



May 2, 2015 – Peoria, IL

The Real Agenda: Refined Carbohydrates

While I'm spending the day with several thousand of my closest friends, let's finish up our look at the editorial in a sports medicine journal that says exercise will not help you lose weight.

While the headline certainly gets our attention, the authors really want to talk about the increase in refined carbohydrates as the cause of the obesity epidemic. I don't disagree, but I disagree with how they're doing it. They began by talking about an exercise myth and weight loss which was completely unnecessary. Then they ramble on about how the refined-food industry is using advertising tactics similar to the tobacco industry. The public is intentionally being confused, and scientists are being paid to say the lack of exercise is the real problem. They even attack the concept of carbohydrate loading which has absolutely nothing to do with the obesity epidemic. While I agree with their suggestion that fat is a better source of fuel during long distance running and cycling events in elite athletes, that has nothing to do with the majority of people who are trying to lose weight.



They wrap up by saying that refined carbohydrate drinks should not be sponsoring sporting events and foods should not be promoted by athletes. Here's how it ends:

It is time to wind back the harms caused by the junk food industry's Public Relations machinery. Let us bust the myth of physical inactivity and obesity. You cannot outrun a bad diet.

William Castelli, former director of the Framingham Heart Study, said it much better: Americans can't outrun their appetites.

The problem is that their argument is not supported by data. True, by exercising 30 to 45 minutes per day five days a week, people won't lose a lot of weight unless they had been totally sedentary. But there are very fit people who exercise many hours a day and eat a high carbohydrate diet. Athletes who train for triathlons do it. Dancers and singers do it. To say it's a myth is incorrect, inflammatory, and does what they accuse the PR machine of the refined carbohydrate industry of doing: misleading the public. Ask yourself, if you had read that headline about the exercise myth, would you want to exercise? Their bait-and-switch argument does more harm than good.

The Bottom Line

If you're going to permanently change your weight, you have to do three things:

- You have to eat less.
- You have to eat a better quality diet.
- You have to move more.

No drama. No headlines. No blame game. Just get off it and get after it.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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