

The Importance of Nutrition!

I'll bet you've never even taken the time to consider what your nutritional needs might be, or the importance of that nutrition on your health. Did you know that if the brain doesn't get enough protein, it doesn't develop correctly, or if the healthy female body doesn't get enough flax oil, omega-3 and omega-6 her body's metabolism will not function correctly and she is more susceptible to weight gain? All these pieces of information and many more are contributing factors to our nutritional needs, and our nutritional needs are met through our eating habits, good or bad.

Nutrition as it applies to our daily lives means that we take in what we need to maintain our body's healthy state. Nutrition has become an important word thanks to the involvement of the USDA in our daily food requirements, and the FDA's involvement in determining what is and is not dangerous for us to consume.

But what is our responsibility in the nutrition game? Do we understand what our nutritional requirements are, how to fulfill those requirements, and how to look for real nutritional value in our foods? I'm not sure that nutrition has been successfully addressed in its own right. We hear nutrition in relation to our vitamin intake, our fortified cereals and milk, and in the context that we need "nutritional value" from our food choices. But what really is nutrition when applied to our daily bodily functions?

Nutrition refers to the nurturing of our body, in our ability to keep it healthy and functioning as it is supposed to do. Our ability to provide the body with all the necessary food, vitamins, and minerals so that we continue to thrive in our daily life processes.

How do we determine that we are providing the essential nutritional needs? That knowledge comes by educating ourselves about what our individual needs are, the needs of our family, and then taking that knowledge and applying it to the foods we buy, that we prepare, and that our families consume. Our nutritional needs and caloric needs change as we age, the nutritional needs of a 13 year old teenager are much different to those of a 30 year old woman.

Quite often, our vitamin and mineral needs outweigh our caloric needs. In those instances, we turn to manufactured vitamins and minerals to fill the gap. This is a part of our nutritional needs, also.

Nutrition is one of the most complex areas to gain useful knowledge about, because there are so many components, and because each person has their own individual needs. Women's needs differ from those of men, and older women's needs differ from those of a young girl. As we age, our needs constantly change; therefore continual education about nutrition is a fact of life. The information we have available about the health choices and alternatives available to us change daily. Very few medical doctors ever address our nutritional needs, past the needs of a pregnant woman, or an already ailing patient. What about the needs of the well patient? In order to stay healthy, there is nutrition, exercise, mental, and emotional needs that must be met.

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