

The question in life is not whether you get knocked down. You will. The question is, are you ready to get back up... And fight for what you believe in?

~Dan Quayle

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Issue 3 Vol. 2
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In This Week's Issue:

Fighting Obesity with Omega-3

Health Tip of the Week

Meat Labeling

Exercise of the Week

Fiesta Steak

Strawberry Almond Face Scrub

What Labels Really Mean on Meats

Dr. Mercola recently released an article with the definitions of terms that marketing departments put on their meat packages. He states, "The numerous labels that do little but confuse consumers about the essentials of what they're buying are aggravating to say the least."

- **Grass Fed:** These standards are voluntary, so in order for you to determine whether or not this standard is actually being met, in addition to the "grass-fed" label, the meat you buy would also need to carry the "USDA Process Verified" label.
- **Organic:** This label is USDA and third-party certified. It means that livestock wasn't treated with hormones or antibiotics and was fed a pesticide-free diet.
- **Humanely Raised/Certified Humane:** Many ranches now choose to undergo an audit by third parties such as Animal Welfare Association and Humane Farmed to highlight their extra care. This type of label states that no practices such as overcrowding, castrating, early weaning, or denying animals access to pasture use.
- **Biodynamic:** This pre-organic standard treats the whole ranching operation as an interrelated whole. While some meats are technically organic, a biodynamic farm assures the meat also came from a healthy, self-sustaining system.

Your best bet, which circumvents the labeling confusion altogether, is to get in touch with a local farmer (try finding a farmer's market or **community-supported agriculture program in your area** to do this) who can verify that the products are raised on pasture, without antibiotics and pesticides.

If you don't have access to a local farmer near you, here is a list of grass-fed beef ranchers in the United States that can ship good quality meats right to your door:

- **U.S. Wellness Meats**
- Panorama Meats - Black Angus and Red Angus
www.panoramameats.com
- Country Natural Beef - Hereford and Angus
www.countrynaturalbeef.com
- Tallgrass Beef
www.tallgrassbeef.com
- Niman Ranch - A network of more than 600 independent farmers and ranchers, and probably the easiest to find locally
www.nimanranch.com
- Pacific Village - Entirely grass-fed cattle since 2002
www.newseasonsmarket.com

~Dr. Mercola

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This Week's Health Tip:

Why All the Fuss about Grass-Fed Meat?

Grass-fed beef is vastly superior to grain-fed beef, and in fact it's the clear beef of choice you should be eating. It is far more important to choose grass-fed than to choose organic, as most grass-fed beef are also organic.

Not only is it raised in a more sustainable way for the environment, and a more humane way for the animal, but it's the superior choice for your health.

Grass-fed beef, for instance, is lower in fat than regular beef and, more importantly, contains higher amounts of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), a fatty acid. Grass-fed animals have from three to five times more CLA than grain-fed animals.

CLA has been making headlines for its extreme health benefits, which include:

- **Fighting cancer and diabetes**
- Helping you **lose weight**
- Increasing your metabolic rate, a positive benefit for promoting normal thyroid function
- Helping you maintain normal cholesterol and triglyceride levels
- Enhancing your immune system

The article "**Better Beef**," written by California rancher Dave Evans, gives a great in-depth view of the many benefits of grass-fed beef, from environmental sustainability to the sheer difference in taste and nutrient content of the beef.

Keep in mind that grass-fed meat is almost always preferable to certified organic meat also because most organic beef is fed organic corn, which is what causes the myriad of health problems associated with eating beef. If you can find organic, grass-fed meat, that would be ideal.

~Dr. Mercola

Fighting Obesity and Illness at the Source

Omega-3 fats are thought to play an important role in reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity and other serious diseases. However, humans are unable to synthesize omega-3 for themselves and must obtain it from meat, fish and dairy products.

Studies have indicated that animal feeds enriched with omega-3 improves the health and fertility of animals, and the nutritional quality of their meat and dairy products.

Obese volunteers eating a diet comprising meat and dairy products derived from animals fed with omega-3-enriched linseed (flaxseed) lost 3 kg in three months, and sustained the weight loss five months later.

However, Dr. Mercola states that the studies are overlooking the importance of the source of the Omega-3. There are three types of omega-3 fats:

- DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid)
- EPA (Eicosapentaenoic Acid)
- ALA (Alpha-Linolenic Acid)

Most of the health benefits associated with omega-3 fats are linked to the animal-based omega-3 fats EPA and DHA, not the plant-based omega-3 fat ALA. ALA, which is the type of omega-3 found in flaxseed, is converted into EPA and DHA in your body, but only at a very low ratio.

I am convinced that we all need both plant and animal based omega 3 fats but I have seen many people, primarily vegans, that are strongly opposed to eating any animal products, suffer serious health complications from excluding animal based omega-3 fats.

This does not mean plant-based omega-3 fats are intrinsically harmful or that they should be avoided. Eating meat enriched with omega-3 is likely a healthier option than eating the typical grain-fed beef available in U.S. supermarkets.

In fact, one reason why I recommend choosing grass-fed beef over grain-fed beef is because it contains higher levels of omega-3 fats. The increased levels of omega-3 come from the cattle's diet of grass, as 60 percent of the fat content of grass is ALA.

It's important that the grass-fed beef you choose is really finished on grass, as opposed to being shipped to a feedlot and fattened on grain for the last few months. I say this because as soon as cattle stop eating grass, they begin to lose the omega-3 stored in their tissues, which is why grain-fed beef typically has only **15-50 percent of the omega-3 that grass-fed beef has.**

One reason why it's so important to make sure your beef has higher levels of omega-3 has to do with your ratio of this fat and another called omega-6.

The ideal ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fats is 1:1. Today, though, our ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 averages from 20:1 to 50:1!

Research shows that if your ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 exceeds 4:1, you're at **risk for more health problems.** This is especially meaningful since grain-fed beef can have ratios that exceed 20:1, whereas grass-fed beef is down around 3:1.

That said, most people don't eat beef every day, and even if you did an average serving of grass-fed beef would provide only around 88.5 mg of omega-3 fat, according to **California State University's College of Agriculture**, which on its own is not very much.

~ Dr. Mercola

You can also get Omega-3 from other Sources such as flax seed, krill oil, and best of all fish oil. Stay tuned for next weeks newsletter explaining further the different sources of Omega-3.

~Maggie

Exercise of the Week:

The Reverse Lunge



- Stand with both feet on a balance disc (a couch cushion, or pillow) about hip-width apart and hold a dumbbell in each hand in front of your shoulders, palms facing in.
- Lunge back with your left leg and lower your knee toward the floor
- Step back to return to start position
- repeat the lunge with your right leg to complete 1 repetition
- Do 3 sets of 8 to 10 reps.

~SHAPE

Facial Recipe:



Strawberry Almond Scrub

Strawberries have natural astringent properties that tighten your pores, and leave your face feeling toned and fresh. Try grinding a quarter cup of almonds at once, and store them in a jar in the refrigerator so you always have some around. Try using a food processor, blender, or a small coffee bean grinder that you can use specifically for natural recipes (if you use it to grind coffee beans, everything will smell like coffee).

- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp ground almonds
- 1 ripe strawberry (if fresh strawberries aren't available, it's OK to use thawed, frozen berries.)

Mix the almonds and baking soda together in a small dish. Slice a single strawberry into the bowl and mash it all together with a fork (or your fingers) to make a smooth paste.

Apply to your face using your fingertips.

~The Body Book by Anne Akers Johnson

Fiesta Steak

- Serves: 2
- Prep Time: 35 minutes
- Cook Time: 8 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 pound flank steak
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Tomato salsa

Directions

Marinate flank steak in garlic, olive oil, salt, and pepper to taste for at least 30 minutes and up to overnight.

Heat a grill or sauté pan and sear steak about 3 minutes on each side, or until browned. Then lower heat, cover pan, and continue to cook 5 minutes more for medium doneness.

Slice the steak against the grain into ¼-inch-thick strips.

Serve with salsa on the side.

~SHAPE

