

Nancy Feiwel, M.D.

*Prescribing Health  
and Wellness  
Naturally*

## Food For Thought

Hippocrates is famously quoted as saying, "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." We know how important a nutritious diet is for a healthy body, but sometimes do not appreciate the power of food on our mental health.

Not surprising, if something is damaging for the body, it is harmful for the mind. Strong evidence exists to support what we intuitively know. In one study, Australian teens with a

predominantly junk food based diet (eg, chips, sweets, pizza, soda) were observed to have worsening mental health status (eg, depression, anxiety) over a 2-year period. Among children with unhealthy diets, problematic issues, such as aggression, hyperactivity, worry, sadness, and anxiety became more apparent. In addition to negative effects on the young, a nutrient-deficient diet in adults increases the risk for dementia and

depression. To protect against these conditions consider the following:

- Minimize saturated fats and avoid trans fats
- Eat an abundance of vegetables, fruits, and legumes
- Consume whole grains
- Eat one ounce of nuts or seeds daily
- Choose monounsaturated (olive oil, avocados) and polyunsaturated fats (fish, seeds, nuts)

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## Sleep and the Brain

The restorative powers of sleep for the body and mind cannot be underestimated. In addition to the many physical ailments that may develop, sleep deprivation is associated with hastening of memory loss and early brain deterioration. If a good night's sleep eludes you on a regular basis, the

following may help:

- Keep the bedroom quiet, dark and cool
- Wake at the same time
- Avoid napping
- Limit caffeine and alcohol
- Exercise regularly, but not close to bedtime
- Use the bed only for sleeping
- Go to bed only when sleepy
- Get out of bed when you can't sleep and head back when sleepy
- If planning or worrying in bed, get up. Return when mind is quiet and sleepy
- Expect gradual improvements with these changes, not overnight success

## Cancer is a Weighty Issue

According to the National Cancer Institute and the World Health Organization, up to 30% of cancers can be avoided with a healthy lifestyle consisting of a nutritious diet, regular exercise, and effective stress management. Many things increase one's risk for cancer and high on the list is weight, specifically being overweight or obese.

Several mechanisms are hypothesized to contribute to the relationship between weight and cancer, including an altered immune response, hormonal-producing fat cells that stimulate cell growth, and chronic inflammation.

Regardless of the mechanism, maintaining your body mass index between 18.5 and 24.9 is highly recommended.

Height (inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243
71	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250
72	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258
73	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287

## Exercise

Finding an exercise routine that inspires you to participate everyday can be challenging. Often we tell ourselves we can skip the workout because we expended energy on other activities, which often include household work. Although cleanliness is considered next to godliness, it is not a replacement for more sustained aerobic activities, such as brisk walking, running, or swimming.

In a study published in BMC Public Health, almost 43% of the 4563 adults surveyed reported physical activity that met or exceeded United Kingdom government

guidelines (150 minutes moderate activity/week). Household chores accounted for 36% of the activity and if excluded, only 20% of women would have met current recommendations. Housework as a physical activity was associated with being overweight/less lean, suggesting people are not expending as much energy or building as much muscle mass as they think doing household chores. Although some chores are labor intense enough (eg, sweeping, lawn mowing) to count toward the weekly activity target, most should be considered light activity. Light

activity is better than no activity; but, a moderately intense exercise routine improves overall health and wellbeing.

Moderate intensity activities include:

- Walking briskly (3-4 mph)
- Cycling (<10mph)
- Swimming
- Calisthenics
- Dancing



## Supplements are Medication: Use With Caution

It is not that I am against supplements. In fact, there are several I recommend: a low-dose multivitamin, vitamin D, if you know or suspect your levels are low, and co-enzyme Q10 for those taking a cholesterol-lowering statin. The problem with supplements is the never-ending campaign of promises coupled with a lack of rigorous research and quality control. A recent study

published in BMC Medicine found product substitutions, contamination, or fillers in the majority of the 44 herbal products tested.

The take home: if you decide to take a supplement, investigate the integrity of the company, research possible side effects, and make sure the supplement does not interact with any of your prescribed medications.



## Could Chocolate be a Health Food?

If you have heard me speak, then you know I love chocolate. And I am not alone... the abundance of chocolate products that continue to emerge speak to a societal love of the cocoa bean. Happily, there are several health benefits associated with chocolate.

Chocolate is a plant product and therefore contains phytochemicals, which are plant chemicals with protective

***Strength is the capacity to break a chocolate bar into four pieces with your bare hands—and then eat just one of the pieces.***

- Judith Viorst

and disease preventative properties. Very high levels of flavonoids, a group of phytochemicals with numerous beneficial effects, including anti-inflammatory and antiviral

activities have been measured in chocolate. Chocolate acts as an antioxidant, protecting cells from damage that can lead to cancer and heart disease. In fact the antioxidant concentration of cocoa powder is 12-fold that of blueberries.

While a little chocolate is good, too much can be problematic as it is a high calorie food. My recommendation: 1 ounce of dark chocolate ( $\geq 70\%$  cocoa) 3-4 times a week.

## Medication Compliance

In a recent survey, 75% of Americans admitted they do not take their medication as their physician prescribed. Are you one of these individuals?

The healthcare costs from both an economic and wellness perspective are astronomical considering nearly half of Americans have a chronic condition.

There are a myriad of reasons people do not comply with their medication regimen, from passively forgetting to actively ignoring the advice of their physician, from concerns about side effects to an inability to afford the medication.

Ultimately, it is the patient who suffers, unprotected from the disease the medication seeks to

manage. If you are not taking your medication as directed, discuss with your doctor and work out a solution that addresses the reason you are not compliant. There may be an option that works better for you or perhaps you just need more information about why you were prescribed the medication in the first place.

# Seasonal Eating: Spring Foods

- Spring is the time to consume Berries, Green leafy vegetables and Sprouts.

Think of plants springing out of the ground and budding on the vines.

Blueberries	Kale	Peas
Raspberries	Spinach	Carrots
Strawberries	Lettuce	Onions
Alfalfa sprouts	Cabbage	Garlic
Bean sprouts	Collard greens	Lentils
Brussels sprouts	Mustard greens	Lima beans
Asparagus	Parsley	Green beans
Radishes	Swiss chard	Dandelions

## Featured Recipe

### Salmon Salad on Arugula

**Hands-on: 15 min.**

**Total: 1 hr. 15 min.**

*One serving of this tasty fresh fish salad packs in a full day's worth of omega-3 fatty acids. Keep refrigerated in an airtight container up to two days.*

- 4 (6-ounce) salmon fillets, skinned
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, divided
- 2 tablespoons plain fat-free Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons crème fraîche or sour cream
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh basil
- 4 teaspoons capers, rinsed, drained, and chopped
- 4 cups baby arugula leaves
- 1 cup very thinly vertically sliced red onion

**1.** Sprinkle salmon evenly with salt and pepper. Heat a medium nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon oil to pan; swirl to coat. Add salmon; cook 6 minutes on each side or until desired degree of doneness. Cool to room temperature; flake with a fork.

**2.** Combine salmon, 1 tablespoon juice, yogurt, and next 3 ingredients (through capers) in a medium bowl. Refrigerate 30 minutes or up to 3 hours.

**3.** Combine remaining 1 tablespoon oil, remaining 1 tablespoon juice, arugula, and onion in a bowl. Toss gently to coat. Divide arugula mixture evenly among 4 plates. Top evenly with salmon mixture.

**SERVES 4** (serving size: 1 cup arugula and 2/3 cup salmon mixture)

**CALORIES** 354; **FAT** 19.4g (sat 4.6g, mono 8.6g, poly 4g); **PROTEIN** 38g; **CARB** 5g; **FIBER** 1g; **CHOL** 97mg; **IRON** 1mg; **SODIUM** 297mg; **CALC** 65mg

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DrFeiwel@gmail.com

(646)225-6631

www.corporatewellnessMD.com