



"Primum non nocere"



Number 5



Enter the Zone

What if there was a drug you could buy that keeps you mentally focused throughout the day, increases your physical stamina, gives you extra energy, eliminates hunger between meals, and decreases your chances of developing a chronic disease. Taking this drug would result in the loss of excess body fat and slowing of the aging process. Would you be surprised to learn that this drug already exists? You are already taking this drug every day. This miracle drug is food!

The above is paraphrased from Barry Sears, Ph.D., the developer of the "Zone" method of nutrition. The Zone is a method of eating foods in the appropriate combination, at the right time, and in the correct dosages to keep the hormone insulin in a tight zone: neither too high nor too low. Normalizing insulin secretion will stabilize blood sugar levels, regulate the other endocrine hormone systems in your body, and allow your body fat to supply the energy needed for body functions.

Mainstream nutritional theories are flawed because they are dominated only by caloric thinking. Government experts advise us to follow a low fat, high carbohydrate diet in order to promote good health. Those dietary recommendations during the past fifteen years have resulted in Americans becoming fatter, while developing diabetes and heart disease at epidemic proportions. The war against fat and heart disease is failing. The time has come for us to reevaluate our nutritional ideology.

Nutritional theories that overemphasize the caloric content of foods are flawed, because they neglect the hormonal effects of food. It is excessive insulin that signals fat to accumulate and results in up and down swings in blood sugar. High insulin levels also result in the imbalance in secretion of the eicosanoid hormones which regulate essential body functions at the cellular level. The discovery of the eicosanoid hormones by Swedish researchers in 1982 resulted in their winning a Nobel Prize, however most physicians are yet unaware of these important chemicals. These hormones exist briefly at the cellular level to control essential body functions such as blood pressure, blood clotting, involuntary muscle movements, body temperature, pain sensations, immune system functions, and cell membrane physiology. Proper levels of insulin are required to provide for the balanced synthesis of these important hormones which control and regulate all body functions. Food is the only drug known which has been proven to control the secretion of insulin.

I recommend you read *"a Week in the Zone"* and *"Zone Perfect Meals in Minutes"* by Dr. Sears in order to get an in-depth view of his intriguing and effective nutritional method. During the first six months that I followed this method, I lost 40 pounds of body fat while increasing my energy level and maintaining strength. Assorted aches and pains have disappeared along the way. For those of you who have tried calorie restriction diets you know the results: grumpiness, gnawing hunger, weakness, fatigue, and loss of lean muscle mass. Good taste is missing and you can't wait until you reach your goal so you can resume your old way of eating. Finally when the diet is over, you quickly gain back all the weight you had worked so hard to lose. Conversely, the Zone diet is delicious and doesn't require deprivation since you're not hungry all the time. The foods are readily available in groceries and restaurants, and you can easily continue this diet for a lifetime. This diet is so effective and good-tasting that I feel compelled

to share my experiences. For the past twenty years, patients have been asking me how to lose weight and become healthier by changing their diet and I finally have an excellent response! I used to believe in the low fat, high carbohydrate approach that the experts recommend, but now I understand the weakness of that thinking. Now I understand why people can become fatter and stay fat even on low calorie diets if these diets are excessive in dense carbohydrates and deficient in proteins. I used to think that these people merely lacked will-power and self-control. Now I recognize these individuals as genetically carbohydrate sensitive and their problems result from hormonal imbalances due to chronic over production of insulin.

At our first Zone support group meeting, fifty people attended and we shared encouraging results of increased energy, weight loss, and improved physical conditioning despite relatively brief experiences with the diet. One woman dropped her blood pressure from 150/110 to 135/85 in two weeks. A mother of seven children is now able for the first time to completely breastfeed one of her babies without formula supplements due to her increased milk supply. Another woman reported that her husband is no longer tired and crabby when he comes home from work.

The main principles of this diet include: (1) eat small meals throughout the day; (2) have some protein at each meal; (3) avoid dense carbohydrates such as grains, cereals, pasta, bread, potatoes, and sugar; (4) substitute lighter carbohydrates namely fruits and vegetables; (5) have a small amount of monounsaturated fat at each meal such as olive oil, avocado, or nuts; (6) don't let five hours go by without eating a Zone meal or snack and eat *before* you get hungry. To visualize a typical Zone meal, divide your plate into three sections. On one section put a portion of low fat protein (chicken, turkey, fish, etc.) no larger than the palm of your hand. Fill the other two thirds of the plate with fruits and vegetables. Then add a dash of monounsaturated fat (olive oil, slivered almonds, guacamole, etc.) This kind of meal will keep you in the center of the zone for the next four to five hours--that is energetic, clear thinking, and free of hunger.

The problem with dense carbohydrates like grains, bread, potatoes, and pasta is that their concentrated starches are broken down quickly by digestive enzymes into large quantities of sugar. The sugar enters your bloodstream rapidly stimulating heightened insulin levels which in turn cause blood sugar swings, deposition of body fat, elevation of cholesterol, increase of blood pressure, and disruption of the eicosanoid balance. The →

cultivation of cereal grains (wheat, rice, corn, etc.) is a relatively recent phenomenon in human history dating back about ten thousand years. The development of human biochemistry dates back several hundred thousand years earlier when hunter gatherers ate low fat protein (game) and low density carbohydrates (fruits and vegetables). Our biochemistry has not changed much since that time. Early Egyptians were one of the first civilizations to cultivate and consume a high proportion of cereal grains in their diet 3,500 years ago. The medical evidence gathered from mummies shows that the Egyptians were six inches shorter than their Neo-Paleolithic predecessors and suffered from chronic diseases such as heart disease, obesity, arthritis and dental caries.

The low fat mania which currently pervades the mass media and the supermarket shelves is tragically misguided. Fat is a necessary and important component of the diet. It slows the entry of carbohydrates into the bloodstream thereby modulating the secretion of insulin. Fat itself has no effect on insulin secretion. Fat sends a signal to the brain's appetite center to tell you that you're satisfied, and fat makes our food taste better. Truly, it takes fat to burn fat. The low fat, high carbohydrate snacks such as baked chips, rice cakes, pretzels, and bagels are among the most hormonally damaging foods since their sugars enter your bloodstream rapidly without the beneficial effects of protein, fat, or fiber to slow down their absorption.

If you are unhappy about what has happened to your body during the past fifteen years, check out the amazing Zone diet. The Stanford University swim team has been on the Zone for several years and their members won eight gold medals at the Barcelona Olympics while on this diet. You will notice an energy boost and increased clarity of thought within one week. If you are overweight, you will notice your clothes fitting looser. We have all the materials in the office to help you get started. We can monitor your body fat percentage, blood pressure, weight, and cholesterol levels. I can review your sample menus with you, keep you motivated, and discuss the use of food supplements. If you want to start the Zone, keep motivated, or be added to the Zone mailing list to receive notices of future Zone support group meetings, please call the office. *

Air Purifiers

Today's building methods and codes and the demands for energy conservation have created super-insulated, airtight indoor spaces. These practices have resulted in lower heating and cooling costs; however the natural cleaning agents present in fresh air are excluded. One person coughs or sneezes and the viral particles are quickly scattered throughout the environment for others to breathe. Those person who suffer from airborne allergens such as house dust, molds, danders, mildew, and synthetic chemical vapors develop upper respiratory symptoms or asthma during the months when the windows are closed.

Alpine Industries has developed a clever solution for the problem of indoor pollution. Their air purifiers clean the air by using two methods which mimic the cleansing effects of Nature. The machine generates positive and negative ions which circulate throughout the house and attach to dust and other small particles which causes them to attract one another, thus becoming too heavy to continue circulating in the air. The machine also generates ozone which kills viruses, bacteria, molds, and pollens and neutralizes odors, resulting in a "rain-fresh" atmosphere in the house or office. When the sun beams through a window, you no longer see dust particles in the air. These machines are superior to and less expensive than air filtering devices. We have the machines for display and for sale as well as more information available in our office. *

Progesterone Survey

I wrote an article for a previous newsletter about natural progesterone. The article generated enormous interest from women seeking relief for premenstrual syndrome (PMS). My patients told me that the transdermal progesterone cream was very helpful. To gather more evidence about the results, I mailed out a questionnaire to those patients who had used our progesterone cream during the past year. Eighty-nine surveys were mailed out and thirty-nine were completed and returned.

The following table summarizes the results.

SYMPTOM	FREQUENCY	RELIEF
Moodiness, depression, anger	92%	89%
Breast tenderness or cysts	79%	77%
Fatigue, sluggishness	69%	86%
Compulsive food cravings	67%	77%
Swelling, bloating, weight gain	64%	84%
Poor sleep	59%	78%
Headaches	56%	87%
Poor memory, forgetfulness	51%	75%
Painful cramps	49%	79%
Decreased sex drive	49%	69%
Fuzzy, unclear thinking	46%	78%
Skin problems	44%	71%
Irregular menstrual cycles	41%	81%
Prolonged or heavy menses	38%	67%
Hot flashes	38%	67%
Hair loss	13%	60%

The first column of numbers express the percent of responders who complained of the symptom. The second column shows the percent of those women who complained of a symptom who obtained relief from the symptom. The symptoms are arranged in order of the frequency of occurrence. For all symptoms, a majority of those responding to the survey showed improvement. The average respondent had used the cream for six months. Those women who had showed the greatest improvement and satisfaction, had used the cream the longest time, had improved their nutrition, and had increased their exercise. 64% of respondents had read Dr. John Lee's book about female hormones and had found the book to be helpful.

This is not a scientific study because there is no control group of women who had received placebo (inactive) cream for comparison. However the results and comments of the majority of participants indicate that transdermal progesterone is worth a trial in women who suffer from PMS or perimenopausal symptoms. It should be used as an adjunct in an overall program of good health maintenance including optimal nutrition and exercise. *

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