixture into pan and bake for 30 mins
- Allow to cool and cut into pieces.

Serves 8.

HEALTHY WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

Body: When you think of all the difficulties we have with our upper back because of computer use, sedentary office work, carrying and picking up kids and other body stresses like these, you might think it is a complex mess to fix up. Not really. A massage is a great way to loosen up the tissue, but you also need strength. That is why the pain and problems are happening in the first place. Of all the zillion exercises for the back and shoulders (which are all very good in principle) a single exercise can do everything you need to strengthen and balance upper back, shoulder, arm and chest troubles: push-ups. So simple, but oh so effective. You can do the full version with toes on the floor and body straight, but there are plenty of other versions that you can start with. Half push ups are where you leave you knees on the floor. You can do pushes away from the wall while standing. A little imagination can create a number of gentler versions that help you build up to the full version. You might even end up like Jack Palance at the 1992 Academy awards and do one armed push-ups for all the world to see.

Mind: Balance left and right hemisphere activity with this simple exercise. While sitting or standing, lift your right knee and at the same time move your left hand over onto the right knee as it lifts. Do the same with the left knee and right hand. Repeat for about 2 minutes. If there is something in you memory you were trying retrieve you might find it easier after or even during this exercise.

Soul: Near Sunset it is common for birds to gather in a single tree, making a huge noise. It's like happy hour, but without the mind-numbing alcohol. On the basis that birds are symbolic of the soul or parts of our unique specialness, see if you find this happening somewhere and consider the myriad of souls and unique qualities as they interact in the tree.

Why We Eat

There are lots of different mechanisms that incite us to eat. Most of the mechanisms have other jobs, too. Sometimes their main job is to regulate eating and not eating. Sometimes eating is just an unfortunate side-effect. It is reasonable to say that the eating side-effect has never been a problem because there has never been a constant over-supply of food. Nowadays the opportunity to respond by eating to any and allof these healthy inclinations toward eating is so plentiful, that we are eating ourselves sick. It is so bizarre to think that food could be making us sick, but anyone who has a had a 3 year old at a birthday party and had to clean up the projectile vomit that inevitably follows the cakes, sweets and running around knows the truth. The body has no way of controlling the urges or doing anything about it when we have eaten it – other than throw up. The sad thing is that when people get older they work out that the only sure fire way of getting rid of food once you've eaten it is throwing up (and laxatives). We all know

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the terrible dangers of bulimia and anorexia. That is starvation gone crazy. Obesity, metabolic syndrome and diabetes II is overeating gone crazy.

Let's look at 3 of the main players in the hunger/eating game. There are 3 hormones/peptides that regulate the system throughout the day – Ghrelin; Neuropeptide K and Orexin. I love the names they think up for our body chemicals. Clearly not a very imaginative day for the discoverers of neuropeptide K. Sometimes I feel that it would be easier to remember if we just these chemicals Bert, Fred and Mary, but that's a different argument.

Back to the peptides. Now, it is important to remember that almost everything in the body is multifunctional and so it is very difficult when you try to say that something does some particular thing, but let's try and not complicate it too much. Just bear in mind that all these explanations are a bit simple, but we're just trying to get a better idea of how things work.

Neuropeptide K is a messenger chemical that is released in conjunction with the sympathetic nervous system. When we are under stress neuropeptide K is released to try and keep a bit of balance. There are 2 main stimulations: a desire to eat carbohydrates and reduction in the desire to be active. This makes sense because the sympathetic nervous system is getting us ready to run or fight and neuropeptide K is there to stop us running or fighting like crazy before we need to.

Trouble is, if there is no real danger and it is just our fear of failure of being a loser, then we are not motivated enough and neuropeptide K slows us down AND causes us to eat sugary food. No good. Equally important is that our sympathetic nervous system is active first thing in the morning to spur us on to wake up. Eating breakfast helps to quell the stimulus of neuropeptide K and settle us into a steady morning.

Ghrelin is released as we near the time to eat. It is a more rapid messenger and can account for some of the reasons we feel hungry when we do. Ghrelin works best when linked to our body clock (circadian) rhythms. Morning and afternoon snacks and lunch are meals that keep ghrelin in order.

Orexin has a couple of versions, but is involved in maintaining awareness or keeping us awake. If you don't have orexin working properly you can suffer from narcolepsy where you can fall asleep suddenly at any time of the day. Evening meals help to satisfy the orexin urges for food, but if you eat too late and especially just before going to bed then you stimulate orexin and you can make it hard to go to sleep.

Here comes the messy stuff: when you are not sleeping well you can stimulate ghrelin, which makes you feel hungry. Hence the midnight snack. This is compounded because the midnight snack is trying to produce tryptophan which is used to make serotonin which calms your mood and serotonin is used to make melatonin which puts your brain to sleep. No sleep, more orexin, more ghrelin, desire to eat, difficulty sleeping on full stomach (also on empty stomach), more stress, then neuropeptide K and a reduction in serotonin, which means less melatonin which makes it difficult to sleep, releasing ghrelin

Wow! What a mess! But it is only a mess when you eat in a messy way. Eat something 3-5 times a day to help balance out these body messenger systems. Eat low GI foods so that you need to eat less. Don't eat too much food because that's just like eating higher GI and don't skip meals because your system will start calling for a balance and the only form of balance it knows is food AND do you think for one minute that the fast food manufactureres don't know all this, too?

Let's be at least as smart, if not smarter than the people trying to manipulate us. What do you think?

Looking forward to sharing more thoughts, suggestions, news and making a very Healthy Wednesday connection with you!

Take Care,
The Healthy Wednesday Team

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