



Medical
Wellness
Association

Medical WELLNESS

INTEGRATING HEALTH PRACTICES

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WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

Paul Zane Pilzer, world-renowned economist, projected tremendous opportunities in the emerging “wellness” industry and predicted that wellness will occupy the “next trillion” of our economy. He confirmed that wellness is the business in which the fortunes of the new millennium will be created and distribution will be where most of that wealth occurs. Physicians, chiropractors, therapists, health and wellness practitioners can utilize medical wellness programs to provide real solutions for today’s changing health care environment. Before jumping into this opportunistic market, decisions to build a new wellness center should be preceded by an investigation of the facility feasibility. Such a process provides assurance that is needed to study and confirm that the market exists and a wellness venture can be successfully developed. The future success for any new wellness development will be the market research and business plans as reviewed on pages 4 and 5.

Through our professional journal and meetings, we provide an international forum for communication among medical and wellness professionals. Whether you are a physician, therapist, allied health medical professional or wellness practitioner, we offer solutions for the evolving healthcare environment. In Chicago, there was a sense of excitement in meeting and networking with dedicated medical and wellness practitioners. Please join with us in our exciting third year in making the Medical Wellness Journal a most valuable resource for our profession.

Join the association today and actively participate in the wellness transformation.

Christopher Breuleux, PhD

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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MEDICAL WELLNESS ASSOCIATION

One-on-One

with

Tracy Stopler, MS, RD

The following interview of Tracy Stopler MS, RD, President of Nutrition E.T.C., Inc., Plainview, NY; Nutrition Director at Inform Fitness, NYC; adjunct professor at Adelphi University; Associate Editor of Total Nutrition, and the co-writer of the up and coming book, The Right Weigh (Harper-Collins, 2007) and was conducted by Amy Blansit Broadbent, Editor of the Medical Wellness Journal.

Medical Wellness: Ms. Stopler, you started your career in nutrition 20 years ago. What have been some of the notable changes you have seen?

Stopler: There have been so many changes through the years. Let me take you back, before our time. To 1916... The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) published the very first government pamphlet on dietary guidelines, called "Food for Young Children." In 1917, the same agency published the first "Food Guide" which consisted of 5 food groups: "flesh, starches, fat, watery fruits/vegetables, and sweets." In 1933 they expanded it to 12 food groups. The Recommended Daily Allowances (RDA) were established in 1941 by the Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) and the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). In 1946, the Food Guide was reduced to the "Basic 7." In 1958, using the new RDAs as a guide, the Food for Fitness (Daily food guide) was published and the "Basic 4" food groups were born. The 1st edition of the Dietary Goals for the U.S. was published in 1977 by the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs. This was the first government publication to discuss the importance of vitamin and mineral deficiencies and toxicities. By 1980, the government agencies as well as the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Heart Association (AHA) started to develop their own publications similar to the original

Guidelines which recommended maintaining an "ideal weight", "eat more of" or "less of" some nutrient or food group.

As the years progressed so did the publications. In 1987 the National Cholesterol Education Program was started by Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI). The recommendations to reduce the risk of cancer were published in the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Dietary Rationale in 1988. The 3rd edition of the Dietary Guidelines was published in 1990. The 4th edition in 2001 became most responsible promoting maintaining a "desirable" weight and focusing on moderation, variety and balance of all foods, nutrients and alcohol. From the Four Basic Food Groups, where fruits and vegetables were like brothers who shared a bunkbed in the same room, the fruits and vegetables were separated and called, The Five Food Groups. The new eating guide was published as the "Food Guide Pyramid" in 1992 by the USDA and Human Nutrition and Information Services. The new "group" first moved into a pyramid (a plain but functional and educational residence), and then, in the Spring of 2005, contractors were hired to build steps along the outer perimeter of the pyramid to encourage everyone to exercise. This new condominium was called "Mypyramid," and focused on the individualization of both diet and exercise. Supporting the concept of the three key words, moderation, variety and balance, the newest pyramid promotes eating more from the six food groups (grain, vegetable, fruit, dairy, oil (fat) and protein) only if you've incorporated your exercise routine. Functional? Only time will tell.

MW: Do you think that the food label

is easy for the consumer to understand and apply to their every day lives?

Stopler: Sometimes less is more! The Nutrition Education and Labeling Act that was passed in 1990 required mandatory nutrition labeling on all FDA-regulated foods. The original "Nutrition Information" food label was straight forward but needed to be updated. The "Nutrition Facts" just underwent another makeover, incorporating the latest research, "trans fat." So, now, the label is a bit busier, and more confusing than ever, stating: the serving size, calories, total grams of fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrates (including dietary fibers and sugars), protein, and the percentages of vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron. All the percentages of daily values are based on a 2000 calorie diet. Now, with the sugar substitutes, the "net zero carbohydrates" and the "non-absorbable fibers," the calories from proteins, carbohydrates and fats just don't add up anymore. It has become very confusing even to the nutrition "experts."

MW: There have been many diets gain and lose popularity. How do you direct your clients struggling with "yo-yo dieting"?

Stopler: When my clients come to me and enthusiastically present the upside to the latest food fad or gadget that promises fast, painless weight loss, I take responsibility to educate them that where there is an upside there is usually a down side. Rational decisions can only be made when both the upside and the downside have been considered. With regard to "yo-yo dieting" (repeated weight loss followed by weight gain), the upside is that when the client is "on" track they are usually improving their body's physiology as well. For example, decreased body weight and body

fat usually result in improved lipid profile, lowered blood pressure, and controlled blood sugar. However, when a client is "off" track and "yo-yo" dieting results, research shows that the ego is not the only damage done. Brownell and his group (Lissner L et al: Variability of body weight and health outcomes in the Framingham population, N Engl J Med 324:1839-1844, 1991), conclude that regardless of starting weight, both men and women who experience this "weight cycling" have a higher overall death rate and as much as twice the chance of dying from heart disease.

I direct my clients by asking them three questions: 1) Is it safe? 2) Is it effective? 3) If you do not know the answers to the first two questions then, most importantly, do the risks outweigh the benefits.

Brownell's studied concluded that "the risks due to overweight may not outweigh the risks due to weight fluctuations." Relapses can be prevented by incorporating a realistic food plan that promotes gradual weight loss while optimizing nutritional status.

MW: Do you recommend any specific commercial diets? Are there any books or self-help guides you recommend?

Stopler: I do not feel that there is ONE diet, ONE BOOK, or ONE solution that needs to be addressed. There is only ONE person! Each person needs to come to terms with themselves and the inner demons within themselves that cause them to be destructive to themselves and to their health. Any "diet" will work if the person follows it long enough, but the key is finding a lifestyle of eating that matches a lifestyle of living. Every person needs to create their own individualized plan that allows them to eat more during those happy family reunions, and a plan that allows eating less on days that they are stressed out or just not in the mood. They may prefer a plan to allow for gourmet cooking because they find it educational, inspirational and just plain fun, and/or a plan

that is compassionate to consuming a bowl of cereal or mac and cheese for dinner because time nor energy allow for more.

In our upcoming book, *The Right Weigh* (Adam Zickerman and Tracy Stopler with Porter Shimer, Harper Collins Publishing, 2007) the reader design an individualized food plan based on personal preferences, genetics, and lifestyle. The writers make the reader accountable for monitoring his or her intake. It makes the reader responsible for searching out the solutions rather than the problems. It makes the reader empowered to think differently and therefore act differently.

The writers recommend that every person spend a day by themselves, eating what they prefer to eat, before they begin their "Diet By Design" journey. The reader will learn that he or she has arrived at the destination when he or she learns how to change irrational thoughts into more rational ones and feed his or her body with what it 'needs' AND the mind with what it "prefers".

MW: How does your book differ from other diet/nutrition guides?

Stopler: *The Right Weigh* is different because it gets right to the essence of what it will take to succeed at weight loss...authenticity! It forces the reader to answer the question "Why do you want to lose weight?" "Why now?"

Our book teaches the reader how to design their own nutrition and exercise program. You will not only learn the basic principles of nutrition and exercise, but you will be expected to apply these principles to your everyday life. You will learn (and apply) how to compromise (not sabotage) by choosing somewhere in between what you "prefer" to do versus what you "need" to do to reach your goals. It's the only book out there that educates you as a reader, but also motivates you as the writer.

This weight-loss plan let's YOU be the boss. It's a plan that will respect rather than try to change the patterns and preferences that have made you who you are. This plan will be yours and yours alone, custom-tailored -- by you -- to fit more comfortably than any diet has been able to fit before. And because it's yours, so, too, will be the success you enjoy, a success that will empower you as much as it will improve you, in appearance and performance, alike.

WHAT IS MEDICALWELLNESS

Medical wellness is an approach for delivering health care that considers the multiple influences on a person's health. Accordingly, there are multiple options for treating and preventing disease. Further, medical wellness:

- Provides a balanced, appropriate application of wellness practices within the clinical setting that are based on evidence-based practices.
- Promotes a cross-disciplinary approach to patient care, based on informed consent and decision support between the practitioner and patient.
- Establishes a foundation for dialogue and collaboration between conventional and complementary practices with the primary goal of promoting optimal health and well-being.
- Promotes the development and application of professional standards for wellness practices across clinical practices.

Developing Medical Wellness Facilities

By Christopher Breuleux, PhD

Physicians, chiropractors, therapists, health professionals or wellness practitioners can utilize medical wellness programs to provide real solutions for today's changing health care environment. Before jumping into this exciting market, every rational decision to build a new wellness program should be preceded by an investigation of the feasibility of the project. Such a process provides assurance that is needed to study and confirm that the market exists and can be successfully developed for a new wellness venture. Before a new wellness center develops facility standards, it should have a clear conceptual plan along with goals and desired outcomes. The future success for any wellness development will be the market research and business plan.

Winning with Wellness

The recommended Medical Wellness approach with each successful medical wellness center is similar to the approach a coach takes when assembling a team for a winning season: **Planning**, **Preseason**, and **Season**. The time proven process taken during the planning process will ensure the successful development of the new wellness center. There are several important tasks for developing a successful wellness center and program:

Planning

A new wellness facility team, like any team, must plan for success. It is recommended that the detailed planning stage of the project be initiated as early as possible. The market study and plan is often completed by a professional consultant. The first step in the essential planning process is to conduct a Market Feasibility Evaluation. As a result of this feasibility process these plans should start with the project goals, target market and site selection. Specifically they should include some technical analysis of the following components:

- Define Project Mission and Goals
- Market Analysis
- Member and User Profile

- Demographic Analysis
- Competitive Analysis
- Comparison of Successful Centers
- Program Plan
- Facility Space Program
- Wellness Center Model and Profile
- Financial Proforma and Schedules
- New Center Project Time Line

Pre-season

Critical tasks to prepare for a winning season in any new facility include: market research, space and facility design, equipment selection, hiring and training of staff, and a successful marketing and pre-sales program. In addition, the effective development of all wellness programming that will set the tone for customer service and retention. In my experience, the complex and vital processes during these stages play a large part in determining the success of the program. It is recommended to initially use a consultant with proven wellness experience and expertise during the planning and pre-season process.

Season

When the doors to your new facility open, the season begins. This is when professional and effective management will improve the health and wellness of the community, guests, and members; and help maximize programs, participation, and revenues while minimizing expenses. The professional market study will include financial forecasts, budgets and executive recommendations. This process will allow the program and staffing plans to lead a successful wellness center operation (season). It has been my professional experience that this process is a *blueprint* for success. Behind each successful project is the experience and expertise of the planning team. How the programs and services come together and functions is determined during the critical feasibility study and business plan process.

Planning for Business Success

A new wellness facility team, like any

team, must plan for success. It is recommended that the detailed planning stage of the project be initiated as early as possible. The first step in the essential planning process is to conduct a market feasibility evaluation. As a result of this feasibility process, these plans should start with the project goals, target market and site selection. In beginning to conduct a detailed market feasibility analysis, it is very important to review demographic data and select the best site for the success criteria and desired goals. Set outcome goals to identify the business and wellness goals for the proposed center; meet with all key stakeholders to fully understand the reasons for building a center and preliminary financial objectives; evaluate the overall facility, service areas and program plan to clarify how the wellness center and programs will help contribute to the goals of the overall plan. The following process is just one example used to estimate the feasibility of a new wellness facility:

Determine Market Area — The primary market area is defined as within a drive time or a radius of the proposed facility. The recommended trade area is generally a 10- to 15-minute drive time. Although geographic barriers will always exist, experience with projects confirms that the people most likely to join a center are those living or working in close proximity to the facility. I highly recommend using a drive time analysis for the evaluation. Consultants will review the project site locations and conduct a site analysis. They should evaluate the location for potential users based on demographics, convenience and accessibility. Radius or mile rings studies can be completed if the drive time analysis is not available.

Estimates and Extrapolation — Proprietary membership, enrollment rates, estimated penetration from census-related reports, data mining and household surveys are reviewed and analyzed. These results are applied to the local

community level using demographic projections and data mining. Rely on consultants, design firms, wellness industry data sources, surveys, benchmarking databases and nationally recognized market analysis demographic database tools to analyze: the number of households within varying proximities of the proposed facility site; the average income levels of households within varying proximities from the proposed facility site and the correlation of household income to the acceptance threshold of member dues and other fees; the average number of individuals per household as well as median age of the highest potential prospective members; industry studies that document the average distances users and members are willing to travel to join a wellness center; recent community census data and projected population statistics, including household size, income level, age and education; interviews with physician and other practitioners to determine the potential for medical referral memberships; and estimated community and employee usage for various recreational activities. An income analysis can be applied to the potential member profile in order to estimate the population who may join a new facility based on planned programs, services and price elasticity.

Effects of Competition — Every new project should conduct competitive or community analysis of the comparable operations in the target area. This community assessment determines key information about the area's existing wellness centers. A "professional shopper" technique is used to assess direct competition. A good competitive analysis will include the following: the location of competitive centers and their distance from the proposed wellness center along with the estimated memberships and the age of competing facilities. Any new facility or programming components should be included with the size and amenities of the competing facilities, and the summary will identify facility features along with membership options and member dues, initiation fees and other costs.

Corrections Based on Research Experience — Even after all attempts to

discount potential memberships through the market evaluation and the competition analysis, there will be a group of people who would be expected to join, but do not participate as predicted. This is where a seasoned consultant with proven experience is most valuable.

Impact of Medically-related Memberships — It has been determined that 20% to 30% of fitness center members are introduced to the facility because of medical needs, such as cardiovascular disease or orthopedic problems. Experience with wellness operations indicates that physicians who are associated with the facility will use the programs as an integral part of medical treatment.

Comparison of Successful Centers — Develop a comparison of successful wellness centers in the market area to help determine facility and program components to consider in the center. This is a great benchmarking tool and process and future marketing resource for memberships.

The following chart provides the different market research methods and assessments.

Research Methods and Assessments

- Demographic Survey Evaluation
- Telephone Interviews
- Focus Group
- Direct Mail Surveys
 - Customer Intercepts
 - Mystery Shops
- Market Feasibility Assessments
- Brand Image Analysis
- Product/Service Utilization
- Advertising Effectiveness
- New Product/Service Development
- Customer Satisfaction
- Inactive/Former Customer Surveys

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www.medicalwellnessassociation.com

Source: Medical Wellness Programs, The Medical Wellness Association, 2003.

Ask the Experts

Q: I would like to add a line of promotional products to my fitness center. Which ones are best sellers in a fitness and wellness center?

Wayne Wilson, owner of Promoter Advertising Products offers this advice:

A: Promotional products are a great way to advertise your business; every time someone uses or wears a product, your business is advertised. Quality products can last for years, giving you an inexpensive long-term advertising promo. They work well as merchandise in company stores, incentives to employees and handouts at trade shows. The best-selling products are apparel, writing instruments and business gifts such as key chains and water bottles.

The newest trends in apparel are particularly noteworthy, because unlike the inexpensive promo t-shirts of the past, most apparel is made by name-brand designers, such as Nike, Champion, North Face etc. Women's apparel has enjoyed a recent surge in popularity as more companies begin to cater to the female consumer. Fitted collared and t-shirts have gained the most popularity with women. Successful products tend to be more youthful. Above all, the most successful products are higher quality, your customers will know the difference.

You can find more advice about promotional products at www.gopromoter.com

Avoiding Nutritional QUACKERY

By Ronda Gates, MS RPh

The fields of exercise, nutrition and weight management are rife with deception. Multitudes of tricksters, savvy marketing professionals and flat out dishonest people use skillful ploys to hoodwink consumers into handing over money for worthless or even dangerous advice, products, and procedures. “Fraud” or “quackery” is how health promotion professionals describe products that contrast with information and programs about health issues that are reliable and scientifically-based. The following signs can help you identify quackery:

- Claims of solutions that sound “magical” or that present enticingly simple (and logical-sounding) answers to complex problems.
- Distrust of the current methods of medicine or suspicion of the regular food supply with “alternatives” for sale (providing profit to the seller) under the guise that people should have freedom of choice. Beware of anyone claiming to be persecuted by the medical establishment—it means an amateur is making your diagnosis. They often try to convince you that physicians want to keep you ill so that you will continue to pay for office visits.
- Evidence in the form of testimonials, case histories, and other non-scientific support for their claims. These are carefully selected and often use the name of a person who doesn’t exist. Everyone is passionate about something. Remember that famous personalities are paid big bucks for their support.
- Testimonials and claims from various “institutions” should be checked out. For example, advertisements for Metabolife say, “Metabolife 356® was the first herbal product to achieve the A.C.E.R.I.S. Quality Assurance Seal and continues to surpass regulatory requirements.” In fact, to use a vendor’s language, this is “a lot of fancy verbiage from Metabolife.” The A.C.E.R.I.S. Quality Assurance seal is

a seal that any manufacturer may purchase. The vendor does not need to demonstrate any assurance of quality or provide any documentation to use this seal—they just need to hand over money!

- Impressive-sounding terminology used to disguise a lack of good science.
- Evidence from “unpublished studies.” Valid scientific studies are published in reputable scientific journals.
- **LOOK CLOSELY.** Marketing geniuses can advertise a product with myths and misinformation but the package you open has to tell the truth. Look at the bottle or package itself. Here are two examples:
 - Ads for chromium picolinate claim the supplement builds lean tissue and burns fat. But the bottle itself never says that because it isn’t true. Strength training builds lean tissue. Cardiovascular conditioning promotes use of stored body fat.
 - The box for a popular nutrition bar reads, “to burn stored body fat, you must eat the correct ratio of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats,” but the statement isn’t on the wrapper because it isn’t true.
- In tiny print, somewhere on a page, the word “Advertisement.”
- Product availability from only one source.
- Evidence that is purported to be valid because the person has a M.D. or Ph.D. degree or “has studied at a reputable institution.” Anyone can audit classes at almost any institution, and a job as a lab assistant doesn’t mean the individual has done research.

For more information:

FTC: Diet and Fitness Federal Trade Commission. <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/fitness/index.html>

Claims that Can be Made for Conventional Foods and Dietary Supplements FDA/Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/hclaims.html>



Ronda Gates, M.S. RPh is the owner of *LIFESTYLES* by Ronda Gates, a Lake Oswego, OR company that has been developing and delivering health promotion programs, products and consulting services since 1978. Ms. Gates developed the medical evidence-based lifestyle and weight management program, *TRANSFORMATIONS*.

Be a savvy consumer. Watch out for:

- Logic without proof
- Motive of personal gain
- Authority not cited
- Unreliable publication
- Fake credentials
- Advertisement
- Unpublished studies
- Testimonials
- Suspicions about food supply
- Persecution claims
- Simple answers
- Too-good-to-be-true solutions

Liability Considerations for the Personal Trainer and Facility Business Owner

By Amy Blansit-Broadbent, MA

Any legal complaints filed against your business can be financially damaging—and ultimately destructive. A personal trainer, owner of a training facility or business is at an even greater risk for liability due to the physical nature of the business. But there are steps that you can take to avoid being sued. Share the following advice with your employees and implement these tips into your business practice for a greater chance of avoiding the hassle and expense-ridden legal process.

Tips to Help You Avoid Liability Claims

- Immediately fix or throw away any faulty exercise or other types of equipment. Make sure your equipment is well maintained as defined by the owner's manual for each product. Avoid being charged with negligence by inspecting your equipment regularly and documenting the inspection and any repairs. If you notice any damage, even very minor problems, do not allow anyone (including clients or employees) to use the equipment until all necessary repairs have been made. Never alter any type of equipment or use it in any manner other than that specifically recommended by the manufacturer.
- Make sure your business premises are safe. Monitor your facility regularly for potential hazards that may pose a threat to your clients or employees. Assign to all your employees the duty of watching for any spilled water or excess sweat that could cause a slip or fall. Install proper flooring materials and non-skid mats to any shower-area floors. Keep your parking lot free of debris and well lit at night.
- Create and maintain all necessary paperwork. Paperwork is your key to protection. Work with your attorney to draft a 'release from liability' form for

each member of your facility. Any paperwork containing personal information, including medical or insurance information, releases, and waivers, should be stored in a secure and carefully locked location. Document every incident that occurs at your business, from minor incidents to major accidents, even if the individuals involved in the incident were not injured. Retain all business-related paperwork for five to seven years.

- Don't *require* your employees to obtain CPR training. Believe it or not, from a legal standpoint it is best not to require your staff to be CPR certified. By requiring this type of training, your business can be liable for the staffs' actions or errors. Practice regularly with those employees who are trained in CPR to keep their skills sharp, and remind staff members to stay within their limits of training if an emergency does ever occur.
- Carefully regulate any supplements or diet consultations you offer through your business. If your company staff includes a dietary consultant who is not a registered dietitian or nutritional specialist, your company is at risk. Fad diets can be dangerous. Do not recommend any dietary action for a client unless you or your employee is well educated and trained in nutritional and dietary concerns. Consult with a physician or registered dietitian regularly to ensure that the information you present to your customers is accurate, complete, and above all safe.
- Your best plan is to avoid lawsuits by being proactive, well informed, and careful in every aspect of your business practice. Make sure you and your staff document and sign everything. If you do ever get sued, contact your attorney and insurance company immediately. Don't make any statements to your clients about the situation, and never

speak to a representative of the person suing you. (This can include an insurance agent or an attorney.) Even simple phone conversations could prove detrimental to your case, so if any of these individuals ask you to talk, just refer them to your attorney then immediately end the conversation.

(Never forget that someone can be recording everything you say over the phone.) Also, be sure your employees understand the importance of not sharing their opinions about the incident, and tell them not to make a statement of any kind to anyone. Immediately after an incident occurs, gather and document as much information as you can, but continue to conduct business as usual. Remember, sometimes these legal troubles can't be avoided, but they also can't be allowed to detract from the service you provide to your customers.

Amy Blansit-Broadbent, MA is founder of the American College of Wellness.



Rolfing for Structural Integration and Wellness

By Anthony Thompson

Rolfing Structural Integration is a form of bodywork that aims to align the body in the gravitational field by manual manipulation of the body's neuro-myofascial system. As a graduate of the Rolf Institute of Structural Integration, I am promoting Rolfing® to medical wellness professionals to bring a better understanding of Structural Integration to the medical community.

Rolfing was developed by Ida P. Rolf, PhD, a biochemist who developed the 10-series of Structural Integration over 50 years ago. The series aims to get the major segments of the body aligned and coordinated so ease and comfort can be experienced in a client's body. Rolfing can create a more effective use of muscles, thereby conserving energy during movement due to more refined, economical patterns.

The founder of Structural Integration, Dr. Ida Rolf¹ received her PhD in biochemistry from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, and worked at the Rockefeller Institute as an organic chemist. Dr. Rolf intrigued by alternative therapies began experimenting with body manipulations. She started asking fundamental questions pertaining to the conditions of the human body that promote health and optimal physiological functioning. These questions led to the development of the Rolfing series of Structural Integration and founded the Rolf Institute of Structural Integration located in Boulder, Colorado.

Rolfing is a series of manual manipulations of the soft tissue, or neuro-myofascial system of the

body focused on improving the alignment and the level of freedom or spaciousness in the body. The Rolfing community refers to structural fixations in a body as lesions, which is addressed in this physical manipulation phase of the Rolfing process. One could envision the structural manipulation to be a cross between deep tissue massage and chiropractic work, where one tries to lengthen, hydrate, and relax muscles while aligning the body and redistributing the body 'load' in a more optimal way. The practitioner uses long, slow strokes using fingers, fists, or elbows in an attempt to free and release fascial holdings. The Rolf movement, similar to physical therapy, works to educate individuals of movement patterns and preferences, while giving the client additional options to explore. It is the Rolfer's goal to weave both the structural/lesion and movement/inhibition work into an individualized process that encourages integration, motility, and coherence of the body.

The myofascial system of connective tissue, is intertwined with muscles, ligaments, tendons and even bone tissue. Therefore, working on and releasing fascial adhesions that are built up over a lifetime from stress, injury or specific movement patterns can effect on the entire body structure. These effects are demonstrated through studies at UCLA, where Rolfing was shown to reduce stress more than those subjects whom only exercised and stretched². Additionally, Rolfing is credited, at Starkey Laboratories, to have decreased on the job repetitive stress injuries (carpal tunnel syndrome) dramatically³, while simulta-

neously decreasing workers compensation costs by a staggering 92% in 7 yrs⁴. Furthermore, research conducted at the Nation Center of Medical Rehabilitation in Maryland demonstrated that Rolfing can decrease sway back or extreme lordosis⁵, and additional research further demonstrates how the Rolfing process can enhance neurological functioning^{6,7}.

Recently, Robert Schleip, PhD, has shown in laboratory experiments that the fascia not only wraps all the human bodies musculature, but also may have the ability to contract like muscle tissue⁸. This groundbreaking research is intriguing to the Rolfing community because it re-emphasizes the importance and utility of fascia in our bodily processes. Furthermore, Dr. Schleip has influenced the Rolfing community by demonstrating the importance and interconnectedness of the nervous system with the myofascial system of the body⁹. Dr. Schleip made an interesting discovery when he participated in 3 arthroscopic knee operations where patients were given general anesthesia. Dr. Schleip performed passive range of motion



tests before and during the anesthesia, and to Dr. Schlep's surprise, the range of motion tests showed an increase when the patients were anesthetized. This work clearly points to the importance and interconnectedness of both the myofascial system and the nervous system and how both influence structure and flexibility in a client's body, and therefore must be considered during the Rolfing process

To summarize, Rolfing promotes the structural integration of the myofascial system and works to bring the body into alignment. Additionally, Rolf movement education emphasizes the importance of addressing holding patterns at a neurological level, particularly pattern recognition, similar to physical therapy. The goal of Rolf movement work is to provide clients with additional movement options to help one achieve and maintain newly found freedom in the body. Research results demonstrate Rolfing can reduce stress and chronic pain and increase range of motion.

For more information visit:
<http://www.rolf.org>

Anthony Thompson is a certified Rolfing practitioner, received his BS in Biochemistry from Indiana University, has worked in the pharmaceutical industry as a medicinal/organic chemist.

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National Uniformity for Food Act

Mar 8, 2006: On passage Passed by recorded vote: 283 - 139 (Roll no. 32).

The controversy around the food labeling bill, HR Bill 4167: National Uniformity for Food Act of 2005, appears to be growing.

Critics of the bill include scores of consumer, health, wellness and environmental groups, as well as food safety experts. They believe this is the dismantling of vital food protection laws and the right of individuals to know what is in their food. Congress was bombarded with over fifty thousand email letters and phone calls last week. Siding with consumers, a number of major newspapers also published editorials against HR 4167, while the attorneys general from 37 states sent a strong letter to Congress opposing the bill. But Congress has postponed the bill to date, yet is still poised to pass this critical bill.

Supporters of the bill argue that a single national standard for food safety is needed to avoid confusion for consumers and food producers, who complain about having to create different food labels for different states. These supporters include industry giants such as Nestle USA, the HJ Heinz Co., Kraft Foods and Sara Lee Corp., as well as supermarket chains and trade associations.

To access the details of HR 4167
Visit: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h109-4167>

Wellness Coaching and Collaborative Problem Solving Model

by Dr. Donna Mayerson of Hummingbird Coaching Services

Making Healthy Lifestyle Changes is stressful and many of the traditional supports that individuals have had in the past have eroded. We recognize that people in today's world have fast-paced lifestyles with higher demands on personal and professional time, along with more single parent households and homes where both parents must work. These elements severely reduce the time, energy, and motivation people have to focus on their own needs.

Those seeking to improve their health and fitness have a number of places they turn to for support. Sometimes they turn to personal relationships with friends or family. Sometimes they turn to professional relationships with doctors, physical therapists, chiropractors or personal trainers. But often, they do not have the time or money to continue the work they began together.

Health and fitness seekers also turn to published materials – books, magazine articles, etc. - that have been written by experts. Unfortunately, very few of us are good at taking generic information and actually applying it to the particulars of our own lives. Though many people find printed materials helpful, such materials are usually not sufficient to resolve the issues at hand.

Hummingbird Coaching Services (HCS) has developed a service that adds to the range of supports for those wishing to make healthy lifestyle changes. It is aimed at being a “gap filler” – more personalized than generic information from experts and less intensive and expensive than professional one-on-one counseling. This service, MyHealthCoach.com (MHC) is personalized and efficient. Unlike traditional counseling, it is focused on non-clinical problems – the everyday challenges of

instituting positive lifestyle changes. Clinical issues are instead referred to mental health and health professionals. HCS coaching also differs from traditional counseling in the depth of analysis. Counseling requires a high degree of thoroughness and analysis since the stakes are very high. Alternatively, since the stakes are lower with coaching a quicker methodology can be utilized.

Key Points:

- People need additional supports to the array currently available to ensure Healthy Lifestyle Change
- All problems involve negative emotions (e.g. frustration, anger, guilt, disappointment, etc.) that must be acknowledged and validated before rational problem-solving can occur
- Acknowledgement and validation via reflective listening, positive reframing and empathic responding are always necessary and sometimes sufficient responses to a member in need of support.
- Effective goal setting and implementation support greatly increases the likelihood of behavioral change.
- Efficiency is the key to keeping the coaching service price point low and thereby making it widely accessible.

In coaching, if a strategy doesn't work we simply circle back and try something different, whereas in counseling a misdirected intervention can have more severe consequences and therefore is more unacceptable. Further, whereas counseling/therapy is often based in an “expert” model and advice is often expected, in coaching an explicit attempt is made to avoid advice-giving. Instead, the aim is to help individuals think through issues and come to their own conclusions in a collaborative problem-solving model. The coach

offers ideas for consideration and helps the people generate ideas of their own. The coach helps an individual consider various ideas, choose a direction, and then supports them in the implementation of their decision.

HCS coaches aim to serve their members well but to use as little of their own time as possible in doing so. The more efficient coaches can be in the use of their time, the lower the cost to deliver the service and thereby the cost to members is kept to a minimum. Lower cost means greater availability to a wider range of people.

HCS has developed procedures and technology to help coaches in their quest for efficiency. It has developed its unique Human Touch software (in its third generation) that enables coaches and members to interact in meaningful and convenient ways using the Internet. The software offers members a secure personal website at which they can access their coach in real-time or on a non-synchronous basis within 24 hours. The site allows coaches to hand pick topic-specific, user-friendly articles targeted to the specific issue at hand and to deliver them to a member's personal library. It also allows coaches to help members set specific goals and to support them through implementing these goals. And, the software and program provide coaching support for the coaches themselves. All in all, the software is efficient for coaches, user-friendly for members, and capable of handling a large volume of activity.

MHC services are based in a collaborative relationship. The relationship formed between member and coach not only enhances the quality of service but the efficiency as well. The familiarity that a coach develops with a member's circumstances and significant rela-

tionships allows them over time to more quickly offer useful ideas and assistance. With traditional call-in assistance lines, such as a warm-line, the time intensive exercise of getting background and contextual information is repeated each time. Efficiency is lost.

Challenging the conventional wisdom that relationship formation requires in-person interaction, HCS has found that members and coaches *can* build sufficient relationships via internet-based communication. Often HCS coaches utilize an initial time-limited telephone conversation to establish a personal connection and then proceed with computer-based interactions for the remainder of their work with the member. In looking to maximize efficiency HCS has focused on minimizing the time used in live interactions when the listener waits for the respondent to formulate and express their thoughts. Non-synchronous interchanges via computer eliminate these “inefficiencies”. HCS coaching does not require a coach to be tethered to a member while the member formulates and expresses their thoughts. Instead, coach time is used mainly in reviewing member correspondence and formulating responses. This strategy produces great timesaving. Further, HCS has developed a protocol based on key learnings from the field of psychotherapy and behavior modification. The protocol is embedded within a proprietary problem-solving model called Y.O.U.R.[®] This model is based on the

concept that too often people act without a good understanding of a problem. Their responses then complicate matters and often make matters worse. MHC offers the opportunity to step back and take a second look at what’s going on – to try to quickly come to a reasonable guess as to what factors might be influencing the situation. *The Y.O.U.R. model organizes the inquiry in a systematic way.* Basically, it sequences the process of:

- clarifying the member’s thoughts, feelings, beliefs and expectations around the issue (Y for You),
- identifying some targeted Observations to make,
- deriving an understanding from the observations made Using well established concepts of human behavior, and then
- generating specific Responses based on an improved understanding.

But, having an idea of “what” to do is very different from actually “doing” it. People need help with the follow-through. So, after figuring out “what” to do using the Y.O.U.R. Model, HCS focuses on implementation. Here HCS builds on sound research and experience from the field of behavior modification that has to do with goal-setting and with implementation support.

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Healthy Hot Chocolate

2 cups (500 ml) low fat milk or soy-milk
2 oz (56g) 70% cocoa dark chocolate
2 tsp (10 ml) granulated sugar
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cinnamon

1. In saucepan, heat milk or soymilk over medium heat until it steams and is very hot.
2. Add sugar and cinnamon and stir until the sugar has dissolved. Remove from heat.
3. Break dark chocolate into chunks. In a microwave oven, place chocolate chunks in a microwave-safe container and microwave on medium for 30 seconds to 1 minute, until the chocolate turns shiny. Remove container from the microwave and stir until chocolate completely melts.
4. Add small amount of hot milk to melted chocolate and whisk to mix until well blended. Slowly add melted chocolate mixture to the rest of hot milk and whisk until well blended. Pour into mugs. Makes 4 servings

Nutritional analysis per serving:
Calories 211, Protein 10 g, Carbohydrate 23.5 g, Fat 8.5 g, Fiber 2.5 g

Source: Healthy Hot Chocolate. Accessed March 13, 2006 from: http://www.saveonfoods.com/1/cookbook/recipe_cards/healthy_hot_chocolate.htm

More chocolate information on page 13.

Wellness and Fitness Testing: Key Service Concepts

by Rob Rideout, Vice President of MicroFit, Inc.

Thirty years ago, I tested twenty police officers a day for three days and charged \$75 per officer. I earned \$4500 and quickly learned that I could provide a valuable service. Ten years later, I co-founded MicroFit and for the past twenty years, we have refined our programs to assist wellness centers to improve their service.

Facility Tour – Where First Impressions Count

A proper tour of your facility is critical in establishing your credibility. Here is a time-tested idea: Start your tours with a “quick test,” usually blood pressure or body fat. This will change your guest’s mindset away from the “fear of being sold!” to “how can I improve?” They will be more receptive to your tour, resulting in increased membership sales and sustained participation.

Standards and Liability

Many facilities require a fitness assessment before members can begin participation. By adhering to these standards, facilities maintain a professionalism that sets them apart from other fitness centers. One size does not fit all in your facility. Fitness assessments provide a baseline from which every exercise recommendation or fitness therapy can be tailored to meet the goals of each individual. Fitness assessments will eventually play a key role in identifying a “red flag” that warrants caution before a client is allowed to begin an exercise program. In addition to saving a facility from a potential lawsuit, a professional fitness assessment can actually save a life! Fitness assessments should meet the guidelines set forth by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), and your compliance will create an atmosphere of trust and confidence.

Educate and Motivate Members

Education plays an important role in retaining members! MicroFit provides

your staff with reliable fitness data, adding value to all your programs. The goal is to motivate your members and users toward healthier lifestyles. The outcomes will be increased participation, member retention, and quality referrals.

Program Marketing

Personal training and testing can build relationships and improve user retention. Fitness assessments not only motivate members, they help to create a relationship between trainers and new clients. Consider this approach: Promote an assessment package with three 1/2 hr. personal training sessions. This helps to up-sell personal training. Trainers get a chance to “audition for their job.” Selling a package with at least one follow-up assessment will increase retention by helping to set realistic short-term goals, helping members to “jumpstart” their exercise/nutritional programs. A \$150 package with the first assessment in the first of 3 half hour training sessions is a great value for new members and an excellent way to sell the benefits of having a personal trainer. Should fitness/wellness centers or trainers provide free fitness assessments? Does your dentist give away free fillings and follow-up office visits? Why should it be different for a qualified wellness or fitness professional? In some states, health and fitness assessments qualify for insurance reimbursement.

Fitness Testing can be a Powerful Marketing Tool when using fitness assessments for community outreach. Health fairs, sporting events, and open houses are great. Offer free blood pressure or body fat screenings. Learn about the prospective member and provide attractive reports, as well as information about your facility. Invite them to visit with a complimentary one-day pass. Having a structured fitness assessment

program also allows you to build a testimonial portfolio. Standardized fitness assessment tools also provide outcome measures that allow you to negotiate with managed care organizations and corporations for wellness contracts.

When approaching local companies, you must be able to show outcome results. Aggregate fitness assessment data can be given to the corporation to monitor employee progress. Statistical outcome reports help employers identify health and fitness problem areas within their employee population. In turn, the corporation can establish a baseline from which a course of improvement can be planned and measured, using your facilities and services. Fitness/wellness centers are seeing more 45-60 year olds joining because doctors are beginning to prescribe exercise for disease prevention. Offering standardized health and fitness assessments positions you to partner with outpatient and rehabilitative healthcare services. Health fitness and wellness assessments, can legitimately promote your services to doctors and other health professionals who can provide a steady stream of referrals.

For more information visit:
<http://microfit.com>



Chocolate: Good for the Mind, Body & Spirit

Kirsti A. Dyer, MD, MS, CWS

It has been shown as proof positive that carefully prepared chocolate is as healthful a food as it is pleasant; that it is nourishing and easily digested...that it is above all helpful to people who must do a great deal of mental work.

~Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

Any true chocolate connoisseur can tell you that this delectable "food of the gods" is good for your mind and your spirit. Researchers—nutritionist, food scientists, nurses and cardiologists—have also demonstrated scientifically that chocolate is good for your body.

Knowledge of chocolate's benefits is not new. The ancient Aztecs discovered a "divine drink, which builds up resistance and fights fatigue." A cup of this invaluable, refreshing and nourishing drink, made by crushing the seeds of the *Theobroma cacao* tree, permitted a man to walk for a whole day without food. Nutrition researcher, Michael Levine, among others, described chocolate as being the world's perfect food—chemically speaking. (1,2)

Affects on the Mind

Noted sex therapist, Dr. Ruth Westheimer says of this "wicked pleasure" that "the taste of chocolate is a sensual pleasure in itself, existing in the same world as sex." The reason? Chocolate stimulates the release of endorphins, natural hormones produced by the brain, that generates feelings of pleasure and promotes a sense of well being. Chocolate may also make a person feel better by directly interacting with the brain. One of the ingredients in chocolate is tryptophan, an essential amino acid needed by the brain to produce serotonin. Serotonin is a mood-modulating neurotransmitter, the brain's "happy chemical." High levels of serotonin can give rise to feelings of happiness. (1,3)

Chocolate contains another neurotransmitter, anandamide. Anandamide targets the same brain structure as THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the active ingredient in cannabis. Chocolate also contains two chemicals that slow the normal breakdown of anandamide and prolong the action of this natural stimulant in the brain. The BBC's Hot Topic article on Chocolate provides an excellent Flash animation demonstrating how chocolate might prolong the effects of anandamide. (1) However, one must note that experts estimate the levels of these substances are so low in most choco-

late, that a person would need to eat several pounds of chocolate in order to substantially impact the brain's own normal anandamide levels. (1,3)

Many people consume chocolate during moments of emotional distress, for its comforting properties, ability to improve mood and restore a sense of well being. The comforting, mood-elevating properties are most likely caused by the release of endorphins resulting from chocolate consumption. (3)

Affects on the Body & Heart

Chocolate is a perfect food, as wholesome as it is delicious, a beneficent restorer of exhausted power.

~ Baron Justus von Liebig

The heart-protecting properties of dark chocolate have been recognized for some time. Numerous dietary intervention studies have demonstrated cardioprotective effects of flavanol-rich foods and beverages. Black tea, green tea, red wine, various fruits and berries, cocoa and cocoa products all contain high concentrations of flavonoids, phenolic phytochemicals, which have been extensively investigated for their chemopreventive and antioxidant capacities. (4,5) Flavonoids appear to exert their cardioprotective effects by defending against oxidation, improving endothelial function, reducing the tendency of blood to clot by improving platelet function and decreasing hypertension and reducing the risk of heart disease. (4-8) Research by Lee et al, suggested that cocoa may have more benefits than teas and red wine because of greater amounts phenolic phytochemicals and a higher antioxidant capacity. (6)

Endothelial dysfunction appears to play a key role in the pathogenesis of atherosclerosis, coronary artery disease, diabetes mellitus and hypertension. (The endothelium is the thin layer that covers the inner surface of blood vessels.) Recent evidence has shown that flavanol-rich cocoa induces vasodilation by activating the nitric oxide system, enhancing nitric oxide synthesis, improving endothelial function and increasing blood flow in the arteries. (4,7,8) Enhanced endothelial function and the ability of the artery to dilate improves vascular health and subsequently lowers the risk for heart disease. (9) Flavonoids appear to decrease the tendency for blood to clot and

reduce the risk of forming blood clots, by reducing platelet aggregation and activation. (8,10)

Components in chocolate may aid in decreasing hypertension. In 2003 Taubert et al reported significant decrease in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure in elderly patients who consumed dark chocolate. (11) The elderly participants with isolated systolic hypertension were asked to consume 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of dark chocolate over a period of two weeks. Eating chocolate was found to decrease the systolic blood pressure by an average of 5.1 mmHg, indicating that the cocoa component of dark chocolate was responsible for the lowering blood pressure. (11, 12)

In addition to the cardio-vascular protective effects of chocolate, cocoa contributes various minerals—magnesium, phosphorus and potassium—needed for the optimum function of the body's various systems. Quality dark chocolate and cocoa powders contain high amounts of the mineral magnesium. A bar of chocolate can provide 25 – 50 mg of magnesium. Premenstrual women often crave chocolate. This increased chocolate craving may be an attempt by the body to self-medicate, restore magnesium dietary deficiencies by eating chocolate and increasing the intake of this mineral. (3,13) Additionally, magnesium is needed in many of the reactions involved in metabolism, so eating chocolate may provide minerals that help the body more efficiently metabolize food into energy.

Thus, multiple components in chocolate, particularly flavonoids, contribute to the complex interplay of nutrition and health. (8, 14) These various studies might lead one to think, as did Jeremy Laurance (15) that "A square of chocolate a day could keep the cardiologist away."

Less Healthful Affects on the Body

Most people, especially true aficionados, agree that cocoa and chocolate are delicious, delectable and desirable in whatever form, whether consumed as foods or as beverages. Evidence from many research studies (4-12) have demonstrated true benefits of cocoa—to promote vascular health and protect the heart. However, there are other factors that should be carefully considered before deciding if chocolate can become a part of a person's diet plan, realizing that here may be better ways of improv-

ing the blood vessels (16).

Chocolate contains other components mixed with cocoa to make cocoa more palatable. These additional components contribute to less healthy attributes of chocolate products. Fat, sugar and other components provide a high number of calories and can negatively impact a person's health by increasing the risk of obesity and interfering with diabetes. (17)

When eating chocolate the number of calories provided by the food or beverage can be quite significant. In terms of calories, chocolate is much more calorie or energy dense than many other foods, packing a large number of calories into a small amount of food. Chocolate averages around 500 calories per 100 grams or 3.5 ounces. (16) In Taubert's study on the effects of chocolate on hypertension, participants consumed 14 consecutive daily doses of 100 grams of dark chocolate, increasing their calorie intake by 480 kcalories. (11) This increase in calories would translate to an excess of 3360 kcalories in a week—almost two pounds by the end of the study. In Engler's study examining the effect of dark chocolate on endothelial function, participants were asked to consume 46 grams of dark chocolate daily, the approximate amount in 10 Hershey's Chocolate Kisses, increasing their daily calorie intake by 250 kcalories. (9,18) In two weeks of consuming this amount of chocolate the participant would reach the calories needed to gain a pound of weight. Thus, the calories gained from consumption of chocolate over time can be significant, unless balanced by increased physical activity.

Another factor to consider when eating chocolate is the fat content. Fats can make up as much as 50% of the total calories in a bar of chocolate, depending on the type of chocolate and whether or not nuts are included. (19) Although the fat content of chocolate is relatively high, not all of the fat present is harmful. Cocoa butter is comprised of palmitic acid and stearic acid, both saturated fats and oleic acid, a heart-healthy monounsaturated fat. Palmitic acid can raise blood cholesterol, but only represents a portion of the total fats in chocolate. Stearic acid and oleic acids do not raise blood cholesterol, in fact oleic acid may help in reducing blood cholesterol. (14,17-20) Dark chocolate, made with a high cocoa butter content, may help to increase levels of HDL, the good cholesterol. On the other hand chocolate made with palm, coconut or hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils, instead of cocoa butter is

less healthy and can raise bad cholesterol levels. (8, 16)

The combination of cocoa butter (fats) and sugar in chocolate have a lower glycemic index than might be expected. Dark chocolate has a low of 22, milk chocolate 40 and 70 for chocolate bars with higher sugar content. (The glycemic index indicates how quickly the blood sugar [glucose] levels increase two to three hours after eating carbohydrates, as the carbohydrates are converted into glucose.) For those predisposed to diabetes, foods flavored with cocoa powder such as chocolate bars, cakes, breakfast cereals, ice cream and chocolate milk have much higher glycemic indexes because they are mostly sugar, increasing insulin levels after eating. Thus, high sugar content in chocolate foods and beverages not only contributes to the number of calories, but it can also pose a potential health problem, especially for those predisposed to diabetes. (20)

Types of Chocolate

"Once in a while I say, 'Go for it!' and I eat chocolate," confesses model Claudia Schiffer. Obviously, even for this supermodel, indulging in chocolate is worth the calories. However not all types of chocolate are healthy. When choosing chocolate for the health benefits consider the type of cocoa bean, the processing method used and what other ingredients have been added to the chocolate. (4,17)

The processing of cocoa causes the loss of flavanols in most commercially available cocoas and many chocolates. (4) Dutch processing is the procedure of turning roasted cocoa or cacao beans (the source of chocolate) into cocoa powder, which significantly reduces the flavonoid content in the chocolate. The three main forms of chocolate available are: (4, 21-23)

-Dark, Semi-sweet Chocolate—Unsweetened chocolate combined with added sweeteners and cocoa butter which contain at least 35% chocolate liquor.; the fat content averages 27%. Dark chocolate has two to four times (or more) the amount of flavonoids than milk chocolate.

-Milk Chocolate—Unsweetened chocolate with added cocoa butter, milk, sweeteners and flavorings. All milk chocolate made in the U.S. contains at least 10 % cocoa mass and 12 % whole milk.

-White Chocolate—Contains cocoa butter but no nonfat cocoa solids. It is the term used to describe products made from cocoa butter, milk solids and nutritive carbohydrate sweeteners. White chocolate

contains no cocoa solids or chocolate liquor, so it provides none of the health benefits from flavanoids. (22)

Consumers should also realize that, in general, none of the instant cocoa mixes or other various chocolate-flavored products contain the cardio-protective flavonoids. These mixes and products along with candy items such as chocolate covered caramel-nut chews and white chocolate are generally not considered to be the heart-healthy choices. (17) Chocolate products containing more than 70% cocoa are the most beneficial and healthy. Higher quality dark chocolate is frequently more satisfying than mass-produced milk chocolate, so that a person is able to eat chocolate in smaller portions and be content. (8) Many chocolate manufacturers now include the percentage of cocoa on the packages to make selecting a higher quality chocolate easier.

Research & Funding Sources

Researchers (7,12) have demonstrated that their findings may provide a possible mechanism for cardioprotective effects of flavanol-rich foods. However many still believe that more randomized controlled trials are needed to examine the influence of flavanols on cardiovascular events before recommending dietary supplementation with cocoa. (12)

When reading the research results touting the health benefits of chocolate, consumers should also consider the employers, funding sources and materials support for the chocolate studies and whether there might be some conflicts of interests in publishing their results. M&M/Mars Inc. (candy makers) employed one of the researchers with the Hollenger project (4). In addition two of the researchers on this project served as consultants to Mars on several occasions and also received research grant support from Mars. (4) The Keen team (5) has researchers who worked for Mars, as part of Analytical and Applied Sciences, Mars Incorporated. (1) Engler's study was funded by the UCSF School of Nursing, however, the American Cocoa Research Institute, who's members include some of the world's largest chocolate manufacturers, provided the chocolate. (9,16)

Recommendations for Choosing a Life with Chocolate

For many people chocolate remains a favorite food and beverage. Results show both positive and negative aspects about consuming chocolate. It is important to

consider the various components of chocolate and the complex interplay of both nutrition and health before making a decision to include chocolate as part of a diet plan. (14)

Evaluation of the existing research is also important for healthcare practitioners trying to weigh the evidence and decide what to recommend about chocolate to patients. Eating flavanol-rich cocoa provides positive cardio-protective benefits. (1) Unfortunately, there is currently no established serving of chocolate that allows a person to reap the reported cardiovascular benefits. (17) Chocolate also provides trace minerals used in various metabolic reactions. Over indulgence of chocolate and the accompanying calories, fat and sugar can have a negative impact on pre-existing conditions such as diabetes, overweight and obesity, which ironically increases a person's risk of heart disease. (1) In light of the current obesity epidemic and the potential for increasing the risk of heart disease, physicians and dietitians should be cautious when recommending cocoa a part of a diet to all patients. As noted by Belinda Linden of the British Heart Foundation, "We are not saying never eat chocolate—everyone enjoys a treat from time to time—but there are certainly much better ways of improving your blood vessels, such as eating a varied diet, including at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day." (16)

Most experts agree that when enjoyed in moderation a small piece of dark chocolate (up to 2 oz. per day) can be included as part of a healthy diet for most healthy people. (24) Monica Myklebust, MD, and Jenna Wunder, MPH, RD of the University of Michigan Integrative Medicine Department included dark chocolate as a source of beneficial antioxidants when they developed their Healing Foods Pyramid in 2004. (8)

Perhaps Mary Engler PhD, RN summed up the findings about chocolate the best. "Even though we still have a long way to go before we understand all of chocolate's effects, for now, there's little doubt that in moderation and in conjunction with a healthy, balanced diet and exercise we can enjoy—and even benefit from—moderate amounts of high-flavonoid dark chocolate." (9)

Research has helped to confirm what true chocolate connoisseurs already knew that chocolate is a healthful food. So the next time you reach for a square of dark chocolate, or prepare a cup of healthful hot chocolate (see recipe on page 11) for the wellness benefits you can do so with less

guilt. Choose the dark chocolate, with higher amounts of cocoa (>70 %), enjoy in moderation, but most of all savor the delicious moment. (17,18)

A day without chocolate is like a day without breathing. You are simply missing one of the basic pleasures of life.

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Chocolate is the best friend of those engaged in literary pursuits.

—Baron Justice Von Liebig



Note: The author tested chemist Baron Justice Von Liebig's statement during the writing and editing of this article. She is now off for a brisk walk.



Club Nutrition and Fitness Program Review

Club Nutrition and Fitness opened the doors to their new facility in 2004.; the Club had grown from a 1500 sqft studio to 20,000 sqft facility in just 2 years. The full-service, medical and exercise physiology based facility specializes in general health and wellness training, weight loss, composition changes and sport-specific applications. Owner, Kevin Walker, B.S., CPT, CFT, CWS, FACW contributes the successful growth to the business niche of offering a one-on-one training atmosphere in a large facility with a strong emphasis on proper nutrition and lifestyle. Club Nutrition and Fitness (CNF) serves over 1400 members. Programming continues to expand with a current schedule including a variety of group exercise classes, Pilates, tai chi, yoga, karate and spinning. Sport specific training is also very popular. CNF is in the process of adding a full time, onsite physical therapy clinic. Members also enjoy the convenience of onsite massage therapists, child care facilities, and full service amenities. CNF also works within the community and hospitals to offer corporate wellness; providing education, screening, and group activity to working professionals.

Club Nutrition and Fitness started as a small personal training facility promoting proper nutrition. This concept has grown with expanding facilities, allowing Club Nutrition and Fitness' clients flexibility not found at franchised locations. Walker notes that only about 20 percent of Club Nutrition and Fitness' clients fall into the basic training routines taught at franchises. Most of the clients need comprehensive evaluations and constant changes in their programs in order to achieve desired results. The employees of CNF specialize in individualizing programs to each customer. The key point for CNF is customer service and personal attention; making it a point to exceed every client's expectations. Each of Club Nutrition and Fitness' employees are required to know three personal facts about each client. Walker points out this not only fills the silence of an hour session, but adds to the personal touch he tries to maintain with his business.

Wellness Center Keys to Success

- Customer service – exceed your client's expectations
- Differentiate from others – find your niche
- Become your clients' resource for all fitness and wellness needs
- Provides purpose through achievable goals
- The most important communication skill – LISTENING

For more information visit: <http://www.clubnutritionandfitness.com>

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