

# Food and Exercise: The Drugs of Choice

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It's often been said that variety is the spice of life. Interestingly, the average person only knows and uses about ten exercises in their workout program. Similarly, the average person only eats approximately 10-12 foods on a regular basis. When you consider that there are literally thousands of exercises and hundreds of food choices it's obvious that people are bored both at the gym and at their dinner table.

### Food: The First Drug of Choice

**Eating the same foods over and over is one of the most sure-fire methods to developing a food intolerance. Not to be confused with a food allergy, food intolerances are negative reactions to foods that produce symptoms such as nasal congestion, skin conditions, headaches, itchiness, lethargy and a variety of other maladies. These conditions are thought to be brought on by a 'leaky gut' which is characterized by the passing of undigested food particles through the gut wall and into the liver. When our liver becomes backed up from the many food additives, chemicals and pesticides so many of us consume, the undigested food particles end up making it to our general circulation which causes an immune response from our body. Over time, if we continue eating those foods our body considers harmful, the immune system continues mounting a stronger and stronger response, shown by the many symptoms described above.**

**One particularly successful method of reducing the chances of developing intolerances to certain foods is to eat foods on a rotating basis. It's generally accepted that food stays within your system for approximately 48-72 hours, with an average of 55 hours. Therefore, eating your food on a four-day rotation works well for many people and has eliminated many of the symptoms associated with food intolerance because they avoid exposing themselves to foods from the same families, or genus, minimizing the immune response. To make this way of eating work for you I recommend what I call a "training rotation plan", which is much easier than a true rotation diet that requires monitoring foods by families (taxonomic relationships). With a training rotation plan, you keep a notepad in your pocket and write down everything you eat and drink on a daily basis. At the end of the day you look at all the foods and don't allow yourself to eat those foods for another 72 hours. For example, if you ate eggs, chicken, cauliflower, mushrooms and drank orange juice on Monday, you would not eat any of these foods nor drink orange juice again until Friday.**

**Rotating your foods is not the only measure you must take to reduce your chances of developing a 'leaky gut' and the resulting food intolerances. Pharmaceutical medications (especially NSAIDs), alcohol and stress have all been shown to cause a 'leaky gut'. I recommend that in addition to rotating your foods, you should work with a natural medicine physician to avoid medications and alcohol as much as possible, and work to limit the amount of stress in your life; many of you will find the book Conversations With God by Neale Donald Walsch helpful in understanding and managing the stresses of life!**

### Exercise: The Second Drug of Choice

**Unfortunately many people are stuck doing the same exercise routine day in and day out, and are likely causing damage to their musculoskeletal system by repetitively performing the same movements with little or no variety. Some people find it stressful trying to develop a new program while others simply don't know enough exercises. Exercise should not be a source of negative stress considering that it can improve sleep quality, metabolic rate, muscle tone, and one's overall sense of well-being.**

**Taking some of the stress out of exercise is easy when one considers that human movement can be broken down into seven basic movement patterns. I've identified these patterns as Primal**

**Pattern™ movements in my book Movement that matters because of the importance they likely played for survival purposes in developmental man. These patterns are: squatting, lunging, bending, pushing, pulling, twisting and gait (walking, jogging and sprinting). All of these movements can be performed while standing upright and using equipment such as Swiss Balls, medicine balls, cable machines, balance boards and free weights (dumbbells and barbells).**

**Using these patterns to create new and exciting exercise programs for you is quite simple. Select 3-4 patterns to perform during any given workout and perform 2-4 sets of each pattern. For example, you may choose to use the squatting, pushing, pulling and twisting patterns during a workout. You could start your workout with squats, then move to a standing cable push, followed by a cable row and finishing with woodchops, performing 2-4 sets of each exercise. Also, you could perform them in a circuit format by performing one set of each pattern in sequence followed by a rest period (resting long enough to regain good form on your next circuit). If selecting exercises is difficult for you, flipping through past issues of NZ Fitness should give you the exercise variety you need.**

### **Conclusion**

**Don't be one of the many that are stuck eating the same foods and using the same exercises over and over in the gym. By getting some variety in your foods and workouts you will not only abolish boredom and lethargy, you can reduce your risk of developing food intolerances and musculoskeletal imbalances. You'll find that not only does your body look and feel better, you'll have a renewed enjoyment at mealtime and look forward to going to the gym!**