

Nutrition Advice That All Experts Agree: A Starting Point for A Vibrantly Healthy Diet!

Presented by Jim Painter, Ph.D., RD

Webinar Questions Answered by Dr. Painter

- Please speak to coconut oil, what part of it makes it a healthy saturated fat?

This requires a long answer and I am writing a response on my website.

- Is coconut oil better than olive oil?

See above answer.

- Do the fruit sugar calories end up being the same as other added sugars and what are the benefits other than fiber and antioxidants?

Added sugar and fruit sugar are composed of the exact same compounds mainly glucose, fructose and sucrose depending on the fruit or sweetener. So the calories from sugar are the same whether from added or intrinsic. But the body handles them very differently. Fiber in the fruits slows the absorption and thus blunts the glycemic response. The phytonutrients can slow absorption but also affect the way they are metabolized after absorption.

- How does the process glycolysis change when consuming added sugars vs. intrinsic sugars?

The process is the same. But many B vitamins and other nutrients for metabolism are required that the added sugar does not supply so they must be obtained from whole foods.

- What is your take on sugar substitutes?

This quote from the article Non-nutritive sweeteners: Review and update (published in 2013 in Nutrition by Padmini Shankar et al.):

“Although the FDA and most published (especially industry-funded) studies endorse the safety of these additives, there is a lack of conclusive evidence-based research to discourage or to encourage their use on a regular basis. While moderate use of NNS may be useful as a dietary aid for someone with diabetes or on a weight loss

regimen, for optimal health it is recommended that only minimal amounts of both sugar and NNS be consumed.”

My thoughts are similar. This is not one of my top 10 nutritional concerns. I don't think there are major issues with most of them. Some are safer than others. Stevia and erythritol are my first choices.

- Can you share the link for chocolate cake recipe?

<https://drjimpainter.com/recipes/coco-cocoa-nut-torte-recipe-2014.html>

- In the cake recipe, how does the unsweetened coconut get incorporated?

See recipe for details:

<https://drjimpainter.com/recipes/coco-cocoa-nut-torte-recipe-2014.html>

- How processed is cauliflower crust?

Minimally. The cauliflower is cooked, mashed, and the liquid drained off. A recipe that illustrated the process can be found here:

<https://themodernproper.com/cauliflower-pizza-crust>

- Is it efficacious to use a DIM supplement if you cannot tolerate the GI effects of consuming cruciferous vegetables?

Whenever active ingredients are concentrated, they should only be taken after consultation with your healthcare provider to determine if a DIM supplement is a good choice for you. When you switch from eating whole foods to keep you healthy to concentrated supplements of active ingredients you have switched to herbal medicine.

- Where/how can a wholesale cruciferous grower quantify/measure the amount of sulforaphane and their specific glucosinolates? How can they then apply the findings on their label -- either in the nutrition facts or in text format?

I don't know. The FDA has very specific rules regarding food labeling, but I am not aware of any nutrient claims that can be made for that glucosinolates.

- What is the benefit of Juicing? Are nutrients as readily available even after processing?

There are many benefits to juicing. Nutrients are more readily available because the cell walls are broken down. Juicing is almost always done with fresh produce, so they contain the full complement of their original nutrients and all of the enzymes

are still active. Juice should be consumed soon after juicing as antioxidants break down faster in juice form compared to whole food form.

- Do the studies indicate if the garlic is fresh or cooked?

Most of the studies are conducted with garlic supplements. Some of them use supplements with standard doses of the active ingredients. Very few of the studies I have read use whole garlic either fresh or cooked.

- Is the allicin in garlic still as active if you cook it in a pan or baked oven or best as raw?

Allicin is still active after it is cooked. As long as the aroma is still there the active compounds are present. Allicin is degraded fairly rapidly into numerous sulfur-containing compounds. Many of these have been studied and they retain the beneficial properties.

- What do you do if onions and garlic cause GI distress?

First no vegetables are required, and variety provides the best chance for getting the greatest benefit. That said allium vegetables provide some powerful benefits. So, I would consider consuming them as part of a meal and reducing the amount if they cause GI distress. Don't eat them late at night and try consuming the milder ones like leeks and chives.

- What are your thoughts on garlic in pill form?

Generally, whole food forms should be the first choice, although there are situations where garlic in a pill form is a good choice. As stated above most of the research on garlic's health benefits was conducted with garlic in the pill form.

- Are dried spices and herbs as nutritious as fresh?

Typically the nutrients of interest in herbs and spices are not affected by drying. Drying usually has the best nutrient retention of all the common food preservation methods.

- I totally agree with the 'whole foods' and the veggie recommendations. However, as a RD/CDE, the 'intrinsic sugar' recommendation should be prefaced with a caveat not for anyone with metabolic disease/insulin resistance—i.e. prediabetics, T2D, MetS, PCOS. This population constitutes ~50% of the adults in the US so eating 'whole fruits', especially dried fruit, as 'healthy' alternatives to processed sugar, can

actually have a deleterious effect on their metabolic health (including the large percentage with NAFLD). I have seen, firsthand, the detriment to blood sugars during the summer months when my patients 'overindulge' in the wide assortment of fresh fruit.

This seems to be a 2-part question. First intrinsic sugar is always a better choice than added sugar even for the disease conditions mentioned above. Second fruit can certainly be overconsumed and be detrimental for several metabolic diseases.

- Does your portion control approach counter your philosophy of eating whole foods?

Not at all. One should eat appropriate portions of whole foods. Eating whole foods is one way to consume smaller portions because they are more satiating than highly refined foods. My point with discussing the documentary Portion Size Me wasn't that whole foods don't matter, even though I used typical fast foods for the examples because portion sizes do matter when people will eat out. The main point of the video was that portions can be decreased simply by changing the dining environment to smaller plates, bowls, glasses and spoons.

- How does blenderizing vegetables and fruits affect their use for the gut microbiome??

I have never seen a study on this, so I don't know. Blending vegetables and fruit may make the fiber more accessible and therefore beneficial for the gut bacteria. The blending may increase the absorption of certain nutrients by increasing the surface area of the produce for the enzymes to work on.

- How do you feel about other flours such as wheat, rye, garbanzo, etc?

Wheat or gluten-free flours fit within a healthy diet if they are whole grain flours. Typically, gluten-free baked products are made from highly refined starches with very little nutrients or fiber and should be limited or avoided completely.

- Do you believe that flour (ex. wheat) has a place in a healthy diet? We noticed you said you don't eat flour.

I was diagnosed with celiac disease 20 years ago and it almost killed me. I think I had an intolerance that seems to be resolved after a decade of GF free. Now I avoid it because I feel much better not eating all the nutritionally devoid, highly refined wheat-containing foods or gluten-free starchy foods.

- What is your recommendation about using 'dressings' for dipping vegetables as dressings can be loaded with sugar and fat and chemicals?

Make your own dressing when possible or choose commercially prepared dressings that have minimal added sugar and chemicals on the label. Healthy fats, in dressings should not be a concern.

- What are your thoughts on hashimoto's and cruciferous vegetables connection?

Since I haven't studied it, I will give the answer that is always right. I don't know. That said as far as I have read, I don't see that crucifers are a cause or even contraindicated for hashimoto's disease unless you are eating an enormous volume.

- I don't think of protein powder as a whole food. Why would it be good? I understand for people who have special needs but for everyone?

Protein powder is not a whole food. And refined foods are generally to be avoided or limited. That is because generally refined foods are high in starches and fats and are devoid of nutrients, phytonutrients and fiber. Protein powders are the opposite. They are refined to concentrate the nutrients that are desired. And often they are accompanied by refined concentrates of nutrients and phytonutrients. So a lot of the difference comes down to the reason for the refinement and the resulting nutrient content. Protein powders are not meant to be the main part of the diet. They are a concentrated nutrient supplement.

- Does the body absorb all nutrients from plant protein powders like Orgain?

That is a loaded question, the body never absorbs all the nutrients from a plant product. That said because the cell walls are broken down, the protein in protein powder is almost certainly better absorbed than from the whole plant.

- Would you consider Orgain to be equivalent to a whole food?

No. As stated above it is a concentration of the desired components of a whole food.

- What is the name of your book?

Let's Eat Mindfully! It is available here: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1728823390>