

# Book Review

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## **The Unofficial Guide to Smart Nutrition.**

Ross Hume Hall PhD with D.S. Mills,  
M. Janson MD and J. Brown PhD.

IDG Books Worldwide, Inc. CA. 2000,  
577 pages, US \$15.95

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If there were one book one could study which would be a very good guide to eating wisely and well, it is this one. This book contains all the material needed for a complete course in nutrition. I wish it was mandatory for all medical students to take a course called Clinical Nutrition 1 with this book as their official text.

It begins with the body-cell's-eye-view of what the cells needs for optimum survival. This of course can never be reached as Roger Williams pointed out so well many years ago. But one can approximate these ideal conditions for the whole body by providing the foods and nutrients to which we have been adapted during evolution. The next section describes the basic food categories such as fruits and vegetables, the grains, legumes and nuts, fat and oils, meats and fish, and last of all dairy products. For each of these categories the various food items are described, analyzed and compared one with the other so that they can be rated for their nutritional quality. Thus under meats these animal products are rated into four ranks with the first rank being the best; this rank includes free-range meats, while the bottom or forth rank includes sausages, deli meats. This is a very handy system of describing these foods, easy for the reader to understand and to follow.

The section on special features discusses the various food fractions such as cholesterol, the impact of cooking and storing. Special diets such as vegetarian are described. There is a section on eating out which is now a major factor in modern nutrition. I found the medical section very helpful and the impact of nutrients against cancer, heart disease and other degenerative diseases is discussed. Food allergies are

given ample treatment, something rare in books on nutrition. Finally the nutrition needs thought life are considered ranging from children through the teens and into adulthood.

It is impossible to examine every fact in detail. But I like to read portions of books which deal with subjects with which I am most familiar. When I am in agreement with these sections I assume that the rest of the book is equally well done. For this book I read the section on cholesterol and heart disease carefully. It is excellent and I can find no fault in any of it. I have read many other portions of this book at random and found it very interesting, full of good information, well described. I therefore assume that the book is generally accurate and I strongly endorse it for anyone interested in their own nutrition. I would hope that medical schools would use it, and that government agencies dealing with the impact of nutrition on the general health of the population would read it and take it very seriously.

I like all of Professor Hall's books because of the breadth of his knowledge and the skill with which he presents it. He can be proud of his excellent book.

—A. Hoffer, M.D., Ph.D., FRCP (C)

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## **Eat, Drink and be Merry!**

Tuormaa, Tuula E.

Country Books, Derbyshire, England.

Paperback, 192 pages, 2001. L9.95.

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I admit immediately that I am very biased in favour of this book. But you probably know this already, having read my comments on the jacket. And you will be convinced of my bias after you read my Foreword. I wrote the Foreword after reading the original manuscript. I thought it was excellent and of course am even more impressed now that I have read it again in

its final form. It is a major indictment of our current high-tech medical system and describes in detail what it is that has gone wrong, chapter by chapter. The result is that in spite of all the high-tech advances made every second Canadian and American, and probably every person living in high-tech nations, has one or more chronic diseases, physical and mental.

This has been illustrated by my long time friend Dr. E. Cheraskin who in his superb lectures used this illustration. Visualize a large room in a surgical suite populated by several men and women in white coats and uniforms with a bathtub which is overflowing. The high-tech personnel are vigorously mopping up the water, trying to keep the floor dry. The caption underneath this cartoon states simply, "Why does not someone turn off the tap?" Again visualize a river with a person floating down the river every minute or so, yelling for help. The villagers set up an ambulance service and canoes to rescue each person as they come within sight. The caption underneath reads, "Why don't they look upstream and find out who is throwing them in?" A poem quoted by the author credited to Joseph Malines entitled, "The Ambulance down in the Valley", reads as follows:

Twas a dangerous cliff as they freely confessed though to walk near its crest was pleasant. But over its edge there slipped a duke and many a peasant. So the people said something would have to be done, but their project did not tally; Some said, 'Put a fence round the edge of the cliff' Some 'An ambulance down in the valley' Then an old man remarked, "It is marvel to me, that people give far more attention, to repairing results than stopping the cause, when they much better aim at prevention. Let us stop its source all this mischief" cried he, Come neighbors and friends, let us rally, If the cliff we will fence, we might almost dispense with the ambulance down in the valley."

After describing the importance of good nutrition in preventing physical and

mental illness, the author reports the many modern factors which in combination with the deteriorated diet makes us even more vulnerable to disease. These include the use of pesticides, air pollution, the major pharmaceutical industry which is much more effective in promoting drugs that do not cure and which may even perpetuate illness. She devotes one hour to the illness industry which in my opinion is a major modern disease industrial complex. After examining, and I have not seen this examined as forcefully anywhere before, she concludes that medicine is not a science. There is a solution and the last two chapters provide the elements of that. The solution is to reverse the changes already in existence and to improve our diet until we provide our bodies with what we have been adapted to.

I hope Londoners have not forgotten what happened during the last war in England. At the outset of that war it was freely and gratuitously predicted that the inhabitants of London subject to that terrible bombing would suffer so much stress that there would be a major breakdown in society. When the population was eagerly examined after the war, to their surprise - especially to stress theorists who believed in psychological explanations - the people were healthier than they had been at the beginning of the war.

What happened? Due to the rationing of sugar which was reduced by half to about 60 pounds per person per year, due to the mandatory use of longer extraction (brown) flour, and due to a tremendous effort by the government to encourage the people via the BBC radio about the virtues of gardens, vegetables, and home grown foods as much as possible the health of the people was vastly improved and they took the stress in their stride. Coronary disease decreased, the English became better, even the incidence of schizophrenia decreased. But after the war all the restrictions were lifted and the educational campaign was stopped. The inexorable march of deter-

ioraton began once more and continues to this day.

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**Preventing Arthritis. A Holistic Approach to Life Without Pain**

Lawrence, R.M. and Zucker, M.  
G.P. Putnam Sons, New York, 10014.  
Hardcover, 286 pages, 2001, US 22.95

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Over the past thirty years I have written several hundred reviews of books dealing with what was once called megavitamin therapy, later orthomolecular medicine, and now has a variety of names including nutritional medicine. I have grown with the field and am watching with interest and amazement how it has flowered from its very simple origins when the major interest was a disease called hypoglycemia and the use of vitamin B<sub>3</sub> and vitamin C. Over the years these books have become more complex and more comprehensive, and of course have been describing ever more successful treatment of the chronic diseases that now afflict men and women living in high-tech societies and spreading rapidly to all parts of the world as they adopt similar nutritional practises.

Arthritis is one of best examples because vitamin B<sub>3</sub> was found by Bill Kaufman to be very effective in treating the arthritides and other diseases of aging. He described his findings in two excellent books both published before 1949. Bill used large doses of this vitamin as if it were a drug. He was one the first physicians who broke the vitamin-as-prevention paradigm. He used very large doses of a vitamin for treating a disease not known to be a vitamin deficiency disease. Of course his work was totally ignored. There is no indication in his early books that the problem could be more than just one vitamin and should have included attention to nutrition in general. When I and my colleagues completed the first six double blind controlled experiments in psychiatry by 1960 we used vitamin B<sub>3</sub> and vitamin C as if they were drugs.

We did not realize that the treatment of this disease was much better if all the other aspects of nutrition were taken into account.

In this book the authors cover the entire subject matter of nutrition. I have no doubt that their results are very much better than the ones Bill Kaufman observed so many years ago and which I observed when I began to use Bill's B-3 idea for treating arthritis. I have not kept track of the patients I treated but it surely must be well over fifty. Arthritics seldom are referred to psychiatrists.

Over the years it has become clear that the orthomolecular treatment of individual diseases such as arthritis, cardiovascular disease and so on is very similar - as if they are not really separate diseases at all but are merely manifestations of one major disease called the Saccharine Disease by Dr. T. L. Cleave in his classic book, "Diabetes, Coronary Thrombosis and the Saccharine Disease". Exposed to the same set of environmental disasters which is what modern society is, will cause arthritis in some, ulcerative colitis, diabetes, coronary disease, even depression and schizophrenia in others. These are the genetic modified systems of these patients. This is why a comprehensive outline of treatment for arthritis can also be used to treat almost all of these chronic diseases, except that the dose and emphasis on nutrients will vary depending upon the specific form their Saccharine Disease takes. Thus arthritis will require large doses of B<sub>3</sub>, schizophrenia will need large doses of the same vitamin, but cancer sill need large doses of vitamin C, and depression will need large doses of folic acid. But they may also need one or more of the many nutrients that have been found to be therapeutic and which are described in this book.

Preventing and treating arthritis starts with the food one eats - the diet. In this book weight reduction is emphasized. I did not find any reference to food allergies-in a few cases I have seen patients recover

when allergic foods were identified and eliminated from the diet. The description of the nutrients and natural non nutrient compounds as glucosamine or MSM are very good and helpful. Patients must pay attention to exercise and their program of fitness, and must use any healing technique which can be helpful. I will not describe these in detail for this review is not meant to be a substitute for you reading the book yourself. But I do hope you will become very interested by this brief review and that you will rush out and buy a book for yourself and one for your favorite doctor. There is a very good description of the drugs that standard medicine uses for treating arthritis. As you can guess the authors are not enthusiastic about these because they are not very therapeutic and have major side effects and serious toxic reactions. You will hear all about the fantastic new drugs for arthritis on the news media but I doubt you will ever see an accurate account of the value of the orthomolecular approach which is sounder, safer and very much cheaper.

—A. Hoffer MD PhD FRCP(C)