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Resistance to Vegetarian Meals? Try Talking About Climate Change...

There are so many reasons to eat less meat. We usually focus on the health benefits of reducing our meat intake, which include reduced risk of heart disease, certain cancers, and obesity. We may discuss the morality or ethics of eating animals and our treatment of them. But surprisingly, appealing to people's concerns about the environment may be more effective than other approaches in convincing people to change their eating habits.

Most people accept that global warming is occurring and its impacts on climate and extreme weather are becoming more apparent by the day. Efforts to reduce one's carbon footprint, such as carpooling, driving less, recycling, and re-using goods are all good options to do our part. But large-scale meat production for human consumption has an enormous impact on the environment. Eighteen percent of global greenhouse gas emissions are the result of livestock production. Two thirds of agricultural land is used to raise animals, while only eight percent is used to grow plant foods for direct consumption by humans. Livestock production also uses incredible amounts of freshwater, destroys forests, contributes to pollution, and fertilizer and waste runoff from farms creates dead zones in coastal areas and coral reefs. Not only that, but 50% of the antibiotics used annually are given to livestock, contributing to the problem of antibiotic resistant microbes.

Changing what we eat can drastically reduce our carbon footprint and reduce our effect on the environment and climate change. And surprisingly, studies support that appealing to people's environmental concerns may be an effective way to get them to choose some foods over others. A 2022 study showed people menu items with labels to indicate their impact on the environment. For example, a

meal might be labeled "high climate impact" or "low climate impact." When provided with this information, people tended to make more sustainable choices than when not shown this information. Discussing the impact of our food choices with our families and communities may provide that extra nudge some need to choose more climate-friendly options.



If diners are still resistant to meat-free meals, consider not mentioning that the meal is vegetarian or even vegan. Highlight what is in the meal, instead of what is missing. Calling a meal vegan or vegetarian may deter people who might otherwise try it. Enticing descriptions also help. Instead

of vegetarian tacos, call them crispy cauliflower tacos with black beans and lime crema. Rather than pointing out that minestrone soup is vegetarian, describe it as a hearty Italian bean, vegetable, and pasta soup. Many people enjoy vegetarian meals on a regular basis without seeking them out or even realizing they are making a vegetarian choice.

Another strategy is to serve or present the vegetarian items first. In food service, that might mean putting these items first in a service line. People tend to choose the first item that appeals to them, even if it happens to not contain meat. You can also serve meals that are mainly vegetarian with the option of adding meat, like a salad or pasta dish with the option to add chicken or fish. In a home setting, serve salad before dinner, or use a small amount of meat in a meal that is mostly plant-based.

Not everyone is going to become a vegetarian, but encouraging people to choose healthier, more climate-friendly options at least some of the time can go a long way to improving both our health and the health of our planet.

Accommodating Gluten-Free Diets



Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye, as well as some other less common grains. For the average person, there is no harm in consuming gluten, and many whole grain products provide needed fiber, protein, and other nutrients that are part of a healthy diet. Additionally, cutting gluten out of the diet unnecessarily and eliminating these hearty whole grains may be detrimental. Whole grain consumption is associated with reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers, and gluten may also act as a prebiotic in our intestines, feeding the good bacteria that live there.

But for some, gluten consumption can cause a host of uncomfortable and even painful symptoms. While true gluten allergy, otherwise known as Celiac disease, is fairly rare (estimated to be about 1% of the population), it can be debilitating for those who experience it. Symptoms can range from mild fatigue and gastrointestinal symptoms to intestinal damage, osteoporosis, anemia, and even certain cancers. Other people may be diagnosed with non-celiac gluten sensitivity, or gluten-intolerance, if they do not produce antibodies to gluten but experience intestinal distress or other symptoms after eating foods that contain gluten.

If you are eating a gluten-free diet, or just want to accommodate others who are, there are fortunately many ways to do so. There are many products on the market today that are traditionally made with wheat flour that are now made without gluten. Items like bread, pasta, crackers, rolls and tortillas can be found in gluten-free versions in the grocery store.

There are a few common ingredients that might be harder to spot in a finished dish that also contain gluten. Soy sauce contains gluten, but it can be easily replaced with tamari sauce or coconut aminos, both of which are gluten-free. Bread crumbs can be replaced with gluten-free panko. Food starch sometimes contains gluten but can also be purchased gluten-free. When eating out, avoid sauces like bechamel, cheese sauces, or gravies that

might use a roux, which is a base of butter and flour. One of the best ways to skirt ingredients you are trying to avoid is to eat unprocessed food. The fewer ingredients a food has, the more likely you are to be able to identify all of them.

If you simply cannot remove gluten from a dish, the best thing to do is find a gluten-free alternative. Fortunately, many, in fact, most foods are naturally gluten-free and entire world cuisines are essentially gluten-free. Many Central and South American cuisines rely on corn and rice rather than wheat, and many Asian cuisines are also wheat-free with the use of rice and rice noodles (just beware of traditional soy sauce and replace it with tamari or coconut aminos).



It is important to remember that, unless you have Celiac disease or gluten-intolerance, there is no benefit to your health to avoid gluten-containing foods, and in fact, the opposite may be true. But if you need to avoid gluten or would like to accommodate someone who does, try to focus on the positive, all the amazing foods that can be eaten on a gluten-free diet, rather than the negative, the foods that must be avoided. Fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, dairy, meat, poultry, fish, and eggs are all naturally gluten-free. In addition, many gluten-free grains can be used in place of wheat, such as quinoa, rice, millet, corn and gluten-free oats (oats are naturally gluten-free but are often processed in facilities that process wheat, so look for gluten-free on the label). The refreshing watermelon salad recipe included in this newsletter (page 6) is also naturally gluten-free!

National Picnic Day!

On April 23rd, many of our campuses celebrated Picnic Day, a celebration intended to get people outdoors with friends and family. Our Health & Wellness Tool Committee's Laura Stewart sent ideas for Picnic Day out to the campuses, including festive recipes and fun activities to enjoy outside. Check out pictures sent in to us from campuses, highlighting the festivities!



Crestwood Center Sacramento serves up some good eats on National Picnic Day!

Crestwood Treatment Center Fremont staff enjoy some al fresco dining in their courtyard on National Picnic Day!



Staying Hydrated and Cool in the Hot Summer Months



We all know how important drinking water is to our health, but it doesn't hurt to be reminded during the dog days of summer. Dehydration, heat stroke and other heat-related illnesses do occur and send people to the emergency room often in the warmer months. Dehydration symptoms include dry mouth, tiredness, thirst, little urine output, headache, and dizziness. Mild heat illnesses can manifest as skin rashes, muscle cramps, and swelling. Heat stroke is less common, although far more serious, and usually occurs when a person spends time in extreme heat or exercises vigorously in the heat. In this situation, a person's core body temperature rises, they become confused, and can even experience seizures. If not treated, it can lead to death.

If you or someone else experiences symptoms of mild heat illness, immediately try to cool down the body and consume cold liquids. Sitting in an air-conditioned car or home, taking a cold shower or bath, or wetting the skin and exposing it to moving air, such as a fan, can usually accomplish this. If someone is displaying symptoms of heat stroke, a trip to the ER is in order. There they can provide intravenous fluids and more support if needed.

To avoid getting to this point, it is important to drink plenty of liquids and stay cool when temperatures soar. If you must be active outside, try to complete tasks early in the morning and later in the evening, when temperatures are lower. If you do not have air conditioning at home, going to a cooling center or even an air-conditioned mall or store for a few hours can help. Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothes. To stay hydrated, drink plenty of non-alcoholic beverages like water or fruit juice. Caffeine is a diuretic, but most coffees still have the net effect of hydration, so if that is the only beverage available, it is better than nothing. Choose foods with a high-water

content, like fruits and vegetables. If you have been sweating a lot, drinking water, and you still don't feel good, consider salt tablets, a sports drink, or Pedialyte to replace lost electrolytes.

Remember that children, the elderly, and those on certain medications are even more susceptible to these conditions, so keep an eye on those around you. Encourage people to drink water and make it available to them. Unsweetened or lightly sweetened teas, fruit juice mixed with carbonated water, and ice water with sliced cucumbers, fruit, mint, or other herbs can be appealing beverages to those who dislike plain water. Keeping everyone hydrated and at a comfortable temperature helps ensure a safe and enjoyable summer.



Spirituality Corner: Spirituality in Sport

This summer, Paris will host the 2024 Summer Olympics. The Olympics offers an opportunity to join together to watch and celebrate as athletes compete to represent their country and sport. Pierre De Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympics said, "Sport has the power to break down barriers and foster understanding between cultures."



While it may not be intuitive to think about sport and competition as being a spiritual practice, it can apply in a variety of ways. Imagine a child on a baseball team contributing their individual efforts to propel their team toward a common goal. Even a parent cheering in the stands along with the other supporters as a group with common ground can be seen as spiritual. So, it makes sense that when we sit down to watch together with millions of people around the world as individual athletes and teams compete in the Olympic games, we may feel a sense of being a part of something big, something that unifies us.

This spirit of unity and solidarity is something the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recognized and recently incorporated into their Olympic motto. In 2021 IOC President Bach explained, "Solidarity fuels our mission to make the world a better place through sport. We can only go faster, we can only aim higher, we can only become stronger by standing together — in solidarity."

As an individual athlete, whether casual or professional, for a team or individual event, through the effort of striving for personal excellence, people can learn important life lessons about resilience, dedication, perseverance, self-sacrifice, and personal potential.

Tom Brady said it well during his recent Patriots Hall of Fame induction ceremony, "But understand this: life is hard. No matter who you are, there are bumps and hits and bruises along the way. My advice is to prepare yourself. Football lessons teach us that success and

achievement come from overcoming adversity, and that team accomplishment far exceeds anyone's individual goals."

In addition to their own preparation and efforts, many athletes also seek out a higher power to help propel them to victory or to express gratitude for additional help they felt led them to achieve success. They may gesture towards the sky or cross their chests.

We don't have to be Olympians or professional athletes to tap into spirituality in sports. The key is to start noticing how it feels to be connected with something bigger. As a participant, if you jump into a pick-up basketball game with some friends or are kicking a soccer ball around with your kid, notice how it feels to work together. Even when you're alone running slowly on a treadmill you can notice how your body feels and feel gratitude for how all the different body systems work in synergy to allow us to move. Or, as a fan watching professional athletes or Olympians, notice how it feels to join in with others to cheer them on as we celebrate unity and human potential.

*This article was contributed by our Wellness Ambassador, **Erin Lubniewski**, Occupational Therapist at Crestwood Treatment Center Fremont.*

(If you are interested in becoming a Wellness Ambassador for your campus, please contact Margaret at mclayton@cbhi.net.)

*We don't have to be Olympians or professional athletes to tap into **spirituality in sports**.*



Watermelon Salad

Watermelon is a summer staple, sliced into wedges or cubed in fruit salads. But for those of us who like savory with our sweet, watermelon salad is a refreshing addition to the summer table. This recipe is easy, light, vegetarian, naturally gluten-free, and can be made vegan and dairy-free with the omission of the feta cheese. Serve it as a side at a cookout, or as a light lunch.

Ingredients

- 1/2 a medium watermelon (seedless is best), cut into cubes
- 1 medium English cucumber, cubed
- About 1 cup chopped fresh basil, mint, or a combination of the two
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 jalapeno, seeded and chopped finely (optional)

For the dressing:

- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 2 tbsp honey (use agave syrup if vegan)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Pinch of salt



Combine the watermelon, cucumber, herbs, feta and jalapeno (if using) and toss to combine. In a bowl or blender, combine the dressing ingredients and mix until emulsified. Drizzle dressing over the salad and serve immediately.

Any Health and Wellness News Questions?

Contact Margaret M. Clayton, M.S. at:
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“Healthy eating isn’t about counting fat grams, dieting, cleanses and antioxidants; it’s about eating food untouched from the way we find it in nature in a balanced way.”

-Pooja Mottl