

Healthy Living For Dancers, Sept./Oct. 2010

What is Real Food and Why Should I Care?

By Veronica Collings, D.C.

From the onset of this column, I've referred to an elusive term, "real food," almost as a punctuation for the specific recommendations I made. Why is that? Because, no matter what you do to improve your health, if you don't understand and apply the concept of "real food," nothing will be as effective as it could be. Conversely, if you really understand and apply this concept, you might not need to do anything else.

So, what is "real food"? I like the simple way that Diana Schwarzbein, M.D. explains it in her book, *The Schwarzbein Principle*: "Because manufacturers have misused the word 'natural' in advertising their invented foods and adulterated food products, people do not understand what natural means anymore. For that reason, I have reeducated my patients to eat only 'real' foods which they could, in theory, **pick, gather, milk, hunt or fish**. For example, an egg is a real food, but chemical egg substitutes are not."

So, why should you care? As Dr. Bruce West explains in his article, *30 Days to Feel and Look Better*, from his *Health Alert*, July 2010/Volume 27, Issue 7: "We don't need enemies. We are our own. The food processing industry creates the man-made, sugar-laden, diabetes-causing non-foods that set the stage for disease and suffering. But they are not the **cause** of sickness and more than **24 million cases of diabetes**. **We are** - by buying and eating these obnoxious concoctions that the human digestive tract was never designed to digest."

Dr. West continues by elaborating on two **indisputable facts**:

Fact #1: People who eat the Western Diet of highly processed sugar-laden, chemically altered non-foods suffer high rates of diabetes, heart and coronary artery disease, joint disease, osteoporosis, and cancer. In fact, most degenerative diseases, which are responsible for eating up more than 80% of our entire \$2 trillion annual health bill, are caused by the Western diet.



Fact #2: People who eat **traditional diets** generally do not suffer from these diseases. And it almost does not matter if the diet is high protein, high fat, or high carbohydrate. What does matter is that the diets are comprised of **real food**, totally unlike the chemicalized, highly processed concoctions of the Western diet.

Fact #3: On the positive side, if you get off the Western diet, you will enjoy **dramatic health improvements in a very short time**. Studies have shown that, if you get off the Western diet for just six short months, you will enjoy an 80% reduction in your risk of getting heart and/or coronary artery disease, a 90% reduction in your risk of getting type 2 diabetes, a 70% risk reduction in getting colon cancer¹, and on and on.

And what is the food, medical, media, and pharmaceutical industries' response to these amazing facts - facts that, if acted on, could balance the health care budget in a year? They ignore them. And why? Because there is **too much money to be made** in selling highly processed foods, and then caring for and concocting drugs and medical treatments for all the people who do not know they can cure themselves.

Dr. Weston Price, D.D.S. published a book in 1939 entitled *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*. In it, he delineated exactly what we would expect if we continued eating "foods of commerce." In the 1930's, he travelled to nearly 20 primitive cultures. At each location, he compared the health of those eating their traditional diets versus those who had switched to processed foods. Within one generation, marked degeneration appeared in all markers of health that he measured. He predicted with great accuracy how the rates of the deadly degenerative diseases with which we are now plagued would skyrocket.

So, this is not new stuff - just critical to our health, well-being and ability to enjoy life. On a radio show, Sally Fallon from the Weston A. Price Foundation, was asked if she could condense all this into one sentence. She didn't hesitate to say, "Eat like your great great grandmother."

You can do the same and I can teach you how. One beautiful thing about being human is that we have the capacity to change. By replacing one bad habit with one good one, in as little as 21 days, that new habit becomes ours and brings us one step closer to healthy living. For dancers, that means more time on the dance floor doing what we love best.

About the author: Dr. Collings is a summa cum laude graduate of Pennsylvania College of Chiropractic. As a holistic health care provider, she utilizes only natural remedies. Her offices are located in the Plymouth Plaza Building at 580 W. Germantown Pike, Suite 111, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462, in front of the Plymouth Meeting Mall. To learn how to apply the principles discussed in this article, you can contact Dr. Veronica Collings at 610-828-9634, email vcollings@aol.com, or visit her at www.drveronicacollings.com.

¹ Michael Pollan, *In Defense of Food*, (New York, Penguin Press, 2008).