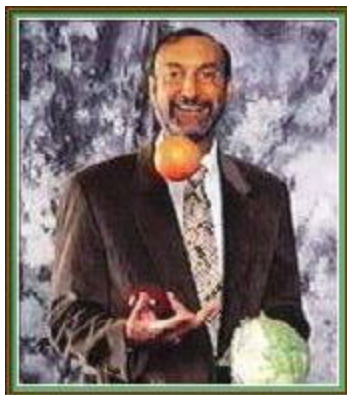


Dr. Michael Klaper

A graduate from the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Chicago, 1972.

He served his medical internship at Vancouver General Hospital in British Columbia, Canada and under took additional training in surgery, anesthesiology, orthopedics and obstetrics at the University of California Hospitals in San Francisco.



As Dr. Klaper's medical Career progressed, he began to realize that many of the diseases his patients brought to his office - clogged arteries (atherosclerosis) high blood pressure (hypertension), obesity, adult onset diabetes, and even some forms of arthritis, asthma, and other significant illnesses - were made worse, or actually caused, by the high-fat, overly processed Standard American Diet (SAD.).

This prompted him to undertake a serious study of the link between diet and disease, eventually leading him to implement nutritionally-based therapies in his practice. The results were dramatic. Nearly all of his patients who followed his dietary, exercise, and stress reduction programs soon became leaner and more energetic, while their elevated blood pressures and cholesterol levels returned to safer values. (In twelve weeks on this same program, Dr. Klaper's own cholesterol dropped from 242 mg/dl to 140mg/dl, while a 22-pound "spare tire" of abdominal fat melted away -- without dieting or calorie restriction.) He also observed that many of the chronic diseases mentioned above improved or resolved completely, often allowing his patients to reduce or discontinue their medication entirely.

Dr. Klaper believes strongly that proper nutrition and a balanced lifestyle are essential for health, and in many cases make the

difference between healing an illness or merely treating the symptoms.

To further the education of physicians and other health professionals about the importance of nutrition in clinical practice, Dr. Klaper serves as the Director of the non-profit Institute of Nutrition Education and Research. He also is a member of the Nutrition Task Force of the American Medical Student Association.

Dr. Klaper has served as advisor to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (N.A.S.A.) project on nutrition for long-term space colonists on the moon and on mars.

A gifted teacher, humorous lecturer, and the author of successful books and video's on cholesterol-free nutrition. Dr. Klaper has contributed to the making of two PBS television productions, "Food for Thought," and the award winning, "Diet for a New America." Dr. Klaper also hosts the popular radio program "Sounds of Healing," on WPFW, 89.3 FM, in the Washington, D.C. area.

A MAN WITH A MISSION

The larger-than-life image projected onto the screen behind Dr. Michael Klaper was not a pretty one: a glob of yellow fat taken from the right coronary artery of an unfortunate patient. In the center of the glob was a dark red spot, the blood clot that got caught in the fat and blocked the artery completely, bringing about a fatal heart attack.

A few clicks of the slide projector later, Klaper stood in front of an equally sickening sight: a muddy, polluted stream, its banks stripped of vegetation and filled with disease-ridden animal excrement rains had washed there from a nearby stockyard.

The two images are inextricably connected, Klaper told his audience last Thursday at Irvine High School. Both, he said, are the effects of the same cause: meat-eating. Klaper, a strict "vegan"- - no animal flesh, eggs or dairy products--

vegetarian for the last decade, is now a crusader for vegetarianism for a dual purpose: health and environmentalism. He is a former anesthesiologist who switched to general practice and clinical nutrition because "I didn't want to put people to sleep all day. I wanted to wake them up."

Klaper's talk was sponsored by the Students for Social Responsibility organization, an organization at the school which promotes environmentalism and other causes, and by EarthSave Orange County, an environmental group that focuses on the environmental effects of food choices. Many members of both groups are part of a new wave of vegetarianism.

"Every 30 seconds in this country, someone clutches their chest and has a heart attack," Klaper said. "Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in North America, and it's caused by atherosclerosis, which is that yellow greasy stuff. But heart disease is reversible, and that yellow greasy stuff will go away if you stop running animal fat through your body."

A meat-centered diet, he said, also upsets the body's hormone levels and has been correlated to various forms of cancer.

"In my mind, there is so much evidence that they have crossed the line from correlation and become causes," he said.

The high level of protein in meat, he said, puts stress on the kidneys and leaches calcium from the bones, contributing to such problems as osteoporosis, in which the bones become weak and brittle. "There's no question that a meat-centered diet is hazardous to your health."

"The human body has absolutely no requirement for animal flesh," Klaper said. "Nobody has ever been found face-down 20 yards from the Burger King because they couldn't get their Whopper in time."

The nutrition information most of us grew up with, he said, is wrong.

"Remember the four food groups?" They had us believing that there were only four kinds of food: milk, meat, fruits and vegetables, and grain. And you'd better have some of each group every day or you're going to die."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently expanded the old four food groups, adding categories that give more recognition to the nutritional value of vegetables, Klaper told the audience.

Besides, Klaper said, "cows don't eat meat, and they don't drink milk."

The shape of human teeth (most are flat-surfaced) and hands (with fingernails rather than sharp claws) are an indication to Klaper and other advocates of vegetarianism that "maybe we're not supposed to be tearing the flesh off animals. We're not equipped for it."

The human body does need protein, water, vitamins, minerals, energy and fiber -- all of which are available from plant foods.

Klaper says that it is a misconception that some forms of protein the human body needs are only available from meat. "Have you or anyone you know ever been treated for protein deficiency? I've never heard of it. It doesn't happen. You cannot give yourself a diet of 2,000 calories or more without getting more than enough protein."

Since becoming a vegan himself, Klaper has also prescribed such diets for his patients.

"I tell them to eliminate animal products from their diets, take a walk every day, and see me once a week. When they do that, they get leaner, their cholesterol levels and blood pressure drop, and their blood sugar normalizes. They can stop taking their medication and lead healthy lives."

Klaper said that after changing his diet, he dropped 20 pounds and that his blood cholesterol level also fell.

As for the environmental aspect, Klaper said: "my

waiting room has expanded to include one very large patient: Planet Earth.

"When you buy steak at the supermarket for \$3.98 a pound, you're buying a costly illusion. It costs much more than that. Without farm subsidies, it would cost more than \$10 a pound. And that doesn't count what it costs the planet.

"The riches of the Midwest breadbasket are not fed to humans. Most of it is fed to animals: 82% of the corn we grow in this country, 83% of the oats, 70% of the barley, 77% of the soybeans, 90% of the rye and even 31% of the wheat. We feed the animals, and then we eat them.

"It's so inefficient. It takes 16 pounds of corn to make 1 pound of beef. And three-quarters of that is excrement, which pollutes the planet."

Cattle, Klaper said, are "four-legged locusts: They eat plants down to the roots, the plants die, the winds blow away the topsoil, and their hoofs pack the dirt down so that nothing new can grow."

Raising animals for food also uses water, he said. It takes 2,500 gallons to produce a pound of meat, he said, contrasted with 25 gallons for an equal amount of wheat. And meat also uses 50 to 75 times more fossil fuel than grain to produce, transport and store, according to Klaper.

The emphasis on meat-eating in the United States affects other countries as well, he said, not only because other countries use their resources for meat to be exported to the United States, but also because of the cultural impact.

"When a TV family sits down to dinner and eats meat, that image goes not only to the U.S. but around the world. And the people who see that want to be like us."

Although Americans in general and Californians in particular have become more aware of nutrition lately, Klaper said, some who call themselves vegetarians really aren't. "You have what we call the 'California vegetarian,' who says: 'I'm a vegetarian. I only eat chicken and fish.' Well, if it

ever had a face on it, if it can run away from you when you try to eat it, if it had a mother and a father, don't eat it."

Chris Lazarus of Irvine, a member of EarthSave Orange County, became a vegetarian four years ago, but more for ethical reasons than for health or environmental ones. "I was donating a lot of money to animal welfare organizations, and it just didn't seem right anymore for me to be eating animals."

Since then, she said, her health has improved, although not dramatically. "I was eating a pretty good diet before," she said. Her husband, Robert Baron, who converted to vegetarianism shortly after she did, said he did lose some weight.

Irvine High School juniors Cynthia Miltimore and Heather Gates, both members of Students for Social Responsibility, became vegetarians about two months ago after hearing about the health and environmental effects of eating meat.

"I feel healthier now," Heather said.

"I've become really interested in animal rights issues and environmentalism," Cynthia said. "And when I started thinking about it, eating them for dinner seemed kind of hypocritical."

WARNING:

The Information in these articles is 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.

Bring freedom and choice back to medicine by supporting [Americans for Free Choice in Medicine](http://www.afcm.org).
Http://www.afcm.org