

health

calories and fat and cholesterol to feed an entire village in a Third World country, and then we go sit in an office, sit in front of a computer screen, sit in our cars some more, and sit in front of a television. We eat and eat those lovely foods and we don't move afterward. Cardiologists will tell you it's not so much what we put in our mouths that's the problem, it's how much—especially with our sedentary lifestyles.

So what's the answer? How do we personally keep ourselves and our families fit and lean, like smooth-running expensive race cars instead of beaten-up wrecks that are about to blow a tire? A bevy of local experts tell us—and guess what? We need to eat more like our great-grandparents. Papa and Nana, with their homemade food and vegetable gardens and vigorous activity, actually had it right.

Foods for Life

Many of us still say "chicken tonight—

Foods for Your Health

Does what you eat really affect your health? Let's see what the local experts say.

Our grandparents, our great-grandparents, would be flabbergasted by Raley's. Yeah, yeah, I see the airplanes and the horseless carriages, Bubba, but just look at all the food.

For most of this country's history, and particularly during economic downturns, food has been a precious commodity. And not necessarily one that involved a lot of choice. You ate what was in season in your garden, baked your own plain wheat bread, gathered up the ration cards or what cash you could spare and bought as much meat as possible. Special holidays—such as Thanksgiving—your sister brought a turkey or duck from her farm. And you stretched those meals out by making soups and stews for days afterward.

The idea that we can now waltz into a store—at midnight if we want—and buy strawberries in the middle of winter, ready-made breads in endless variety, boxes and bags of crackers and chips, styrofoam trays of huge pieces of chicken—why, it's nothing short of a miracle. And the frozen foods, the canned goods, the meals in a box, soy milk, organic milk, lactose-free milk, juice with pulp, juice without, juice with calcium. It's like a Dr. Seuss story—or a hungry kid's dream.

The final irony, of course, is that this largesse, this luxury, this wonderful set of choices that confront us each time those magical doors pop open with a subtle whoosh of air—are killing us. We, as a nation, are the fattest people on Earth. Even a third of our kids are fat.

It's not just too many food choices, of course. It's the fact that we're also busy people, zooming around in cars all day, with no time for those overstuffed grocery stores. So we pull in a drive-through restaurant, wolf down a meal with enough

or steak?" We focus on meat, and treat vegetables and bread as a side dish. But actually, everyone from the American Cancer Society to the Department of Agriculture to the American Dietetic Association says most of our calories should come from whole grains, fruit and vegetables. With this as a base,

Did You Know...

Chicken soup was prescribed for treating upper respiratory infections in ancient Greece? In fact, a recent University of Nebraska study suggests chicken soup improves the function of certain white blood cells needed to fight infection.



Travel to a different place.

 hotel nikko san francisco

www.nikkohotels.com | 415.394.1111 | 1.800.NIKKO.US
off union square | 222 Mason St. | San Francisco, CA 94102

For special rates, call our reservations department and ask for Offer 5C.



ANDREW KACZYNSKI, M.D.

BODY CONTOURING • EXTERNAL ULTRASONIC LIPOSUCTION • ABDOMINOPLASTY
BREAST AUGMENTATION • BREAST REDUCTION • MINIMAL INCISION BREAST LIFT

DEEP PLANE FACELIFT • ENDOSCOPIC BROWLIFT • BLEPHAROPLASTY
LASER SURGERY • RHINOPLASTY • FOTOFACIAL TREATMENTS

77 CADILLAC DRIVE, SUITE 170 • SACRAMENTO

916.925.5522

we can add a couple of servings of low-fat dairy and a couple more of protein—in the form of lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans or nuts. That's it—that's the magic secret. Unfortunately, most of us have it backward.

“We need to eat a really good variety of red/green/yellow vegetables and fruits,” says Marcia Taylor-Carlile, R.N., C.D.E. (Certified Diabetes Educator), the community health education coordinator for Mercy Hospital in Folsom. “The American Cancer Society pushes the five-a-day idea, but this is the minimum number of servings we should eat. When I teach cardiac or diabetic patients, I say six to 11 servings. The latest study says Americans are consuming an average of three servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and only 2 percent of those are dark green or yellow vegetables. We're no where close to where we should be.”

Seeds of Change

Does the idea of 11 servings of vegetables make you feel about 5 years old with a mountain of lima beans on your plate you must eat before racing off to watch “Batman” on TV? Experts say there are two ways to ease this image: one is to be clear about what a serving actually consists of, and the second is to pick flavorful, fun produce to eat.

“A serving doesn't have to be huge—a big banana might count as two,” says Margaret Scheller, R.D., a clinical dietitian at Sutter Roseville Medical Center. “And I'm fond of berries, citrus fruits, sweet potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, garlic and onions, carrots, pumpkin. Even canned pumpkin—I mix it up with a little cinnamon and margarine. It's wonderful for your skin. And in the summer, there is a lot of variety—peaches, melons, tomatoes.”

There also are tricks of the trade, so to speak. For example, how can you sneak more veggies into your diet? “Most of us don't actually dislike these foods—we just don't think about them,” says Fran Spitale, R.D., nutrition coordinator for Kaiser at Point West. “And we tend to nibble on what we see. With all the convenience vegetables now—baby carrots, cut-up broccoli, peppers—I suggest people keep them on hand, at their desk at work, in the refrigerator at home.”

Other convenient vegetables are the

frozen kind—and they're OK, too. "Keep them around—you never know when you're going to need a vegetable," says Scheller. "Fresh produce loses nutrients over time, but frozen vegetables retain them because they're flash-frozen. Spinach, green beans—if you need them, you can pull them out, and they're often better nutritionally."

And where you get your fresh produce might help get you in the mood to eat it. "Farmers markets [here in Sacramento] are great," says Taylor-Carlile. "You're getting produce which is fairly locally grown and is often organic. And even a large chain like Raley's has a lot of organic fruits and vegetables now—which may be fresher and less likely to be grown under conditions that involve toxins or chemicals."

Growing your own fruits and vegetables also gets the stamp of approval from local food experts. "There are lots of benefits to gardening," says Taylor-Carlile. "In addition to the food you get, you're also getting some exercise. And we tend to have a better relationship with food when we've grown our own." Scheller

agrees, adding: "Nothing tastes better than fresh produce right outside your door."

Other ways to up your veggie/fruit/whole grain consumption? "Baking at home can be a great idea," says Scheller. "Pumpkin or zucchini bread or muffins—you can control the oils and sweeteners if you make them yourself. In the supermarket, these products have a lot of hydrogenated fats. Also in meat loaf, I extend it by grating in zucchini and adding some brown rice."

Americans seem a little better about eating grains—rice, cereals, pasta, breads—than produce, but experts suggest we pick those that add the most fiber to our diet. "I encourage people to eat foods with more than 5 percent fiber on the label," says Scheller. "There are two kinds of fiber: soluble, which can be found in oatmeal, oat bran, Cheerios—and insoluble fiber, which acts like an intestinal broom—we don't absorb it. This type can be found in bran cereal, shredded wheat. You can even mix your favorite cereal in with one of these: Rice Krispies with bran flakes, for example."

Lastly, experts say eating a healthy diet doesn't have to be boring, even if the basic message reminds you vaguely of your mother. "It's so important to vary foods every day and keep it interesting," says Scheller. "It takes just a little bit of planning—you don't have to do anything elaborate." Some of her personal dinner-time favorites? Baked sweet potatoes, tacos, burritos, pastas.

For Kids' Sake

Again, it's not just aging baby boomers who could stand to lose a few pounds. Even our nation's kids are piling on weight—and no one is exactly sure why. Statistically, the number of obese kids has doubled in the last decade—from 7.6 percent to 13 percent—and more than one-third of our kids are considered overweight. Scientists have studied fruit juice as a possible culprit—and found no correlation, by the way—and television (again, not clearly a cause in and of itself of obesity).

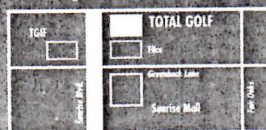
While the debate rages on, most clinicians say—as with overweight American adults—there is probably a complex



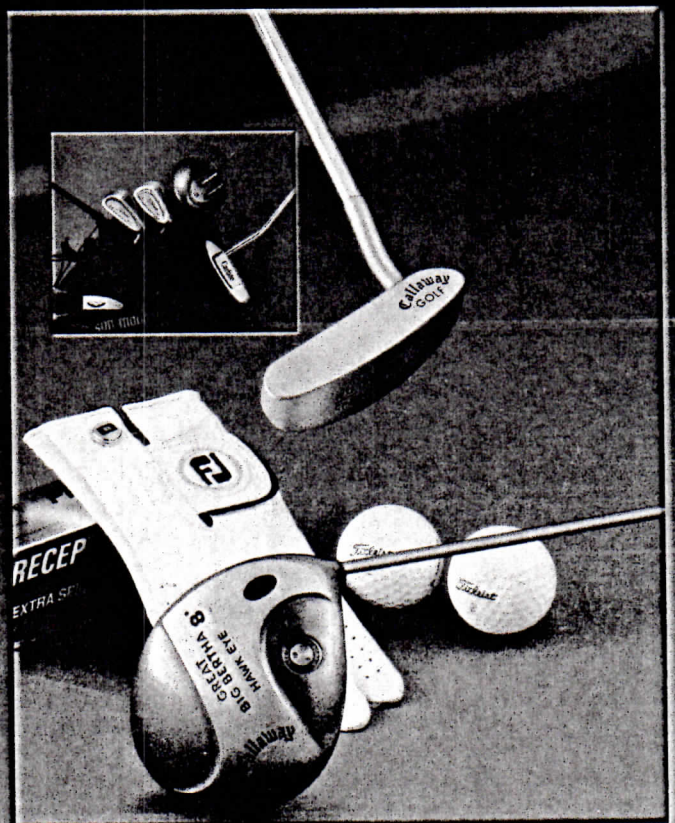
**"We Make It Happen...
We Find Solutions"**

- Proline Equipment & Accessories
- Custom Club Fitting System
- In House Repair Shop
- Lessons Available
- Free Shipping Anywhere In USA
- www.totalgolfonline.com

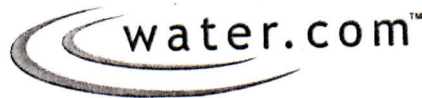
Open 7 Days



**6304 Sunrise Blvd.
Citrus Heights
(916) 722-8822**



Premium Bottled Waters State-of-the-Art Filtration Full Line Coffee Service



OUR PROMISE TO YOU

Shari's Berries™
The Original Gourmet Chocolate Dipped Strawberry™

www.berries.com • (916) 487-9999
Three Sacramento Locations
Shipped Fresh • Nationwide • Overnight • Year Round

Quick Build Systems Structural Insulated Panels

Call today for a quote on your project!

- Custom Home Packages
- Cabin Packages
- Insulated Warehouses
- Sound Walls

"A better way to build"
Ph 800.435.4007
Fax 209.745.9200
www.quickbuildsystems.com

combination of factors: less funding for physical education classes in schools, more sedentary lifestyles at home (computer games, television), and diets that are high in fat and sugar, and low in vegetables, fruit, whole grains and fiber. What to do?

While it's tempting to begin singing our mothers' tune—"Eat your veggies"—studies show telling isn't enough. If you're not eating your peas at dinner, chances are your daughter is picking at them, too. One interesting study even suggests the biggest maternal naggers have the worst diets themselves—a "do what I say, not what I do" course that is doomed to failure, say researchers.

And luring kids to eat their vegetables—"Eat your spinach and you can have dessert"—also is a mistake, according to experts. One study concluded that children given this message learn to dislike the taste of vegetables, coming to view it as something that must be quickly gotten through until your mouth is relieved with a big bite of sugar.

The best advice? "Get kids involved," says Scheller. "Get them cookbooks, have them plan meals, help cook." And make dietary changes a family affair. Silently digging with gusto into your broccoli is perhaps the best message you can send.

And don't insist they "finish" their vegetables, but instead suggest they "try" them, say experts. "With kids, you don't have to push too hard," says Spitale. "Usually they like a few things—keep those favorites around and ask them to 'taste' something new."

Finally, get moving—again as a family. Current recommendations suggest adults get 30 minutes of vigorous activity a day and kids get 60 minutes. Experts agree this doesn't mean everyone going down to the gym to walk a treadmill and watch CNN—it can mean biking or walking to the park, jumping rope, playing tag, a game of kick ball, a swim in the pool.

Diet Saboteurs

Not to sound like a headline on one of those women's magazines—10 Things You're Eating That You Don't Even Know Will Kill You—but are there foods we should just plain avoid? Surprisingly, the answer in most cases is no. "People tend to isolate foods as bad foods they should never eat," says Spitale. "But no

such list exists. "If you live on sugar and snack foods, that's not good, but if in general your diet is healthy, an occasional candy bar or hot dog isn't going to hurt you."

On the other hand, there are things that perhaps require caution. Nutrition experts, as a whole, for example, get a little passionate about sugar. And the biggest culprit in the American diet? Soda. "There are hidden calories in drinks—which we tend to think of as sort of a free food," says Spitalo. "It's a drink—how bad can this be? But in a 12-ounce soda, you're getting a couple tablespoons of sugar—and that's all it is."

In fact, it is these very empty calories that bug experts the most. There are foods that have added sugars, but are still high in vitamins and minerals—things like chocolate milk, presweetened cereals or canned fruit. But when you start talking Coke, cake and candy, there's not much to recommend them. And while sugar has not been proven to change people's behavior or cause hyperactivity or lower the immune system, it clearly contributes to two real problems: tooth decay and obesity.

Along the same lines, experts suggest care at restaurants, where portion sizes are often gigantic and contain lots of added fat and salt. "Be very selective about restaurant food," says Taylor-Carlile, who especially warns patients away from the all-you-can-eat type of buffets. "Ask to have things grilled—not fried—and take half of it home with you for another meal."

At restaurants, portion sizes are often gigantic and contain lots of added fat and salt.

And fast-food restaurants may be downright dangerous if you believe best sellers such as *Fast Food Nation*, which cited a 1996 USDA study that reported 78.6 percent of ground beef sampled from the nation's meat-packing plants contained microbes commonly found in fecal matter of cattle—these microbes can cause food poisoning. At the very least, experts say, fast food is high in sugar, fat and salt and may not even be a very quick

meal. "To me, there's nothing fast about fast food," says Scheller, who adds that in the time it takes to drive there, wait in line, pick up your food, and drive home, you could have made something much healthier in your own kitchen.

A Kitchen of One's Own

Marie Brown (not her real name), 39, is committed to healthy meals and more home cooking for a variety of reasons. "It all goes back to last March [2001], when I had a cold that had gone on and on and on," she says. "I was sitting in the park with this big nose and thinking 'what are the things you always read about your health?' and I came up short in all of them: sleep, stress and food." In her family's case—which includes a husband and two daughters, ages 5 and 2—scheduling was partly to blame. She works days, her husband works nights, and there are two little people clamoring for food just when everyone is crashing in and out the door. "We were having Papa Murphy's [pizza] two times a week, eating out a lot, eating a lot of takeout," she says. "My hus-

Finally, A Wood Window with all the Strengths of Milgard Manufacturing



When you present this ad, receive a special gift from Milgard Windows!

It's the next logical progression for wood windows. Milgard's WoodClad line combines the richness and warmth of clear vertical grain Douglas Fir with the strength and durability of pultruded fiberglass. This advanced material can handle heat, cold and wind like no other material we've found. It never needs painting and it's extremely energy efficient. The most beautiful part is how the windows will look inside your home. Clear, vertical grain fir offers a look you just can't achieve with an ordinary pine window.

Milgard Windows
MM

www.milgard.com

Call
Frank Goodie & Sons
Certified WoodClad Dealer
800.883.0926

band has a thing with sugar, but with me, it's grease and salt. I can sit there with a bag of Cheetos and eat the whole thing. I just felt we had no control."

Although aware of long-term health claims for an improved diet, Brown was initially interested in strengthening the family's immune system. "For me, I want to feel better on a daily basis and enjoy my family instead of all of us catching every bug that comes along," she says. During the 2001 cold and flu season, Brown says she had a dozen colds and several stomach viruses—as did her children—and her husband contracted pneumonia.

What changes did she make? "I started drinking lots of water and I exchanged snacks at work—cookies, muffins—for veggies and fruit," she says. "I kept carrots and apples at my desk and raw almonds—they give you protein but don't drag you down. And for lunch, instead of a hamburger and fries, I'd eat a big salad. And later in the day, maybe make some wheat bread toast." How did she feel? "I felt great," she says, "and I could get

through the afternoon and not feel like I was going to fall asleep at my desk."

At home, she and her husband both made a concerted effort to cook dinner and to include a lot of vegetables. "At first, we made a point to cook vegetarian every other night—black bean tacos instead of chicken or beef," she says. "We had to be really rigid at first, but we've been doing it for over a year now, and it's more a matter of course. We don't think so much about it."

Brown and her husband pretty much eliminated sugar from their diets, and allow the kids limited amounts: a fruit juice Popsicle after lunch, two mini-chocolate chip cookies for each hand after dinner. She did this primarily because she believes sugar weakened their immune system and caused behavioral changes in her older daughter, but she also is concerned about teeth and weight. "We have obesity on both sides of our family," she says.

Brown admits, however, that their diets are not always perfect. "When we were looking at houses last fall, and when we

were moving, the stress level went up and we were eating pizza again, takeout burritos, driving through McDonald's for chicken nuggets and fries for the girls," she says. But after the holidays, and a cold, they got back on track. "I don't know if there's even any scientific evidence, but in my head, I've made the connection that if we eat well, we won't catch as many things," she says. This cold and flu season, Brown has had one cold and no stomach viruses, and her husband and kids have been healthier, too, although she says it's unclear how much of this actually can be attributed to their improved diet. On the other hand, they all feel good "and if we get some cancer prevention out of it all, so much the better," she adds.

Lastly, she says it takes only slightly more effort to follow a healthy diet and cook at home. "Basically one thing makes a difference for me—I'm not into, like, canned peas," she says. "But whole, fresh foods make it enjoyable for me. It's fun to think about it. It does require more trips to the grocery store, though—veggies go bad faster than hot dogs." ●

sacramentoshops



Hot Latin Rock

THE LUCKY GARCIA BAND

FEEL THE LOVE

Performing with
Tower of Power
Friday July 26, 2002
Radisson Hotel
Tickets available at
ticketmaster.com

Live Performance Dates
at luckygarcia.com

For booking information call
Collings Aki 916.995-0650

Lucky Garcia Band

Tower of Power