

These are questions that Triangle Style Magazine sent over for Dr. Bartels to write an article about food facts vs. fiction.

Q.If you boil your vegetables do they lose all their nutrients?

A.The vitamin and mineral content of many vegetables is reduced when they are cooked excessively. In parts of the world (like the Triangle) where the vegetable and fruit supply is safe it is generally preferable not to overcook most fruits and vegetables. Additionally, some of the fiber in vegetables can break down and you can actually absorb more calories from vegetables that are boiled rather than eaten raw or lightly steamed.

Q. Are fresh fruits and vegetables more nutritious than frozen ones?

There can be some loss of B vitamin potency from freezing but generally there is not much difference.

Q. Is it true that drinking a moderate amount of any kind of alcohol every day is good for you?

There are studies in which people who drink a little bit actually live longer than people who do not drink. However, many people have various problems with alcohol and lots of people should not drink at all. This is an individual issue you should discuss with your doctor.

Q. Is it true that you should drink eight glasses of water a day?

This is basically true. Most people do not drink enough water.

Q. Is it better to eat six mini meals than three squares?

There is nothing magical about the standard daily three meal format. Some patients clearly do better with four, five, or even six smaller meals daily. Some men do well with one meal daily.

Q. Is eating after 8:00 p.m. a cause for gaining weight?

This is generally true. It is better to eat early in the day. Late night eating can contribute to weight gain for metabolic reasons. Also people tend to make poor food choices late at night as they become tired.

Q. Is it true that “an apple a day, keeps the doctor away?”

Apples are a wholesome food and go well with our maintenance diets. In general, the less processed a food is the better. Apples are a better choice than apple sauce, but apple sauce is a better choice than apple juice. However, the only thing that really keeps the doctor away is death.