Nutrition Questions

**Is it okay to have “cheat days” or should I eat healthy 100% of the time?**

According to the Healthline article by Gavin Van De Walle, totally avoiding junk food is not beneficial. Van De Walle suggests that we enjoy having our favorite treats on occasion. Having treats less frequent is a stable way of eating healthy in the long run (Van De Walle). In my experience, I think that gradually reducing the intake of junk food is the best way to control bad eating. There may be many of us trying to be healthy at the beginning of the year, but sudden adjustments can fail easily. Also, vaguely knowing that junk food is not good for health may not be enough information to help people make healthier choices. If everyone knows the consequences of junk food, it may assist with making better decisions. For example, if we know that sugar intake can lead to an increase in our blood pressure and cause heart disease (Van De Walle), then we may choose to eat a fresh fruit over a sugary donut.

**What is worse: whole-fat foods or low-fat foods with high amounts of sugar?**

Having low-fat foods with high amounts of sugar is worse than having whole-fat foods. This is supported by recent studies showing that carbohydrates are known to be less healthy than fat, and that the unhealthiest foods are high in sugar and fat (Diabetes.co.uk). People may not realize that there are high levels of sugar in some cereal, drinks, yogurt, pre-prepared meals, or soups. I have not had yogurt for a couple of years, but recently found that I am vitamin D deficient. Upon hearing this news, I started purchasing yogurt and saw that most brands of yogurt contain sugar. I tried several kinds of yogurt and finally decided to buy one that has less than 8g of sugar. I thought that if we do not choose our food carefully, we will have many sugars daily. I grew up drinking whole fat milk and can digest it, so I am trying to have whole milk yogurt to catch up on my vitamin D and calcium levels. By having whole fat milk daily, I can digest the milk’s sugar slower than products containing low fat milk with sugar (Fetters).

**How important is it to have a normal BMI?**

According to an article from Harvard Health Publications, having a normal BMI does not prove an individual is healthy. Insurance companies are using BMI as a quantitative guide of a healthy individual. The author of this article noted that higher BMIs would increase the risk of conditions like diabetes, arthritis, liver disease, some types of cancer, hypertension, high cholesterol and sleep apnea. However, those with lower BMI measurements might still be prone to cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure (Shmerling). Despite this, the BMI only takes into account height and weight and misses other significant information specific to individuals. Because of this, I believe that while a normal BMI can be assistive information in deciding a person’s current and future health, it should not solely be used as a metric for insurance companies to use. I do, however, find that it can be helpful as a guideline when helping myself or someone else create physical fitness or nutrition programs in tandem with other methods of understanding a person’s mental and physical health.

**Resources**

Diabetes co.uk. (2019) *Sugar vs Fat.* Retributed from https://www.diabetes.co.uk/nutrition/sugar-vs-fat.html

Fetters K. A. (2016). *5 reasons to start eating full-fat daily, according to science.* Retributed from https://health.usnews.com/wellness/food/articles/2016-10-28/5-reasons-to-start-eating-full-fat-dairy-according-to-science

Shmerling H. R. MD. (2016). *How useful is the body mass index (BMI)?*. Retributed from https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/how-useful-is-the-body-mass-index-bmi-201603309339

Van De Walle, Gavin. (2019) *“Should you completely avoid junk food?* Retributed from https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/avoiding-junk-food#bottom-line