

# JOEL FUHRMAN M.D.

LOSE WEIGHT - REVERSE DISEASE - LIVE LONGER

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## Raising Healthy Children By Joel Fuhrman. M.D.

When you talk with parents who are raising their children conventionally, one of the first things you hear is that one of their children is sick, or is just getting over being sick. Recurring illness has become a way of life for many children. It doesn't have to be that way.



Because they keep developing sinusitis and inner ear infections, many of these children are being routinely medicated. Some have received 10, 20, or even 30 courses of antibiotics but they continue to get ill. Some of these children are faced with the prospect of undergoing sinus surgery or having tubes placed in their ears. Others are on drugs such as Ritalin for behavioral disorders. It is sad to realize that youngsters between ages one and seven have become part of a very heavily drugged population.

Fortunately, a great many of these youngsters can get well. But first parents need to learn

that by feeding their children conventionally, and then bringing them to conventional physicians when they get sick, they are just compounding the

problem. What's more, it may lead to even more serious troubles later on in life.

Children are very susceptible to damage when they are young, and the way we feed and raise them when they are young will have a tremendous effect on what will happen to them later in life. Fortunately, the human body can withstand a remarkable amount of daily dietary abuse for a long time. But it cannot withstand it indefinitely.

### Antibiotics have no effect on viruses

During the past 10 years, the use of antibiotics has gone up more than 50 percent in the United States. And while there are instances when the use of antibiotics is appropriate, misuse can do long-term damage to your immune system.

Antibiotics are designed to kill bacteria. But that is *not* how they are typically being used. Approximately 90 percent of antibiotics are given for viral illnesses against which they are ineffective. Antibiotics are routinely and repeatedly administered by physicians for illnesses such as colds and bronchitis. This use of antibiotics is inappropriate. It has been well documented in the scientific literature that antibiotics have no effect on viruses. There are other problems with antibiotics. They can cause diarrhea, digestive disturbances, yeast overgrowth, bone marrow suppression and life-threatening allergic reactions.

### Bacteria can be good for you

When you take an antibiotic, it kills bacteria. It kills the "bad" bacteria- such as those that can complicate an infection- but it also kills the "good" bacteria lining your gut. These thousands of different species of good bacteria play a very important role in your health. They produce certain vitamins, such as B vitamins and vitamin K; they break down various fibers; and they produce other nutritive substances, such as short chain fatty

acids and other nutrients that have antioxidant and immune enhancing properties. In addition to these health-enhancing activities that enable your body to function more efficiently, these good bacteria secrete antibacterial substances that prevent the disease causing bacteria from taking hold in your gut.

When you eat a healthful plant-based diet, it promotes the growth of good bacteria. When you eat an unhealthful diet, it promotes the growth of bacteria that are not as healthful.

One of the benefits of switching to a plant-based diet consisting of an abundance of green vegetables and fresh fruits is that it encourages the growth of the best type of bacteria, those that help protect you against disease. For example, having a proliferation of the health-promoting species of bacteria is one of the strongest protections you have against colon cancer.

### **Reserve antibiotics for serious life-threatening situations**

When you take antibiotics repeatedly when you are young, you diminish the population of good bacteria that protects you against the bad bacteria. In addition, the bad bacteria become more resistant (harder to kill the next time). Repeated use of antibiotics sets the stage for recurrent infections and can turn what might have started out as a minor illness into a more serious disease.

The following deadly cycle is all too prevalent today. We feed our children unhealthy foods; they develop a cold, flu, bronchitis, and ear infection; we take them to conventional pediatricians who prescribe an antibiotic; and the healthful bacteria are killed off. Without the helpful (good) bacteria they have become more susceptible to future infections and now harbor a colony of yeast and more virulent pathogens that survived the antibiotic. This cycle often is repeated 10-30 times, setting the stage for serious problems in adulthood.

Fortunately, the human body has a tremendous

capacity to fight and recover from disease without antibiotics. The recovery may be somewhat slower when the body is allowed to heal itself, but the healing usually will be more complete.

Generally speaking, the use of antibiotics should be reserved for serious life-threatening infections, not conditions that the body is well equipped to resolve on its own.

### **Don't force your child to eat too much**

Many parents of young children think that their children need more food than they really do. Children between the ages of one and three do not require very large amounts of food, and they can be very picky about what they eat. Often, when parents think that their children are not eating enough, they try to entice them with some kind of "treat" (usually unwholesome) to get their children to take in more calories. The minute the child tastes these highly processed foods, which typically are high in fat, salt, sugar and other seasonings, and are artificially flavored, their taste for more natural foods diminishes.

The best way to ensure that children eat wholesome foods is for the whole family to eat wholesome foods. Put wholesome foods on the table and let the child (as well as everyone else) choose from these. At first, don't be concerned if your child doesn't eat much. This can be difficult for parents. But when your child actually gets hungry he or she will start eating the assortment of natural foods you have set out. Eventually, your child will consume the same overall amount of calories from natural foods that they previously were getting from junk foods. This approach will work even with very picky eaters, since even a relatively sparse assortment of natural foods will provide them with the nutrients they need.

### **Cow's milk is a poor substitute for human breast milk**

Parents have been misled into thinking that children need cow's milk to be healthy. Consumption of cow's milk brings with it many potentially serious problems. Cow's milk is associated with type I diabetes, leukemia, auto-

immune illnesses such as ulcerative colitis and rheumatoid arthritis, and other problems.

Milk can cause intestinal bleeding, which can cause anemia and the more milk children drink, the more anemic they can become. This milk induced anemia can decrease a child's brain function and lower his or her IQ.

There is considerable evidence that when we feed our children cow's milk based formulas (and even soy-based formulas) at a young age, there is an increased risk of allergies later on in life.

It is very important for children who are drinking lots of cow's milk to have a blood test to check for iron deficiency. Cow's milk is iron deficient and it also prevents the absorption of iron. Children may need to have their diets supplemented with iron to replace the iron they are losing as a result of drinking cow's milk.

### ***Human Breast Milk is Best for Human Babies***

The best way to prevent childhood cancer, asthma, ear infections and other recurrent illnesses of children - and prevent breast cancer and prostate cancer later on in life - is to feed children breast milk. Breast feeding, for as long a period of time as possible, provides extraordinary benefits.

We live in a world that puts many considerations ahead of the health and well-being of children and adults. With all of the oppressive political conditions that are grinding away at people, even in affluent countries like the United States, parents are not always able to provide for all of the complex needs of their children. But, nonetheless, their needs remain needs nonetheless, and every effort should be made to meet them.

### **WARNING:**

The Information in these articles are not intended to replace medical advice or treatment. Questions about symptoms, specific dietary needs and medications, general or specific, should be discussed with your physician. The information in this article is for informational purposes only, and is not medical advice or a substitute for a physician's consultation and/or examination.

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