

## Some Considerations for Healthy Nutrition

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### Abstract

Food is an important determining factor for human health. Worldwide, diet is responsible for about 20% of the global burden of disease. Reducing the burden of disease determined by food and nutrition can be solved by changing the eating behavior of the population to a healthier one. Promoting nutritional health and increasing the level of awareness of the importance of a balanced and varied diet for the health of the population represent an imperative of the time and national priority objectives in all countries. In recent decades, healthy nutrition as a priority component of a healthy lifestyle, as well as a means of preventing chronic diseases, has become an important concern for specialists around the world.

**Keywords:** *Nutritional Health; Awareness; Healthy Lifestyle; Prevention of Chronic Diseases*

### Introduction

The evolution of mankind was marked by the succession over the centuries of several stages of socio-political order and civilizations, each characterized by its administrative, economic, religious and cultural particularities, along with which they evolved and changed over time - as it is known - the possibilities and eating habits. The nature and type of food have undergone remarkable transformations with the progress of the human species, the distance and differences recorded between the way of feeding primitive man and that of contemporary man being as important as those that characterize any other aspects of human evolution between these two stages extremes. And - similar to many other aspects - human nutrition has registered progress, but sometimes also unfavorable trends of evolution, along with the transition from one historical stage to another. therapeutically used for the treatment of diseases belong to Hippocrates of Cos; we also owe him the first written materials about dietary regimes indicated for healthy and sick people. Hippocratic ideas marked medicine until the 16th century, and some of them (regarding the influence of environmental factors on health and illness) can still be considered valid today [1].

The processes of industrialization, urbanization and mechanization specific to our days in many regions of the globe entail changes in eating habits (the consumption of foods with high caloric and lipid density and low dietary fiber content) and a sedentary lifestyle that favors the extension of obesity in the population, this in turn associating an increased risk for the occurrence of type 2 diabetes, hypertension and other cardiovascular diseases. On the other hand, it follows from this that the prevention and control programs dedicated to all these diseases will be able to find many common elements, which can facilitate their implementation in the population in the long term [2].

In recent decades, the WHO warns us annually about the essential increase in the number of diseases of civilization: cardiovascular diseases, osteoporosis, hypertension, serious liver and gall bladder diseases, multiple and varied endocrine diseases, diabetes, gout, atherosclerosis, cancer, etc. Diet plays an important role in the genesis of these diseases. Although metabolic diseases have proliferated in recent years in particular, however, they can often be prevented or at least limited. An adequate quantitative and qualitative food intake for every human being is a WHO priority objective. Year after year, Europeans improve their standard of living, but not necessarily their health [3].

Macronutrients - carbohydrates, proteins and lipids - provide the basis for all processes in the body. At the same time, fundamental reactions cannot take place without micronutrients, such as vitamins and minerals. Added to these are dietary fibers and - very importantly - the intake of liquids, especially water. The most important liquid remains water. Metabolism has two circuits. The first serves for disintegration - catabolism, the other for synthesis - anabolism. The whole life of the organism is a balance between the disintegration of nutrients and the generation of energy, the synthesis of new molecules and cells. If the energy intake is in excess, it is stored in reserve in the form of adipose tissue. And vice versa, insufficient intake of these macronutrients leads to malnutrition [4].

In particular, fetal development depends on an adequate supply of nutrients from maternal blood. In the later development of children and adolescents, adequate nutrition is extremely important for normal physical development. Currently there is information about the nutrition of the elderly, correlated with the changes that occur in the body with aging.

Energy expenditure can be increased by essentially increasing the physical load, or the amount of muscle mass. In recent years, food has become a generalized "entertainment". Thus, it is time to take control of food consumption. Just as the metabolism can be unbalanced through a faulty nutrition and lifestyle, it can be achieved, but, concomitantly, we must not forget the soul balance, which is of great importance [5].

Dietary risk factors (excessive intake of salt, sugar, fat and energy) lead to the development of metabolic risk factors (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high blood glucose, overweight and obesity). Dietary risk factors are the largest contributors to the global burden of disease. Regardless of their nature, vegetable, animal or mixed, food is indispensable for humans, given the fact that they provide energy and basic nutrients, essential for the proper development of metabolic processes, growth and development of the individual. Nutrition is a very important factor for maintaining health. Excluding some food groups from the diet does not bring health benefits, but on the contrary, sometimes it can generate deficiencies or even the development of pathological conditions. A balanced and varied diet can be ensured by including in the diet all food groups in optimal proportions. Nutrition is an essential element in the harmonious development of the human body, in maintaining health and preventing certain diseases, and nutritional medical therapy is important in the treatment of diseases after their occurrence [6].

The essential characteristics of a healthy diet are:

- Moderation (it means eating as much as you need, to satisfy the body's energy and nutritional needs);
- Limiting the consumption of sugar and fats (saturated fats below 10% of the energy intake, the rest being replaced by polyunsaturated fats; trans fats - as little as possible, preferably none from processed foods and less than 1% of the energy intake for natural ones);
- Reducing salt consumption (maximum 5g salt/day);
- Increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables (fresh, but also thermally processed):
- 200g of fruit/day (2 - 3 portions-standard).
- 200g vegetables/day (2 - 3 portions-standard).

- 30 - 45g of fiber/day, from whole grains, fruits and vegetables.
- Diversity (presupposes the balance between food groups, so that none of the nutrients needed by the body is missing. No food product contains all the proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals that the human body needs to be healthy, therefore a wide range of food products must be consumed);
- Food quality (provides the totality of a food product, which makes it compatible with specific regulations and consumer requirements) [7-9].

Nutrition involves all the physiological processes through which the body metabolizes and assimilates the nutrients necessary for growth, development and tissue recovery. Whatever the age and the state of health, food is a necessity, but also one of the great pleasures of life. Nutrients are biochemical substances indispensable to the human body for growth and survival. They are included in different food products in varying proportions and quantities and are released following food metabolism. From the point of view of the function they perform in the body and the required quantity, nutrients are divided into two categories:

- Macronutrients (carbohydrates, lipids and proteins),
- Micronutrients (vitamins and minerals).

Carbohydrates, proteins and lipids represent the material providing energy for the body and the building blocks for restoring and renewing worn-out tissues. Minerals and vitamins intervene in a series of biochemical reactions in the body, accelerating the speed of their production. Thus, vitamins are also known as biocatalysts [10].

Essential nutrients represent those nutrients (amino acids, fatty acids) that cannot be synthesized by the human body and therefore their intake from external sources is mandatory. Food is considered nutritionally balanced when it has a caloric intake corresponding to the needs of the body and a necessary content of macronutrients and micronutrients. The optimal proportion of macronutrients (from the caloric value) is: 50 - 55% carbohydrates, 25 - 30% lipids, 10 - 15% proteins [11].

The daily caloric requirement varies depending on age, sex, body mass, hormonal status, daily activities, climate.

### Conclusion

Adequate nutrition is the most modern concept in the field, based on the theory of balanced nutrition, both assuming that nutrition maintains the molecular composition and compensates for energy and plastic expenses for basal metabolism, body development and daily physical activity and disease prevention. In general, pathological conditions determined by incorrect nutrition or poor quality of food can be classified as follows: diseases associated with undernutrition, enzymopathies, diseases determined by excess food consumption, diseases determined by the incorrect combination of food products, diseases determined by the incorrect diet, poisoning, food toxicosis, infections and parasites transmitted through food. The WHO strategy on changing the eating behavior of each individual can be achieved through active health promotion and health education measures in the areas of adequate diet, food safety and nutrition. Doctors and nutritionists, specialized studies warn that the aging process is accelerated if the diet is unhealthy. The possibility of buying healthy, appetizing, tasty food at any time and in any quantity at an affordable price makes it increasingly difficult to maintain health. Unhealthy diet is one of the 4 modifiable behavioral risk factors (along with smoking, alcohol consumption and physical inactivity), which contribute to the occurrence of most important chronic diseases.

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