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HOLISTIC HEALTH NOTEBOOK

Think you're doing OK? Don't be so sure

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Even though very few of us Americans eat a healthy diet, we still think we're doing OK nutritionally. Not great, maybe, but OK. Some of us are obese and most of us are overweight so we know we're eating too much but isn't overweight a billboard shouting to the world that, "Yes, we get enough nutrition?"

Actually, no. According to recent U.S. Department of Agriculture studies, large percentages of Americans fail to obtain even the baseline recommendations of vitamins and minerals. In other words, we are at the same time starving and eating too much.

Read these shocking figures of the percentages of the U.S. population not meeting the DRI for specific nutrients:

Fish oil consumption is associated with reduced risk for irregular heartbeats, as are magnesium and potassium.

but it can make up for underlying deficiencies that exacerbate health problems.

For example, in the Cambridge Heart Antioxidant Study (CHAOS), researchers found that vitamin E had reduced documented heart attacks by 77 percent. Vitamin E is actually a family of tocopherols and tocotrienols, with each member of the family contributing significantly to improved health. (When purchasing a vitamin E supplement, make sure you get all eight tocopherols and tocotrienols.)

A 2007 study published in Circulation reported that vitamin E reduced the risk of blood clots up to 49 percent.

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Of course, this is just a sprinkling of information about the importance of good nutrition in the prevention (and sometimes the treatment) of various health disorders. ■

— Carol Simontacchi is the owner of the Island Nutrition Center on Sanibel. She can be reached at 472-4499 or on the Web at www.islandnutritioncenter.meta-ehealth.com.



Calcium: 72.9 percent
Folate: 75.1 percent
Iron: 34.3 percent
Magnesium: 68 percent
Niacin: 24.2 percent
And the list goes on and on.
Regardless of recent press pooh-poohing the efficacy and safety of vitamin and mineral supplementation, studies continue to reaffirm what we already know: that supplementation may not substitute for poor dietary choices



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