

The 30 Pound Club

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March 7, 2010 – Los Angeles, CA

Musings on Food and Other Topics

These are some questions and observations about food and exercise that I thought I would share with you.

Why don't fruits and vegetables taste like chocolate?

I think the rest of it might be, "That would be so great!" You know the real reason? First, they all have phytonutrients in them, although they're different types. Second, they all have carbohydrate calories. Fructose in fruit, starch and other carbohydrates in vegetables, and sugar in chocolate. Up to this point, they're pretty much tied. The real difference is in the fat content. The texture of the chocolate, the creaminess, combined with the sweetness really tastes good to most people.

Now if we could just limit ourselves to a small piece and not go all Forest Gump on a box of chocolates, we'd be fine. I've told you before: Paula can keep a plain Hershey bar in the cabinet for a week and just take one square a day; on the other hand, a pan of brownies rarely makes it past the second day. We no longer make brownies. Any food can be a part of a responsible eating plan if you control the frequency and the amount—and if you can't control it, shun it like the Devil.

Why don't they develop a bean that doesn't give us gas?

With all the characteristics that scientists try to put into crops, that's one that would be very desirable. I think we avoid beans, peas, and lentils because we want to be bearable around people. Heck, we just want to be able to stand being around ourselves. Sadly, humans don't make the enzyme necessary to break down the types of sugar in beans. As a result, the healthy bacteria in our gut digest them and produce gas as a result. The only option is to take a product with alpha-galactosidase, an enzyme that will break down the components in beans. Well, we need the fiber and protein in those beans—so eat more beans and buy the digestive enzymes and use them regularly.

Why don't we make the time to do the things we know we have to do to get to the weight we want to be?

This has always perplexed me. Whether it relates to weight loss, exercise, or anything we deem important, we often don't set aside the time we know it takes to get it done.

Case in point. The toilet was leaking in our half-bath. The wax seal takes about 20 minutes to replace and only costs a couple of bucks. I waited almost eight weeks to fix it—after I bought the seal! I'm busy, but I'm not so busy that I can't take 20 minutes to do something that needs to be done.

Another example. Lots of us say we need to spend more time being active and also want to do more to strengthen our marriages. From our experience, dance lessons have helped Paula and me do both. We're getting off the sofa and moving a lot more, we're doing something fun together, and the unexpected benefit is that it's kind of like dating again—we dress up a little bit and dance, then we get something to eat or drink afterward. I'm sure there are other activities at a wide range of prices that would serve a similar purpose in your marriage or with

your children. You simply need to make the time to examine your options and find something that you like to do and that fits your budget.

In an area that's more related to heart health, it never ceases to amaze me that people who say they can't find the time to exercise before a heart attack will suddenly find the time to exercise in cardiac rehabilitation class after a heart attack, even after they go back to work. Here's a thought: start exercising *before* you have the heart attack!

What I can tell you is that if you want something bad enough, you'll find a way to get it done. Many of you have signed contracts and sent them to me. I've kept them and in April, I'm going to start contacting you one at a time to see how you're doing. I know by what you've posted to the 30 Pound Club Group on Facebook and by your emails that you're doing well. But just in case you haven't done as well as you'd like or have lost focus, I'll be contacting you soon.

It's not too late—the contract appears again at the end of this message. Email or fax it to me with your goals.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet



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