



Deep Dive into the Foods We Eat

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What is Processed Foods?

- "Processed" means anything that is done to food that changes it from its original form
- Food is not necessarily 'bad' because it is processed
 - This can include:
 - Frozen or canned fruits or vegetables
 - Store bought bread
 - Milk (with added Vit D)
 - Salt (with added iodine)

Ultra Processed Foods

- Or UPF -changes the make-up of the food –by adding salt, sugar, colorings, preservatives, etc
 - Breakfast cereals
 - Chips or other snack foods
 - Soda
 - Frozen meals
 - Packaged foods, canned soup

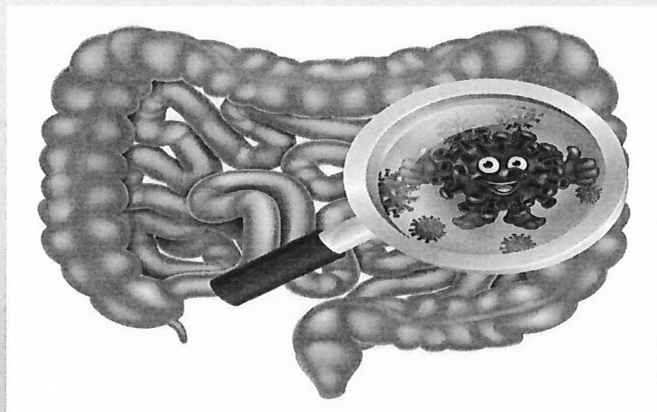
Is UPF **bad** for us?

- Often leads to increased intake of sugar consumption
- Decreased intake of fiber
- Can lower micronutrient intake (vitamins and minerals)

- But also can help make foods more affordable, self-stable, and convenient to prepare/include in our diets

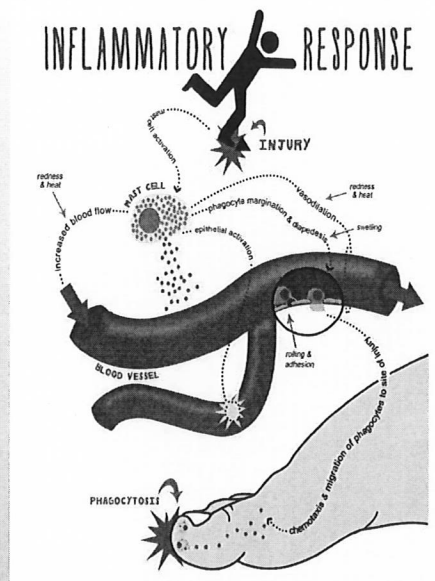
Do UPF foods affect our health

- Is there an increased risk of **inflammation**?



Inflammation

- Inflammation is a normal response when something enters our body that does not belong. *An example would be getting a splinter in your finger.*
- Helps repair damage to our bodies and get rid of germs
 - Our body sends white blood cells to repair the injury
- Having a fever is an example that our body is doing what it's supposed to- fight off an infection
- Acute inflammation is corrected when inflammatory cells go to the site of the infection and heal the area



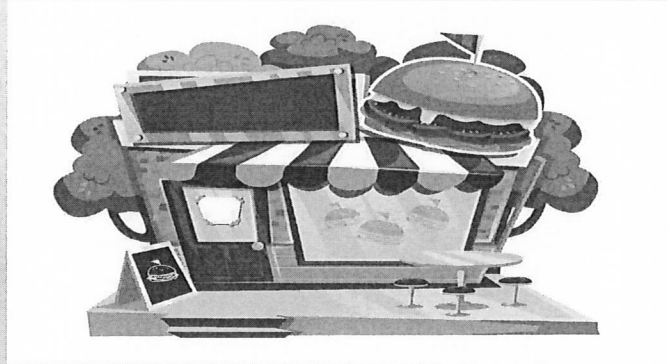
Chronic Inflammation

- The concern is when inflammation goes on too long and it affects healthy tissue
 - This can affect the normal state of our bodies
 - Can lead to cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, gut microbiome imbalance



Our Daily Lifestyles

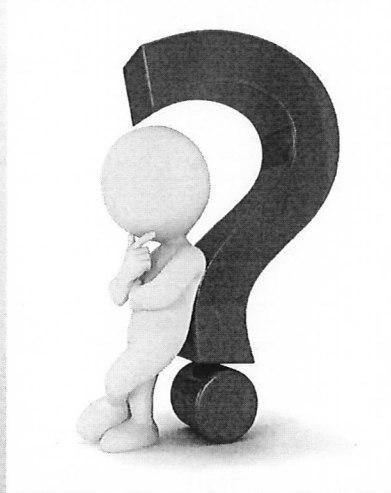
- We are surrounded by food options
 - Restaurants/fast food
 - Grab and go/gas station
 - Vending machines
 - DoorDash/Uber Eats



Factors that may contribute to inflammation

- Our Western diets are high in
 - Saturated fats
 - Trans fats
 - Red meat and processed meat
 - Refined carbohydrates
 - Sweetened beverages
 - Large portions
 - High calories

So what about processed foods or UPF?



NOVA SYSTEM –from the Food and Agriculture Organization

- Classifies processed foods into four categories
 1. Unprocessed or minimally processed foods
 2. Contains culinary processed foods (ie sugar, salt, oil or starch produced from category 1)
 3. Processed foods like canned vegetables or baked bread, canned fish (usually made from 2-3 ingredients)
 4. Usually highly processed foods that contains flavors, preservatives, artificial sugars (Ready to eat with little prep work needed)

Are processed foods bad?

- Categorizing the food only provides part of the information
- Foods have been processed for many thousands of years
 - Preserving food for food storage, safety and more edible
 - In ancient Greece –the most popular foods that were processed were: bread, olive oil, and wine
 - Soy, coffee, cocoa, olives, barley, wheat would not be able to be enjoyed if not processed
 - Also helps with waste reduction of food and continuation of food supply

Ultra processed foods

- Any food that has more than 5 ingredients
 - This includes foods enriched and fortified
 - 73% of America's food supply is UPF
 - 60% of the calories in our diet come from

UPF are...

- More widely available
- Cheaper and easier to buy
- Shelf stable
- Examples of these foods are: fast food, frozen food items, sugar sweetened beverages and energy drinks

Food Safety!

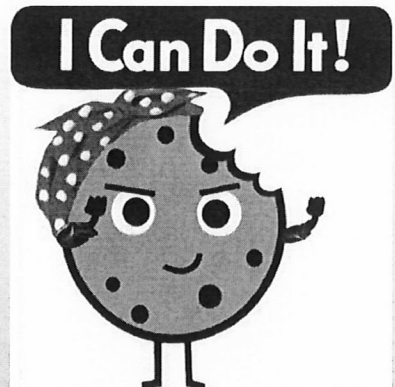


- Without additives and food safety features from processed foods –bigger risk of food borne illness and spread of pathogens in the home if buying less processed foods
- Food processing makes our food safer to eat by reducing potential harmful pathogens
- Offers convenience (like quick oatmeal)
- Increases ability to digest food more completely (allows digestive enzymes to help with more efficient digesting)



Improving our Diets

- Don't get bogged down on what we **can't** eat but look at what we **can** add to our diet
- Focus on limiting UPF but don't feel that you have to avoid them completely
- Try to replace items in your diet - instead of reducing food options
- Getting the right mix of food at all levels of food processing



How do we **decrease** the risk of inflammation

- Eating more fruits and vegetables
- Include omega 3 fatty acids in your diet
- Less eating out
- Healthier fat options
- Plant based diet including beans and legumes
 - **Mediterranean Diet** that focuses on less processed foods
 - Whole grain and fiber containing foods

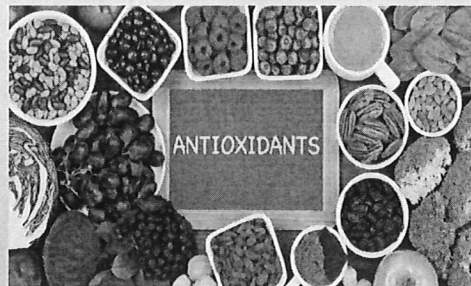
Mediterranean Diet

- Traditional cuisine of Greece, Italy and other near by countries of the Mediterranean sea
 - Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, plant based beans/nuts
 - Moderate amounts of fish, eggs
 - Limit red meats and added sugar



Antioxidants

- They are naturally occurring in our food and help us fight off harmful illnesses to our body
- Help our body get rid of free radicals in the body that cause damage to cells
- Help improve cell health including better control with pain, anxiety, and memory disorder



Where to get antioxidants in our foods

- Vitamin C- citrus foods, broccoli, sweet potatoes, tomatoes
- Vitamin E -almond, avocados, legumes, oatmeal
- Beta Carotene-carrots, grapefruit, apricots, cantaloupe
- Selenium-eggs, salmon, brown rice, tuna

- Include a rainbow of foods in your meals

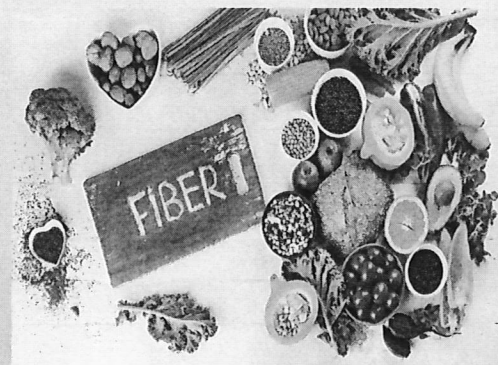


Fiber

- Studies have shown that fiber can help lower inflammation
- Help lower C-reactive protein (hormone produced by liver that indicates increased inflammation)

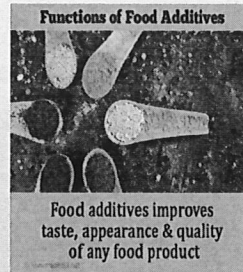
High Fiber foods

- Whole grain cereals & bread
 - Fruits
 - Vegetables
 - Beans, legumes
 - * Including Mediterranean Diet
- 14 grams of fiber per 1000cals
 - At least 20grams of fiber recommended



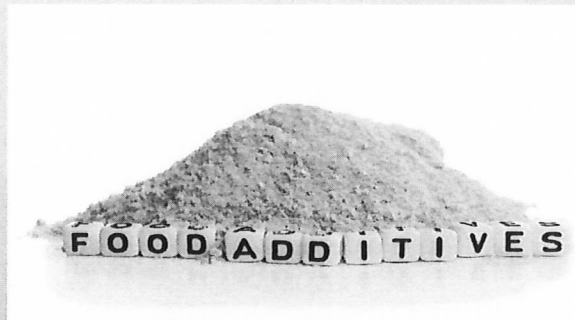
Food Additives

- Help to make food convenient, nutritious and affordable all year long
- Can help with sensory qualities
 - Taste
 - Smell
 - Texture
 - Appearance



Common Food Additives

- MSG –Monosodium glutamate
- AFC –Artificial Food Colorings
- High Fructose Corn Syrup
- Xanthan Gum
- Carrageenan



MSG -Monosodium glutamate

- Helps to enhance flavor of foods
 - Found natural in tomatoes and cheese
 - Some people report side effects but research has not connected MSG and symptoms
 - Quantity of consumption is also in question

Artificial Food Colorings -AFC

- Red 40, yellow 5, yellow 6
- Reactions are listed as rare however some research has shown Yellow 5 & 6 can cause problems with people with asthma

High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)

- Often used in highly processed foods, baked goods, cereal and soft drinks
- Some concerns are that HFCS can increase cravings affecting appetite
- May also contribute inflammation, diabetes and some cancers

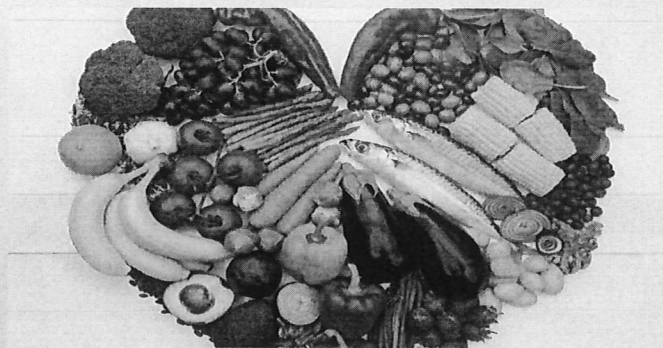
Xanthan Gum

- Helps to thicken and stabilize foods
 - Can be used in baked goods, soup, ice cream, sauces, salad dressings, and glute free products
 - Some research has found because it is a soluble fiber, it can help lower blood sugars
 - Also may lower cholesterol, improve bowel function and may help to promote weight loss

Carrageenan

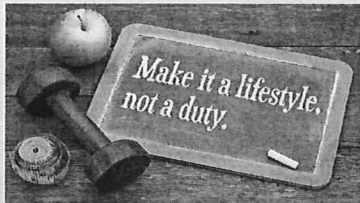
- Made from seaweed and is a thickening agent
 - Found in yogurt, cottage cheese, canned soup, frozen pizza
 - Some research has question if it's connected to digestive issues include irritable bowel disease and colon cancer – studies have been done on animals and the correlation with humans is unknown

• FOOD MUST BE EATEN TO BE NUTRITIOUS



Take away message

- Focus on nutrient dense food
- Limit on the go eating -have a plan!
- Start with something small
 - 'Do-able' changes
 - Evaluate snacks or meals
- Reduce intake of red meat
- Include more omega 3 fatty acids
- Include a meatless meal 1-2/wk
- Cook once, eat thrice
- Shop your pantry
- Shop your fridge/freezer
- Not every meal has to be a 'masterpiece'
- Exercise
- Get good sleep



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