

Your Mother was Right!!

By Dr. Susan Kay Udry

When we buy an electronic product, it comes with a schematic. People however don't. To understand our wiring we must look back through civilization towards ancient man. We were developed to pull apples and figs off trees, pick berries, nuts, and greens and eat an occasional antelope or buffalo that we chased down. I tell people: **"The closer to GOD" we eat, the healthier we become.**" When man messes with food it is for shelf life, texture, taste, temptation, etc. Man's intervention with food has little to do with health, only corporate wealth. I also often tell people: **"If you have to cook it, don't eat it."** This doesn't mean you need to eat everything raw, it means our ancient wiring system was not designed to eat so many foods that **must** be cooked. Grains fall into this category.

Many make the mistake of thinking whole grains are healthy, while refined grains represent a problem. This is not correct. Grains, in general, are problematic. Grains and bread contain excessive pro-inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids; gluten, (to which many are sensitive); and lectins that inflame the gut, the joints and promote systemic disease. Grains are deficient in key nutrients such as vitamins A, C, B₁₂ and beta-carotene. The pH of digested grain is acidic. Our bones, cells, organs and muscles degenerate due to tissue acidity. We are healthier when our tissues are more alkaline. When we are more alkaline, our tissues hold more oxygen (an enemy of disease). Truly, we are alkaline by design and acid by function. Many metabolic reactions produce acids that must be buffered. The best alkaline buffers are supposed to come from fruit and vegetables. If we are not eating these, the alkaline buffers must come from our bones. Acidic end products that must be buffered come from meat, grain, soda, coffee, smoking and stress.

A small amount of grain is not a problem, but we have gone "a rye." We eat copious amounts: bread, corn chips, potato chips, pasta, cereal, pretzels, bagels, muffins, and dessert. The "USDA food pyramid" (which is still under scrutiny), suggests 6-11 servings of grain/day. Since we have embraced this ethic, we have become the fattest and sickest country in the world. Most of us would do much better if we would **replace the "AI" in grains with "EE," as in 'greens.'**

Grains have many problematic substances. I just want to focus on the omega-6 fatty acids which generate inflammation. **We are genetically accustomed to a 1:1 ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acid ratio.** A ratio of under 4:1 is acceptable. As the ratio increases, cellular inflammation increases. (Inflammation = pain, discomfort, irritability, arthritis, etc) The average American's dietary ratio is from 10:1 to 30:1 omega 6 to omega 3 fatty acids - a huge aberration for our body to deal with. This aberration creates a chronic, sub-clinical inflammatory state in the body. This is the same inflammation that drives arteriosclerosis **BUT** it is not limited to the coronary vessels. Depending on one's genetic predisposition, some develop cancer; others get arteriosclerosis, Alzheimer's or osteoporosis. Some may just suffer with back pain, general aches and pains, fatigue, arthritis, diabetes, obesity, depression, headaches, or a sensitive gut just to name a few.

Consider oatmeal, a common breakfast food. In one quarter of a cup of rolled oats, we get a 21:1 ratio of omega 6 to omega 3 fatty acids. White bread provides a 21:1 ratio; whole wheat contains a 27:1 ratio (doesn't that surprise you?!). Potato chips have a 60:1 ratio; corn chips provide a 12:1 ratio. I suggest throwing away all these foods. Avoid consuming grains, such as those in bread, for at least three months. Thereafter, have one small serving a day if you wish.

What about vegetables? Broccoli provides an impressive 1:3 ratio of omega 6 to omega 3's; kale offers a 1:1 ratio; most of the green leafy lettuces give a 1:2 ratio. The ratio of omega 6 to omega 3's in fruits generally ranges from 2:1 to 1:1. **Wild ocean-caught fish** ranges from 1:1 to 1:7; it is a significant source of omega 3 fatty acids. This is not the packaged (farmed and often dyed) fish found in the frozen food section of the store or deep-fried at your local fast-food restaurant.

The mainstay of our diet should be green leafy vegetables, fruit and open ocean caught wild fish, free-range antibiotic free organic poultry or grass fed and grass dressed organic beef. You can buy special omega 3 rich eggs, but open range grass fed beef may be more challenging to find even in your health food store. **(Ask.)** Consider - game animals eat foliage, fruit or smaller animals that feed on foliage and/or fruit. We feed grain to our cattle and farm animals; we raise fish in farms where they are fed grain. These grains affect the fatty acid balance in their tissues as well. When we eat these animals, this imbalance affects our tissues.

I strongly suggest beginning a lifelong supplementation program involving omega 3 fatty acids, particularly EPA and DHA. The standard fish oil capsule contains 180 mg of EPA and 120 mg of DHA - a total of 300 mg of omega 3 fatty acids - an amount that reflects what is normally found in fish. It is not known exactly how much EPA or DHA we should take. Experts suggest 1 - 3 grams daily, which amounts to 3-12 capsules/day. I suggest you work with your health care professional to decide the dosage best for you based on your size, diet, history and overall condition. I also suggest taking ground flax and flaxseed oil, which contains alpha linolenic acid, another essential fatty acid. Each flaxseed oil capsule contains 500 mg of LNA. The standard recommendation is two grams/day, a total of four capsules and 2-6 tbsp. of flax oil daily.

These fatty acids do not represent pharmacological amounts. They are designed to provide a level we would normally get in the pre-grain period of history. They are without side effects. **There are a select handful of people who need to be careful with omega 3 supplements.** People with clotting disorders, diabetes, asthma or gall bladder disease need to work with a health care professional.

Fortunately, it is relatively easy to shift the balance of the body back to normal. The goal is to avoid the bread family, which loads our cells with inflammatory omega 6 fatty acids. We need to consume liberal amounts of fresh fruit and vegetables, with focus on the green leafies. Even the USDA suggests four to five cups daily. Try to eat fresh, wild, unfarmed fish as often as possible, and make sure to **take at least one gram of EPA or DHA and two grams of LNA per day.** It is not uncommon to see a significant reduction in pain complaints within one to two weeks. One patient comes to mind who, within 10 days of following this suggestion, lost five pounds and 50 percent of his chronic athletic pain. This is quite common. It often works with chronic back pain, foot pain, and headaches by resolving them within a month. An interesting side note: **When aspirin or Motrin relieves your pain or headache it is usually an indication that your fatty acid cascade is out of balance.**

I hope you have found this article interesting and informative.
And remember, your mother **was** right – eat your green leafy vegetables!!

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