



Smart Life Forum

John McDougall, MD

*Prevention and Cure of Common Diseases
with a Simple Tasty Diet: Why the Medical and
Pharmaceutical Businesses Fail*

Thursday, February 16, 2005
7:00 PM

Cubberly Community Center
4000 Middlefield Road, Room H1, Palo Alto, California



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Future Speakers:

- March 16, Phil Jacklin, PhD - *Five Examples: An Introduction to "Best Choice" Medicine*

Meet Dr. John McDougall

Dr. John McDougall's national recognition as a nutrition expert earned him a position in the Great Nutrition Debate 2000 presented by the USDA. He is a board-certified internist, author of 10 national best-selling books, the international on-line "McDougall Newsletter," host of the nationally syndicated television show "McDougall M.D.," and medical director of the 10-day, live-in McDougall Program in Santa Rosa, CA. Other McDougall activities include seminars and health-oriented adventure vacations.

Main Presentation

Nearly Everyone's Sick

There is no question that there is a need for some medical miracle, since most people living in modern societies are fat and sick. For example, look at America :

- Most people older than 35 years have one or more risk factors, which predict they will suffer a tragedy, like a heart attack
- More than one-third of them have high cholesterol
- More than one-third have high blood pressure
- Nearly two-thirds are too fat for their own good and more than 30% are frankly obese
- Nearly 10% have diabetes
- One-fifth of adult Americans smoke and most have inactive lifestyles

All these predictions of disease translate into the fact that every year 1.2 million Americans will have a heart attack and about 700,000 will have a stroke.

The Root of Modern Illness: Rich Foods

Two universal observations provide irrefutable evidence that the cause of obesity and related health problems is primarily due to a shift from a diet consisting mostly of unrefined plant foods to one based on animal-derived and highly processed foods, and secondarily to a decrease in physical activity. First, throughout human history most people lived on diets based on common starches like rice (Asia), breads (Western Europe), pastas (Southern Europe), corn (American Indians), beans, potatoes and corn (Central and South America), sweet potatoes (New Guinea), and millet, beans and corn (Africa). These populations have been almost entirely free of obesity and related diseases. On special occasions, called “feast days” or “festivals,” members of these societies did unordinary things, like take a day off work, dance in the street, and eat “special” rich foods – they'd roast a pig over a fire pit or add a chicken to the pot of vegetable stew.

Common folks could only afford to attend these festivals a few times a year. However, in every society there were a small number of wealthy people who had an opportunity to choose otherwise. These kings, queens and their fellow aristocrats could afford to, and did, eat these delicacies all day long, every day – and you have seen what these people looked like in the paintings of the past. As a result of the Industrial Revolution and the unprecedented wealth that followed, in America today everyone can afford to, and does eat like the royalty of the past – every day is a holiday – and you have seen the results in hundreds of people who pass you every time you are in the shopping mall.

When I was growing up, as a child, we ate as if every day were a holiday. We started out every morning with Easter (eggs), went on to Thanksgiving (turkey with all the fixings) and Christmas (a plate of ham) for lunch and dinner, and every night after dinner we had a birthday party with cake and/or ice cream. All that feasting has two unquestionable consequences: obesity and chronic disease – it did back then with the royalty, and it does the same today with all of us.

The second indisputable observation is that people living today on primarily plant food-based diets, like those from rural Africa, Japan, Korea, and China, are trim throughout life and have a much lower incidence of heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, multiple sclerosis,

and breast, prostate and colon cancer than do Americans. When these people migrate to the United States and exchange their native grain- and vegetable-based diets for higher-fat, higher-protein, and lower-carbohydrate meals -- based around meat, dairy products and highly processed foods -- most become fat and sick. Unfortunately, many people are confused and think carbohydrates, like rice and potatoes, make people gain excess weight. If these carbohydrates were indeed “bad for you,” then you would see the opposite -- Africans and Asians moving to our country and changing to our diet would become trimmer and healthier looking. And that's just not what you see.

Poor health is now a worldwide pandemic since the fast food industries have made rich foods available to everyone -- even the most destitute of people. For example, Americans shelled out more than \$110 billion on burgers, fried chicken, and other fast food delights in 2000, compared with \$6 billion in 1970.

Modern Medicine Fails the Customer

The typical well-treated patient living in an “advanced society” is fat, sick, and overmedicated. Justifying all this misery, the medical and pharmaceutical businesses brag all the way to the bank about improvements of their customer's risk factors (incidental numbers forced to lower values by drugs).

Attend a luncheon conference at your local hospital. Your suspicions will be sparked by the drug-detail person seated in the back of the conference room -- she paid for the lunch and the “expert” speaker. Your doctor is being taught by one of the big pharmaceutical companies, like Merck, Upjohn, or Lilly, how to treat your signs (risk factors) and symptoms with 10 to 20 expensive drugs. But no one is learning about how to restore your lost health and appearance.

I am not suggesting your trusted doctor is in cahoots with big business, purposefully trying to keep you sick and buying products and services. Doctors are simply displaying normal human behavior. Stop for a moment and impartially look at the industries you have worked with. What determines their activities? Profit. Always profit. Why should people working for the medical and pharmaceutical enterprises have higher principles?

You say, “Because the lives of my loved ones are at stake.” Grow up -- stop elevating those in the healthcare industries to “god-like” status. Give them the same respect you would anyone else you do business with, like your bank loan officer or used car dealer.

Sick People Take Medications – Healthy People Are Drug-Free

The goal of every doctor should be to help make his or her patients drug-free by teaching them to become healthy. Unfortunately, most doctors know only drug-therapy for patients' problems and the result is fat and sick people carrying around bags full of prescriptions – and they are not one speck healthier or happier. (And you wonder why so many doctors complain about the practice of medicine these days. How would you feel if all of your projects ended in failure?)

To make matters worse, well-intentioned doctors are making their prescription decisions based upon fraudulent and incomplete information paid for by pharmaceutical companies – blind to the suffering of their customers; these businesses manipulate the research studies in order to boost sales. You should not be surprised by this, after all, pharmaceutical companies are in the business of profiting from your sickness and, as a result of their efforts, they are considered among the most successful of all businesses worldwide.

Drug companies spend billions of dollars and employ thousands of people to try to demonstrate the slightest benefits from their products. From the beginning, the “investigations” used to sell their products are designed so that the results will turn out favorable – why not? They are paying for the project. And if the results do not turn out as expected, then these companies bury any research findings that weigh negatively upon their products. The US government turns a blind eye to these shenanigans. According to top researchers, we can no longer rely upon the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for protection from useless and dangerous drugs, since this organization acts essentially as a tool for the pharmaceutical industries.

All this dishonesty is very profitable; \$154.4 billion dollars was spent by consumers in one year (2001) on medications that in many cases do more harm than good – and prescription drug spending rises 15% to 18% per year. All the while, hopeful patients are lulled into believing they will be saved by these miracle potions. If the truth were to be known, more of these same ill people would take matters into their own hands and save themselves with a healthy diet, some exercise, and clean habits, rather than waiting to be saved by “technological breakthroughs.” When was the last miracle drug invented? Penicillin discovered in 1928 by Alexander Fleming? Viagra discovered in 1991 by Nicholas

Terrett? Most new drugs released to the marketplace are simply copies of older drugs with minor variations to allow a new patent.

Most Drugs on the Market Are Useless and Harmful

People running the drug companies are aware of the fraudulent nature of their business. According to Allen Roses, Vice President of GlaxoSmithKline, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, "Vast majority of drugs only work in 30 or 50% of people." When he says "work," I assume he is giving credit for even the slightest positive change, and not talking about resolving the patients' illnesses – because essentially 100% of the drugs used to treat chronic diseases fail to cure the patient. Yet, the language used by pharmaceutical companies to promote their products might cause you to think otherwise. They refer to their drugs in ways that suggest their inventions commonly cure chronic diseases, by calling their products, "antihypertensive" and "antidiabetic" – as if these chemicals would eradicate hypertension (high blood pressure) and diabetes – maybe something like antibiotics kill bacteria and cure infections. The truth is, no doctor has ever seen a patient cured of high blood pressure or diabetes with either class of medication, no matter how much they might wish it to be otherwise. By and large, drugs do little, if anything, to improve the well-being and/or longevity of people suffering with chronic diseases, but are undeniably a direct source of death, disability and suffering.

The Solution to Better Health

What would happen to people you know who are overweight and suffering from dietary diseases, like type II diabetes, gout, and atherosclerosis, if they were sent on a one way journey to rural Japan to live with a country family, work on a community farm and eat the native rice and vegetable dishes? The answer is: they would become trimmer and healthier.

Over the past 25 years of my medical practice I have seen this transformation from obese and sickly to trim and healthy for thousands of people after making changes from rich foods to a plant food-based, low-fat diet, plentiful in unrefined complex carbohydrates. Scientific research solidly supports the fact that obesity, type II diabetes, hypertension,

heart disease, inflammatory arthritis, and gout can be prevented and often reversed with this very same diet. These results are even better when people exercise daily. Unfortunately, this solution is non-profit and requires effort from the consumer—but that does not change the truth.

