

EPISODE 817

3 Foods You Absolutely SHOULD NOT Eat to Prevent Disease

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SHAWN STEVENSON: On this episode, you're going to learn about three foods that lead to excessive fat gain, sexual dysfunction, and a whole host of chronic diseases. Let's get right to it. A brand new meta analysis published in the British Medical Journal found that people who consume higher amounts of ultra processed foods have an increased risk of anxiety, depression, obesity, metabolic syndrome, a variety of cancers, and premature death. But what is it about these ultra processed foods that make them so damaging to human health? And what are the main ingredients in these ultra processed foods that are causing all these issues? Well, there are three primary foods used in ultra processed foods that are doing the most harm.

And the first one is a very specific form of fat. A meta-analysis published in the journal BMJ Open Heart found that these vegetable oils can be a major culprit behind organ failure, cardiac arrest, and even sudden death. The first food on this list of the top three foods to avoid to prevent chronic disease is highly refined vegetable oil. Dietary fats are absolutely critical to human health and functionality. Fats are required as building blocks to make trillions of our cells And they're also utilized as a metabolic fuel to run processes in our bodies. Now, being that fats are used to make our tissues and fuel our metabolism, the quality of the fats that we consume are of the utmost importance.

The fats that we've eaten as humans for thousands of years have largely been swapped out within a single century. We've gone from the majority of our dietary fats being from minimally processed animal and plant fats to today where approximately 80 percent of the fat calories in the average American's diet is from heavily processed, "vegetable oil". Now I'm putting vegetable oil in air quotes because the truth is the name vegetable oil is a misnomer. It's not made from vegetables at all. It's largely made from industrial seed oils and a lot of synthetic chemicals. How vegetable oil is made is something that you have to see to believe. It's alarming to see firsthand how these seed oils are processed at extremely high temperatures.

Scoured with chemical solvents, bleached, and then chemically deodorized before it's promoted to be fit for human consumption.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Now, even well meaning experts still beating the drum of vegetable oil safety can at least acknowledge that this conglomeration of oils is high in polyunsaturated fats, number one. That are highly unstable and sensitive to heat damage, number two. And damaging these sensitive oils automatically increases their oxidative and inflammatory potentials in our bodies, number three. So even they have to admit that vegetable oil in the truest sense of the word is an ultra processed food. And to say that these oils are safe or healthy is to ignore what they truly are.

Physician, scientist, and New York Times bestselling author Dr. Kate Shanahan shared with me that what makes vegetable oil so toxic is not the seeds themselves. It's the process of oxidation that creates toxins within the vegetable oil that weren't there to begin with. She states, "All chronic diseases share the same root cause of oxidative stress. Vegetable oil being both toxic and nutritionally poor is oxidative stress in a bottle". All right, it's not like a genie in the bottle. Shout out to Christina Aguilera. This is oxidative stress in a bottle. And I promise you, you do not want to drink that. You do not want to rub that bottle to see what's inside.

Now, more and more science is being published to affirm this fact and to just give you a whiff of their volatility. Research published in the journal Inhalation Toxicology found that even inhaling the fumes of vegetable oil during cooking can damage your DNA. The biggest offender, as noted in the journal Environmental Science and Pollution Research International, is the use was the inflammatory fan favorite canola oil, aka rapeseed oil. Coming in with the highest level of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons admitted into the room during cooking. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons are implicated in everything from cancer to autoimmune diseases. But, hey! If we're encouraged to eat This toxic food in the first place. Why not smell the smells of them as well?

Now, of course I'm being sarcastic there. We don't want to smell it or eat this stuff. But although we have a plethora of human studies revealing the detrimental effects of vegetable oil. One of the things that inspire me to share this today were two recent animal studies. One finding that consuming canola oil shrunk the testicles of mice. And another study published in the African Journal of Biological Sciences in which the researcher stated, "canola oil resulted in distorted semen tubules, degenerated germ cells and ultra structural changes in

SHAWN STEVENSON: the testicles. Canola oil should be used with caution, especially in males, to avoid its hazardous effects on the testes". All right. So again, this is sharing human studies and animal studies. There are some serious concerns here, whether this is with cardiovascular damage, whether this is with fertility issues and reproductive health and just overall all cause mortality, increasing the risk of early death.

And to add injury to a Deadpool level insult. Recent research conducted by scientists at UC Riverside determined that one of the specific oils under the "vegetable oil umbrella", soybean oil, not only leads to obesity and diabetes, but could also affect neurological conditions like autism, Alzheimer's disease, anxiety, and depression. On top of the growing number of human studies, their animal study published in the journal Endocrinology found that soybean oil negatively alters gene expression in the brain. Now these alterations were notable for increasing inflammation, disrupting insulin signaling, and more.

And what can be easily missed when looking at this study is that soybean oil was put up against an oil that's been utilized by humans for nearly 4, 000 years. Again, this is documented probably longer, but at least 4, 000 years. And this oil had none of the negative effects that the soybean oil had, and that oil was coconut oil. Unfortunately, ultra processed oils like soybean oil have been framed as largely healthy due to their lower ratio of saturated fats. And also again, having a university education in this, we were presented a very skewed perception of saturated fats when it comes to dietary intake and the impact that it has on human health.

Saturated fats are essential in a multitude of Processes in the human body, including building our brain. Literally. It's one of the primary fats that when we're developing as an infant. One of the primary fats in breast milk, for example, is actually saturated fats. And as we, of course, go into adolescence and into adulthood, we still require a healthy amount of saturated fats. They're definitely not all bad, but not all saturated fats are created equal as well. We want to keep that in mind. Where are the saturated fats coming from? And also, this is not saying to have a high diet in saturated fats, but to completely villainize them. When humans have utilized things like coconut oil for thousands of years to great benefit.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And instead saying, Hey, this oil, which is Brand new, newly invented, riddled with chemical solvents and bleaching agents and this high heat treatment to create, again, oxidation in a bottle. It's lower in saturated fat, so it's good for you. Alright, it minimized the conversation down to something so incredibly minute and missed out on the big point here.

Now, an oil like coconut oil is remarkably healthy compared to vegetable oils. In fact, a study published in the journal *Experimental and Therapeutic Medicine* found that the antioxidants and antioxidant precursors in coconut oil have the potential to protect our brains under stress and even exhibit antidepressant qualities. One of the biggest benefits of coconut oil, in particular in regards to cooking, is that the fats are incredibly stable and far less prone to oxidation or rancidity compared to lesser saturated fats. Coconut oil is approximately 65 percent medium chain triglycerides that provide notable brain and metabolism supporting benefits.

Actually, coconut derived MCT oil itself has some remarkable benefits. For example, a randomized, double blind study published in the *International Journal of Obesity and Related Metabolic Disorders* placed participants on a reduced calorie diet that included either supplemental MCTs, medium chain triglycerides, or supplemental LCTs, long chain triglycerides. After the data was compiled, it revealed that the group who included MCTs lost more weight, eliminated more body fat, and experienced higher levels of satiety. And what was particularly interesting about this study was that people consuming MCTs were able to retain more of their muscle mass during the weight loss process.

That's the secret sauce of it all. The most important factor in utilizing MCT oil, by the way, is ensuring that it's coconut derived and tested for purity. The only MCT oil that I've been utilizing for the past nearly eight years now is from the incredible folks at Onnit. Go to onnit.com/model and you'll get 10 percent off of their amazing MCT oil. They've also got some of the best science backed supplements as well literally put through randomized placebo controlled studies to affirm their effectiveness for things like boosting cardiovascular performance Increasing gains in strength and power and also improving cognitive function.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So definitely check out things like ShroomTech Sport and AlphaBrain as well. But in particular with MCTs, you want to get it from onnit.com/model. You're going to get 10 percent off store wide. So definitely pop over there and check them out. Now, keep in mind something like MCT oil is great to add to beverages, you know, things like hot teas and coffees or smoothies. You can even use a lot... You can even utilize them for salad dressings, but for cooking purposes some of the most time tested science backed alternatives to vegetable oil, which we need to do our very best to avoid if at all possible. What we want to use instead are things like extra virgin olive oil.

Researchers at Auburn University have affirmed that the oleocanthal rich extra virgin olive oil actually has the potential to protect and even regenerate the blood brain barrier when it's damaged. All right, that's very, very special and unique. So extra virgin olive oil, ideally bottled in glass to protect the oil's dark glass. Unrefined coconut oil is another great option for cooking. Grass fed butter, ghee, and other traditional minimally processed oils are all great choices. Do not Purchase vegetable oil again, quote, vegetable oil, canola oil, soybean oil, just don't bring that into your house, specifically for your cooking purposes at home. And keep in mind that most of the vegetable oil in the average person's diet in our modern society is lurking in ultra processed foods. So if we can minimize our consumption of ultra processed foods, make more high quality meals at home. And of course there are emerging companies that are paying attention to these real nutritional tenants and removing vegetable oils from their ingredients.

And we can utilize these things as well. And so, you know, the good news is that we have this education now and things are changing because what we focus on really does expand. And as this information continues to get out, I've been talking about this for about 10 years now when it comes to vegetable oil, in particular, But just having this new data, it really inspired me to create this episode for you and give you this information.

Now, moving on to number two on this list of three foods that you need to avoid to prevent chronic disease. Humans have had a relationship with sweetness for tens of thousands of years, at least. The sweetness, once exclusively found in whole real food sources, signified a

SHAWN STEVENSON: dense source of energy and valuable micronutrients that came packaged in those natural foods.

But something has changed within the last few generations. In the 1700s, the average Westerner was consuming about 4-6 pounds of sugar each year. Today, the average American consumes more than 10 times that amount. Data published in the peer reviewed journal *Advances in Nutrition* states that the average American now consumes 80 pounds of added sugar every year. Now to be clear, this is the sugar that's added to, added on top of the already existing sugar within that food. Combining the existing sugar in a typical highly refined grain based diet with the added sugar, the average American is consuming well over 100 pounds of sugar each year. This is staggering.

Again, a couple hundred years ago, four to six pounds. Today, over a hundred. It's crazy. And it's not going to come without a cost because we're literally changing what the human body is fueled on, what the human body is made out of. Not so surprisingly, nearly 130 million Americans today now have type two diabetes or prediabetes. And a recent study published in the peer reviewed journal, *metabolic syndrome and related disorders*, determined that only 12 percent of American adults is now metabolically healthy. Something is severely wrong and we're truly going to need a superhero team of individuals. to help put an end to this. And so we've got to take control of our own family's health.

We've got to be the Avengers within our own households and connect with other superheroes and help to change the culture around this because it is in fact creating a lot of damage. Now the fastest method of flooding our system with sugar and causing metabolic dysfunction is through the consumption of liquid sugar. Which is highlighted in a study published in the *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry*. The researchers asserted that the consumption of highly concentrated liquid fructose like what's found in soda leads to the development of leptin resistance in the brain and the development of excess belly fat directly.

Leptin is our body's primary satiety hormone. Drinking highly refined sugar filled beverages leads to the one two punch of one. Quickly creating more body fat, and two, still making us want to consume more.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Number two on our list of foods to avoid to prevent chronic disease is refined sugar. But in particular, Refined sugar sweetened beverages.

In recent decades, beverage companies have been doubling down on sweetness as our society has been doubling, tripling, and quadrupling down on chronic diseases. Most of our citizens are not truly aware of the shocking amount of sugar contained in these beverages. Within a single bottle of soda. For instance, a 20 ounce bottle of coca cola is pouring in 65 grams of sugar. That's about 16 teaspoons of sugar in your system. Now this was a commonality in my day to day life growing up as a kid here in the United States. And seeing my mother consuming Two to three times this much on a daily basis. I would literally be tasked with going to 7 Eleven for her each day and getting her big gulp, then super big gulp, then a double big gulp.

All right. And it just got to this place where she was consuming hundreds of grams of sugar every day, easily, just again, through this liquid medium, the amount of sugar is going to hyper stimulate insulin, damage leptin, and literally derange the communication between your brain and your body. And because it's in this liquid form, these inordinate amounts of sugar hit your bloodstream with the speed of the flash, or if you're in the MCU with the speed of Quicksilver. And the action step here to help to turn this around is making a shift to your family culture and distancing everyone's exposure to soda and sugary drinks. Again, the superior approach is to keep it out of your family's home in the first place. Relegated to special events or outings or better yet, upgrade the go to beverages for your family overall.

Obviously, the number one beverage in the world should be and is water. All right. But from there, if we want to have a little fun, of course, there are a variety of beverages that we can turn to. And there are emerging alternatives that use all natural ingredients and natural low glycemic sweeteners. Not to be mistaken with artificial sweeteners though. All right. Just to be clear. All right. So there are companies that are aware of this issue with ultra process, highly refined sugars and using natural alternatives. Not to be mistaken with artificial sweeteners and here's why. The artificial sweetener market is a multi billion dollar industry driven primarily by artificial sweeteners by an even bigger multi billion dollar soft drink industry.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right. So the artificial sweetener market is from the guys who brought you soda. Going to a soda company for a healthy beverage is like going to a drug dealer for some vitamins. All right. They just don't do that. And the fact that soda companies are so sweet on artificial sweeteners should immediately raise some red flags for us. But again, we just look past it. We don't see it. And for us as business as usual. But despite the obvious conflicts of interest from known abusers of public health and despite the growing body of evidence against artificial sweeteners, there are some folks still reaching out for artificial sweeteners like Thor reaching out for his hammer. Mjolnir. It's Mjolnir.

A recent study conducted by researchers at the Boston University School of Medicine and published in the peer reviewed journal Stroke Uncovered a surprising link between drinking diet soda and two debilitating health issues. The study found that people who drink diet soda daily are almost three times more likely to have a stroke and develop dementia. Now, just to be clear, this is a strong correlation noted in this study. Not causation, but the researchers did an excellent job taking into account adjustments for age, sex, education, caloric intake, diet quality, physical activity, and smoking. So other confounding factors that could be leading to this, but something about drinking diet sodas in particular stood out.

Another recent clinical trial involving 17 obese test subjects who did not regularly consume artificial sweeteners at the time, found that the artificial sweetener sucralose elevated their blood sugar levels by 14 percent and elevated their insulin levels by 20 percent on average. Now, being that it is a non caloric supposedly, non glycemic sweetener, it's not supposed to do that. But artificial sweeteners can pretend that they're a superhero, but they're really Loki in disguise. So I did a Thor and a Loki there, so hopefully you're tuned in with the MCU and what they're doing. Shout out to those guys. But the reality is that these Loki-like artificial sweeteners are ready to take control of your brain and your hormones. In addition, many of us have grown up in this paradigm where we're literally just swimming in sodas.

And again, there are emerging alternatives that use all natural ingredients and natural low glycemic sweeteners. Keyword, natural low glycemic sweeteners. And when I personally want something bubbly, And something that also has some tremendous health benefits. I love sipping on the electrolyte sparkling water from LMNT.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's just my favorite thing to keep on hand. I keep some cold in my fridge. And yes, the number one science based electrolyte company now has their classic drink mix and an incredible new Sparkling electrolyte water and this is not a mere sparkling water, by the way There's some great sparkling waters out there, but this is something superior because it really is a performance drink we have the optimal ratio of key electrolytes that support cognitive function and physical performance as well based on hundreds of thousands of data points from elite athletes and other high performing individuals.

And in particular, if we look at the ratio of sodium. Sodium was found by researchers at McGill university to literally control cognitive switches in the brain. They refer to them as quote on off switches in the brain that protect the brain against degeneration and also incite improved cognitive performance. Also the ratio of potassium and magnesium and magnesium, as we've talked about many times is responsible for over 600 biochemical processes in the human body is incredibly important for our cognitive performance, for our sleep quality, the list goes on and on and all the different things that it does, but it has a huge role to play in muscle contraction and relaxation.

And so if we're looking at performance of our body and our mind, This is far more than just a sparkling drink to sip on but some of my favorite flavors. They've got the grapefruit. They've got watermelon, but also they have a new flavor. That's exclusive to the sparkling drink, which is black cherry lime and You can get yours right now by going to drinklmt.com/model. That's drinklmt.com/model. And with any purchase of their classic drink mix or the new sparkling electrolyte water, you're going to get a free sample pack to try out all the different flavors of electrolytes. So again, head over there, check them out. It's drinklmt.com/model.

Moving on to number three on our list of three foods to avoid to prevent chronic disease. It's a group of foods that was actually the very basis, the primary foods that I was taught to eat in my university nutritional science class. It was a time when the food pyramid reigned supreme with grains making up the bulk of our diet were instructed to make up the bulk of our diet with no distinction of how these grains were grown.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Number three on our list is pesticide laden grains. In addition to sugar, the other category of foods that are keeping our community's blood sugar levels in constant chaos are conventional grains. Though they are denoted separately on product labels, carbohydrates break down into sugar-slash glucose in our blood. So when you combine our grain heavy diet with the ungodly amount of sugars in our diet, You have a civil war taking place within your metabolism that will break your body down from the inside out. In my university nutritional science class, I was told how important "healthy whole grains" were and that they should be the basis of our diet.

So when attempting to improve my health, I went all in on whole grain everything. So I was eating whole grain pasta, which had this earthy kind of. Yeah, it just didn't, it didn't vibe correctly. But I got used to it on my first date with my wife. I invited her over and I was like, you know, make some food for you and I whipped up some of this whole grain pasta. She didn't tell me till years later that it was, it was Basura.

All right. That's trash. Right. Okay. Just check it with my guys. I learned that from Cardi B. Just, sorry to admit, but it wasn't that good. All right. And the reality was, again, I was trying to do the right thing to improve my health, but I was misguided at the time. And the biggest part of this miseducation that was left out was the fact that the wheat that we are consuming that is proliferating on store shelves in particular here in the United States is not the Amber waves of grain that our ancestors dined on. Wheat naturally evolved over thousands of years, but only to a modest degree. However, the last couple of decades, the makeup of wheat has been changed dramatically. Under the influence of agricultural scientists. Wheat strains have been hybridized and genetically manipulated to make it resistant to changes in environmental conditions, resistant to pathogens, and most importantly for food manufacturers to increase the speed of growth and yield per acre.

This manipulation has essentially resulted in a food that the human microbiome has never seen before. And in recent years, we're seeing the results of it. with growing numbers of celiac disease and gluten related sensitivities. It's a real issue that's largely related to less than real wheat. Gluten. Now that's a bad word.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's a trigger word for a lot of people. Gluten is just one of the proteins that's found within wheat. And it's emerged as a major villain. A recent study published in the peer reviewed journal BMC Biochemistry reveals some shocking findings. In this study, the researchers found that digested gluten could literally block the ability for leptin to bind to leptin receptors.

And it was a dose dependent response. The more gluten present, the more leptin was blocked. In fact, the amount of gluten eaten in a typical meal of bread or pasta was found to reduce leptin binding by up to 50%. Now gluten has been portrayed in the role of the evil villain in nutrition for many years now But I don't want you to get your crumbs in a bunch thinking that gluten containing foods are off the menu Now indeed for some folks, especially if you're dealing with an autoimmune condition Or obviously celiac You want to play it safe with gluten But data published in the journal nutrients demonstrates that gluten prompts the release of a protein called zonulin that increases the permeability of your gut lining, whether you're gluten sensitive or not.

And dysfunction of these tight junctions. that make up your gut lining is a key contributor to systemic inflammation. But as with most things, there are multiple perspectives to consider here. Even the researchers in the study noted that the way the gluten was prepared slash cooked makes a difference in its effects on leptin. Still, though, And this is what is most important, the potentially bigger issue with wheat and other grains. It's not gluten and gluten adjacent compounds. It's the way that they're grown and processed. If you upgrade the quality and avoid the following culprit, having some occasional grains on the menu will not be a problem for most people.

Conventional grains are one of the most pesticide and herbicide laden cash crops. According to the environmental working group, wheat, Oats, corn, and other bread slash cereal grains are by far the largest source of glyphosate consumption for the average American today. The controversial glyphosate is just one of the herbicides used in wheat production and data published in the journal, Interdisciplinary toxicology, details how glyphosate can increase the risk of everything from cancer to celiac disease to infertility.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Now, the most alarming thing about this study is that it was published 10 years ago, a decade ago. This data has been known and numerous peer reviewed studies have come out since on the clear detrimental impact of glyphosate. Even the world health organization has classified glyphosate as a class two, a carcinogen denoting that it is a probable cancer causing agent to humans and the environmental working group published data affirming glyphosate contamination in 80 to 90 percent of popular wheat based products on American store shelves.

Now, a quick step to take when it comes to grain based products is to make it a mandate if we're going to consume these products to go organic whenever possible. Avoid glyphosate. You know, a lot of people think that their symptoms relating to the consumption of wheat based products or grains is due to the gluten, right? And companies have used health washing to say, hey, this is gluten free. And some people do see an improvement in symptoms or resolution of symptoms, but some people don't when they go with a gluten free option. But when people, and this is a very common occurrence now, especially social media, you get to see a lot of this.

When people go to other countries where glyphosate is not being used and more traditional practices with wheat and the quality of the wheat strains are better, they don't have the same symptoms. They can go to say Sicily and have ravioli and have spaghetti and not end up having a huge outbreak of symptoms. But then they come back here and they're like, And try to have some of those same foods and their body reacts in a negative way. So A quick step that you can take is simply to go organic when it comes to grains. A recent study published in jama internal medicine found that eating organic foods free from pesticides and herbicides led to a significant reduction in the risk of cancer for the nearly 70 000 test subjects who were analyzed. And simply by reducing your intake of ultra processed foods and eating more real food meals, you're going to avoid these pesticide laden grains, highly refined sugar, and highly refined vegetable oil.

And if you're wondering where to find great ideas for real food meals, I highly recommend checking out the eat smarter family cookbook. There are over 250 peer reviewed studies used to create this book and also 100 delicious recipes for you to enjoy with your family.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So definitely check it out. Just go to anywhere books are sold. Of course, eat smarter cookbook.com. This is our chance to transform our family kitchen culture and to truly stack conditions in our family's favor. So I hope that you got a lot of value out of this information. And this is something to share with the people that you care about. Removing these three primary culprits which ironically are the three primary things that make up ultra processed foods can radically improve the health of our families and our community.

I appreciate you so much for tuning in today. We've got some epic masterclasses and world class guests coming your way very, very soon. So make sure to stay tuned, take care, have an amazing day. And I'll talk with you soon.

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