

TRY IT... YOU'LL LIKE IT! Training Your Taste Buds to Enjoy Real Food

If you currently find vegetables and many other healthy types of foods distasteful – chances are your taste buds are accustomed to the unnatural fare of the standard, American diet. Because of their extreme nature, these highly-refined foods with their artificial flavors and excessive amounts of sugar, refined salts and bad fats literally have burned out your taste buds. If this is the case for you as it is for most individuals, don't despair. While you may never develop a taste for brussel sprouts you can develop a taste for healthier foods and actually come to prefer them with time.

It is extremely important to understand that taste is an acquired phenomenon and it can be un-acquired as well. Given the right amount of time, your taste buds will acclimate to the taste of new foods and once you start eating more natural foods on a regular basis; you will not feel deprived for having given up the unhealthy refined junk foods. Actually, you'll discover there are new foods that you'll come to love even more *and you'll feel good about eating them!* I've seen this happen with almost all of my patients.

Patients who give up poor-quality, albeit tasty food, do typically tell me they enjoy the new and healthy foods they have tried. They don't feel deprived or miss the junk foods they used to die for... and possibly from, literally! In fact, most individuals don't even have an acquired taste for those foods anymore because when their taste buds are not bombarded and numbed by the many chemicals, sugars and salts that are in the majority of highly processed, pseudo-type foods; their taste buds changed. On average, it takes about 6-8 weeks to change your palette – but happily for some, it can happen much sooner.

It's interesting to ponder, that as a society, we think nothing of training ourselves to acquire a taste for many things that have some unhealthy effects such as coffee and alcohol. Yet, we balk at the notion of training ourselves to acquire a taste for things that are good for us such as broccoli, asparagus and brussel sprouts. Similarly, we don't think twice about eating fake foods saturated with harmful amounts of fat, sodium, sugar and toxic chemical additives. Why is that?

Based on my own personal experience, I believe it's because we have become very complacent about what we put in our mouths. Quite often, people don't have a clue what's in the food that they are eating and don't seem to care either. As long as it tastes good or what we believe is good and everyone else is eating it – it's ok! So the question is – would you knowingly eat rat poison just because it tasted good and was the popular thing to do? Of course not! Yet, that's exactly what we've been conditioned to do; albeit, on a slightly lesser, but none the less, damaging scale.

The primary criteria for making food choices should be the quality of the food and its benefits to the body with taste as the secondary factor. You can have both to be sure! To put your taste buds and social acceptance before your health and well-being is a recipe for physical disaster! We must always remember that the choices we make today will dictate our health in the future. From what we are all experiencing – health care costs are not getting cheaper! Thus, one major way to affect our long-term health care costs is to invest in our health today. You can't eat garbage every day and not expect to pay the costly consequences both in dollars and in health.

What is it that most individuals don't want to give up eating? It's their treats! Most folks are afraid that they will miss out on some special enjoyment, if they start eating **healthier** treats. First of all, eating healthier and changing your taste buds doesn't mean that you have to stop eating everything that is high in sugar, highly processed or full of chemicals. Instead, see what you can do about progressively upgrading the quality of your treats. Then, intentionally, schedule that not so healthy indulgence just once in a while. When you **feel** how much better you feel while eating healthy foods, the indulgence won't seem so attractive and necessary.

Secondly, think for a moment of the most scrumptious, no-holds barred treat you can imagine. How often do you have it? How often do you allow yourself this treat? Let's say that you just absolutely can't live without death-by-chocolate, double hot-fudge brownie sundae with a boat load of delectable toppings. Now, think about having the sugary, crunchy, syrupy delight every day, 3 times a day. Does it still seem like a treat? Would you even want to do this that often? Usually, when you think of having it this frequently – it starts to lose its appeal, doesn't it? Some of you will say yes! For those of you that don't feel that it sounds like it loses its appeal... let's discuss the issue further!

Early in life we learned that when allowed to have something every day, on a regular basis, it effectively diminishes the "special" treat status. A real treat is something that is not only a "special delight" as my dictionary says; but, there is also a **frequency of indulgence factor involved** as well. If, for example, you have ice cream and cookies before you go to bed every night; going out for ice cream and cookies is no longer a special treat. You are in essence, depriving yourself of a "treat." So in this instance, lesser can be better!

Dr. Grilliot, "I hear everything you're saying; but, my problem is I can't stand the taste of vegetables." This is a common, "yeah, but," I hear from a lot of individuals. In the infamous style of tell-it-like-it-is, Dr. Phil McGraw, my response to this complaint in short is a polite, "get over it!"

Chances are there are several things that we didn't like at first when we began eating them; but later, we learned to love them. I certainly know a high percentage of people who wrinkled up their face in disgust the first time they tasted the pungent, adult beverages of coffee and beer or alcohol. How about you the first time you tasted them? But most individuals kept on drinking them anyways when you came of age, because you wanted the "buzz" and the "cool" status that came along with them. You essentially forced yourself to learn to like those drinks to the extent that many of you actually, came to love them and now have somewhat of an emotional and part physiological need for them.

Know that with time you'll get even a better "buzz" from eating natural, nutritionally-rich foods. The constant buzz of **strength, energy, emotional balance and overall health and well-being that comes with fueling our bodies healthily is real**. You can have all of this instead of the physical and emotional highs and lows that you get from eating processed, nutrient-poor foods including over-stimulating substances such as caffeine, alcohol, refined salt and sugar. The roller coaster of highs and lows which eventually turns into primarily lows will be dead in its tracks.

A tried and true method of helping to train your taste buds is to have a different food item on 5 different occasions each week and have 5 small little bites each time you have it. This situation frequently helps people develop a taste for the new, healthier foods **because taste is a lot about familiarity**. Also, try having foods prepared in a variety of different ways. You may find that you don't like broccoli raw; but, it tastes great steamed with a certain kind of sauce for example. Of course, there will be things that you just flat-out don't like; but, give these little tricks a try for some healthy foods that at least have a chance to consistently make it on your plate. Who knows... the things you try today may become some of your favorites tomorrow!

I want to finish this article by asking you this question, "If someone were to give you a prize-winning race horse that was worth several million dollars -- would you let it drink soda pop, eat fried chicken, never exercise and fail to get proper rest? Of course you wouldn't because that prize-winning horse worth several million dollars would lose its value if you didn't take care of it. So here is one last question, "What's the difference between that multi-million dollar race horse and your own personal body? With enough money that prize winning horse can be replaced. Can you be replaced? Oh, sure; some amazing doctors may replace a few body parts; but overall, your body and your life is the only one you're going to have.

I believe each and every one of us has a multi-million dollar body; we're just not taking care of our net worth! Are you?

For more information pertaining to our "Healthy Life by Design" program, please visit us on the web: www.naturalwellnesscentre.net. This article is authored by Dr. James R. Grilliot, a chiropractic physician and director of Natural Wellness Centre; phone number: 740-687-0279.