

## February 2011 Newsletter



Dr Hassell is clearly shocked to learn that his staff has installed a donut cam in his office. (Michael, on the right, brought the doughnuts in for a second opinion.)

### If “nutrition facts” are the answer, then what is the question?

Do you look at the *Nutrition Facts* on labels to see if the food is good for you? Well, stop it! Instead, search the label until you find the *Ingredient List*. This is the most important information because it tells you exactly what is in the product. This is where we must start in evaluating our food.

The *Nutrition Facts* panel, on the other hand, can distract us with facts that may not actually offer useful information about the food. Calories, for example: to figure out how many calories we need and what our diet is actually supplying is not a simple calculation. Serving sizes and calorie counts tend to be inaccurate – and even if the calories are known, they are not necessarily fully absorbed. Whole nuts typically have 15-20% of their calories unabsorbed due to particle size, but refined carbohydrates – like bagels, sweet drinks, and alcohol – are very efficiently absorbed. So the caloric content of whole foods may be off by as much as 15%, making direct comparisons unreliable.

To add to the confusion, the *Nutrition Facts* label offers speculations on the “daily value” percentages. What do we do with information like “8% total carbohydrate”? Our bodies care more about the *kind* of carbohydrate – is it refined or is it

naturally occurring in a whole food? The *Ingredient List* will tell us by identifying the source.

One carbohydrate that should get our attention when it shows up in the ingredient list is sugar. It is pretty safe to say that the more added sugar a product has, the more we should avoid it.

#### How to identify high-risk sweeteners

**1. Check the ingredient list.** Some of the more common names are: evaporated cane sugar, cane juice crystals, raw unrefined sugar, fructose, dextrose, glucose, corn syrup, fruit juice concentrate, and agave nectar. **Whether these sweeteners are organic is meaningless – the organic versions are just as toxic to your health!**

**2. Note where sweeteners appear** in the list of ingredients. Remember, the ingredients are listed in their order of prevalence. Also, check to see how many forms of sugar are listed. Many products have 3 or 4 kinds of sugar added! In products claiming to be “honey-sweetened” you may even find that the honey is listed **after** one or two forms of refined sugar.

#### Natural sweeteners are better

■ **Fresh fruit** is optimal but is generally not sweet enough to be an efficient sweetening agent. Canned and dried fruit, however, both need to be carefully frisked for added sugar and chemicals. Read their ingredients. Keep in mind that they are concentrated sources of sugar that should be eaten on a very limited basis, especially for anyone who is struggling with weight.

■ **Honey** in its raw form is a truly unrefined sweetener. In fact, if you don’t mind herding bees you can harvest your own honey and spin it straight from the comb. Also, even the mildest clover honey is flavorful enough to reduce chances of it being eaten in the same quantities as sugar.

■ **Molasses** and **pure maple syrup**: these both have nutritional value but should be used only as replacements for the more refined sweeteners. They also have significant flavors that tend to keep us from using too much at a time.

## Added or naturally-occurring sugar?

A nutrition panel can report 16 grams of sugar in a 226-gram tub of plain (unsweetened) low-fat yogurt, but you will notice from the ingredient list that there is no added sweetener – the sugar is from the lactose in the milk. The same amount of *sweetened* yogurt can contain up to **44 grams of sugar!** If you are choosing a fat-free yogurt, by the way, be aware that more sweeteners will usually be added to make the yogurt taste “good”.

***Naturally-occurring fats and sugars are always better than added fats and sugars. ALWAYS.***

## Six ingredients to avoid

Foods we want to minimize in our diet:

1. **Partially hydrogenated or hydrogenated oil** (like margarine and vegetable shortening)
2. **Refined grains** (like white flour, wheat flour, enriched unbleached free-range organic\* flour products and white rice)
3. **Refined sugars** by any name (see list on first page)
4. **Preserved or processed meats** (like deli meats, bacon, sausages, and hot dogs)
5. **Commercially-fried foods** (that is, any foods you don't fry yourself)
6. **Fake foods** (like egg beaters, non-dairy creamer, and artificial sweeteners: sucralose/Splenda, aspartame/NutraSweet, Equal, saccharine/Sweet'n Low)

**\*Remember, organic junk food is still junk food!**

## Good Food, Great Medicine Class

### Cancer Survivorship (February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6-8 pm)

Join Dr. Hassell for a discussion about evidence-based diet and exercise recommendations for reducing future cancer risk and achieving optimal outcomes during cancer treatment. Hear answers to these common questions:

- Does cancer “feed on sugar?”
- Should I be on a low-fat diet?
- Should I eat meat?
- Do flax seeds have anti-cancer benefits?
- Should I be eating soy products?
- Does the Mediterranean diet help with cancer?

He will also talk about nutritional supplements, tips for dealing with side effects of treatment, and tips for evaluating claims for “cancer cures” you may come across on the internet or elsewhere.

The class will be held in Souther Auditorium at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center. To register, please call us at 503.291.1777.

## The cookbook

*Good Food, Great Medicine* has finally joined forces with Barnes and Noble, who have (admittedly in a rather reckless move that probably raised some eyebrows on Wall Street) **ORDERED A BOOK!**

## KOIN Studio 6

Dr. Hassell is a guest on KOIN TV's Studio 6 on the first Monday of each month. The topic February 7<sup>th</sup> was “Chocolate and Wine”, and on March 7<sup>th</sup> he will be discussing the subject of supplements. The program airs 4 – 5pm.

## Research update

Dr. Hassell's next phase of research to minimize side effects for radiation and chemotherapy has been approved by the Institutional Review Board. He is now working on funding the research.

## Upcoming Speaking Events

**2/2/2011 – NEXT Steps against Cancer:** Miles Hassell MD: *Nutrition Exercise & Natural Medicine to Reduce Risk, Enhance Survival and Improve Quality of Life.* Providence St. Vincent Medical Center, Cancer Center. Preregister at *Providence Resource Line*: 503.574.6595.

**2/11/2011 – CAPRI:** Miles Hassell MD: *Ten Steps for Preventing & Reversing Heart Disease.* Bremerton, WA.

**2/22/2011 – Good Food Great Medicine Series:** Miles Hassell MD: *Cancer Survivorship.* Providence St. Vincent Medical Center. To register, call 503.291.1777.

**3/8/2011 – Grand Rounds:** Miles Hassell MD: *Choosing Health: How A Greek Grandmother Can Help Your Patients Avoid Heart Disease, Cancer, Diabetes, and Stroke.* Providence St. Vincent Medical Center.

**3/10/2011– Providence Integrative Medicine Program:** Miles Hassell, MD and Cindy Reuter, ND, MSOM, L.Ac., RD: *Making Your Way Through the Supplement Jungle: Vitamins, Minerals and Herbs,* Providence Portland Medical Center, Portland, Oregon. *This talk is free.* Preregister at Providence Resource Line: 503.574.6595.

**3/11/2011 – Komen Breast Cancer Issues Physician/ Health Care Professionals Conference:** Miles Hassell MD: *Portland, Oregon. For more info see:* [http://www.komenoregon.org/Cancer\\_Education/BreastCancerIssues/Issues-for-Physicians.shtml](http://www.komenoregon.org/Cancer_Education/BreastCancerIssues/Issues-for-Physicians.shtml)

*“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good”*

*1 Thess. 5:21(KJV)*