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Nutrition and Diets:

How Healthy is Too Healthy

Is there such a thing as too healthy of a diet? Lindsey Getz (2009) seems to think so, “There’s a fine line between including foods deemed healthy in your diet and eating nothing but” (Can an Overemphasis on Eating Healthy Become Unhealthy)! In her article Getz mentions a disorder, which is not yet officially recognized as such but is gaining traction, called orthorexia.

Orthorexia is a condition one suffers from when obsessed with eating only healthy items. The term was coined by Doctor Steven Bratman after he personally became obsessed with eating health foods (Can an Overemphasis on Eating Healthy Become Unhealthy). Getz continues in her paper to mention the various effects such an obsession could have on an individual’s mental wellbeing and stresses that a healthy relationship with all food is necessary, stressing moderation in all things.

On the supposed opposite side of the spectrum is Chris Woolston. Woolston’s position is that the American diet is out of control that we’re eating “too many calories” (Can an Overemphasis on Eating Healthy Become Unhealthy). Who is to argue, I for one completely agree. Woolston’s paper discusses the many things wrong with the American diet and the risks associated with them: portion size, composition, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, etc.

He even mentions the recommended serving amounts from the food pyramid and also mentions and stresses moderation

I think that there does come a point where an overemphasis on eating healthy becomes unhealthy. Being a psychology major the very idea of orthorexia is intriguing. From my perspective if one becomes so obsessed with eating well that it disrupts the regular flow of your life then that condition is absolutely unhealthy. I agree with Getz that there is a certain place for the foods that aren't 'pure' and a healthy relationship with food is what is needed. Moderation is key to becoming healthy, or maintaining a healthy diet. It did not appear that Woolston disagreed that there is a point when eating healthy becomes unhealthy, he did not really address it, instead focusing more on the current unhealthy diets and habits. Personally Woolston nailed it on the head when he said, "Much of the advice can be boiled down to one word: moderation" (Can an Overemphasis on Eating Healthy Become Unhealthy).

If people would learn to have a healthy, moderated relationship with food the diet and nutrition would be much healthier on its own. If society all adopted moderation to food consumption America would not have an obesity issue, people would be fit, and health care costs would decrease as the overall health of society increased. The overall quality of life would increase. With that all being said, that is strictly from a biological point of view, I cannot and will not speak to what the economic consequences could be.

Works Cited

"Can an Overemphasis on Eating Healthy Become Unhealthy." *Biology 1090, Human Biology*

Salt Lake Community College Taking Sides Reading. McGraw-Hill, 2013. 74-88. Print.