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A LITTLE ABOUT HEALTH FOODS

by Edna Knowles, B.Sc., Dip. Ed.

Now that the Christmas and New Year festivities are over for another year, this article by Miss Knowles might, if a pun can be forgiven, give us food for thought. There can be no doubt that most of us eat and drink too much during the festivities but do we give enough thought to our diets during the rest of the year?

WGS

My great grandmother was Swiss, and I think my great interest in nutrition and natural whole-foods must derive from her, and also, incidentally, my love of mountains! The Swiss have been pioneers in health foods, but in this country, the interest in health and natural unprocessed foods is not very great. The average person in Britain chooses food mainly for convenience, and there is still a naive belief that manufacturers would *never* produce anything either devoid of natural nutrients or packed full with chemicals!

Thus supermarkets prosper with their bland-tasteless foods in packets or tins, and their regularly equal-sized fruits and vegetables, laden with pesticides.

Really good whole-foods, that is, natural produce compost-grown, unsprayed and unprocessed in any way, are very difficult to obtain here, except in large towns. Not everyone has time or opportunity to grow their own food, and it is very difficult indeed to know what to eat if one cannot afford expensive health-foods and postal charges. While the demand is still so low, availability and lower prices will never come. Small firms and Soil Association farms can never compete with the large wholesalers. Thus all those valuing their health must in many cases resort to vitamin supplements.

There are about 40 essential nutrients, which should be in our food, but which are sadly lacking today. Not only are these essential for health and for prevention of disease and minor complaints, but they can also be used instead of drugs for curative purposes. During the last 30 years, following an enormous amount of research in nutrition in America, it has been shown that far more of each nutrient is required daily than has been thought in orthodox medical circles. This is especially the case when there is a considerable amount of stress in an individual's life. Stress has been shown to use up enormous amounts of the body's nutrients, thus wasting them and causing multiple deficiencies. This is especially the case with vitamins C and E, the B complex and, of course, protein. All of these are deficient in people from all walks of life, and especially in older people, and this deficiency is a contributory cause of many physical and mental ailments, of the symptoms of old age, and in addition, of delinquency, crime and the

dependence upon smoking, alcohol and drugs.

A really good diet should be *high in protein, moderate in fats*, of which more than half should be cold-pressed unrefined vegetable oils, and *low in carbohydrates* (starches and sugars). The latter should consist of natural unprocessed cereals, compost-grown unsprayed fruits and vegetables, and, if required, honey containing pollen, molasses and Barbados brown sugar. It should be emphasised, however, that honey, molasses and any kind of sugar are all high in sucrose, and are therefore only to be taken in moderation. Good quality protein can be found in yeast, wheatgerm, soya meal, skimmed milk powder, yoghurt, cheese, eggs, desiccated liver, and for those who are not vegetarians, in meat and fish. Proteins are made up of amino acids, and when digested in the body, these acids are absorbed and become available for rebuilding into the type of proteins needed in our own tissues.

Besides these main nutrients, there are also many vitamins and minerals, which are absolutely essential to life, and it is these which are so often lacking in today's foods.

Vitamins A and D can be obtained from halibut liver oil capsules, the *B complex* in its natural form in yeast, wheatgerm, and desiccated liver, *vitamin C* in rose hips (either powder or tablets), *vitamin E* in wheatgerm, sunflower seeds and nuts. *Vitamin F* (the unsaturated fatty acids of vegetable oils), are best obtained from cold-pressed unrefined wheatgerm oil, sunflower oil, safflower oil, soya bean oil, or in the nuts, grains or beans which supply these.

In addition to these, it is useful to take *lecithin*, either in capsule or granular form, as this enables fats and oils to be more easily digested, and after absorption, utilised. As vitamins A, D and E are fat-soluble and can only be absorbed with fats or oils, lecithin ensures that they are fully utilised, too.

For *minerals*, seaweed as tablets (or obtainable as dried dulse which can be soaked and used as a vegetable), provides *potassium* and all the *trace elements*, including *iodine*. *Calcium* and *magnesium*, so essential for bones, teeth, nails and hair, are best obtained from bonemeal tablets or dolomite tablets.

Those interested in their health should read the books of Adelle Davis, the well-known American nutritionist, which have recently been published here in paperback form. They are "Let's Eat Right to Keep Fit", "Let's Get Well", "Let's Have Healthy Children", and "Let's Cook it Right". These should be on everyone's bookshelves. They are written in readable style, and cover all the research of recent years in nutrition by important Nobel prize-winners such as Dr. Linus Pauling, Dr. Roger J. Williams, Dr. Fred Klenner, Drs. W. E. and E. V. Shute, Dr. G. O. Burr, and many others.

Meanwhile, make a point of getting all genuine Swiss foods, such as Bircher Muesli, Cernelle Pollen, natural Swiss cheeses and other milk products. If you can grow at least a small amount of parsley in a window box, or some watercress in a trough, this will also greatly help with your diet.

Avoid as far as possible all highly-processed foods, especially those containing animal fats and hydrogenated oils. The process of hydrogenation converts natural vegetable oils into solid, but unnatural products, containing saturated instead of unsaturated fatty acids. Thus if these are used, there soon develops a deficiency of the natural essential unsaturated fatty acids, or vitamin F, which are greatly needed in the body for many structural purposes. These hydrogenated oils are found in all shortenings, frying oils, salad oils (unless obtained from a health food shop), and in ordinary margarine. Pure starch and pure cane sugar in foods are also to be avoided as these can lead to many diseases, including diabetes, heart and circulatory problems, obesity and even cancer. Another dangerous substance for health is common salt, which many people shower on their food, just as they do sugar. If you must have some kind of salt, use a substitute obtainable from the health shop which contains mainly salts of potassium. As for drinking, alcohol is of no use to anyone, but tea, too, if made strong and taken regularly, can also be harmful. Coffee, chocolate and cola, all contain caffeine, a harmful drug, and only decaffeinated coffee should be drunk regularly. Finally, avoid all fried and baked foods, twice-cooked foods, and among natural produce, avoid very acid fruits.

AND SOME MORE FOOD TOPICS ...

Cookery corner



This speciality from Zürich is called a "Tirggel". It is made from flour, sugar and honey. The mould for this particular example dates back to the beginning of the 19th century.

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL - LUCERNE

The 1976 Lucerne Music Festival will be held from 18th August to 9th September and will mark the centenary of the birth of Manuel de Falla and Pablo Casals. Eleven symphony concerts and two choral concerts are to be given by the Swiss Festival Orchestra, the Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Munich, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Washington Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic and the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra (WDR) accompanied by leading soloists and conducted by Cristóbal Halffter, Zdenek Macal, Gunter Schuller, Rafael Kubelik, Herbert von Karajan, Antal Dorati, Karl Böhm and Eugen Jochum.

The choral works will be rendered by the Lucerne Festival Choir, Die Luzerner Vokalsolisten, the choir of the Bavarian Radio, Munich, the Cologne

Radio Choir, the North German Radio Choir, Hamburg, the Tölz Boys Choir and the Escolania de Montserrat. The "Musica nova", "Young Artists" and "Perspectives" series are also to be continued.

The Lucerne Municipal Theatre will present the chamber opera "The Barber of Seville" by Paisiello. The traditional Master Courses will again be held at the Lucerne Conservatoire under Rudolf Firkusny (piano), Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin), Elisabeth Grümmer/Hugo Diez (singing) and Janos Starker (cello).

A special Casals symposium is to be devoted to the master Spanish cellist. The printed preliminary programme will be available in February 1976, but orders for tickets can only be accepted on the basis of the General Programme (appearing in May 1976).

Swiss Eggs with Pasta

If you are looking for a relatively cheap alternative to the usual meat and two veg. meal why not try Swiss Eggs with Pasta. This can be used as a main dish or alternatively it can be used as a first course when entertaining guests.

Ingredients

6 oz. cut noodles
1 oz. butter
3-4 oz. Jaarlsberg or Gruyere cheese
4 eggs
4 teasp. tomato puree
1-2 teasp. paprika
½ pt. single cream
salt and pepper.

Method

Cook the pasta in 3 pints of boiling, well salted water until just tender and drain thoroughly. Well butter four individual gratin dishes and line with thin slivers of the cheese, then make a bed of pasta in each one and drop an egg into the centre. Add the tomato puree and paprika to the cream and mix well. Season to taste and pour cream over the eggs. Cover with the remaining slivers of cheese arranged lattice fashion and bake in moderate oven (375 deg. F. Gas Mark 5), until the eggs are set and the cheese becomes a bubbling golden crust. Serves four.

Cheesy Gammon Savoury

Grill four gammon rashers on both sides. Turn out a can of jellied cranberry sauce and cut into thick slices. Place one slice on each rasher, cover with strips of processed cheese and grill until cheese melts.

MERVEILLES

500 grammes flour (plain)
6 eggs
A little cream or top of milk
Butter the size of an egg
(unsalted)
2 teasp. kirsch
Pinch salt

Method

Break the eggs into the sieved flour, add the salt, butter, kirsch and cream. Beat the eggs slowly in the centre with the fingers, gradually incorporating the flour and the rest of the ingredients. Work the paste until it leaves the fingers clean. Put into a cloth and leave in a cool place. Cut off and roll into thin circles, approximately 5 inches across. Cut four slits down each circle, drop into boiling fat and cook until golden. Remove, drain on paper and dust with icing sugar.

To serve, make into a pyramid on a large plate.

(Submitted by Mrs. Frances Boo.)