

Here Is Some Instruction for Eating the Right Carbs

God skillfully designed your body as an incredible, living creation that will operate at peak efficiency and health when it is supplied with proper nutrition. There are many of reasons why Americans are obese. I want to take a look at the powerful nutritional foundation that will help you to discover a healthier, happier, more attractive you. And once we've settled on the foundations of good food to eat, I'll provide you in the next section with a specific diet to follow to reverse inflammation's disruption in your body once and for all.

Choosing the Right Carbohydrates

Certain carbohydrates are critical for good health. When combined with the correct portions of fats and proteins, good carbs give you energy, calm your mood, keep you full and satisfied by turning off hunger and assist in weight loss. They also help you to enjoy meals and snacks, enable you to handle stress better, allow you to sleep more soundly, improve your bowel function, and give you an overall feeling of well-being.

However, as with so many things in the land of excess, most Americans have fallen in love with the wrong kind of carbs. They see their waistlines getting wider and wider as a result of eating too much sugar, starch, bread and pasta, and they think the answer is to swear off all carbohydrates. The problem is, high-protein diets are often hard to maintain for long, and in some cases they have damaging effects on health. The answer isn't a no-carb diet but one rich in the *right* kinds of carbohydrates.

The National Institutes of Health recommends that 45 to 65

percent of daily energy intake for adults come from carbohydrates, with 20 to 35 percent of energy coming from fats and only 10 to 35 percent from proteins. The American Diabetes Association also recommends 45 to 60 grams of carbohydrates in each meal, preferably from healthy whole grains.

I believe this is too many carbohydrates and too much grain.

I believe excessive carbohydrates and grains—especially wheat and corn products—are one of the main reasons for our obesity epidemic. I typically recommend about 50 to 55 percent of daily calories come from low-glycemic carbohydrates, 15 to 20 percent from plant and lean animal proteins, and 25 to 30 percent from healthy fats.

Because wheat and corn can trigger exaggerated blood sugar responses, I have my patients give up all wheat and corn products for a season or until they reduce their belly or body fat. Even if breads at the supermarket are called whole-grain breads, they still contain amylopectin A, which usually spikes blood sugar, programming the body for fat storage and weight gain. Therefore if my patients request bread, I recommend that they have small amounts of millet bread in the morning or at lunch. It contains no wheat. However, if weight loss stalls, I have my patients stop eating millet bread. Once a person reaches his goal waist measurement or weight, if he can practice moderation, I have him add back small servings of wheat and corn for breakfast or lunch, but not dinner.

The Tortoise and the Hare

So, how can a person know which are the right carbs to choose? Many people are familiar with the old story about the tortoise and the hare. The hare races ahead but fails to reach the finish line, while the slow but steady tortoise eventually passes him and wins the race. When it comes to how your body processes carbohydrates, the race that takes place within you

is reminiscent of this classic fable. I've used these familiar characters to identify two main types of carbohydrates:

- low-glycemic “tortoise carbs” and high-glycemic “hare carbs.”

Unfortunately most of the carbohydrates overweight and obese people consume are high-glycemic “hare carbs,” which cause the blood sugar to rise rapidly. As I have already alluded to, this starts a chain of events that traps people in a fat-storage mode and prevents them from losing weight. The underlying cycle of hare carbs is obvious enough: The faster you absorb the carbs, the higher your insulin level rises, the more weight you gain and the more diseases you develop. You become literally programmed for weight gain.

When it comes to weight-loss success, “tortoise carbs” are the long-term winners. These are the carbohydrates that slowly raise the blood sugar and enable you to lose weight and prevent or reverse diseases. These low-glycemic tortoise carbs can be broken down into the following groups:

- Vegetables (except potatoes)
- Fruits (except bananas and dried fruits)
- Starches, such as millet bread, brown rice pasta, steel-cut oatmeal, sweet potatoes, new potatoes, brown rice and wild rice, in small quantities (minimize these starches; some patients have to eliminate them altogether)
- Dairy products, such as skim milk; low-fat, low-sugar yogurt; kefir; and low-fat cottage cheese (minimize these products)
- Legumes, such as beans, peas, lentils, hummus and peanuts (I recommend 1–4 cups of these starches a day, but start with small servings; you may also need Beano, an enzyme that helps you digest beans and minimize gas)
- Nuts and seeds (raw; a handful a day)

Even though most of these tortoise carbohydrates are healthy, it's still possible to choose the wrong types of starches and dairy or overeat low-glycemic starches, such as millet bread and brown rice pasta. For this reason, and because there are other ways carbohydrates stall weight-loss efforts, it's important to incorporate the glycemic index and glycemic load principles previously discussed.

The preceding is an excerpt from Reversing Inflammation (Charisma House, 2015) by Don Colbert, M.D. Copyright © 2015 by Don Colbert, MD. All rights reserved.

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Award-Winning Singer Christy Sutherland Shines in 'Welcome to Inspiration'

Christy Sutherland, a Nashville-based Christian singer-songwriter, knows what it's like to lose everything in life. So when she was asked to make her acting debut in the family-oriented, faith-based movie "Welcome to Inspiration"—out this

month on DVD—she was able to make her character Laura Ann come alive with raw, genuine emotion.

Starring Jason Crabb, Larry Gatlin, Britt George and Regina McCrary, along with Sutherland, “Welcome to Inspiration” is a film about average people going through struggles when they meet a street sweeper who teaches them the Seven Revelations of Irrefutable Success—based on the Bible.

The movie explores how the seven revelations affect the different characters, including a struggling musician, a widow, a mechanic, a small business owner, among others. Sutherland plays a multi-faceted character who – after “doing the wrong things for the right reasons”—discovers that truth sets her free.

“Everybody can relate to somebody in the film,” Sutherland says. “The underlying theme of the movie is to trust in God. He has a plan. Things come together when you put it in God’s hands.”

Sutherland has had more than 50 recordings of her songs done by major artists. She spent the first 10 years of her career in country music, working as a staff writer for Patrick Joseph Music, Universal Music Publishing and a recording artist at Sony Records and Giant Records. But then, at the age of 31, she lost everything.

After seeing her career in country music collapse, she says she heard the voice of God: “The Lord said to me, ‘I want you to sing for Me.’”

“No matter how broken your dreams are, you just need to hand them over to God, and He makes something beautiful,” she says. “True success is giving God total control of your life. His ways are not our ways.”

The way Sutherland fell into acting was also an act of faith. Jason Crabb’s management contacted her manager/husband and

said that Sutherland would be great as Laura Ann in “Welcome to Inspiration,” which is based on Tim Enochs’s book *The Street Sweeper*. Sutherland took a crash course in acting, but it basically comes naturally for her.

Since walking the red carpet at the premier of “Welcome to Inspiration” at the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), she has been in the film “A Belle for Christmas” starring Dean Cain, Haylie Duff and Kristy Swanson. Most recently, she acted in a sitcom pilot.

“I love that, as an actress, you get to become a different person,” says Sutherland, who is looking forward to more opportunities to exercise her acting skills.

She is no stranger to attention. She is a four-time winner of the prestigious Diamond Award for Christian Country Female Vocalist of the Year. The Christian Music Hall of Fame has also presented its Visionary Award for Southern Gospel Female Vocalist of the Year to her.

For more information about Christy Sutherland, please visit [. For more information about the movie “Welcome to Inspiration,” visit \[.\]\(#\)](#)

4 Points Dads Must Make With Their Kids About Violence

If we watch the news on a regular basis, it’s impossible to miss the strong attraction America has to stories featuring mayhem. The cliché: “If it bleeds, it leads” may be a huge generalization. But, too often, it seems to be the playbook by which news events are filtered. The fact is: Assault, murder,

terrorism, and war always grab the headlines.

Video games have become more graphic and more personal; movies and television depict gruesome images designed to grab our attention. Even the Internet thinks nothing of making stonings, beheadings, and the aftermath of terrorist attacks instantly accessible. Even sports broadcasts tend to glorify the gore, “I think he snapped his elbow on that play, Sam; let’s play it again (10 times) in slow motion so we can see the actual point where the bones separate...” Really?

Understanding this, how do we help our children understand how wrong violence is... while at the same time respecting our military, staying committed to protecting the innocent, and valuing the importance of self-defense?

Check out the following 4 conversations dads must have with their kids about violence:

1. Talk about right and wrong from a firm vantage point. Every value system must have clear reference points from which to draw conclusions. [Tweet This] Teach your children personal faith; make sure they understand key provisions in the Constitution; and be the kind of consistent role model where they can anchor their beliefs and understand right and wrong in the context of a stable family.

2. Violence is NOT entertaining. Talk with your children about entertainment. Take a strong stand against the idea that there is any entertainment value in anyone else’s pain. Make sure they understand the difference between fights that move the plot along and violence that is simply gratuitous.

3. Discuss advocating on behalf of victims. Part of being a man is defending the oppressed, the minority, and the underdog. If violence is not entertainment and, if being “manly” means standing up for the oppressed, we must talk with our children about defending those who are bullied and standing against persecutions such as sexism, racism, and

homophobia (Read about Jeff Foxworthy's Heart for the Underdog).

4. Have a conversation about world politics and why war is sometimes the only appropriate response. Build on the idea that strong people stand up for victims. Mention Hitler and WWII and explain why America had to intervene. Don't be afraid to field hard questions from the kids. Make sure they understand that good government always has to ask itself hard questions, Try refrain from being politically partisan.

Sound Off: Is this a hard topic for you to wrap your head around? What is helpful in your family?

Huddle up with your kids tonight and ask, "What is the difference between right and wrong?"

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5 Ways Suffering Brings Life

One of my favorite verses is Philippians 3:10. Here Paul is in prison, yet instead of asking God to rescue him from prison he says:

"... to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death: if somehow I might make it to the resurrection of the dead."

Most people read the first part of that verse and stop. But in order to receive resurrection power, you must first die. No

one has ever been raised from the dead that wasn't dead first.

We embrace this death—entering into His sufferings—by suffering for the gospel. Here are five spiritual benefits of suffering:

1. With suffering comes intimacy. There is a level of intimacy with Yeshua that can only be obtained through suffering. Paul equates knowing the Messiah with participating in His suffering.

2. Yeshua invites us to suffer with Him. When I went through a particularly painful event many years ago—so painful, I thought I was finished in ministry—I heard the voice of the Lord. I knew I could defend myself and many encouraged me to do so. But Yeshua's word to me was, "I am inviting you to die with me." The minute I said yes, peace entered my soul and I knew he would vindicate me. And he did within just a few months. I would have short-circuited His intervention had I defended myself.

3. Suffering brings maturity. In Bible College we had a young 'prophet' come and minister. He was 18 and clearly anointed, but our director warned us that only the *years* bring wisdom. He was exposed as a homosexual a few years later. Joseph as a teen had a prophetic gift, but he was too immature to use it. By blabbing to his brothers he ended up as a slave—then a prisoner. After many years and trials he was finally mature enough for the calling. His suffering prepared him. In a span of a few hours he became the most powerful man on earth.

4. The greater the call, the greater the suffering. King David received the call to be King as a boy. And for a while things progressed as if it could happen any minute: Invited to play harp for Saul, kills Goliath, becomes a general and even gets a promise from the rightful heir, Jonathan, that David would be king in his place. And then suddenly the king wants to kill him. For more than a decade he suffered as he ran from Saul.

But in the end, this all served to prepare him. The older, more mature David had two chances to kill Saul, but wouldn't. He had grown and shortly thereafter became king.

5. From death comes life. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:10-12 that when we embrace death for the gospel, it will produce life in our hearers. All the suffering He endured for the gospel released a powerful anointing in his efforts to preach the Good News.

We lived a year in Ukraine not long after the revolution. We battled an apartment full of fleas, a bathroom that spewed out sewage through our floor every night and threats from the Mafia. It was hard! But in the end, we left behind a new congregation that has flourished until this day.

While suffering isn't meant to be fun, there is simply no other way to be all that God has called you to be.

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For the original article, visit .

Have You Closed the Door On

Your Garbage?

After all of my children married and left the house, it was time to downsize so I sold my three bedroom home on two large lots and moved into a nice, two bedroom condo in a complex closer to work where the maintenance and landscaping are not my responsibility. However, taking out the garbage is.

Instead of just dragging a can to the curb, I now have to drive my garbage around to a dumpster. It's nicely landscaped around the dumpster, but you have to park your vehicle and walk up to the dumpster, open the door and toss the garbage in. A few months ago when I was going through this ritual, the Lord talked to me about taking out the garbage.

I had tossed the bags inside of the dumpster and started walking back to my car when I realized I had not shut the door to the dumpster. I went back and shut it and it then started the crushing process. I heard the Lord say, 'You can take the garbage out but unless you close the door, nothing happens.' Then, He started downloading.

When we take the garbage out but don't shut the door, we can smell the odor from the dumpster. Not only do we smell it, but others do as well. Also, if the door is not shut, the compacting mechanism will not engage. When it works right, the compacting mechanism crushes and changes the shape of the trash until it is no longer recognizable and ready for permanent disposal. So, shutting the door after taking out the trash is vital.

We all have "garbage" in our lives, things we want to get rid of. This may include, but not be limited, to misplaced priorities, distractions, wrong attitudes, harmful relationships, offenses, idolatry, bad habits, and overt sin. Just tossing it out is not enough. We have to shut the door. If we don't, it won't get taken care of so we can reach in and

pick it back up again. It's smelly to everyone that comes in contact with us, and it will remain as-is rather than being crushed and taken away for good.

If we want the garbage removed from our lives, the process is simple, whether they be great or small. All we have to do is give them to the Lord, shut the door and turn away. He'll do the rest. He is faithful to take all of it, make it unrecognizable and where is no scent of it on us or around us. Psalms 103:11-12 says, "For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

What an amazing, wonderful Lord!

Prayer Power for the Week of March 2, 2015

This week, take an inventory of what may need to be disposed of in your life; take it to the Lord and let Him eliminate it so you won't be able to go back and pick it up again. Make sure that there is no trace left and that the area is completely cleansed and sanitized. Then fill the area with the Word that cleanses and renews. Ask God to create in you a clean heart and renew a right spirit within you. Continue to pray for those being persecuted and even martyred for their Christian faith. Pray for national repentance and that we, as God's people, would take the admonition to humble ourselves, pray and turn from our wicked ways so that God would hear and heal our land. Pray for revival to ignite our churches and spread throughout the nation and the world. Lift up our leaders and remember Israel as you pray for God's purposes on the earth (Psalm 51:10; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 5:26; Psalm 103:11-12).

Is There Hidden 'Poison' in Our Food?

Do foods like skim milk and balsamic vinegar seem healthy? The amount of sugar in these foods may surprise you.

Many so-called health foods are loaded with sugar. These hidden sugars are part of why so many people are unhealthy.

Damaging Sugar Spikes

Americans consume a shocking amount of sugar. Many people eat and drink the equivalent of an entire cup of sugar every day! That's double the amount of sugar average Americans consumed 100 years ago.

All of that sugar can be deadly. Dr. Gerald Edelman, a Dallas oncologist and author of the book, *Sugar Rehab*, has seen first-hand the damaging effects of too much sugar. He says sugar stimulates cancer cells directly and indirectly.

"In prior years it wasn't quite as clear as it is now, that there is a direct link between sugar spikes during the day and cause of cancer," he said.

He adds cancer survivors who are also diabetic have a much higher chance of their cancer coming back than people with low blood sugar.

Edelman points out that too much sugar can cause obesity, a known risk factor for many health problems, from heart disease to high blood pressure as well as the common cold.

"These sugar spikes, which really means an elevation in your blood sugar level, what that does is it causes an inflammation state in the body. It's very harmful to your body," he explained.

“So the inflammation state, with all the chemicals that cause inflammation that are secreted as a result of all these high blood sugars, they can cause a lowering of your immune system,” he continued.

“So high blood sugar is an immunosuppressant effect. It suppresses your immune system, so you’re more susceptible to the flu, you’re more vulnerable to inflammatory diseases, such as arthritis,” he said.

John Speanburg is one of Edelman’s patients. He has Hodgkins lymphoma, cancer of the blood. After following Edelman’s advice to slash the sugar, he lost weight and has been cancer-free for nine years.

“I love yogurt,” he said. “But when you start realizing there’s nine grams of sugar in a cup of yogurt, I started cutting out my yogurt.”

Sugar Addicts

Edelman suggests an easy way to curtail sugar intake. He recommends looking at a product’s nutrition facts panel on the label. He said if an item contains more than two grams of sugars per serving, don’t eat or drink it.

He warns not to be fooled by healthy-looking foods. As an example, he pointed to a popular protein shake that contained 44 grams of sugar per serving.

Sugar is highly addictive. Brain imaging shows the pleasure and reward centers light up the same way when a person eats sugar as they do when a person takes cocaine.

Also, it is difficult to get off the roller-coaster ride consisting of the sugar “high” followed by the sugar “crash.”

“You’re going through spikes and valleys of blood sugar levels,” Edelman explained. “When you’re at a valley, what’s your body want? It wants more sugar. Your body loses its

natural equilibrium of intelligently telling you when its hungry and intelligently telling you when its full.”

Most people who try to cut back on the amount of sugar they consume stop eating the obvious offenders such as desserts like cakes, cookies and ice cream. Unfortunately, that’s only the beginning.

Many foods that appear healthy are just as sweet as dessert. For instance, those little packages of oatmeal can contain as many as 12 grams of sugar per serving. A low-sugar alternative are the old-fashioned, slow-cook oats or steel-cut oats, which contain only one gram of sugar per serving.

‘Health Food’ Lie?

These types of substitutions are the foundation of nutritionist and best-selling author J.J. Virgin’s latest book, *J.J. Virgin’s Sugar Impact Diet*.

She shows how to choose lower-sugar alternatives to foods with high sugar impact. Sugars hidden in foods being marketed as health foods are why so many people have difficulty losing weight.

“What I think is most upsetting is all of these people trying so hard to eat healthy, yet being duped by misinformation,” she said. “Because they just go, ‘Wow, this isn’t working. I’m going to give up.’”

Virgin says low-fat and fat-free foods often contain far more sugar than people realize. For example, many fat-free salad dressings are one-third sugar.

“When we started to pull the fat out of products, we either add, or are left with, sugar,” she said. “If you look at a lot of the dairy products, especially cream cheeses, we go to the light cream cheese, and they actually added sugar in.”

She said a good diet contains a large percentage of healthy

fats, the same ones that have been unfairly demonized.

“More than anything else, fats are satiating. When you eat fat it helps you stay full for hours,” she explained. “This is so critical because if you’re eating a low-fat diet and you’re hungry every couple of hours, you just trained your body to live on sugar, not fat. You should be able to go four to six hours before you need to eat again.”

Virgin attributes her svelte figure and glowing hair and skin to a diet high in healthy fat.

“My diet is 40 to 50 percent fat,” she said. “Honestly, when I used to eat a low-fat diet, I used to struggle with my weight, my mood, my skin. And this was 20 to 30 years ago when it should have been easy, right?”

“So I eat a lot of avocados, wild fish, grass fed beef, raw nuts and seeds, nut butters, macadamia nut oil, coconut oil and coconut butter,” she added.

No Sugar Added

She said a good way to crush sugar cravings is to replace sweets with healthy fats.

“They’re delicious and they’re satiating and they trigger your reward center, so you don’t feel deprived,” she said.

Perhaps the biggest sugar scam are the words “fruit” and “juice” on the labels of processed foods. These items are made of the super-sweet concentrated fructose that’s left over after the healthy fruit fiber and nutrients have been removed.

Some examples are fruit leathers, fruit snacks and fruit juice. Dried fruits are also misleading because they often contain more sugar than candy.

Virgin warns about falling for the “no sugar added” claim.

“There’s easy ways to say ‘no sugar added’ and still put it in there,” she explained. “Apple juice concentrate is the worst thing you can possibly have. Apple juice concentrate has more fructose than high fructose corn syrup does.”

Refined carbohydrates are deceptive because, while not tasting sweet, they turn into sugar after you eat them because the grains have been stripped of the good stuff, leaving only the starch.

Refined carbohydrates are foods like white bread, bagels, buns, pizza crust, white rice, white pasta, waffles, pancakes and tortillas.

Even whole grains can be a poor choice because of added sugars. Two slices of whole wheat bread can contain six teaspoons of sugar.

Therefore, don’t blindly choose to eat a food simply because it’s whole grain. First check the list of ingredients for added sugar. A red flag is any ingredient containing the word “syrup.”

Check the Facts

Other seemingly healthy foods that often contain staggering amounts of sugar include muffins, breakfast or energy bars, sports drinks and energy drinks. Don’t rely on the manufacturer’s description of the product. Read the nutrition facts and the list of ingredients.

“We’re really trying but the challenge is that the manufacturers know how to prey on our good intentions,” Virgin said.

In *Sugar Impact Diet*, foods are divided into high, medium and low sugar impact.

For example, white potatoes are high sugar impact, sweet potatoes are medium sugar impact, and pumpkin is low sugar

impact.

White rice is high sugar impact, brown rice is medium sugar impact and wild rice is low sugar impact.

A pasta sauce with sugar added is high sugar impact, with no sugar added is medium impact, and crushed tomatoes, olive oil and basil is low sugar impact.

Just Say No to Sugar

Virgin advises steering clear of artificial sweeteners. Research shows people who consume a lot of them actually tend to gain more weight because they continue to fuel the craving for sweet foods.

“There’s also a phenomenon called ‘calorie disregulation’ that they saw with artificial sweeteners,” she said. “When you eat something that has a sweet taste with no calories, your body can’t calibrate the degree of sweetness with how many calories. So it causes you to overeat.”

Edelman said sometimes artificial sweeteners can be helpful when people are trying to break their addiction to sugar. However, he admits they should be used with caution.

“You have to limit some of these sugar-free products because they have sugar alcohols in them and sugar alcohols can act as laxatives,” he said.

The best advice is to be aware and “just say no” to sugar ... in obvious places like desserts, as well as the hidden ones.

For the original article, visit .

Here Are Ways Dads Can Bond With 'Different' Kids

I'm all for being our children's biggest fans. Our kids need their dads to be supportive and positive.

We know that each child is different, so we dads need to discover ways to encourage and challenge our kids based on their unique gifts and interests. This has been on my mind a lot recently with my youngest son, Chance. He and his older brother Marcellus are great examples of the fact that some kids follow your footsteps in many ways ... and some just don't.

Chance has been challenging for me because he's different from all my other kids, and especially his older brother. Marcellus played football like me, and generally pursued a lot of the same things I did. Now, as an adult, he's working in a role that's a lot like what I did for years.

Then Chance comes along, and he's into dancing, singing and drawing. I've done my best to encourage him in those areas, but I'm no dancer, and you probably wouldn't want to hear me sing. I'm not artistic either. And unlike when Marcellus was his age, I don't have a good idea what Chance is feeling when he goes to perform, when he's doing what he loves to do.

So this is challenging me to stretch and grow as a father. I have no experience or familiarity with what's happening, so I'm not as confident as I want to be.

I know many of you have children whose interests are nothing like yours, and you've felt similar things. That's often true for dads of daughters. But I want to challenge you *not* to pull back or give up, but stay engaged and go deeper as you try to connect with your child.

How do you do that? With Chance, I've been really focusing on

2 things:

1. Keep affirming your child. If he is going in a direction that's different from you, *he recognizes it*, and he may even wonder if you love him less because of it. So make sure you don't withhold your love and approval. Go out of your way to say, "I love you" and "I'm proud of you." Maybe even see if you can throw in the idea that you're "learning new things" from him and really "enjoying the experience."

2. Really listen to your child. Ask questions. Show genuine interest. Tune in to her words and nonverbal communication. You *will* learn more about your child, and you'll demonstrate that, yes, Dad really is interested in what she's doing. That will give your child an extra measure of security and affirmation.

I'm still figuring out how to be there for my son, but these things have been a huge help. And who knows, you might even see me dancing one day.

I'm sure many of you have experienced something similar with a child. How have you succeeded in overcoming the differences or building bonds with a child who's very much unlike you?

Action Points

- Be willing to get out of your comfort zone and try something your child enjoys doing.
- Try to really learn about why that appeals to him or her.
- Don't hesitate to also invite your child into an activity that you enjoy—even if it might not be his first choice. You'll expand his horizons a bit, and he'll enjoy the chance to enter into your world.

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Day Dad's Challenge. See more about Carey here.

Don Colbert: Inflammation Reversal Basics

How many times have you heard someone make the simplistic statement “Losing weight isn’t rocket science. All it takes is eating less and exercising more?” Many of my obese patients would like to wring the necks of all the well-meaning but insensitive people who offer this as a word of “advice.” As if these patients never tried that.

When it comes to weight loss, it is true that to shed pounds, we usually need to eat less and exercise more. However, what happens when doing these things doesn’t work? What do you do when you have followed every diet and exercise program to the letter and still haven’t seen results?

If this describes you, first let me remind you that you are not alone. As we explore the various reasons why people get stuck in their efforts to lose weight, you will see that many of these factors are reaching epidemic proportions. If you suffer from one or more of them, you are in the company of millions—and the club is growing.

Second, know that you may be metabolically compromised. All that means is that your metabolism is sluggish. Somehow—usually through chronic weight-loss diets and binge eating—it has become impaired to the point of barely working. This means your body isn’t burning fuel the way it should be.

This can happen for a myriad of reasons, several of which you can find at . However, the overall result is that your body

gets locked into storing fat instead of burning it. Sadly, many obese and metabolically compromised Americans are unaware of the factors that have contributed to their condition.

With that in mind, let's examine some of the major factors that can severely affect metabolic rate.

Chronic Stress Lowers Metabolic Rate

Our bodies are designed to secrete two stress hormones when we are stressed: epinephrine and cortisol. A "fight or flight" hormone, epinephrine works immediately by racing through our bodies when triggered by such stressors as an emergency, running late for an appointment, or an argument with a spouse. When our bodies are unable to fight or flee, we become like rush-hour commuters stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic on the interstate—we are left literally stewing in our own stress juices.

Epinephrine revs up the stress response by raising our blood pressure and increasing both our heart rate and our breathing. When the perceived stress is over, the epinephrine level typically drops back to normal.

On the other hand, cortisol works more slowly, giving us stamina to cope with long-term stress. However, when the stress response becomes stuck as a result of long-term stress, the ongoing elevation of cortisol causes the body to continually release sugar from glycogen into the bloodstream. Glycogen is simply stored sugar, generally held in the liver and muscles.

When glycogen is released into the bloodstream, it causes insulin levels to rise, which in turn lowers the blood sugar. Low blood sugar causes more cortisol to be released, leading to weight gain.

Certain foods and beverages will raise cortisol levels, including everyday items such as caffeinated beverages and

coffee. In fact, drinking two cups of coffee raises your cortisol levels by approximately 30 percent within a single hour. I am not recommending that you stop drinking coffee, since it does have health benefits. However, I recommend a maximum of two cups a day.

Eating excessive amounts of sugar, white bread and other high-glycemic foods without the proper ratio of protein, fats and fiber can cause hypoglycemic episodes. These are bouts with low blood sugar that also raise cortisol levels. Whenever your blood sugar drops, your body is naturally signaled to increase cortisol production. Another way this can happen is through food allergies and sensitivities and by skipping meals and snack times.

Your Gender Plays a Part

Women typically have a higher percentage of body fat and lower metabolic rate than men. There is currently no consensus on a specific “healthy” range of body fat percentage, and ranges vary according to age. However, most studies indicate a good goal for women is to keep your body fat under 30 percent (for women, obese is defined as a body fat percentage—not BMI—greater than 33 percent; 31–33 percent is borderline). For men, that goal is less than 20 percent (for men, obese is defined as greater than 25 percent; 21–25 percent is borderline).

Inactivity and Muscle Loss

Sedentary individuals as they age have a significant loss of muscle mass. Adults naturally lose 5 to 7 pounds of muscle every 10 years after age 35; as you might guess, inactivity further accelerates this process. The less active we are, the more body fat we keep—and, naturally, the more muscle we lose. By age 60 most people have lost about 28 pounds of muscle and have replaced most of that with much more fat.

I have found this to be especially true among women. I check

body fat measurements on all my weight-loss patients and have commonly encountered women with 50 percent body fat or more. Yet it is extremely rare to find this among male patients. Most high-body-fat cases stem from a combination of gender and lack of exercise, plus metabolic compromise.

Could Your Medication Be to Blame?

A common side effect of certain medications is weight gain. These medications include birth control pills, hormone replacement therapy, prednisone and other steroids, various antidepressants, antipsychotic medications, lithium, insulin and insulin-stimulating medications, cholesterol-lowering medications, some anticonvulsant medications, some antihistamines and certain blood pressure pills, such as beta-blockers. Ironically, many physicians treat diseases caused by obesity such as hypertension, diabetes, depression and elevated cholesterol with the very medications that lower the metabolic rate and result in more weight gain. That is why I typically use vitamins, supplements and other nutrients in conjunction with a sensible eating plan to treat obesity-associated problems rather than just medications.

Half the Equation

Every overweight individual has a reason for his or her overweight condition. Yet sadly, most who have struggled unsuccessfully with diets over the long haul never discover the underlying reasons for their inability to shed pounds. I have touched on many of these various causes as they relate to metabolic rate, ranging from skipping meals to chronic dieting to chronic stress to aging to medications to low thyroid. In doing so, I have tried to help you understand the many ways your metabolic rate can be affected—which you now know directly influences maintaining weight loss and blood sugar levels.

This is only half the equation, however. Revealing how

metabolism works is essential for understanding how to lose pounds and keep them off. Just as important is knowing the solution: developing a low-glycemic lifestyle.

The preceding is an excerpt from Reversing Inflammation (Charisma House, 2015) by Don Colbert, M.D. Copyright © 2015 by Don Colbert, MD. All rights reserved.

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1 Possible Reason You Haven't Birthed Your Prophetic Dream

I've had a series of baby dreams over the last decade. One seemed to build upon another but I recently had one that was out of sequence and I believe it explains a lot for many in the body of Christ.

As I travel to minister, hold prayer calls or meet at Awakening House of Prayer, I get more and more confirmation of this reality: Many believing saints feel like they are about to pop wide open with whatever they are carrying—they are pregnant with some purpose, some ministry, some mission that God has given them and that spiritual bun in the oven seems

long past ready to come out.

I was in Pensacola in October during the Pioneers of Awakening Conference with Dutch Sheets, Rick Curry, Ken Malone and Ron Teal when I had a significant dream that expressed the frustration so many feel. In part one of this series on birthing your prophetic purposes, I'm going to give you a key that may bring some relief. Be sure to sign up for my newsletter so you can get part two delivered in your inbox next week.

In the Waiting Room

In my dream, I was in the waiting room with many other people. I was about as pregnant as pregnant can be and very uncomfortable. Notice I saw many other people—men and women. These ones were also in the waiting room and had been there even longer than me, as they were there when I got there.

I was sitting in a chair waiting to go into the delivery room to give birth. I was extremely uncomfortable in just about every way. My back was hurting. My ankles were swollen. Sitting in the straight back chair was awkward but walking was no better. And nobody was moving. No one was coming in and no one was coming out. That's when I spoke up.

"Let me go in. I need to deliver this baby."

"No, it's not time yet," said the attendant.

I sat a while longer and the scenario repeated.

"Let me go in. I need to deliver this baby."

"No, it's not time yet," said the attendant.

"Yes, it is. Can't you see I'm about to bust wide open? I'm going to have this baby right here in this delivery room!"

My urgent pleas did not move the attendant. He would not let

me go in. I remember feeling frustrated and starting to grow angry. Couldn't they see that I was overdue and this baby was ready to come out? Why wouldn't they let me deliver?

Easing Your Frustration

The next morning, Dutch was preaching a message and in it he said something that eased my frustration. Of course, he had no idea I had this dream. I didn't tell him until the luncheon. It was as if God was speaking through him to give me the answer to why the attendant would not allow me to go into the delivery room.

Dutch explained that sometimes it's the enemy stopping us from birthing the thing God has given us to carry. That, of course, is what I assumed was the issue and why I was so frustrated in the dream. But sometimes, Dutch said, you haven't delivered because the body of Christ is not yet ready to receive what you are birthing. I bore witness with those words and it eased my frustration.

If you've been frustrated because you haven't seen the purposes and plans of God He has given you to birth—because you haven't seen the prophetic words come to pass—it could be the enemy. But it could very well be God's timing is not yet just right. So, by all means, ask Holy Spirit if there's a demonic hindrance but also prayerfully consider that God's timing has not yet arrived because He's preparing the body of Christ to receive what He's birthing through you.

In part two of this series, I'll share what happened to me on an airplane less than a week after I had this dream. Be sure to subscribe to my newsletter to get the next installment.

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the Still, Small Voice of God; The Making of a Prophet *and* Satan's Deadly Trio: Defeating the Deceptions of Jezebel, Religion and Witchcraft. *You can visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.*

10 Ways You Can Push Your Spouse Away

It's so easy to push your spouse away. And you can do so without even realizing it.

On several occasions, I've pushed my wife, Susan, away and created a distance between us with my critical and condescending words. And Susan would tell you that she's pushed me away by texting and posting when I wanted her attention.

I originally wrote this post a few years ago. It was so popular with married couples that I decided to update it and share it with you once again. I hope that by reading these "10 Ways to Push Your Spouse Away," you'll actually learn how to pull your spouse toward you.

1. Computer time. Posting, commenting, shopping, gaming, chatting, emailing, downloading, blogging, reading, researching—there are a ton of things to do on the computer. Much of it is good, but too much of a good thing can be bad sometimes, especially when it takes priority over spending time with your spouse.

2. TV. For many, watching television is their "default mode." Grabbing the remote is almost habitual. Television is one of

the greatest time bandits there is—it steals valuable time from you and your spouse and adds little or nothing to your relationship. Sure, sit down and watch your favorite family show together every week, but then turn off the tube. Better yet, agree with your spouse to keep the television off for one week and spend that time together instead. It may just transform your marriage.

3. Phone conversations and texting. Cell phones allow us to get a lot of work done during our commute to and from work, driving to and from meetings, waiting for appointments and on trips. There is a time and place for everything, though. There are also times and places when we should unglue the phone from our ear and our fingers. Meal time with the family, couch time with your husband and date nights with your wife are all great opportunities to give the one you love one of the greatest gift you have—your undivided time.

4. Hyper-scheduling. “I’m really busy right now.” Most of us have probably said those words recently. It’s probably true. Our calendars are simply filled to the brim. Sure, there are probably some things on your schedule that you really can’t practically control, but there are many things that you **can** control. Remember this: Your busy schedule plus your spouse’s busy schedule equals missed opportunities to enjoy life and each other. [Tweet This] So start saying “no” to more things outside the home and saying “yes” to more things inside. Set a date night each week with your spouse to spend one-on-one time together.

5. Quiet-less house. Noise can be a distraction to intimacy in relationships. The phone ringing, the television talking, video games blasting and the iPod playing can all create unrest in a home. It’s so important to make your home a haven and a place of peace for you and your spouse. So make sure that there are curfews on electronics in your home, not only for your kids but for you and your spouse as well.

6. Idols. Cleaning the house, working, watching sports, eating and even exercising are all good things. If, however, they become idols in your life, your relationship with your spouse may very well suffer. Make sure your relationship with your spouse is a top priority.

7. The Tongue. The tongue can praise and the tongue can put down. Too often, couples use this small part of the body as a weapon that emotionally wounds and, sometimes, scars for life. Decide today to use your tongue for healing, not to hurt. [Tweet This]

8. The Body. When you and your spouse got married, you became “one flesh.” You were designed to enjoy one another emotionally and physically. Sexual intimacy is a wonderful gift and should not be withheld as punishment or used to manipulate your spouse.

9. Finances. A total of 57 percent of couples cite money issues as the No. 1 reason behind their divorce. Unbridled spending and debt can cause huge problems in a marriage. Start a budget. Don’t spend more than you’ve got.

10. Keeping a List. Do you keep a constant running tab in your mind of how your spouse has hurt you and failed you? It’s hard to let the hurts go. If not dealt with, that list of wrongs will eventually become a list of resentments moving then to bitterness and then to anger. Seek forgiveness and grant forgiveness to your spouse.

In what ways are you pushing your spouse away? What steps are you taking to change? Please share your comment below.

Mark Merrill *is the president of Family First. For the original article, visit .*