

**S**o you are trying to get into better shape... maybe eating less, exercising more, and in general trying to be healthier. There are thousands of diet programs out there and just as many "healthy living" books. There are even "super" foods that are promoted to cure any ailment that bothers you. It certainly can get very confusing. In life I have found that the "KISS" principle... "keep it simple, silly!"...is a good way to wade through the vast amount of information that we must process everyday. It is with the KISS principle in mind that the following is presented.

When you are trying to determine the best route to better health, you will not go wrong by eating your foods as close to their original state as possible...that means fruits, vegetables, fresh meats and dairy. Before you spend money on super foods and expensive supplements, let's start with reading the labels on your foods and eliminating the food additives which can harm you. A good rule of thumb is that if the food product contains things that you can not pronounce and have no clue what they are, you can probably find a healthier alternative. In general, food manufacturers add chemicals to processed foods to extend their shelf life and to enhance flavor, and use ingredients which are most cost effective. The human body is not designed to digest some of these food additives. So what are some of the biggest offenders?

**1. Monosodium Glutamate (MSG):** Its flavor-enhancing potential was noticed by the Japanese in the 1908 and it was added to Japanese soldiers rations during WWII. It was noticed that these soldiers never complained about their food, because MSG can make sawdust taste almost good! After the war this new chemical was eagerly adopted by the American food industry. Kentucky Fried Chicken was one of the first fast food restaurants to add MSG to their "eleven

secret herbs and spices." In 1983, author William Poundstone, in his book *BIG SECRETS* hired a laboratory to analyze a dry sampling of the spice mixture. The surprising discovery was that instead of identifying 'eleven herbs and spices,' the analysis showed only four ingredients: flour, salt, pepper and monosodium glutamate, a flavor enhancer.

MSG works by crossing the blood brain barrier and overstimulates your brain nerve cells. It is called a neurotoxin. In the process, it causes your brain to get hungry and so you eat more. We have all had experience of "eating Chinese", when you can eat like a pig and two hours later you are hungry for more. Even the 1995 FDA report found that an unknown percentage of the population may react to MSG and develop MSG symptom complex, a condition characterized by some of the following symptoms: burning skin sensations, heart palpitations, weakness, numbness, muscle tightening, bronchospasm (asthma) or light-headedness. Despite the controversy over the safety of MSG, the FDA has classified MSG "generally as safe" and has

# Health Wise

## You Are What You Eat: Foods that help and foods that harm

by Diane G. Bowen, M.D.

**"In life I have found that the "KISS" principle... "keep it simple, silly!"...is a good way to wade through the vast amount of information that we must process everyday."**

set no limitation on its quantity in food. MSG was routinely added to infant formula until the late 1960s when studies were released about MSG toxicity in the nervous system of baby mice. As a matter of fact, if researchers want to study the effect of diabetes and obesity, they give MSG to baby rats and they all become obese and diabetic! I will leave it up to the reader to do their own research and to come to their own conclusions, but if you want a rat to get fat, give him MSG!

### 2. High Fructose Corn

**Syrup (HFCS)** Your brain uses glucose exclusively as its only energy source. It gets it from the vegetables, dairy and fruits and sugar that you eat. While artificial sugars stimulate your body to produce insulin to take the sweetener out of circulation, the artificial sweetener can not be used by the brain for its energy source. It is a well known fact that hypoglycemia, the lack of sufficient glucose in the blood, can lead to a decrease of mental capacity, anxiety and ultimately seizures. While naturally occurring sugars, as well as sucrose, contain fructose bound to other sugars, high fructose corn syrup contains a good deal of "free" or unbound fructose. Research indicates that this free fructose interferes with the heart's use of key minerals like magnesium, copper and chromium. HFCS has also been implicated in elevated blood cholesterol levels and the creation of blood clots.

Since May 1982, a system of price supports and imposed sugar quotas has made importing sugar into the United States and Canada prohibitively expensive. The food industry turned to HFCS as a substitute, with both Coca-Cola and Pepsi switching to HFCS in 1984. In the past, fructose was considered beneficial to diabetics because it causes only a modest rise in blood sugar. However, research on other hormonal factors suggests that fructose actually promotes disease more readily than glucose. While glucose is metabolized in every cell in the body, fructose must be metabolized only in the liver. The livers of test animals fed large amounts of fructose develop fatty deposits and cirrhosis, similar to problems that develop in the livers of alcoholics. So while some

natural sugar is fine, HFCS and artificial sweeteners like Splenda and Equal lead to excess use and obesity and aggravate diabetes. If you are looking for alternatives to regular sugar, consider Stevia, or Xylitol, both of which are shown to actually decrease cavities while sweetening your food.

**3. Soy products:** Soybeans were first introduced to America in the late 1700's by Samuel Bowen who planted them at his plantation at Thunderbolt, Georgia. The crop grew well and was insect resistant. Initially it was grown as animal feed. By World War I, soybeans were valued as a source of oil and of inexpensive, high-quality protein. Since it is naturally pest resistant, it extends the shelf life of breads and packaged baked goods. This has helped the U.S. soybean crop to increase from 9 million bushels in 1929 to a record 2.8 billion bushels in 1998. In other words, soy is big business and as such has the ability to fund much pro-soy research. Eating as little as 30 grams (about 4 tablespoons) of soy per day can result in low thyroid function with symptoms of lethargy, constipation, weight gain and fatigue. Many middle aged women often choose to drink soy milk because it is supposed to be healthier as a supplement for decreasing hormones, yet this is the same group of people who are at risk for low thyroid function. Asians consume soy foods in small amounts (about 2 teaspoons) as a condiment, and not as a replacement for animal foods. Soy foods increase the body's requirement for vitamin D, needed for strong bones and normal growth. A soy formula fed to a baby consumes about 6 times the FDA amount for adults. These mega doses of phytoestrogens (plant based estrogens) in soy formula have been implicated in the current trend toward increasingly premature sexual development in girls and delayed or retarded sexual development in boys.

There is a lot more to tell, but I do not want you to go to sleep. Hopefully your interest has been stirred to look things up for yourself and determine what will work for you. My mother-in-law says that something is eventually going to kill you, so you should just enjoy what you eat. I agree with her. It is easy to become "consumed" with the notion of eating the best things and avoiding all the "bad" things, but that is not good for you either. So eat lots of fresh veggies and fruits, some meat and dairy, and don't forget to enjoy some homemade baked goods on occasion. In other words, eat the "real" things that God created for us and be thankful for the blessings He provides for us everyday to enjoy! **U**

Dr. Bowen is a board certified Plastic Surgeon and a member of the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery



Paid Advertisement

Years in the sun.  
In moments, undone.

Under the sun and over the years, your skin suffers. And the damage looks back at you in the mirror: brown spots, broken capillaries and unwanted hair.

Our Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) therapy, part of our sophisticated family of laser light treatments, can work wonders in clearing pigmentation, correcting textures and removing hair.

To discover the benefits of these specialized therapies and arrange a personal analysis, please call Melanie Todd, ST, a member of our skin rejuvenation team, at 912.634.1993.

YOUR *skin*. OUR SPECIALTY.

GOLDEN ISLES  
CENTER FOR  
PLASTIC SURGERY, PC  
DIANE G. BOWEN, MD

1015 Arthur J. Moore Drive St. Simons Island, GA 31522 [www.dr DianeBowen.com](http://www.dr DianeBowen.com)

Local SERVICE  
National EXPERTISE

With over 90 years of experience between them, our management team provides clients with the best of both worlds: Local service with expertise you usually only find in larger national companies. We are committed to providing our clients with our local touch enhanced by our nationally recognized expertise in the following areas:

- Life & Disability Insurance Planning
- Employee Benefits/Health Insurance
- Retirement 401(k) Planning
- Asset Allocation Planning
- Financial & Estate Planning
- Business Continuation Planning



JACOBS, KIRBY &  
COOLIDGE, LLC

Call us or  
visit our web site.  
[www.jkcllc.com](http://www.jkcllc.com)

4355 Coral Park Drive • Brunswick, Georgia 31520 • 912-265-6909

Russell C Jacobs, III, Carl Coolidge, David McClellan and Beverly McBride are registered representatives of and offer securities, investment advisory and financial planning services through MML Investors Services, Inc. Member SIPC. (<http://www.sipc.org>) (Supervisory Office, South Tower Suite 400, 3333 Peachtree Road, Atlanta, GA 30326, 404-261-8900) Jacobs, Kirby & Coolidge, LLC is not a subsidiary or affiliate of MML Investors Services, Inc.

Insurance products are offered through Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company and other fine companies.