

WHAT'S UP DOC PETE?



Foundation of a strong immune system

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Hippocrates' famous injunction to "let food be thy medicine" is conversely evident today as industrialized food invokes disease. Industrialized foods are processed simple carbohydrates (white flour and sugar) stripped of nutrients, with added artificial flavors, dyes, hormones and chemical preservatives. In the same manner that genetically modified animal feed, which has been laced with hormones and/or antibiotics, increases fat deposition in animals, so too, the consumption of refined grains laden with chemicals increases fat deposition in humans.

Gratefully, today we have the means to obtain foods that can be our medicine. Farmer's markets are ubiquitous and there are organic food sections in the supermarkets. People have a greater interest in diets that reflect healthier, nutrient-rich, whole foods balancing complex carbohydrates (fresh vegetables and fruits) and proteins derived from sources free of hormones, antibiotics and preservatives. Although it is impossible to recover and maintain health without nutritional balance, dietary and lifestyle change can be the most resisted form of treatment for all patients.

Imbalance of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract is counterproductive to nutrition's ability to support health. GI imbalance leads to an increase of food and environmental sensitivities. These acquired sensitivities cause further inflammation of the GI tract, decreasing the permeability of nutrients. The increase in inflammation can also produce an increase in antibodies, affecting the immunological system, as large protein molecules leak through the walls of the intestine to the gut-associated lymphoid tissue (GALT). In turn the adrenal glands are over-stimulated to produce more cortisol to overcome the inflammation, which subsequently starts a cascade of hormonal responses decreasing the capacity to resist disease.

Not surprisingly, restoring GI balance is essential to the efficacy of nutrition and subsequent immune health.



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