

Living Well Series: Ditching Dairy

The value of removing dairy from our family diet honestly never registered on my radar for the first twelve years of my post cancer health journey. Then, in the summer of 2013, I paid a visit to the busy family practice clinic of my mentor, and now dear friend, Dr. Sorina Soescu.

In addition to our vegetarian diet, the widespread research on inflammatory diets and cancer prompted my family to eliminate gluten containing grains in 2009. Assuming at that point we had resolved all of our food related symptoms I put our daily eating habits on auto pilot. That is until the big AHA moment or should I say moments, associated with my first ever experience of a raw diet.

First Hand Experience

Being away from home and family no doubt heightened the awareness of my experiences. My only focus of the time was the cases presented in Dr. Soescu's practice and the spiritual, mental, and physical experiences of eating a raw fruit meal each morning. Because my hosts stayed raw all day until dinner, so did I and after a few short days this is what I noticed:

- Morning energy like never before
- The absence of post nasal drainage
- The absence of an afternoon dip in energy
- The absence of bloating
- Deeper sleep

- Optimized bowel elimination

Now, there is no doubt in my mind that these results were due to the combined effect of a raw meal to start my day and the lack of dairy products. This article however, is just about ditching dairy and you can read more about fruit for breakfast [here](#).

Having struggled with sinusitis my entire life, I honestly thought I had been symptom free for years until I woke up the first morning in Romania without sinus drainage. I'm sharing this not because it's such a dramatic outcome, but actually because it seems rather benign and that's the point. I had lived with symptoms on a daily basis that didn't even register because they had become so normal. Could that be true for you? Joachim, my husband, refers to this as the fish/water phenomena. Ask a fish how the water is and your answer will be, "what water?"

Makes you wonder what "water" you swim in day after day that is accepted but not acknowledged. It could very well be that the inflammatory responses you are living with or have accepted could be improved in the absence of dairy in your diet.

The Whys

And this brings me back to the purpose of this blog and three reasons why I'd like you to consider ditching dairy.

1. The evidence proves dairy consumption contributes to many chronic symptoms, here are a few:

Milk and Adolescent Acne

Milk and Chronic Disease

Milk and Prostate Cancer

2. You will feel better! It's remarkable how much discomfort we are willing to tolerate in order to maintain our lifestyle and how much energy we gain from resolving them.

3. Environmentally, the dairy industry takes a huge toll on our planet. Here's two studies that everyone needs to read:

The dairy industry's impact in California

Yale Environment report on Wisconsin dairy farms.

Getting Started

Back to my revelation in Romania. While I certainly caught my family by surprise when I returned ready to make this big shift in our diet, they did get on board for the following reasons:

- First to support my personal health journey
- Then the research they read was more than convincing
- Once the change was made they experienced their own benefits of resolved symptoms

Maybe going cold turkey as my family did in August 2013 is a bit daunting. How about trying this step by step approach offered by Dr. Oz? Oz's 28 day challenge calls for the removal of one dairy food type from your diet each week. And for you cheese addicts out there, you can hang on to it until week four.

Some of my clients have found success with eliminating dairy products by the meal. Beginning each day with my suggested all fruit breakfast provides you with a head start. Then, for a week or two focus on lunch, becoming aware of where it sneaks into your diet. Dinner does require more effort as you will be rethinking family favorites. I suggest attempting one new recipe a week and possibly do that on the weekend when you can

allow yourself more time.

So what do you say? The new year is the perfect opportunity to take on a new challenge and the return on your investment is substantial.