

Do as I say and not as I do

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Citation

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Abstract

Sir

As the body gets older, its ability to revitalize and repair itself also diminishes. Nurses have a front row seat to witness the fact that obesity and diabetes are rising out of control in the United States, even among the youth of America, and diseases influenced by inflammation are growing at an alarming rate. What can be done to stop this?

First we must accept that we are all responsible for our own health. All of us must make it a priority to make changes in our lives in order to improve the health and vitality that we all want to hold onto in our later years. Whether you believe it or not – if you work in the healthcare field you are being scrutinized by others for your own habits. We can no longer say “do as I say and not as I do” if we truly want to make an impact on the lives of others. We must become educated as to what is needed to keep our body systems maintained and to protect our cells against progressive damage. We also need to make smart decisions about the foods we put in our body in order to keep those nutrients that are essential available so that our bodies can repair themselves. Your body truly is a miracle – think of it like a house that paints itself automatically when needed, and repairs its own roof it is leaks! Now you get the idea!

In the days of our grandparents the food that was eaten satisfied hunger cravings and provided a more diverse amount of nutrients. The fast food we eat today along with the processed foods in the supermarket have been stripped of their nutrients and are now deficient in those essential nutrients that the body requires to obtain real satisfaction. Nurses spend much of their lives dealing with the stress that comes from taking care of your patients and should take an extra hard look at what they are putting into their bodies on a daily basis. The goal is to reduce the amount of damaging foods and to maximize the amount of foods that aid in the repair and rejuvenation process.

Step one for healthy eating is to take inventory of what you are putting into your body that you know is not good for you. You should also reduce the amount of refined sugars and sugary caffeine drinks. Caffeine is actually a “stressor” to your system and provides a false sense of energy while it is actually over stimulating you adrenal glands. Caffeine is also a diuretic which removes fluids from your body. Initially, caffeine consumption seems like the perfect solution to a sleepless night or a stressful day. Caffeine is a central nervous system stimulant; one cup of coffee (6oz) temporarily increases alertness, wakefulness, focus and wards off drowsiness for 3-12 hours depending on one’s ability to detoxify this chemical from their liver. 90% of the population consumes a lot more than 6oz of caffeine per day. A small coffee from Starbucks is 12oz and 200mg of caffeine. Many people feel energetic and excited with the first cup of coffee and then when the caffeine buzz wears off, they become tired, irritable and crave more sugar and caffeine. It becomes a vicious cycle that turns into an addiction. Any substance that consumes you and has negative side effects will have adverse health consequences in the future. There are four warning signs of caffeine dependence:

1. Withdrawal
2. Dependence
3. Difficulty in quitting
4. Tolerance

In anti-aging medicine we believe that it is important to set the stage so our 75 trillion plus cells can operate and reproduce at their maximum potential. In doing so this allows groups of cells called organs to function at their best. I’m going to point out what caffeine does:

1. It will raise blood pressure

2. Lead to adrenal exhaustion
3. Decrease the brain's ability to complete complex tasks
4. Possibly increase the incidence of some cancers
5. Increase the risk of ulcers
6. Adversely affects the hormone balance in women
7. Can cause panic attacks and other nervous disorders

What caffeine doesn't do is produce energy. It does cause the release of stress hormones which produces alertness. The temporary alertness is short lived and is frequently followed by a let down. You should limit yourself to one 8 ounce cup of decaf -coffee or better yet switch to green tea.

The Second thing you can do is to take part in a daily fitness program. According the ACSM (American College of Sports Medicine) and CDC (Center for Disease Control), exercise is not an option! It is critical that you implement 5 hours of exercise into you weekly lifestyle in order to decrease your chance of chronic illnesses and increase your productivity. As you develop lean muscle mass, you prepare yourself for an energy-filled, fruitful life! I hate to exercise! I don't have time! I don't like to sweat! What's your excuse?!! We all have the same 168 hour per week in which to fit 5 hours of exercise. Schedule exercise into your day by planning for it the night before. Making exercise a priority will heighten the quality and quantity of life and enable you to become a better spouse, parent, etc. Fitness if fun! Motion is lotion for the body! Exercise is medicine! Where there's a will, there's a way! Your first step to beginning a fitness program is changing your daily mindset to one that is positive. Daily positive affirmations will increase your success on starting and maintaining a daily wellness program. As nurses you need to make time to exercise even it if means going for a

jog on your lunch break or getting up 30 minutes earlier each day. Do what you say!

Beginning Exercisers: Your goal is to move your body any way you know how for five hours a week. Park one mile from your job and walk to and from your parking spot. Set your alarm clock 30 minutes earlier and go outside for a walk or jog. Use the steps in your house to incorporate a 30 minute step routine while watching the 6a.m. news or listen to your favorite music. Take your lunch to work and go to a park, school or track to exercise and then eat your lunch in peace. Use the stairs in your office building and take two 15 minute breaks throughout the day to walk or run up and down the steps. To enhance your fitness results try to eat a healthy protein plus a carb every 3-4 hours. Also try not to eat three hours before bed since your metabolism slows down.

Advanced Exercisers: Your goal is performance. If you are training for a sport or race, a comprehensive mind, body and spirit wellness program is necessary for optimum performance. It is imperative that you eat healthy 90 % of the time. The timing of your eating is also critical for sports performance. You need to practice your skill acquisition daily in addition to exercising for speed, agility, strength, flexibility, balance, power, aerobic or anaerobic fitness and core stability. Most importantly, to ensure success you need to incorporate exercises for your emotional and spiritual health. This will help to keep you focused on living a life that is balanced between sports performance, career, family, faith and finances.

You can do it! Start by making small changes. Cut back on eating out to one time per week. Cut back to less than one empty caloric treat per day. Make a realistic three month goal and a HUGE three month reward to help motivate you through your new healthier habits! Do what you say!

References

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