



These two goats found the Sandy Mountain Days Pet Show a good place to join heads. The goat on the left, Fantasy, belongs to Marjie Mills, age 3. The head-butter on the right, Bugs, belongs to Lisa Epley, age 11. Photo by Mark Floyd

The Doctor Says

Vitamins helpful, but care needed

Vitamin and mineral pills will help supplement a diet, but 10 vitamins a day will not necessarily make a person a perfect "10".

Taking vitamin pills as insurance may sound like a good idea, especially if a person is finicky, has a poor appetite or a run-down feeling, according to Carolyn Knutson, a registered dietitian.

"The thing that bothers me about depending on vitamin-mineral pills is that the nutrients low in a person's diet are often not the ones in the pills they are taking," Knutson said. "Our bodies excrete excess vitamins in the urine and we flush away many dollars every year. Furthermore, there are interactions among nutrients so that increasing the intake of one nutrient may increase or decrease the body's need for another."

"It scares me to see people take large dose of single vitamins or minerals," she added. "They run the risk of throwing their systems out of balance."

There are recommended requirements for about 25 of the 40 known nutrients, but science has not yet defined the perfect amounts of every nutrient needed for health. A variety of foods, however, contain all these essential nutrients in adequate amounts for 98 percent of all healthy people.

Many people feels that all essential minerals come from such foods as meats, eggs, whole grains, green leafy vegetables, peas and beans, milk, fruit, iodized salt and flouridated water. But there may be exceptions to the rule, Knutson noted.

"Some women of child-bearing years do not eat enough of certain foods to obtain adequate iron and may develop anemia requiring an iron supplement," she said. "Pregnant women have increased nutritional needs and require supplemental iron and folic acid present in prenatal vitamins with iron."

"Strict vegetarians eating no animal products, such as milk or eggs, may need to supplement their diets with vitamin B-12. Persons with certain chronic disease that effect absorption of nutrients may require vitamin-mineral supplementation also."

In order to eat all the essential nutrients, fairly inactive people need to limit high sugar, high fat foods and alcohol to special occasions. These dessert and snack foods are low in essential nutrients, but their calories crowd out foods rich in life-giving vitamins and minerals.

Vitamin deficiencies were the nutritional diseases of last century. Now, nutritionists are more concerned with excesses of salt, calories, fat, sugar and alcohol. If people take care to cut these excesses, consume a variety of foods and get exercise to burn up calories, their bodies will have all the vitamins and minerals needed for a healthy life.

Concern over diet, as well as rising inflation, has changed the habits of millions of America's shoppers, according to a report from Kraft's Consumer's Right to Know program.

The study took data from government surveys, market research organizations and independent companies. The data suggests that when it comes to food, today's consumers are "better educated, more demanding and put a greater emphasis on quality. Their major food buying concerns include cost, nutrition and lifestyle."

Shoppers are choosing alternatives to expensive beef products, resulting in more poultry, hamburger, fish, pork, cheese and non-meat products. Other methods for cutting costs, but still maintaining nutrition include redeeming coupons, shopping for sales, controlling impulse buying, using leftovers and doing more home gardening and canning.

Nutrition labeling, food additives and weight control are also important issues. One survey revealed that there is a 33 percent increase in the number of people on a reducing or weight-watching diet.

Major trends in American households are two-income families, more single-person households and more women in the work force. As a result, there is a greater demand for convenience products, labor-saving equipment and small-portion packaging.

At the same time, the previous trend toward more eating away from home is beginning to decline, due to rising fuel prices and general inflation. A return to eating at home is indicated.

With more women in the work force, more men are doing the grocery shopping and cooking.

All of the data suggests that "we are in an era of transition as people continue to cope with changing economic, demographic and social patterns. Consumers are becoming more informed and are actively seeking solutions to important problems and issues."

The Post will frequently run medical or nutritional tips from reliable sources in The Doctor Says column.

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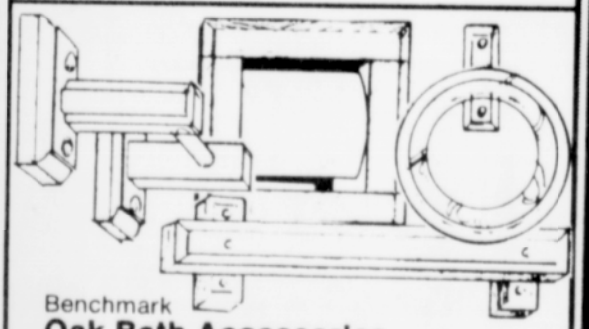
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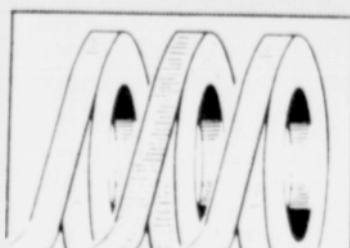
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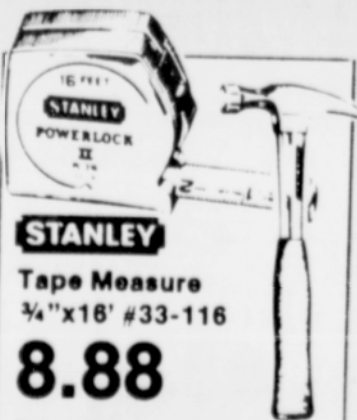


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