

## Facts and Myths About Nutrition

Written by W.J.Pais

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### "Get the Facts First! Don't be fooled by Nutrition Myths and Fallacies!"

1. Fact or Myth-There are 6 basic nutrients: vitamins, minerals, proteins, fats, carbohydrates and water.

#### **FACT**

-These nutrients are essential to life and you get them all from eating healthy foods.

2. Fact or Myth-When you put a piece of bread in the toaster you are reducing the number of calories it contains.

#### **MYTH**

-It might have a lower water content, but it contains the exact same amount of calories.

3. Fact or Myth-All popcorn is a healthy, nutritious snack.

#### **MYTH**

-It all depends on how it is prepared. Air popped popcorn is the best choice-stay away from the microwave brands (they can have up to 280 calories and have as much as 17 grams of fat!)

4. Fact or Myth-To lose weight you should eliminate all starchy foods from your diet.

#### **MYTH**

-It is usually what you put on top of your breads, cereals, and pastas that will add all the extra calories. Make sure you eat a variety of foods including starches and watch your calories you take in vs. the calories you burn.

5. Fact or Myth-Regular table sugar is just as nutritious as brown sugar.

#### **Fact**

-Sugar is sugar! Brown sugar just has a little molasses added to change the color. The molasses doesn't add a significant amount of nutrients.

6. Fact or Myth-Eating a high fat diet or an excessive amount of

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chocolate causes acne.

### MYTH

-This theory has never really been proven. Dermatologists think that acne has to do with your family history and your hormones.

7. Fact or Myth-Potato and corn chips are part of the vegetable group in the food guide pyramid.

### MYTH

-Even though potatoes and corn are found in the vegetable group, potato and corn chips are not found there. These two snacks can be very high in fat and should only be eaten once in a while.

8. Fact or Myth-If I'm running late and have to skip breakfast, I can make it up by eating more at lunch time.

### FACT

-A good breakfast provides you with energy to start the day right. Without it, you'll have less get up and go--and more difficulty concentrating in school or at work.

9. Fact or Myth-I need extra protein to build my muscles.

### FACT

-Most teens get more than enough protein in their regular diets. The key to bigger muscles is a good exercise program and balanced overall diet. To give your muscles the energy they need for top performance, eat plenty of complex carbohydrate food, such as pasta, bread, crackers, rice and potatoes.

10. Fact or Myth-I don't need milk as much as I did as a child.

### FACT

-Your need for calcium is highest during adolescence, so it is important to include 1% milk and lower-fat dairy products in your diet.

11. Fact or Myth-I don't have to pay attention to fat and cholesterol in my diet until I become an adult.

### FACT

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-Recent information suggests that your diet during adolescence can influence your health as an adult. Today, health professionals recommend a total diet that's higher in complex carbohydrates and lower in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol for all healthy people over the age of two.

12. Fact or Myth-Eating healthy means you should eliminate all foods that have a high fat content from your diet.

### **FACT**

-The key to eating healthy is to eat a variety of foods. It is not necessary to eliminate a particular food from your diet. Foods higher in fat should be consumed in moderation.

13. Fact or Myth-The sole purpose of eating is to provide the body with the nutrients it needs to function.

### **FACT**

-Food not only provides fuel that the body requires, but also serves as a means for social interaction. Eating should be an enjoyable experience.

14. Fact or Myth-"All Foods Fit" means that you can eat anything you want, as much as you want.

### **FACT**

-Be sensible. Enjoy all foods without going overboard. Remember to balance your diet with adequate physical activity.

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### **FACTS about SUGAR**

The average person in this country consumes about 128 pounds of sugar per year. That's about 34 teaspoons per day.

A label listing the first two or three ingredients as sugar is likely to be a very high sugar food.

The biggest consequences of eating too much sugar are tooth decay and overweight.

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Controlled studies prove sugar does not play a role in hyperactive children.

Sugar is a refined food that's been stripped of all vitamins, minerals, fiber, and water. It's pure sugar.

Terms to look for on labels include syrup, honey, molasses, and corn sweeteners or words ending in "-ose" such as dextrose, sucrose, lactose, or maltose. These are all forms of sugar.

Since sugar provides calories without other nutrients, it's best to use it in moderation and emphasize a variety of foods from all the food groups. American Heart Association

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[www.amhrt.org](http://www.amhrt.org)

American Dietetics Association

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[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)