



January 9, 2016 – Baltimore, MD

“In Defense of Food” The Key Omission

The movie “In Defense of Food” is a must see, as I’ve said. I think it makes the most reasonable presentation for what we should and should not eat to be healthy. But it also has a glaring omission.

In the movie, a segment focuses on the Hadza, a nomadic tribe in Tanzania and one of the last cultures who are still hunter-gatherers. They eat what they find and occasionally kill. A staple of their diet is very fibrous root vegetables.

The movie also does a segment on a group of elderly 7th Day Adventists. They believe their body is a temple and so they eat a vegetarian diet for the most part. They also live an average of eight years longer than people on a modern diet. Most important, those eight years seem to be healthy ones.

The movie opens with a boy who gained 30 pounds in one year. It also finishes with a look at him about a year later. He’s grown two inches but hasn’t gained any weight; he’s leaner and at much less risk for type 2 diabetes.

One of the recurring themes is that diet is solely responsible for the increase in obesity over the past 40 years. That’s the significant omission of this movie. The movie showed the Hadza walking miles a day to hunt and gather, the elderly 7th Day Adventists exercising including one woman in her 90s who walked four miles a day up and down the hallways of her retirement villa, and the overweight boy engaged in athletics. But exercise was never mentioned as a contributing factor to our weight or health issues. That’s a glaring omission.



I know the movie was about food, but the experts interviewed gave the impression that sugar and other refined food-like substances were the only reason we’re fat and unhealthy. The need for exercise should have been recognized at least.

Michael Pollan has his seven words to describe how to eat and I think they’re great. “Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.” But to be healthy, it’s simply incomplete.

Six words state it completely. “Eat less. Eat better. Move more.” That’s the recipe for good health in 2016 and beyond.

Don’t forget [T2D: Finding Your Cure](#) is Tuesday. It offers a complete view on how to deal with prediabetes.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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