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Eat Bugs. Not Too Much. Mainly With Plants.: Why Onion Is The New Apple And How Fiber Can Improve Your Health In Some Surprising Ways



Synopsis

As we fill our shopping carts and pantries with the latest neatly boxed and wrapped goodies of industry, we continue down a path that began some ten thousand years ago with the emergence of agriculture - an event that would eventually, along with steel roller mills in the 1880s, farm subsidies in the 1970s and an explosion of highly processed and packaged foods, lead to one of the greatest unintended consequences in human history: The shift in how and where the human body captures much-needed energy (calories) to power our demanding bodies and modern lifestyle. This "little" book is about that journey and a story about an unlikely cast of characters to whom we owe much of our current success as a species and any future success and health we may hope to achieve.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jeff D. Leach is a science writer, health advocate and anthropologist. He has published articles and opinions in peer-reviewed journals, magazines, major U.S. newspapers and has appeared on Discovery Channel and BBC. He lectures throughout the world to academic and general audiences on nutrition and health.

Very Satisfied

The message of Eat bugs... is that fiber in our food helps support friendly bacteria in the colon (known these days as probiotics) which contribute to our health in a number of ways. The problem is that modern American food has had most of the fiber removed, and the fiber that remains, mostly wheat bran, is not the most helpful kind. Also, that babies delivered other than vaginally may fail to

get their full original "charge" of friendly bacteria, and those not breast fed can fall behind in maintaining healthy gut populations. The results are weakened and misguided immune systems that often tend to attack the body itself, and increased susceptibility to intestinal pathogens like E. coli. Leach appeals to evolutionary arguments. Humans and their primate ancestors have always supported these friendly bacteria, to mutual benefit. Foods eaten by most "primitive" peoples are very high in fiber, giving us a clue as to how much fiber we would do well to get. Leach's evolutionary knowledge appears to be limited, though. An extensive set of recipes at the end of the book almost all are based on beans, but our pre-agricultural ancestors almost certainly did not eat beans, and "Paleolithic diet" advocates almost all recommend not eating beans. An important point turned up by recent research is that friendly gut bacteria produce short-chain fatty acids, such as butyric acid, which have many desirable properties - they nourish the colon, provide it with energy, and help to destroy undesirable bacteria and viruses. For more information about this important aspect from an excellent source, Google on: wholehealthsource butyrate. The recommendation, then, is to eat a wide diversity of plant foods so as to obtain lots of fiber of many different kinds. The fiber, sometimes referred to as "prebiotic", will encourage the establishment and maintenance of a healthy bacterial population in the large intestine, and that in turn will support health both of the colon and of the entire body. Some everyday foods with good prebiotic ingredients include onions, garlic, artichokes, and asparagus. Supplements may contain inulin and fructo-oligosaccharides. But simply eating lots of different kinds of produce, fresh or frozen, should be sufficient. This book is short, easy to read, and accompanied by many references. But being composed of a concatenation of independently-written articles, it is annoyingly repetitive and redundant. It is also poorly edited, and it does not include an index. If you want to read it (you've just finished reading most of the useful info in it), I recommend getting it from the library rather than buying it.

The book makes the usual points about what we should be doing and the tremendous effects it would have on our health, physical fitness and weight if we would just do it, but also includes numerous recipe examples that are worth more than the price of the book and I can't wait to try. Never wonder again what else you can do with those boneless chicken breasts and stacked up cans of beans in the pantry. This is a great reference to consult every time you are hungry for a good meal.

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