

Why do we need healthy eating?

The benefits of healthy eating are impressive, but equally impressive are the consequences of not following such habits. Healthy eating is one of the most important component of a healthy condition and quality of life. The other option still exists, in terms of calories, fats, sweets, alcohol, smoking and sedentariness. There's an old Chinese saying which warns us that diseases make their way through your mouth."

Can you define healthy eating?

Healthy eating consists of a energetically and nutritionally adapted and balanced diet. This means combining the energetic needs with the nutritional ones, in order to maintain integrity of the structures, physiological processes, growth and development.

What do you mean by moderation in eating?

Well, the opposite of moderation refers to an exaggeration of salt, fats, sugar or any other undesirable compound. They may affect one's health. Some consider that, when following a draconic diet, they are prohibited from eating a nice steak, or an ice-cream. That is actually false: moderation --and not abstinence--, THAT is the key to success.

What is a balanced diet?

When choosing a diet, one nutrient or aliment should not prevail over another. In other words, a certain ration must be kept. A diet must provide the necessary calories and nutrients according to the age, sex, physical activity and health condition of a respective individual.

Lately there have been a lot of debates regarding a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. What can you tell us about this?

I recommend for all groups of age a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, with whole grains, and fibers, with low fat meat and fish (at least twice a week). The fruits have a positive effect because of the high content of potassium, magnesium and sodium. Their natural juice hydrates the body. Better is to have them raw or baked, as when boiling them a part of the salts and carbohydrates are lost. They are also rich in vitamins and minerals, and because of their unmistakable taste and flavor, both the fruits and the vegetables can be easily added to the daily diet.

What can you tell us about obesity and its consequences?

Scientists have discovered an obesity gene, but this gene can be only a factor to favor the fat in excess. The true decisive factor is the lack of concern related to the complications related to obesity, lack of medical information and common choice for comfort and taste. In my opinion, eating for pure pleasure is the modern enemy of humankind. Eat to live, don't live to eat!

Consumption of fast-food products, alcoholic beverages and soft drinks inevitably lead to increased weight over ideal values. Obesity does not stand for "fat and beautiful", but a tired heart, forced to work over the natural standard. Hard work, no regular meals has as a consequence the fact that the dinner becomes the only lunch, when all the food necessary for one day is consumed at once. This irresponsible way of eating leads inevitably to an additional, nocturnal work for the digestive system and a forced assimilation of the nutrients, which transformed into calories lay down exactly where we do not want to.

How does sedentariness affect health?

The lack of regular physical activity leads to obesity and implicitly to cardiovascular diseases. The adults should have over 30 minutes of physical activity during most of the week days, and children and adults overweight, at least 60 minutes. We must be very attentive to some of the attractions of the modern life, such as television and computer, leading to sedentariness.

In most of the TV shows we hear about the additives existing in the food. What is your position in this respect?

When a physician prescribes medicine, he is very attentive to avoid this to interfere with other medicines the patient already uses. Why is this not happening when we talk about additives? Why nobody questions if it is healthy to eat products containing at least 2 -3 additives at a daily basis. I believe the products should not contain additives at all. Processed meat products contain dangerous additives which provide good taste and colour, but not health.

Finally, what advice do you have in order to live a healthier life?

I recommend everybody a diet that should meet 5 criteria: to be proper, balanced, calories controlled, moderate and varied. A well-planned diet contains proper nutrients, is balanced in terms of types of food, offers necessary energy, has a moderate level of unwanted additives and offers variety.

We must all get involved in fighting for a correct alimentation, without many calories, fats, sweets, as all these risk factors may affect our health.