

# Dietary Myths by Dr. Matt Brown

Certain dietary ideas have been inculcated into our thinking. We simply know them to be true because we have heard them all our lives. These ideas come to us through books, commercials, well-meaning parents and family members, the internet, and for about the last 40 years through the USDA dietary guidelines. Have any of us ever seriously questioned these urgings and warnings and looked for the research that supported these ideas? When mom is the one saying it, who would dare go against her?! At the risk of going against the grain the time has come to look at some of these ideas and call them what they are: myths and not facts at all.

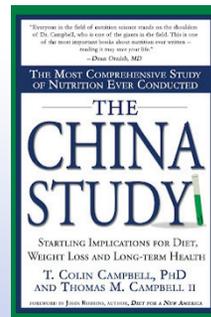
## 1 “If you want to grow up big and strong, drink your milk!”

As adults, we are told, “if you want to maintain strong bones, you have got to be getting some milk, cheese, and/or yogurt in your diet every day.” “Milk is a natural” goes the multimillion-dollar ad campaign sponsored by the dairy industry, launched some years ago, and featuring well-known stars and athletes who would sport heavy milk moustaches. Have you ever wondered how a cow gets her protein? And where does she get all that calcium? I cannot speak for you but I have yet to see a cow out in the field sucking the teat of another cow. Have you seen cows munching on calcium tablets lately? In fact, the cow along with virtually every large critter on the planet, with the exception of the cat family, happily gets along on one thing: plants, and of that, mostly green things! Everyone would agree that the massive frame of a gorilla needs calcium and protein.

Just recently a 21-year old gorilla died of heart disease at the Cleveland Zoo and a decision was made to remove the sugars and enriched foods from the diets of Gorillas around the country. Zoos substituted various greens and some fresh fruits in the Gorillas’ diet, and a funny thing happened: they lost a bunch of weight and have much better energy and are overall much healthier! If the likes of Carl Lewis, Martina Navratilova, Dave Scott, Bill Pearl or Joe Namath did not need milk to achieve athletic success on the world stage, why would you? More and more current athletes are also moving to plant based nutrition as well. Consider Toni Gonzalez, Mac Danzig, Scott Jurek, Dave Zabriskie, and Salim Stoudemire, to name just a few.

The fact is that we do not need cow’s milk or dairy products for any stage of our growth and development. Consider the fact that human milk supplies the growing infant everything it needs and contains 6-8% protein and far less fat and sugar than cow’s milk, which contains about 40% protein and is meant to grow the calf 300 lbs in the first year of life. Consider the fact that the nations on planet Earth eating the most dairy products have the highest rates of hip and spine fracture and the highest rates of breast, colon, and prostate cancer. Numerous health concerns get overlooked in consuming dairy products, including the fact that the three major cow proteins, bovine serum albumin, casein and whey, elicit vigorous and harmful allergic immune responses.

You might be saying to yourself, “Ok! That’s why I get so full of phlegm after I drink milk or eat ice cream or a have big serving of cheese!” And did you know that commercial milking devices macerate the cows’ teats to the point where blood and pus contaminates the milk they produce? When I quit dairy about 5 years ago, started **Juice Plus+**®, and moved toward a whole food, plant-based diet, my allergies disappeared!!! I spent many an allergy season suffering terribly, despite trying every possible antihistamine and nasal steroid. Off dairy, my kids’ acne, which was severe at times, disappeared! The bottom line is that you, too, can get both your calcium and protein needs met through a whole food, plant-based diet.



## 2 Diet really has little to do with getting cancer, heart disease, diabetes or any chronic, degenerative disease.

That is the commonly held belief in the traditional medical system. Consider the Tarahumara Indians, the Papua New Guinea Highlanders, or the Central African Nation inhabitants. Their rates of all chronic diseases are strikingly low. Are their genes that much different than other groups of people? Consider the fact that during World War II rates of heart disease dropped dramatically in the United States at the same time that access



to red meat was severely restricted and sugar was rationed. Consider the fact that in the 1980's during the time of the China Project, a dietary study conducted in 65 different counties in rural and semi-rural China, the breast cancer death rate in China was one fifth of the breast cancer death rate in the United States (see *The China Study*, 2006). According to Robert Weinberg, PhD of MIT and Anthony Komaroff, MD, of Harvard, no more than 10% of the population carries genes that significantly increase their risk of cancer. They declared in a *Newsweek* article ("Your Lifestyle, Your Genes, and Cancer", *Newsweek*, June 14, 2008), "If we grew thinner, exercised regularly, avoided diets rich in red meat (substituting poultry, fish or vegetable sources of protein) and ate diets rich in fruits and vegetables, and stopped using tobacco, we would prevent 70 percent of all cancers."

### 3 Just eat less calories and you will lose weight.

Can calorie restricted diets produce sustained weight loss? Can we fool our own bodies?! Our body is meant to achieve satiety after a meal and eating smaller portions commonly does not provide that feeling of being full. The issue has actually very little to do with portion size but rather dietary composition. Therein lies the secret to eating as much as you want and not gaining weight!

Again, consider the China Project, in which the average Chinese ate 30% more calories than the average American and yet the least active Chinese weighed 20% less. How is that possible? They ate three times more dietary fiber while the average American was eating 2.5 times more fat calories, 30% more protein and 10 times more animal protein. Dietary fiber comes from one source: plants.

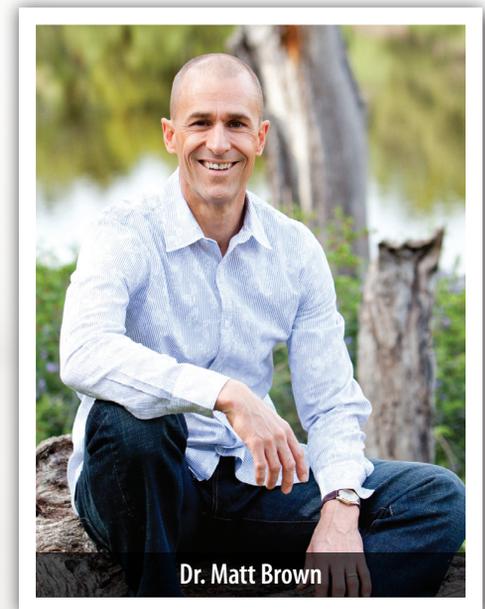
The bottom line is that plants offer fiber, a rich array of micronutrients, vitamins, and minerals and are great sources of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Eating a broad array of veggies, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds offers the best way to lose weight and keep it off. Keep in mind that breads and pasta are not technically whole food, but rather highly milled, refined carbohydrates and meats are relatively much more calorie dense than plant based sources of protein. Take broccoli for example, which has more protein by weight than an equal weight serving of chicken. At about 51% protein, spinach really could have given Popeye all that strength after all! Can we enjoy some high quality bread on occasion? Sure. Can we occasionally eat high quality animal protein in the form of grass-fed, grass-finished beef, free-range chicken, wild fish or various game meats? Sure. Those foods are meant to be consumed in smaller portions and surrounded by colorful veggies.

Whether we recognize it or not, we are all on a journey in life with our health and our nutrition and the key is simply taking one step after another in the right direction. My passion and desire is to empower you to take control of your health. When necessary, I do offer traditional medical services. I recognize that certain disease processes and health related issues are persistent and chronic, despite our best efforts, and do require a traditional approach to treatment. With that said, after seeing such dramatic results with whole

food, plant based nutrition in reversing diabetes, gout, obesity, high blood pressure, inflammatory bowel disease, and the list goes on and on, I choose to work with those individuals who are serious about their diet and lifestyle.

Many health challenges require larger blocks of time than are covered by traditional insurance and I do offer customized, prevention-based packages that allow up to two hours for addressing more complex issues. Please contact our office, **High Country Proactive Health**, at 828-262-3212 for further information on these prevention-based packages or to make an appointment using your medical insurance. In addition, we have partnered with Caroline Stahlschmidt to offer nutrition counseling in our office and together with Catherine Scantlin, we offer a great dietary immersion program called **WHOLE**. **WHOLE** involves a Friday evening and Saturday course involving great teaching, great cooking and an opportunity for you to understand the principles of whole food, plant based nutrition and lifestyle modification. The website for registration and more information is <http://conta.cc/swLqi4>.

High Country Proactive Health wants to serve you and help meet your needs in achieving wellness. Contact our office to meet with me at 828-262-3212 or e-mail us at [nutridocproactivehealth@gmail.com](mailto:nutridocproactivehealth@gmail.com). My website, [www.nutridoc.com](http://www.nutridoc.com), should have updated information on the prevention packages in the next month. Watch the local newspapers or contact my office for the schedule of monthly health lectures in the High Country. Have a great day and a great 2012!



Dr. Matt Brown