What the New Food Pyramid Really Means for How You Eat Transcript

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Intro and podcast welcome

Frozen farmed fish is probably still healthier than the cheez-its you're eating instead, or the Taco Bell. What do you think? It depends. Maybe I'll suggest some canned sardines.

I prefer that. It has less heavy metals. Oh, I saw something new with canned sardines that I really love. You can now get sardines in olive oil. I remember growing up, I loved sardines, but you could only get them in oil or water and it was always in olive oil.

I think they're so underestimated. They're absolutely delicious. Now it's olive oil. Super delicious. High in omega-3s. It's so common in the Mediterranean diet.

Easy to travel with. Your health is shaped by more than symptoms. Through real stories and expert insights, we explore how your genetics, environment, and daily choices affect your wellbeing.

We uncover root causes and share practical tools to help you find the healing you need. Welcome to the Forum Health Integrative Medicine Podcast. Welcome back to the Forum Health Integrative Medicine podcast and part two of our conversation on the updated food pyramid.

I'm your coach and host, Amanda Grabo, and joining me again today are Dr. Andrew Peterson, family physician, functional medicine provider, and chief of staff at Forum Health.

and Renata, Integrative Nutrition Health Coach and Nationally Board Certified Health Coach here at Forum Health. Part one, we talked about why the original food pyramid existed, where it went wrong, and why new guidelines are such a big shift toward real whole foods.

Why the new food pyramid matters

Now in part two, we're getting practical because when people see this new pyramid, the big question becomes, what does this actually mean for how I eat?

Let's jump back in. I totally agree. I think there's a few things that it doesn't scare me, but I think this is the power of coaches. This is the power of functional integrative medicine.

When I look at that and I actually started, I was listening to some podcasts and talking to some people about this. It could cause confusion of, should I be keto now or should I go paleo or it, it, it looks very low carb and carbs are so important.

complex cards, sweet potatoes. Well, go back to the visual. I don't think it does look as low-carb as you're saying because vegetables and fruits are at the top of this.

Very true. Those are all carbohydrates, right? I think what it's saying is we need to be omnivores. I did read through the entire guidelines and I noticed that the actual suggestion for surveys of fruits and vegetables are actually lower than they used to be.

The old pyramid was actually higher, fruits and vegetables. Well, that's only because you can only eat so much food. And if we're going to increase our amount of protein, you have to give it up somewhere.

I think you made a great point. Dr. Peterson, you know why? Because I was actually listening to Michael Pollan talking about it on his social media. He says like, the main thing that bothers me about this pyramid is that people are going to think about if we're going to eat more protein, And if we're going to eat more meat, that means we're

going to have to eat the last things.

And then we're probably going to be eating less fruits and vegetables. And that concerns him. So I thought it was an interesting point. I think it's a fair concern.

I know when I eat, when I eat with my kids at home at dinnertime, as long as they finish their meat and their vegetables, I don't care if they finish their potatoes, right?

So I agree that if I start every day with a protein shake and I have no plants along with that, that's maybe a bit more of a problem than if I said I'm going to have some yogurt with some fruit in it with respect to the micronutrients, the phytonutrients, the vitamins.

I'm not getting a lot of vitamins from a protein shake necessarily if it's just a whey protein. But you've got more B vitamins in beef than you do in raspberries.

We need that fiber, right? So many people.

Protein, plants, and food quality

Absolutely, we need the fiber. Fiber. I think we've been sacrificing and look at how many people. So here's the other thing about protein. When you're in your seventh decade, when you turn 60 and you're going between 60 and 70, in my opinion, your biggest health risk at this point is that you're going to become frail and you're gonna fall and break a hip or you're gonna become weak and invalid, right?

What's the problem? Well, we haven't been eating enough protein. You can't maintain muscle mass. Now, I don't care how regular you are. You can poop twice a day, good for you.

But if you have low muscle mass, you're gonna wish you you didn't eat so much fiber and you ate a lot more protein. By far the healthiest people I know are focusing on protein first, fat second, and then plants third.

And when I say plants, you know, vegetables and fruits, and it is interesting the controversy between vegetables and fruits. There are those that would say, and they're not wrong, that there are a number of toxins in plants because plants don't want us to eat them.

So then you just have to say, look at oxalates. If you eat a lot of spinach, you're full of oxalates and those are pro-inflammatory. So I don't think we can say plants are universally good for us.

What we should say is that we need a certain amount of fiber to feed the bacteria that's in our gut. And perhaps arugula is actually more healthy than spinach.

And spinach got such a good branding prop from Popeye the sailor man back in the day that we still look at it as the best green leafy thing we could eat, but it's probably not as good as we think with all the oxalates it has.

I think, too, people have to explore and get intuitive with their food and their bodies. When I was coaching more, I would have people eat food, healthy food.

And did this resonate with my body? Some people have lower tolerances to some vegetables, some meat, some this, some that. And I still think that phytonutrients, vegetables, fiber, that's all very important components that have to be in the diet.

But I might get more bloated, which I do. with spinach than I do with arugula. But my husband can eat spinach all day, all day long and have no, you know, no symptoms.

So I also think like doing, knowing your body, being intuitive with it, when you're eating healthy foods too, you still have to tune in and say, is this healthy for me?

Cause there's a, such a personal component to that also. And diversify. I think the diversity here is key. I mean, I see a lot of patients like kind of fall into a breath of eating the same things week after week, over and over.

It's very limited. repertoire of different fruits and vegetables that they might eat. And I always tell people, when's the last time you try a new fruit or a new vegetable?

Let's try to experiment with that. Because also, like Dr. Prince said, if you keep eating the same thing over and over again, it creates food allergies.

It could create food reactions. Your body could say, no, enough of this. So you've had enough of that specific phytonutrient, and your body's not accepting that anymore.

It's also going to affect your microbiome over time because if you only eat the same certain foods, the microbes that like that particular food are going to thrive and the microbes that would like you to eat something else, they don't have anything to eat, right?

Back in the day, we used to eat based on what they just grew, right? Seasonal. Yeah, you're eating apples in the fall. citrus if you could get it in the winter.

You're eating, you know, your leafy greens in the spring. You're eating your squashes in the fall, right? And it was truly appropriate for what the ground produced right then.

And so you had to eat variety because you couldn't go to the grocery store and find a pomegranate unless you lived in Spain. Convenience is what killed seasonal eating, because now you can get the same thing every time you go to the grocery store, and you're not forced to do seasonal or varietal eating, because everything's pillable.

Yeah, well, it was also the advent of interstate highways and gasoline-powered engines, right? Every head of lettuce sold in America is either from Yuma, Arizona, or the Central Valley of California.

Nobody's growing lettuce locally and eating it, not at a price point that you're going to find at Costco or Sam's Club. Sam's Club isn't sourcing local produce, they're sourcing produce from Yuma.

I would argue that that's made our plants less healthy than they've ever been. because they're growing this same patch of dirt season after season after season you're getting cabbage or lettuce or green peppers or whatever it is from the same patch of dirt for the past four years.

And getting food from all over the world too like does this whole thing about you can we shouldn't necessarily be eating tropical fruit in the middle of the winter you know like it doesn't make sense.

Or tilapia from China right like We should probably be eating the things closest to us because they are the freshest. That actually harkens back to the very beginning of this science is things break down.

There's more nutritional value in the fish you're eating if you pulled it out of the ocean today than if you put it in the freezer and ate it in a month.

There just is. I tell my patients with respect to breads, I'm like, look, if you want to eat bread, Buy yourself a wheat grinder and a bread maker and some organic wheat.

And it has to be organic because you don't want it sprayed with Roundup ahead of time. And you just take the wheat, dump it in the wheat grinder. Take it from the wheat grinder, put it in the bread maker.

When the bread comes out, it's good for you. Why? Well, because wheat germ goes bad in 48 hours and the wheat germ is where all the micronutrients are found in wheat.

Well, if you grind the wheat and then you package it and I buy it on the shelf pre-ground, what's the likelihood you

ground it within 48 hours of when I'm eating it?

There's no more micronutrient value in my wheat. So the only way you can get that is to grind it yourself. I'm a sourdough girl and sourdough has- You're grinding your own wheat?

No. Start doing it. It's so easy.

Choosing better meats and seafood

But three ingredients, it blows my mind when you can look at the back of something and see a list of 10 to 15 ingredients when in all reality, it is a three ingredient food.

It's water, salt, and the flour. Right. So if you grind your own wheat, wheat has three big parts to it. It has the germ and the endosperm and the bran.

That's where the fiber is, is the bran. That endosperm is the white part that gets us the carbohydrates. But that germ is where all of the, that's where the fat is.

You talked me into it. I'll start grinding my own wheat. It's not hard. It's not hard at all. It's electric. You just plug it in and turn it on. It's easier than your microwave.

We can always improve on something. It's one step at a time. Dr. Peterson, you're meeting me where I'm at. I'm already making it. One more step. I've been doing it for a year and a half.

I can add in the grinding now. That's the beauty of it. One thing at a time. I will say about the new food pyramid too, is that as a coach and somebody who has patient interactions on helping them with lifestyle adjustments, some of the things that I saw that I think need to be talked about for people is now that we have the fruits and vegetables and the meats higher up on this list of priority, right?

The food pyramid didn't ban foods. It re-ranked our priorities. And I think quality is one of the biggest topics we should be having a discussion about because what your food eats, what your plants grow in, you intake and you ingest.

It gets me to resources like the Clean 15 and the Dirty Dozen. We should be prioritizing the right organic fruits and vegetables if we have the capacity to plant.

To your point, Dr. Peterson, I've done some research on the past. The fruit and the vegetables that we have today do not have the same phytonutrient and nutrition profile than they did 5 and 10 years ago.

The soil will taste the same. They don't taste the same. The soil that they've been grown in, a lot of that does not get replanted with nutrients. So we have less nutrients available in the fruits and veggies that we're eating.

I think supplementation is so important to bridge that gap that we're missing from our nutrition. So I think, again, fruits and vegetables. Go check out the Clean 15 and the Dirty Dozen.

The Clean 15 will tell you what you can prioritize that's non-organic, but make sure you're also washing your fruits and vegetables before you eat them.

The Dirty Dozen is going to tell you what fruits and vegetables you need to prioritize that are the most pesticides, herbicides, and- So you might not remember all 12, but Rattle Off, the ones you can remember.

For the Clean, for the Dirty Dozen. The Dirty Dozen, well, there was some changes in 2025, but Dirty Dozen. Well, maybe there's more than 12 now, but strawberries are on the list.

Uh, yes. So Dirty Dozen, spinach, strawberries, kale, grapes, peaches, nectarines. Oh, this was a new one for

2025 that I was super surprised about. Potatoes.

Oh, wow. potatoes were new in 2025, blackberries, apples, those are the ones that you want to prioritize as getting organic. And it actually came prepared today, a little bit more prepared.

Amanda, should we mention to our listeners, if they're not familiar with the clean 15 and the dirty dozen list, where they can get it? Yeah. Do you want to take that?

Yeah, sure. It's an environmental working group. It's an NGO that puts a lot of time and money into researching. where can we, so that makes my specific 30 dozen, clean 15. The 30 dozen, it's the fruits and vegetables issue.

I mostly prefer buying organic, because they contain a lot of pesticides. And the clean 15, fruits and vegetables are not organic, but they don't contain a lot of pesticides, so you can go for that.

And so we try to meet patients where they're at, and sometimes if they don't find enough organic fruits and vegetables where they live, or if they don't have access to it, If it's too expensive, a clean 15 could be a great resource as well as buying seasonally because a lot of times things are in season and locally they might be for special fruits when it comes to fruits and vegetables, they might be cheaper.

So it's something to look out for. And so fruits and vegetables are one, but let's talk about what you should be looking for in your meats. I think one, meat doesn't just mean red meat.

You should be prioritizing seafood as well. So what should people be looking for when prioritizing and buying seafood? Wild caught. Absolutely. Yeah. Stay away from farm raised.

fish because it contains fat corn and soy and GMO crops, as well as they have to get a lot of antibiotics to survive in the environment where they're raised.

So it's not necessarily a health food. Raynana, what do you think about this? Because we should buy wild-caught. But when I, I've had patients come to me and say, well, I don't eat fish because we can only get frozen fish.

And, you know, it's not, it's not fresh. And I'm like, well, frozen farmed fish is probably still healthier than the cheese that you're eating instead or the Taco Bell.

What do you think? It depends. Maybe I'll suggest some canned sardines. I prefer that. It has less heavy metals. Oh, I saw something new with canned sardines that I really love.

You can now get sardines in olive oil. I remember growing up, I loved sardines, but you could only get them in oil or water. I think they're so underestimated.

They're absolutely delicious. Now it's olive oil. Super delicious. High in omega-3s. It's so common in the Mediterranean diet. Easy to travel with. Yeah, easy to travel with.

Exactly. I think it's a great snack. I'm traveling right now in North Carolina, and I'm not gonna lie that I have sardines with me. That's awesome. Love sardines, yeah.

And then because they're smaller on the food chain, you know, they contain much less heavy metals than big fish. The bigger the fish, the more they eat.

Since fish are eating bigger things, they're eating things that have more heavy metals in them. So larger fish typically have higher amounts of heavy metals.

What I understand that actually has to do with where they swim in the ocean. The lower they are in the ocean, the more they're going to be consuming heavy metals off the bottom of the ocean.

Those small medium-sized fish like herring and sardines are a middle of the ocean fish. They're not swimming down at the deepest parts of the ocean. And then your fish that are shallow water fish like trout, they're not going to have as much of the good fatty acids.

The omega-3 balance in trout is not as impressive as the omega-3 balance. in sardines. At Forum Health, we uncover the why behind your symptoms. With advanced lab testing, hormone optimization, and cutting-edge therapies, we help you heal and perform your best.

Food preparation, digestion, and alcohol guidance

And now, through shopforumhealth.com, you can access physician-grade supplements trusted by our providers, supporting everything from adrenal health to focus and longevity.

Learn more at forumhealth.com and explore supplements at shopforumhealth.com. So from what I understand, it's where they're swimming and therefore what they're eating because of the both water temperature and what's available there.

Interesting. And I think it was a great question because this distinction, I mean, it goes for this line of thinking. It's how I try to teach and educate patients on.

Let's try the best choices available and the best things we can find within that category, right? Where that's a, think about beef and think, oh, let's go try to try to find like a grass-fed beef, organic, pasture-raised, whatever it is that you can find.

And sometimes even talking to your local farmers, because many times the certifications that can be quite expensive and a specific farm might not have a certification, but if the way they raise their animals are humane and healthier, that could be a good option as well.

I think that's a great option and one people don't appreciate enough is most places have a butcher. And you can go into the butcher, meet your butcher and say, Hey, what's a good cut of meat?

Where do you source it from? Can I want something that's super healthy, like grass fed? Who's your, and that, cause they're buying these, these steers from all over.

They know they're, they're suppliers. And I think that's how Europe lives. Europe doesn't buy their beef at Costco. So when you're looking at beef red meat, you're looking at grass fed versus grain fed.

And you want to prioritize grass fed, going local, knowing your butcher, knowing the local farmers, going in with your neighbor for like a cow or something like that.

That's a great way to get quality, affordable meat. red meat specifically. Grass-fed means that they eat grass their entire life. So they get less significant marbling.

They look a little bit different. Where grain is grain-fed, they're finished on grains. They're grown with… Yeah, they usually eat grains for the last two to four months of their lives.

And so they put on more fat. So it tastes better because it's got more fat. I would say, and this will be heresy even amongst the health people, that the most important part of that is, is the grain organic?

And most almost never is the grain organic at a feedlot. But I have a friend of mine who's a rancher, I live in Springville, Utah, and he finishes his beef on organic corn.

Well, it tastes a whole lot better and it's organic. And so it is a higher fat content. I've argued for a long time that fat is not the problem. I've struggled my whole life to get my weight above 175. The only way that I keep it above 175 is eating lots of protein, but the fat is not making me fat.

I can promise you that. So that's one of the things if you shop local, you can say, hey, what are you finishing your beef on? We should not get people to just think about any terms of protein, to just prioritize animal protein.

Yeah, absolutely. I think it's extremely important to think about, I mean, most people underestimate, you know, like there was campaigns in the past that were like, oh, like Meat Free Mondays.

I forgot how exactly it was called. I mean, I thought it was supposed to be like the veganism bringing all that. I'm not saying everybody should go vegan or keto or anything.

I'm not promoting any type of vegetarian diet, but I'm just thinking that not because it's good or bad, it's just I think it should be individually. Each case should be, each person should have their own, make their own choices based, you know, with their providers and what their state of their health and everything.

But we do know that plant-based could be extremely interesting in terms of fiber, like beans and lentils, and think about chickpeas and legumes. And I thought it was interesting that they mentioned, like, they kind of highlighted soy in the New Food Pyramid as it got in the guidelines.

I thought it was kind of interesting, maybe kind of ties up with the prior point that Dr. Pearson was making on what's available and what should be. in terms of the food chain and food supply.

I think most people think, okay, let's focus on protein. And sometimes they have trouble eating that much meat or animal protein. Some patients have trouble with that and they say, okay, let's supplement.

The next thing they might go to is for a protein powder, which it could be fine. It could have its place. But what about the plant proteins? And what about the protein that is in a little bit on the nuts and seeds and the other things?

And those have to have healthy fats in them too. Yeah. So I think it's quite important. And a lot of people don't use that enough. I always say when people are trying to meet protein goals, I say, can we try to add on with some nuts and seeds?

And when I talk about seeds, I mean, not yet. They get you your fats, they get you your proteins, they get you fiber, and they get you carbs. They're very complete.

Exactly. They're not as high in the protein. It's going to be harder to hit a protein goal if it's just that, but it certainly adds that diversity, which having vegetables and protein at the base clinically helps us with our gut health, with our hormone balance, with reducing inflammation and all that stuff.

So yeah, I love the complete balance that those bring to the people. Bringing diversity and also like flavor and crunch and like you know texture into the diet and making the place look beautiful and add on a couple things right?

I always have a little salad bar with like different things in the oven with some seasoning and I have like a little crunchy snack or I top it on my salads Go and roast some chickpeas.

And try different ones too, right? I mean, a lot of people talk about specific, oh, let's choose seeds kind of in fashion, like, you know, chia pudding.

That's very fashionable. It's trending right now. But what about, do we do flax seeds? Do we do sunflower seeds? Do we do pumpkin seeds? Hemp seeds? What about trying different ones every week or rotate them, right?

And it can get overwhelming for people, like just listening, like, oh my gosh, I've never thought about all of those things. There's so much, that's the power of having a coach and meeting people where they're at is that we're throwing out a lot of different food.

We're throwing out a lot of different things to look at for how do you buy your meat? How do you buy your fish? How do you buy your eggs? Eggs is another one, right?

I think that all of these resources are available. All this information is out there, but I think the power of having a human to understand where you are today and where you want to be tomorrow and having somebody hold you accountable for those small steps to change is really, really important.

Cause I think this can be a big, this is going to be a big change for a lot of people. One of the things that I think is worth addressing here because depending on the education of our listeners, they may hear that and they may become concerned.

Legumes contain significantly higher concentration of lectins than most other foods, and that scares a lot of people. and they treat it as though it's black and white like it's poison.

Well, technically it's a poison the plant's making so we don't eat it, but it turns out it's not actually that hard to mitigate. You just need to soak your beans or your nuts, right?

And so there are people that cannot tolerate the lectins and they do poorly and that's a fair, that's true. Well, there are also people that can't eat red meat.

They can't tolerate that. That's also true, right? And so there's these camps and like you have to join a team. I'm on the carnivore team or I'm on the plant team or I'm on the low fat team.

Let's stop being on these teams and realize that we can all be on the eat healthy food team. But the food that I might order and eat is different than what my wife might order and eat because I feel just fine with some lectins.

And I think foods like hummus are a great way for me to get some fats and some protein and some fiber all at once. And it tastes good and it's interesting, all of that.

And yet I might say that to a friend of mine or a nephew and they're like, oh, you're eating lectins, you're going to die. Soak your beans, right? If they were really that dangerous, we'd be dead now, right?

Like that's one of the three staples of all of South America. And food preparation, yeah, I grew up on rice and beans. I grew up in Brazil, so I grew up on rice and beans.

Here I am. But what I'm saying is the food preparation, I think it's a very important topic because a lot of people would think like, even let's talk about, for example, olive oil.

Olive oil can be great, but then again, the quality of the olive oil matters. How long has it been pressed? Is it cold pressed? Is it one single source?

Where does it come from? And there's a lot of different questions about it. But most of all, if you cook with olive oil, if you overheat it over 400 degrees, that will basically change the structure of the fat.

Yeah, you're now eating varnish. You're eating paint. At that point, you're eating varnish, which you use to make your furniture look shiny. So to understand how do you cook, what the cooking methods are appropriate for the type of food that you're going to be doing, what type of fats go better with that food, it might be better for you to cook with olive oil or better to cook with butter or coconut oil.

Coconut oil has a super high smoking point, so it could be interesting to cook something olive oil, just with olive oil at the end. Cook with coconut oil, for example, and add olive oil at the end of the cooking.

That'll be more appropriate, right? and knowing those things, and also how to prepare the beans. I mean, for example, Italians, they make tomato sauce.

They remove the seeds of the tomato. They peel it and remove the seeds. And they always cook it. They don't usually eat raw tomatoes so much, except for in the summer.

I mean, all those things, the cultural importance of how the foods are prepared, I think there's so much information there on how those things have been done through generations, and there's so much technology in how to absorb and digest foods better.

I will say this too, the hard part about everything we just talked about is that people then give up because they're like, wait a minute, I have to actually cook my food?

That's too hard, right? And so we do want to meet you where you are. And if all of this is too confusing, then go back to saying, eat whole foods. single ingredient foods, you're going to be okay.

And if you eat some seeds that have lectins, or you eat some beef that has, you know, that was corn fed and it's got more fat, you're still going to be better off doing that than eating Captain Crunch and Cheez-Its.

So don't revert to processed foods simply because this is complicated. Just go to the grocery store and say, hey, this looks like it came straight from the farmer in this form.

I think I'm going to eat it. Heat it up. add some butter so it tastes good, put some salt on it, you'll be fine no matter what it was. It could be broccoli, it could be a potato, it could be eggplant, right?

Eggplants in the 15 that are good for you and broccoli is in the dirty dozen, right? I think as valuable as that information is, if it's overwhelming, just go to Whole Foods.

Keep it simple, right? Keep it simple. You'll be better than what we're doing now. So don't let us confuse you with too much data. I want to talk about these alcohol guidelines, Amanda.

Okay. I think this is a big deal. And there's been pushback because the government is no longer putting a cap. And so there's this idea that, oh, that means people can have as much as they want.

I can't think of anything sillier.

Hydration, movement, and protein targets

They said less is better. Well, how much should you have today? Well, if tomorrow you have less, that will be less. So I started doing some deep dives into how the food pyramid, like, why does this change?

Who changes it? How does it change? And why didn't it change faster? And so I started asking questions on on this. So there's this scientific advisory committee who goes through all this research and presents their findings to the dietary guidelines advisory committee, who then decides on what the final policies are.

So what the scientific advisory presented to the dietary guidelines advisory committee was that there is no appropriate amount of alcohol consumption.

Zero alcohol consumption was actually what was recommended to the dietary advisory committee. They took that and they're looking at what works at population scale.

Is it politically feasible? Is it going to destabilize a food system and things like that? So instead of saying zero, they said less is better. So they took that- That's exactly the point I'm trying to make by less.

How much did I have today? Well, tomorrow I'll have less and tomorrow I'll have less, tomorrow I'll have less. Eventually you'll be at zero. And so people that say, well, now there's no limit.

So any amount is good. I think you could turn that argument on its head and say, well, before you were told you

could have one to two drinks depending on your gender.

So make sure you get your two a day just because it's recommended. That's equally absurd. We know alcohol is a sugar. It's a processed sugar. It's not appearing in nature.

It's happening because some, you know, microbe ate the carbohydrate and turned it into a simpler carbohydrate. That's what alcohol is. So no matter what it does to your in driving or how fun you are at a party, it's a sugar, which means it causes inflammation.

So of course, no amount should be recommended, just like no amount of white sugar should be recommended. It doesn't mean you can't have any. It just means when you do know that it's.

not helpful to you, right? And that's okay. But I think the people that are pushing against it and saying, but now people might drink more. I think they're just uncomfortable with knowing, having to confront the reality that it's not good for you.

It turns out it's just not good for you. If you want to get all the benefits from alcohol that people like to put in research, eat grapes. That's why it's good.

If there is a beneficial part of this, it's because of the thing it came from. Right. And I think that's important. I think it's important for us to admit the truth, which is we shouldn't eat sugar, but it tastes good.

So we're gonna, and we shouldn't drink alcohol, but it's fun. So we might. That's accurate. Yes. It's the first time we've had truth in advertising, right?

Less is better. It's that simple. And I think people that are like, yeah, but now people might drink more. Well, those people were hard to help anyway.

Yes. Science does say zero. What's feasible is less. And if you can do zero, great. And the other thing is like on the day, if it's New Year's Eve and you have four drinks, it's not like, oh, I broke the guidelines.

No, tomorrow you'll have less. You have three. Okay, so we have gone over the old pyramid, the new pyramid. We've talked about the quality and resources like the Clean 15, the Dirty Dozen, different qualities of meat.

I think preparation is another big topic that we hit on. And so we know that quality matters. We know that the way that we process our food matters. And this is all very clinically relevant for us.

The quality matters because that's gonna have a clinical impact on our patient's health. If we're eating highly A, processed foods, affects our health, but if we're eating meats that were pumped full of antibiotics, what you eat is going into you.

You're going to get more of that. If you're eating heavily pesticide and herbicide laid in vegetables and fruit, that's going to have an impact. So quality does matter.

The way you process and cook your food matters. Because as we get into a heavier vegetable meat-based diet, those things are going to have to come to the forefront, and those are going to be conversations that we're going to be having with our patients, certainly, and what people should be looking into.

The other clear shifts were the alcohol was softened. I don't know if it did us any favors going from one to two drinks to drink less. I don't know if that's going to help us much.

I don't know if it does any if it helps us, but it's truth in advertising. It's saying less is better. Which I think is important because if you walked around thinking I can have one drink a day and it's fine, it's because you were being deceived.

Now you know that when you drink alcohol, it's like eating sugar and that's not good for you. But you know, it's okay to sometimes do things that like, it turns out running a marathon is not good for you either.

But you can do it once in a while. It's, I suppose, exciting to do, right? There are a lot of things we do that aren't necessarily that good for us. As long as we're not doing it every day, you know, life is about moderation.

Yep. Other things that changed too was hydration is explicitly called out. Now in the guidelines too, and I really like that because I do think that we are chronically dehydrated these days.

And so I love that they called out hydration as well in the new guidelines. Was there anything else that stood out to you guys or is there any? There's one other thing that stood out and I think it bears some qualifications and that's they actually gave specific guidance on protein.

Final takeaways and closing remarks

They said 1.2 to 1.6 grams of protein per kilogram. Yeah. And I think that's really important and some people will push back against it, but it's important because we eat less and less protein the older we get because it's harder and harder to digest.

And then we become weaker and weaker. We've become frail and we end up in a nursing home. Right? Nobody really wants to live in a nursing home, right?

We want to be going on hikes and playing pickleball and taking the grandkids to, you know, football camp or something. We want to be active, but we can't if we don't have muscle.

So you have to eat sufficient protein. I think that's fantastic. What it doesn't do and nor what I expect it to do is help us understand how can we digest that protein.

And this is for me, this is my final message on the food pyramid. As you age, you're going to digest things less well. And the number of people that are on a proton pump inhibitor or an antacid is ridiculous.

In order to digest your food, no matter where you got it, the quality of it, you have to have five things. You have to have teeth to chew, saliva, because it's a digestive enzyme, acid in your stomach, bile from your liver, and pancreatic enzymes.

And if you have those five things, you can turn the food into fuel. Food, it turns out, is not really fuel in its natural state, any more than if I dragged a tree into my house and told my wife it was firewood.

It's not firewood. I got to lop off all the branches, cut it into 14-inch lengths, split it, and let it season in the yard for two or three years. Now it's firewood.

Your food's the same way. You've got to be able to turn it from whatever it was, a fish, an eggplant, into the little tiny pieces your body needs. With respect to this protein advice, if you need to take a digestive enzyme, take a digestive enzyme, right?

If you need to take some betaine, take some betaine. Help your body digest the foods so that you can maintain your muscle mass, you can maintain your brain function, you can keep your heart pumping because you got all the right nutrients.

And so that's the only thing that I think is missing and I don't think they could put it in there anyway, but food's good for you when you can digest it.

So those are things, maybe that's another podcast, but we need to talk about how to actually digest the food. And that's where people are going to have problems.

They're going to eat a bunch of protein, then they're going to get gas, and they're going to say, this doesn't work. That's your solution. Take a digestive enzyme when you eat your protein.

It's my final word. Perfect. Renata, if you were to give our listeners one final takeaway, what would that be? I think this guidelines, one thing that I really like to see is like putting things in the context of lifestyle.

Like movement is the first time they actually mentioned movement and also the gut health and that we should be eating fermented foods because that also helps our digestion and feed the good microbiome.

I thought a few things were missing that weren't discussed, and I thought it could become a big question for people like, what about my coffee? Is it okay to keep on drinking my coffee?

And I think that's a whole topic for a whole podcast because it could be a big one, whether it's healthy or not in the context of the health. Yeah, so there's a few things I thought they were missing, but overall, I think it was a very positive, very positive message to eat real food.

That's what stuck with me the most. And yeah, I'm still, I'm still thinking, I'm still trying to figure out and analyze if I love it or not. But I think the best thing that I've seen is it's starting a conversation.

It's starting a conversation. I saw so much on social media on people doing their own take on the food pyramid. analyzing it, commenting. I think that's the first time I've ever heard of the food pyramid in social media presented in this way and being a hot topic.

So I think all this conversation is a puzzle. Let's keep on talking about it and let's seek help, right? Let's seek your support as coaches, your provider.

And how can we make this work for you in a way that makes sense? We don't expect you to be an expert. We don't expect you to change the way you're eating, but let's see if we can make better choices.

Slowly, gradually, sustainable choices. Absolutely. I totally agree. I think my final takeaway is that this was a great shift. You've got to analyze and where are you today?

And it's one step at a time. I think that this big shift can get really overwhelming really quickly if people are trying to do it on their own and take on a, I know I'm the type of person who has a I'm all in mentality and I try to do too much at once and then I don't want people or listeners trying to do too much and then giving up and going back to the old way of doing.

One step at a time. If you used to eat one serving of vegetables a day and you only got 20 grams of protein, how do you get to 30 grams of protein? How do you get to 40? It's one micro step at a time.

This should have evolved over time and we got one massive shift, but you don't have to. do a massive shift, you just have to take the first step. And I think we went through a lot of really great information today and a lot of really actionable items came out of our conversation.

Pick one. Don't pick all of them. Pick one and just start from there. Get good at one thing and then add on the next thing. Go back and listen to this and get your next pearl.

So I think that this could sound like a lot for people, but I guess my biggest takeaway is take one nugget and do that. and then take the next nugget and do that.

That's great advice. Absolutely amazing. The pyramid did not flip overnight. Our understanding of health evolved and you don't have to flip overnight like the pyramid.

So if you do want any help in personalizing and changing and lifestyle. We've got some fantastic health coaches here at Form Health that are happy to partner with you.

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If you found this episode of valuable, please make sure to like, comment and share. and stay tuned for another great episode next week. Thank you so much for joining me today, guys.

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