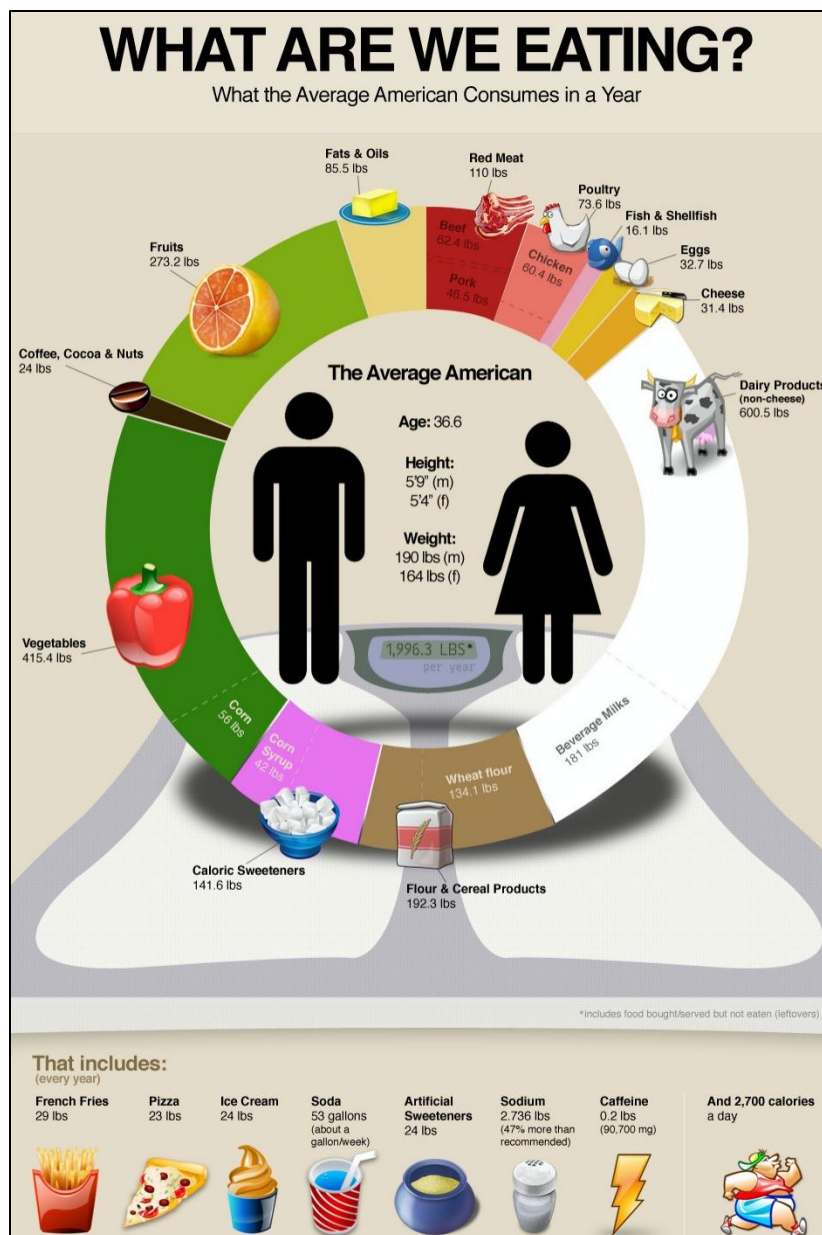


# You are what you eat . . .

Where does it all go?

I'm referring to the food we eat. With few exceptions like those "quarter pounders with cheese," do we really know how much the food we eat weighs? If we were to add up the weight of everything eat and drink, that number would be astounding. How much food do you think the average person eats in a year? I've hired a crack team of researchers, and here is what they found:



According to the graphic on the left, the average adult eats almost 2,000 pounds of food during the course of a year. (I think my son consumed that amount in a month when he came home from college one summer to visit.) My first Volkswagen weighed less than that! Yep, that's all the burgers, fries, steaks, seafood, cereal, snacks, fruits, and whatever else found its way into our open mouths. The numbers don't lie. We are definitely a country of "consumers."

For the most part, we are particular about the types of foods we eat. Most of the time those decisions are based on what tastes good rather than what is good for us. Nowhere in the Garden of Eden were signs stating, "Apples are Good – Eat One!" (I'm not sure Adam and Eve could read. Besides, fire wasn't even invented back then.) Today we know the

nutritional value of apples, despite Adam's unfortunate experience with the "forbidden fruit," but that's where it all started.

According to these recent studies, we are a fat nation, and this is dangerous. One in three adults in the United States is overweight and many to the point they are considered obese. So, armed with facts from studies like this, we need to do something before our wonderful planet disappears one bite at a time.

Nutritionists have studied the foods we eat and the effects those foods have on the human body. They can tell you what to eat and what to avoid. They have also done exhaustive studies on how our bodies process food and which food groups are managed more efficiently. This is something to think about since most of us eat a ton (literally) of food each year. By the time you reach your fiftieth birthday, chances are you have already consumed 100,000 pounds of food (the equivalent of two and a half tractor trailer carloads). If your weight averages 175 pounds, you have eaten approximately 571 times your body weight!



### So, what is the right food?

Since everyone is different physically, that question is difficult to answer in general terms, so I will make some recommendations based on specific areas.



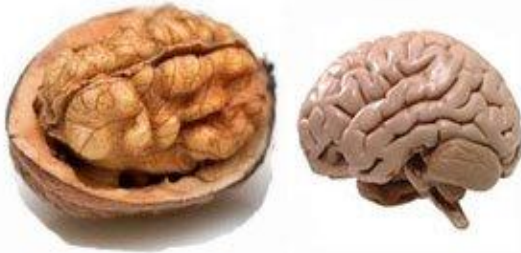
As you age, your body changes. Among those transformations are gradual losses in certain senses that are no longer as perceptive as they once were. Have you ever been in a room with someone who insists on raising the volume on the television to the point where windows rattle and glasses seem to move by themselves on their coasters? If you know someone with this problem, you should recommend a diet rich in mushrooms. The similarity to the human ear is unmistakable.

Mother Nature has a way of showing rather than telling. She doesn't broadcast her remedies over the Internet or via television commercials. She gives us subtle but visual hints, and those hints are all around us. All we have to do is look. When it comes to our eyes (another of our five senses that are subject to deterioration with age), there are carrots. "Eat your carrots, they are good for your eyes" is something we've all heard since we were children, but again, there is a basis for this statement. The illustration below shows why carrots are my choice of foods if you want to improve your vision.



The visual relationship between the sliced carrot on the left and the human eye to the right is also unmistakable. By now, you should be seeing and recognizing these patterns for what they are . . . natural remedies so you can avoid bumping into things in the middle of the night and running over pedestrians while driving.

I'm sure you've heard that fish is "brain food." My grandmother used to say that all the time. While there is no research to support this claim, its origin undoubtedly comes from the fact that fish spend much of their lives swimming in "schools." But if you were to ask me, the



real brain food should be walnuts. The picture to the left clearly shows the connection. Not only are walnuts shaped like the human skull (with a hard exterior protecting its inner contents), once opened, the likeness becomes even more remarkable. That picture is worth a thousand words.

Now I can take these suggestions a step further. There are definitely foods you should NOT eat in certain situations. Everyone knows about eating onions or garlic before a date. Beans and broccoli give you gas, and that slow process can have undesirable results in most social circles. Those choices are obvious, but my purpose here is to educate you further in those "gray" areas few people recognize and understand.

If you have a meeting scheduled with your boss to discuss your annual review and you believe you are due a raise, you should not eat "chicken." Likewise, if you are tired of looking in a mirror and seeing that ninety-seven pound weakling looking back, I'd suggest you find a restaurant that serves "mussels." I'm sure you've often wondered if that person who is constantly "bugging" you throughout the day accidentally swallowed an insect that morning. That would make sense by this set of standards.

Hopefully, I've given you a new sense of awareness in the area of healthy eating and common sense nutrition. The answers aren't always obvious. You will need to make some specific inquiries to uncover your personal solution. Certain foods contain more nutritional value than others, while others simply taste good. Satisfying hunger is one of the strongest instincts in human beings, and as humans, we will go to extraordinary lengths to placate that need.

Somewhere out there is a food that needs to be part of you. Your job is to find it! Remember, you still have a way to go to get to that ton of food you will eventually eat this year!

