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## Private Newsletter

## NEWS FROM THE BATTLEFRONT

Cereals need  
yet more  
“enrichment”**G**overnment Requires More  
Folate in the Food System

This is the text of a recent health release about folate; read our comments at the end..

*“BALTIMORE (Johns Hopkins) - You could call it a dragnet approach to preventive health care. Since the start of this year, the government has required that folic acid be added to a long list of foods as an essential ingredient.*

*This B vitamin is critical for warding off neural tube defects, spinal bifida and other problems in developing fetuses. There's recent evidence that it may reduce the risk of heart disease in women as well. Women should have enough folic acid in their systems before they conceive, but some do not. So these days, bread, pasta, rice, grains and flours all have extra folic acid in them.*

*"The government has taken the initiative to say, 'We can augment the folate in the food supply.' So that those women, who we don't know who they are, will get the folate that they need to help prevent a given high proportion of neural tube*

*defects," says Dr. Laura Caulfield, a professor of nutrition at Johns Hopkins.*

*For anyone worried about a "big brother" approach to the nation's food supply, consider this: about 4,000 fetuses are born with serious defects each year because their mothers lacked enough folic acid."*

**We Comment:**

Here we go again! The staple foods of the American people has been found to be deficient in yet another nutrient. So what is the reaction? The Government must compensate for the folly of the eating public, appease the powerful industrialists, producers of these foods, and require by law that these products be “enriched” with yet another micro-nutrient.

When will it dawn on the American population that cereals are basically unfit for human consumption? They can only be admitted into our shopping baskets on pain of being “fortified” by an ever lengthening list of missing essential nutrients.

What about folate? Where can it be found? The name gives it away. Folate is found in *foliage*! Any green salad or vegetable has it in plenty. Suffice to say, the Natural Eater avoids the errors of the typical American diet, and eats an abundance of salads and green vegetables. There is no way that the Natural Eater will suffer a deficiency of Folate, or indeed any other micro-nutrient.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

Checks and  
Balances at  
the Calcium  
Bank - Part 1

A recent clinical study, popularly known as “the Nurses” study has come up with some interesting results: menopausal women who drink two or more glasses of milk a day are 40% *more likely* to suffer hip fractures than those who drink no milk! [!] Yes, you read that correctly: drinking all that milk “for its calcium” had the opposite effect to that intended. It had the effect of de-mineralising their bones!

How can this be?

First let me, as a *Natural Eater*, allow a knowing smile to play around my lips. The thought is, “I could have told you - what are grown women doing drinking milk - a foodstuff intended by nature only for unweaned babies!”

Putting such reflections aside, there is a mechanism well known to science to explain this phenomenon. It is known as “protein induced calciuria”. Put simply, protein in the bloodstream causes calcium to be lost in the urine. Yes, guess what - milk contains a lot of protein. So what

is this milk protein doing to the body?

Excess protein wields a double whammy: protein metabolism leaves the blood acidified. So the body restores the blood neutrality by using alkaline calcium salts. And where do they come from? From the bones!

The second part of the double whammy is more subtle. Protein has a strange effect on the kidneys. Kidneys are there to filter waste matter from the blood stream. The membrane which controls this has to be finely tuned. It must only let through the waste products and as little as possible of the good substances in the blood. Under the effect of excess protein, the kidneys lose this fine tuning. They start to *leak* calcium! The body finishes up with a *negative calcium* balance and has to make up the deficit from the stores in the bones.

This is a classic case of a little knowledge being a dangerous thing. We have been like the Sorcerer's Apprentice, meddling with processes that are not fully understood. How many of you learned at your Mother's knee to drink up your milk "because of the calcium" or "because of the protein" or just because it's good for babies "it must be good for you"!

We have fallen into the trap of thinking that because a foodstuff contains calcium, then it is a good thing to consume it. In fact there are a number of other considerations.

First of all, just because you've eaten calcium, it doesn't mean that your body has absorbed it. A large percentage of the calcium we eat passes straight through the body and out the other end. The intestines are very good at just taking what the body thinks it needs at that time and letting the

excess pass on. Frequently too, the calcium is not bio-available. It is suspected that much of the calcium in cheese, for example, combines with the fat to form insoluble salts which are simply excreted in the stools.

Secondly, just because calcium has got into the blood stream, doesn't mean that the body uses it to build bones. On the contrary, the body is quite capable of laying calcium down just where you *don't* want it. For example in the arteries, in the heart valves, as nodules in fatty tissue, and as painful spurs in the joints.

What is going on?

Clinical and epidemiological studies have shown that populations in Asia and in Africa who, although consuming low levels of calcium, nevertheless have a low incidence of hip fracture. This counter-intuitive result indicates that there is some other, powerful, factor at work.

This the key to the calcium question. Some of the most powerful factors in body metabolism are hormones. We now know that calcium metabolism is under hormonal control, chiefly parathyroid hormone. Our hormonal system, if it is functioning properly, lays calcium down where it is supposed to go. If it is not functioning properly you can have the worst of both worlds - osteoporosis and demineralisation of the skeleton at the same time as you are getting atherosclerosis and kidney stones!

Finally, listen to this: management of your calcium capital is just as important as managing your 401 retirement account. You are saving calcium in your bones for your "retirement" until the age of about 35. That is until the age of about 35, your body is building up bone density. This is the

"capital" for your retirement years.

After the age of 35 to 40 your retirement account stops accepting credit payments and only allows withdrawals. The secret is to avoid raiding your capital account to pay for current expenses!

In the second part of this article, to be published in the next edition of this newsletter, I shall be talking about how you build up your capital, and like any good tax planner, how you conserve it from depletion.

**Geoff Bond**

**Jerome Irving Rodale** founding father of the organic food

#### HE DIDN'T BEAT THE ODDS

magazine, and founder of Rodale Press, a major publishing corporation.

How he died: On the "Dick Cavett Show"

While discussing the benefits of organic foods. Rodale, who bragged "I'm going to live to be 100 unless I'm run down by a sugar-crazed taxi driver," was only 72 when he appeared on the "Dick Cavett Show" in January 1971. Part way through the interview, he dropped dead in his chair. Cause of death: heart attack. The show was never aired.

<sup>1</sup> Feskanich, D et al. "Milk, Dietary Calcium and Bone Fractures in Women: A 12-year Prospective Study." Am J Public Health 87:6 (1997): 992-997.

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