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The Real Thing

Nutrition Science v. Nutrition Fad: Park Avenue Nutritionist Blends Care w/ Solid Counsel

Americans are more than a little nuts about diet and nutrition. Since at least the 1830s, when Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham started crusading for whole-wheat flour, Graham crackers, vegetarianism, and temperance, Americans have been increasingly obsessed with what they eat.

And increasingly confused and guilty.

Diet does matter, but along the way, nutrition fad has often swept aside nutrition science. Can we forget the bitter Grapefruit Diet? The bloated days of cabbage soup? Oat bran? Red wine? Olive oil? Salmon for breakfast? How about the current "all fatty meat all the time" diet, frequently coupled with strict avoidance of those "high-glycemic" fruits and vegetables?



20 years, and although she wanted to get better, she couldn't deal with a clinical setting. The first service she got at Park Avenue Hands-On Nutrition was a healing facial massage. Then she was ready to look at changing her patterns of restricted intake and disordered eating. "I'm committed to help," Cohn said.

"I try to offer a partnership," she continued. "Our goal is to help a person help themselves. We offer a hand to help, and they offer a hand as well." Involving clients in their own well-being includes some exciting new technologies and techniques for monitoring the body.

One method uses a state-of-the-art armband that measures metabolism all day long. Developed over the last 10 years, it lets nutritionists understand how a particular individual burns calories minute by minute, while resting and active, how many steps they've taken, their heart rate, and more. The unobtrusive device is popular with men, Cohn noted, who like the "numbers game" aspect.

"They like to know how they measure up," she said.

The massage, acupuncture, and reflexology services particularly appeal to women, although men benefit too. The group includes Roberta Klein, a licensed acupuncturist who offers nonsurgical facial rejuvenation for reducing puffiness, increasing blood and energy flow, and clearing toxins.

Dana Kornfeld, a licensed reflexologist, applies pressure to points on the feet to relax, clear blocked energy, improve circulation, and for reduce tension and pain throughout the body.

Cohn notes that diabetics — who are prone to foot problems as a result of poor circulation — are great candidates for the benefits of reflexology. Clients dealing with pregnancy, chronic stress and tension, or sports-related injuries benefit enormously not only from cutting-edge counseling about diet and nutrition but also from the efforts of licensed medical massage therapists.

The center, new in their Upper East Side neighborhood, strives to offer a welcoming environment where real nutrition knowledge can be shared. (If only my friends on the "all fatty meat" diet would give it a try!)

As Cohn explained, "The weight will come off and stay off easier than they think if only they can believe in the real thing."



Lisa Cohn: Striving to treat whole person

Lisa Cohn, M.M.Sc., M.Ed., R.D., a medical nutrition consultant and the president of Park Avenue Hands-On Nutrition (1108 Park Ave., 212-831-7900, parkavenutrition.com), recognizes that health and well-being are not dependent on one or two miracle foods or short-term regimes. In an eminently sensible and truly holistic fashion, she strives to treat the whole person, whether they're dealing with weight management, diabetes, high cholesterol, blood-sugar problems, or a lifetime of eating disorders.

Her innovative practice, in an approachable, street-level, community-friendly setting, combines traditional nutrition science with progressive approaches to well-being, including a range of spalike wellness services provided by highly qualified licensed practitioners. Visits to the center are as likely to involve massage, acupuncture, or reflexology as an analysis of eating patterns and information about good sources of calcium. Everything works together to help clients feel comfortable and make effective changes.

One client was a young woman who had been a competitive athlete. She'd been dieting, binging, and purging for