



April 23, 2016 – Greensboro, NC

Health Habits: Just Do Better

Let's finish up our look at the recent paper that concluded we're doing poorly when it comes to our health habits (1). If you thought smoking and exercise were underwhelming, today we'll look at diet and body fat.

When it comes to following the U.S. Department of Agriculture Dietary Guidelines, just under 38% hit that goal. I've talked about this a lot over the years, and this isn't a debate over what constitutes a good diet. While we are doing somewhat better, adults do not eat enough vegetables, fruits, or beans, and we still eat too many refined carbohydrates and fried foods. We still have a long way to go to get this one right.



The one variable that we do poorest in is percentage of body fat. Because they measured body fat with state of the art techniques, this isn't one where we can say we're big boned like we could with BMI. Only 10% of all those tested had a normal body fat for their gender—10%!

That means not are we not only overweight, we are over-fat as well. This has implications for many areas of our health.

When they looked at measures of cardiovascular health that were associated with percent body fat, total cholesterol was higher (that's bad news) and HDL-cholesterol was lower (also bad). Want to increase your HDL? Lose body fat.

For every health habit they measured, meeting at least one target was better than none; two was better than one, and so on. The point is that you don't have to do them all at once. You can work on healthy habits one at a time until you get it under control; then move to the next. Just do better than you're doing today.

If you want to work on diet and exercise, try the [Energy for Optimal Performance Basic Program](#). People who've been using it since I introduced it have more energy. More important to them, their clothes are fitting better and they're losing weight. If you haven't gotten your copy yet, don't wait. Order yours today and more importantly, follow the plan when you get it!

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: Mayo Clin Proc. 2016 Apr;91(4):432-42.

WGUV FM 88.5/95.3 **npr** **Straight Talk on Health**

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