

Vibrant *living*

YOUR GUIDE TO VIBRANT LIVING THROUGH FITNESS AND NUTRITION

Factory Farmed Meat

Robin Walsh BAsC, ND

I have yet to broach this subject in a newsletter as it seems to be one of the more controversial of topics... sort of like bringing up religion, or politics at a cocktail party!!

However, I feel it is my responsibility to educate the facts about what we are feeding and doing to the animals we are eating, and consequently what we are doing to ourselves.

I took the majority of the information summarized in this article from the book called *The Omnivores Dilemma* by Michael Pollan (<http://tinyurl.com/5b2ggq2>). Michael is a journalist who follows the natural history of four meals from the source to the final meal. For those who are intrigued by this article he has other books that are all great reads.

Many of us (including myself until about 5 years ago) blindly eat food without really realizing all of the energy, stress, effort and potentially trauma that goes into consuming that meal. Most of us take for granted the fact that we can go to the local grocery store and pick up all of the food we desire without thinking about where it came from. Our desire and need for animal protein has greatly increased. This is fueled in part by the current obesity problem in North America, alongside the fast food industry who provide meat at a

very cheap price. In order to get that meat at a very cheap price, we are going to explore how that actually happens.

Corn is one of the cheapest forms of energy, and has therefore found its way into the diet of animals like cattle or even farmed salmon, who are bred to tolerate grain. In the US, there are 4 major meat packing plants



that slaughter 4 out of 5 beef cattle born. Therefore, the production of meat has turned away from happy cows grazing on grass to crowded feed lots on industrial farms. I am not talking about the mom and pop farms here, I am talking about the massive industrial factory farms that are supplying our country with very inexpensive meat - like the 99cent hamburger. In these farms, steers usually spend 6 months with their mothers being raised on natural grasses. It is true that we can't determine what a cow actually experiences, however this is the environment that seems natural and is the environment that the cow was meant to experience.

There is a co evolutionary experience between cows and grass. The cows walk and prevent trees and shrubs from invading the area and hogging the sunlight, and their manure fertilizes the land. The cows in turn have plenty of food, and because of their digestive tract, the cows ferment its food and convert the grass into high quality protein.

The problem is that steer raised on grass take longer to reach slaughter weight than cows raised on a richer diet. According to Pollan, 50-100 years ago cows would take 4-5 years to reach slaughter weight. They now can get there in 14-16 months. What gets a cow there so quickly is drugs, corn, protein and fat supplements.

According to Pollan, who visited these farms, three times a day massive amounts of corn are dropped into the feed troughs into which they pump gallons of liquefied protein and fat supplements. The majority of time they also add vitamins, synthetic estrogens and antibiotics.

Since the advantage of corn fed cows is the fact they gain weight quickly, they are actually less healthy for us then the cow that is allowed to graze. The corn fed cows get more marbled fat which contains a greater proportion of saturated fat and less "good" fat. It has been postulated that the health problems associated with beef are not beef itself, but rather corn fed beef. In the same way that cows are ill adapted to eating corn, humans may be poorly adapted to eating cows that have eaten corn.

According to a vet that was interviewed in the book, the majority of health problems with the cow can be directly or indirectly traced back to the diet. This makes sense, as we can say the same thing about the human diet, and human disease. We are now breeding cows that are able to tolerate corn. In other words, the species is evolving.

However, they are not there yet and bloating is one of the most serious things that can happen when cows eat corn. Corn causes the fermentation process in the rumen to slow down, trapping gas and causing the animals stomach to inflate and press against the lungs. If nothing is done, this causes the animal to suffocate. The corn diet can also give the cow acidosis. As corn digests in rumen it causes the rumen to become acidic and give the cow a form of bovine heartburn which makes the animal feel very sick, and can weaken their immune system. Cattle rarely live on feedlot diets for more than 150 days. Pollan explained that vets confirm the diet is so stressful on the animals that they couldn't live much more on this type of plan.

Now you may ask, with all these problems and weakened immune systems, what keeps the animals healthy?

You guessed it: antibiotics.

Rumensin, a very common antibiotic, buffers acidity in the rumen helping to prevent heartburn. Erythromycin lowers the rate of liver infection. It is common knowledge that the majority of antibiotics sold in America today end up in animal feed lots, which is postulated as being major contributors to antibiotic resistant strains.

Public health boards state that they don't mind if a sick animal is treated with antibiotics. They just don't want to see the drug losing its effectiveness because factory farms use them to promote growth. In the farms defense, they don't use them to promote growth animals. These animals are truly sick...but the animals

would have less of a chance of being sick if we changed what we are feeding them.

So...here is the problem. If we change what we are doing, and stop using drugs there would be a higher animal death rate, poorer farm performance and slower animal turnover. It would take more time to reach slaughter weight, and farms would be smaller, as we don't have land for the amount of cattle we are trying to raise at this point. Many people would be out of work, as meat production would slow down.

On the flip side...if we continue on the path we are going, I don't see how this is going to make us any healthier, our environmental issues any better not to mention the animal rights issues.

I am not saying that everyone has to turn vegetarian. What I am saying is that we have to change our philosophy on how much meat we need to consume, and how much we should be paying for it. The less money we are willing to pay, the more the meat industry will have to scrimp and save and cut corners to get us this food at a lower price. The more we eat, the more people have to figure out how to keep up with this demand.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

To support our health, the planet and our animals:

1. Support Local Farms

- Don't buy produce from factory farms
- Use the market or local farms to buy meat in bulk and put in your freezer
- See the end of this article for local places to Kitchener-Waterloo

2. Consume Less Meat

- For our health we only need 3-4 ounces (the size of a deck of playing cards, or your palm) of meat at a meal
- Reduce your portions

3. Choose Some Vegetarian Options

- Better for your health and the environment

Please don't take my word for it...you as consumers have a lot of power. Educate yourself and then spread the word!!

USE THESE RESOURCES TO GET STARTED

1. <http://www.thematrix1.com/>

These movies are great...you can watch them free on your computer. They are a take off of on the movie The Matrix.

2. The Omnivores Dilemma (<http://tinyurl.com/5b2gq2>) and other Micheal Pollan books

3. Fast Food Nation (<http://tinyurl.com/686cty>) by Eric Schlosser (also a movie you can rent at any video store)

4. Diet for A New America (<http://tinyurl.com/5d3wer>) by John Robbins

RESOURCES FOR LOCAL MEATS IN KW:

1. Your Kitchener Market: <http://www.kitchenermarket.ca/>

2. St. Jacob's Farmers Markets: <http://www.stjacobs.com/html/shopping-farmersmarkets.html>

3. Pfennings: <http://www.pfenningsorganic.com/store/>

4. Bradys Meats Waterloo: <http://www.bradysmeats.com/>

5. Organic Oasis...my personal favourite as you can actually see the animals and how they are raised: <http://www.organicoasis.on.ca/about.htm>

6. Fenwood Farms: http://www.fenwoodfarm.com/chicken_organic.htm

7. The Poultry Place: <http://www.thepoultryplace.com/>

Check out this website for local farms...many of which are at the market

<http://www.foodlink-waterlooregion.ca/index.php?first=3ef30af6d766b&second=447c8c7ff3a68>



Healthy Recipe

Robin Walsh, BAsC, FLT,

GRATED RAW BEET SALAD

This is a recipe that I received from my local organic food box from Re-Root Organic Farm:

<http://reroot.awardspace.com/>.

The recipe taste fantastic, and is a great way to incorporate beets into your diet which are great for your liver.

Ingredients:

- 4 medium beets, peeled
- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp chopped shallots
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 small clove of garlic
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1-2 tbsp finely chopped dill

Instructions:

1. Put the grated beets in a large salad bowl.
2. Combine the olive oil, vinegar, shallot, mustard, and garlic in a large jar.
3. Shake the jar until the olive oil and vinegar are thickened.
4. Pour the dressing over the beets and toss until well coated.
5. Season with salt and pepper and let marinate for an hour in the fridge.
6. Add dill and serve over fresh greens.
7. Enjoy!!



Healthy Tidbit

Yet Another Reason to Lose That Extra Weight

According to the New England Journal of Medicine, excess fat accounts for 1 in 7 cancers in men.

Extra fat causes your cells to become insulin resistant (it is harder for the cells to absorb sugar, and they are more easily converted to fat). This results in higher levels of insulin in your bloodstream. Excess insulin spurs the growth of both healthy and cancerous cells and also increases the hormones that stop cell death. Unchecked cell growth can develop into a tumour

Worst Drinks

This was taken from a Men's Health article of [America's Worst Drinks](#)

1. Dairy Queen Carmel MooLatte – 880 Calories, 115g sugar (27 tsp)
2. Starbucks Venti 2% peppermint white chocolate mocha – 660 Calories, 95g sugar (23tsp)
3. 7 Eleven Double Gulp (2L of cola) - 534 calories, 130g sugar (30 tsp)
4. Arizona Kiwi Strawberry – 352 calories, 82 g sugar (19.5 tsp)
5. Sobe Green Tea - 250 calories, 63g sugar (15 tsp) ***to make your regular tea this sweet you would have to add approximately 16 packets of sugar!!
6. Sunkist Orange Soda – 190 Calories, 46g sugar (11 tsp)
7. Hershey's chocolate drink – 130 calories, 26g sugar (6 tsp sugar)



Remember...it has been shown that just 1 tsp of simple sugar can reduce the activity of your white blood cells (your immune cells) by up to 50% for up to 5 hours after consumption!!!

Vibrant Living

ROBIN WALSH BASC, ND

GOLDSWORTHY CHIROPRACTIC AND WELLNESS CENTRE
168 LEXINGTON CRT., UNIT K
WATERLOO, ON
N2J 4R9

PHONE: 519.886.4814

EMAIL: ROBIN@ROBINWALSHND.COM

WEB: WWW.ROBINWALSHND.COM

Clean Getaway

Halloween Weekend Retreat



Cleanse & rejuvenate body and spirit

October 31 to November 2, 2008

Kimbercote Retreat Centre

Kimberley, ON

Indulge in delicious energy drinks and green martini party, create raw gourmet cuisine, rejuvenate at La Scandinave Spa, hike the trails, morning yoga, laugh, relax and much more.

Hosted by Robin Walsh, ND and Sarah Heipel, CPT

\$389 + gst per person all inclusive

16 spots available...book yours today info@goodenergycoach.com

This is truly a weekend to remember...but don't take our word for it:

I just wanted to say thanks for the great weekend. Jamie and I were both "out of our element" a tad, but I feel like I learned a lot, and am hoping to take some of that knowledge and use it in my everyday life :o) Which is awesome!! We can't wait to go back to the spa and are planning a weekend getaway in the fall up to Collingwood! Thanks again!!

J.M.

Thanks for the fantastic weekend! You and Robin did an amazing job organizing everything. Tracey and I learned so much and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

V.R.

Thanks for a great weekend. Lots of 'pearls' of wisdom. Lots of ideas for healthier eating and living.

I am so grateful that Shannon introduced me to you all.

P.B.

My sister and I made it home safe and sound, I just want to thank you for everything this weekend, i really learned a lot :).

B.C

For more information or to register contact

Sarah at info@goodenergycoach.com

You don't want to miss this experience!