



No blarney here!

Why a traditional St. Patrick's Day spread is one of the healthiest meals you can eat

St. Patrick's Day is one of the most globally celebrated national holidays. And it may surprise you to learn that it's also one of the healthiest.

It's a good night for the bars, of course. But aside from beer and whiskey, which have their own health benefits—as I often report—a traditional St. Paddy's Day meal contains virtually every nutrient you need to live a long and healthy life.

So let's take a closer look at how you can celebrate the Irish—and your health—this March 17.

Cabbage is at the head of the nutrition class

Cabbage is the centerpiece of traditional Irish meals, which is no surprise since it's been cultivated for thousands of years in Ireland.

Cabbage—together with other Brassica or cruciferous vegetables—originates from the wild mustard plant, which for hundreds of years farmers have bred into dozens of vegetable varieties. These include Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, and kale, which were all cultivated from various parts of the mustard plant including its leaves, florets, sprouts, stalks, or stems.

And even though cabbage looks similar to lettuce, it's far more nutritious.

As with most fruits and vegetables, the darker and more colorful the cabbage (due to plant pigments called

carotenoids), the more nutrients it has. For instance, while all types of cabbage contain at least half of your recommended daily allowance (RDA) for vitamin C, red cabbage has about one-third more C than green varieties.

In addition to its many health benefits, vitamin C helps your body absorb the iron found in plants like cabbage. This is critical because you should only get your iron from food sources, not supplements.

(Iron supplementation can actually help boost the amount of iron in your body to dangerous levels, increasing your risk of cancer, infections, heart disease, and chronic organ failure.)

Red and purple cabbage also contain a whopping 36 different kinds of anthocyanins, potent plant pigments containing powerful health benefits like protection against heart disease.

And all types of cabbage, like other cruciferous vegetables, have high levels of disease-fighting antioxidants, in addition to other essential nutrients for overall health, like: B vitamins, calcium, magnesium, potassium, and vitamin K (which is only found in a limited number of food sources).

One simple leafy vegetable's wide-reaching health benefits

Aside from its rich nutrient profile, cabbage also helps with a wide array of impressive health benefits.

If you're trying to lose weight,

cabbage is an ideal food. It's *very* low in calories (only 22 calories per cup).

It can also help with digestion, as it contains both soluble fibers (which are easily absorbed and help prevent diarrhea) and insoluble fibers (which help promote movement through the digestive tract to keep you regular).

Plus, the natural fiber and other constituents in cooked cabbage (especially sauerkraut and kimchi) are prebiotic, meaning they help feed the “good” probiotic bacteria in your gastrointestinal (GI) microbiome. And as I always say, a balanced microbiome is the foundation to good overall health.

Speaking of GI health, I recently reported on how the microbiome and immune system work together to keep chronic inflammation in check.

And cruciferous vegetables like cabbage contain constituents shown to reduce chronic inflammation. Researchers also report that eating cabbage lowers levels of pro-inflammatory blood biomarkers.

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Of course, we all know that inflammation is associated with almost every chronic disease, including heart disease, diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer's, and osteoarthritis.

Research also shows that cabbage helps lower blood pressure—a major risk factor for heart disease. That's because, as I mentioned earlier, cabbage is a good source of potassium, a key nutrient in balancing blood pressure levels.

Cooking (and going raw) with cabbage

Another benefit of this vegetable is that it's really easy to add to your diet. Raw cabbage can be eaten in salad or coleslaw (just be sure to skip the sugar).

You can add cooked cabbage to most stews. Plus, the leftover water you use to boil cabbage is high in nutrients, making it a good vegetable stock for soups.

One of my other favorite cooked cabbage dishes is stuffed cabbage. This mainstay of Italian and Eastern European cooking can be spiced up with hot peppers or paprika.

I also like to cut a cross-section of cabbage and sauté it as a “steak,” with olive oil or butter, garlic, onion, thyme, black pepper, and sea salt—all spices shown to produce serious health benefits. (To read more about the pros of using these spices, search my archives on www.DrMicozzi.com.)

For one of my most beloved family recipes, see page 3.

Corned beef—healthier than you might think

Now I'd like to talk about another deliciously nutritious St. Patrick's Day must-have: Corned beef.

Of course, corned beef and cabbage

has long been a traditional holiday staple. But it's really an Irish-American dish. In fact, you'd be hard pressed to find beef on the menu in Ireland, where the cows are mainly used for dairy.

Corned beef was most likely introduced to the American St. Patrick's day menu in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Irish immigrants lived side-by-side with Jewish immigrants in densely populated urban areas like New York.

And fortunately, this Irish-American dish is rich in vital nutrients.

First of all, beef is one of the best natural sources of protein. It's also a great source of the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, and E, along with vitamin B. And it's rich in healthy omega-3 fatty acids, which I'll talk more about in just a moment.

This meat is also loaded with magnesium, selenium, and calcium—which I always advise you get from food rather than supplements.

Grass-fed beef also contains conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which has been shown to help lower your risk of breast, prostate, colon, liver, and skin cancer.

What mainstream doctors won't tell you about meat

In a recent *Daily Dispatch* e-letter (“Avoiding red meat is sabotaging your health”), and again earlier this month, I reported on a huge analysis of 24 different studies on red meat. The researchers found that eating meat *does not* increase major risk factors for cardiovascular disease, including blood pressure and blood lipids.

In fact, the omega-3s and vitamin D you get from meat can *protect* you from cardiovascular disease—and virtually every other diet-related chronic disease, including Alzheimer's, cancer, and diabetes.

The salt in corned beef also gets a bad rap from people who really ought to know better. As I've said many times before, the government's ridiculously low guidelines for salt consumption are actually more dangerous than eating too much salt.

I wrote in the August 2017 issue of *Insiders' Cures* ("The Great Salt Scam finally makes the 'news'") about evidence showing that lack of salt can compromise kidney and thyroid function. It can also cause weight gain and insulin resistance—both of which can increase your risk of Type II diabetes. And low salt consumption may actually *cause* heart disease.

Meaning a nice serving of well-salted corned beef can actually protect your heart rather than harm it.

Keys for the healthiest, heartiest corned beef

Traditionally, corned beef is made from beef brisket and "corns" of rock salt that are brined in pickling juices, water, and lots of sugar. Of course, all but the sugar is good for you.

To recreate the corned beef sweetness in a healthier way, I like to make my own brine of celery juice, garlic, and apple cider. And make sure you use grass-fed, organic beef brisket, which contains more nutrients and isn't riddled with the antibiotics given to conventional cattle.

Making your own corned beef also means you won't have to buy the processed version, which can contain deadly nitrites. These chemicals are added to processed meats to keep them pink and supposedly "healthy" looking, and also to delay spoilage. But plenty of studies link nitrites to colon and stomach cancer, along with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Of course, mainstream medicine will tell you that even something like an

unprocessed corned beef brisket is dangerous for your health. But study after study shows they've been all wrong, all along.

As for other preparation methods, I also like to make a corned beef sauce from whole mustard seeds, chiles, paprika, and turmeric.

Of course, corned beef is great in Reuben sandwiches. But choose a whole-grain bread and swap out the unhealthy Thousand Island dressing for mustard and/or horseradish.

You can also make your leftover St. Paddy's Day corned beef into a hash. I like mine with plenty of onion and some red bell peppers, and unskinned russet potatoes. Pair your corned beef hash with a couple of free-range eggs for a delicious and ultra-healthy breakfast.

Hashing out the nutritional truth about potatoes

It's hard to imagine the traditional Irish diet without the potato, which the Spanish first brought to Europe from South America in the mid-1500s.

Families of Basque sailors began to cultivate potatoes in northern Spain, and the crops caught the eye of Sir Walter Raleigh. He brought potatoes to Cork, Ireland in the late 1500s. Potatoes became widespread in Europe during the late 1700s and early 1800s through the efforts of the French agronomist Antoine-Augustin Parmentier. In fact, "Parmentier" is listed in the Oxford English dictionary as "a dish made with or accompanied by potatoes."

By the mid-1600s, potatoes had become a staple in the Irish diet. That's why the potato famine of 1848, at the same time as political upheavals in Europe, led to devastating and long-lasting consequences.

Of course, potatoes are very popular in the American diet as well. But there's

Baked Corned Beef and Cabbage Hash

Great recipe for leftovers. Serves 8.

Ingredients:

- 1 wedge leftover cooked cabbage
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt (2 ¼ tsp if using fresh cabbage)
- ¼ tsp. black pepper (preferably freshly ground)
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion
- 8 oz. leftover corned beef
- 1 clove garlic
- ½ c. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 c. heavy cream
- 1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 lb. unskinned russet potatoes
- 6 oz. Gruyère cheese

Directions:

Heat oven to 375°F. If using fresh cabbage, bring a small pot of water to a boil. Add 2 tsp. salt and cook for 5 minutes; drain the squeeze out any extra moisture.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and ¼ tsp. each of salt and pepper. Cook covered, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 8 to 10 minutes.

Add the corned beef and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally for 4 minutes.

Remove from heat and fold in the cabbage and parsley.

Coat a deep 8x8 in. square baking dish with olive oil. In a bowl, whisk together the heavy cream and mustard.

Lay a third of the potatoes in the baking dish, slightly overlapping them. Top with a third of the corned beef and cabbage mixture (about 1 c.) and sprinkle with a third of the cheese (about 1/3 c.). Repeat once.

Top with a layer of potatoes and cabbage mix. Pour the cream mixture into the dish.

Cover the baking dish with foil, place on a rimmed baking sheet, and bake for 45 minutes.

Uncover, sprinkle in the remaining cheese, and bake until the potatoes are tender and the top is a golden brown, about 20 to 30 minutes more. Let cool for 10 minutes before serving.

a lot of confusion surrounding whether they benefit or harm your health.

The government can't even decide whether to consider potatoes a starch or a vegetable. They run around in circles with their recommendations. One day they're okay to eat—the next, they're not. Well, let me settle this once and for all...

Potatoes are indeed a starch, but they're far more nutritious than other starchy, high-carb foods.

One reason is because potatoes are also loaded with fiber, which helps regulate how fast starch enters your bloodstream. Spuds don't make your blood sugar "spike" like simple carbs such as white bread or sugary foods. Instead, they provide a slow, long-lasting source of energy long after you've eaten them.

This means that the high levels of fiber can actually help you manage blood sugar and lower your risk of diabetes. And, as with cabbage, the fiber in potatoes helps promote gastrointestinal

health and improve digestion, which in turn helps you better absorb all the nutrients from your potatoes.

Potatoes are also excellent sources of vitamin C. One potato contains 45 percent of the RDA for C—as much as an orange. And a potato has 10 percent of the RDA for vitamin B6.

In addition, potatoes are a good natural source of iron, and have more potassium than a banana. Plus, they're rich in antioxidants, which can lower your risk of chronic disease.

Potatoes come in various skin colors. As with cabbage, the darker the color, the more nutrients it contains. But regardless of the color, the key is to always eat potatoes with their skins on, because that's where you'll find most of the nutrients.

Since potatoes have more carbs than most vegetables, it's best to eat them in moderation. Fortunately, potatoes rank high on the satiety index (meaning you feel full and satisfied after eating them). And with


150 calories in a medium potato, you can't go wrong!

Potatoes present a variety of culinary possibilities

It's like Bubba Gump said with shrimp: You can eat potatoes scalloped or au gratin, in a soufflé, potage, or vichyssoise. You can eat them baked, boiled, mashed, or herb roasted. And you can eat them as hash browns, latkes, pierogis, or gnocchi.

Just don't eat them fried. Instead, try to combine them with other vegetables and herbs. Like baked potato skins with roasted broccoli, caramelized onions, scallions, and a dollop of full-fat sour cream.

And of course, you can add potatoes right into the pot, or as a side dish to classic corned beef and cabbage.

I can't think of another meal that's more nutritious than this traditional St. Patrick's Day spread. Especially when it's followed by a whiskey toast to another year of good health. Sláinte! 

Diffusing the hype on essential oils

How this "wellness trend" may be the answer to deadly antibiotic resistance

I often write about how simple solutions like eating right, washing your hands regularly, and using herbal remedies can boost your immune system and prevent infections and other diseases.

But there's another natural approach I don't discuss as much. I was reminded of this a few months ago when I read an article about the therapeutic value of essential oils, which are gaining some serious traction in the alternative health market.

If you've yet to use them, essential oils

capture the scent and flavor of an herb or other botanical (otherwise known as its "essence"). They're usually made by distilling the plant's leaves, stems, or flowers in water or steam.

Because of their attractive fragrances, essential oils are typically used in aromatherapy or during massages.

Studies show these fragrant oils can lower your stress levels, help with sleep, alleviate cold symptoms, and even reduce pain.

But that's not all. They also help prevent infections and disease.

Natural, sweet-smelling air purifiers

French physicians have a theory about building the body's reserves and defenses. This medical theory also emphasizes that an infection can't grow in an "inhospitable" host. And nothing makes a human host more inhospitable to germs than a healthy immune system.

But environmental factors can come into play—and sometimes, your immune system falls prey to them. Disease microbes are all around us,

just waiting to invade our bodies.

Like the flu viruses—for instance. These microbes are airborne—meaning you can get the flu simply by standing near someone who's contagious and breathing the same air.

So disinfecting the air you breathe can play an important part in preventing infections. And that's where essential oils come in.

In a 2016 *Daily Dispatch*, I described how releasing the smoke of certain herbs into the air effectively reduces airborne microbes ("Nature's controversial 'new' secret weapon in the war against superbugs").

Specifically, researchers found that smoke from burning wood and a mixture of medicinal herbs reduced bacteria counts in the air by 94 percent. Just one hour of this smoke purified the air for a full 24 hours, and many strains of bacteria were still gone, or present in only very small amounts up to 30 days later.

Many essential oils are naturally antibacterial, antimicrobial, and antifungal. So it makes sense that releasing them into the air through candles or diffusers can have an effect on the air quality around you.

Boost food safety with a different kind of cooking oil

Essential oils don't just purify the air, though. Just like spices, they can be used as tasty, natural preservatives for foods.

For example, adding a couple drops of oregano, thyme, rosemary, or citrus essential oil to raw meat can help prevent listeria and other foodborne diseases—and work as a natural burst of flavor in marinades.

You can also use these oils in salad dressings to protect yourself from *e. coli* which is prevalent in leafy greens these days. Simply juice one

lemon, combine it with a tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil, and add one or two drops of the herbal essential oil you think is tastiest.

Thirsty? For a flavorful and natural tonic, add a drop or two of an essential oil to tea, seltzer, or mineral water.

But whichever oil you choose, be sure not to overdo it, and always consult with a naturopathic doctor or aromatherapist first. Essential oils are highly concentrated—one drop is equivalent to about two tablespoons of fresh herbs.

Using essential oils safely

Of course, due to their potency, there are a few precautions you should take when using essential oils:

1) If you do choose to cook with essential oils, there is one very important point I want to stress: **Make sure the essential oils you want to cook with are listed as safe for human consumption on the bottle**.

Many essential oils are only meant to be used externally, and can be toxic if ingested. See the sidebar to the right for a run-down of which essential oils you can and cannot ingest.

2) **Do not drink the oils directly from the bottle.** They are therapeutic grade and very strong. Too much of certain oils can cause respiratory problems, nausea, GI issues, seizures, and even death. Like the old Brylcream hair ads used to say, "A little dab'll do ya!"

3) Make sure your specific oils are safe to use around pets, children, or pregnant women. This will oftentimes be present on the label, or you can ask a naturopath or aromatherapist.

4) Be sure you're using certain essential oils as intended. Some are only meant to be used either topically, inhaled, diffused, or ingested. Each method has its own precautions. Be

sure to carefully follow all labels and medical advice.¹

5) For topical essential oils, always perform a skin patch first. Apply a small amount to a clean, dry patch of skin on your forearm and wait 24 hours. If no burning or irritation occurs, you should be fine.¹

Your at-a-glance guide to essential oil safety

The Food and Drug Administration recognizes the following common essential oils as safe to ingest:

Almond	Anise
Basil	Cacao
Chamomile	Capsicum (chili peppers)
Cardamom	Carrot
Cinnamon	Clove*
Coriander	Cumin
Fennel	Ginger
Grapefruit	Guava
Lemon	Lime
Marjoram	Mustard
Nutmeg	Onion
Orange	Oregano
Rosemary	Saffron
Sage	Spearmint
Tangerine	Tarragon
Thyme	Vanilla

Generally, it's safe to consume any oils that are to be used as a flavoring agent or preservative.

But any essential oils that are used for their aroma should not be ingested. Particularly:²

Camphor	Cedar leaf
Cinnamon*	Eucalyptus
Juniper	Lavender
Lemongrass*	Nutmeg
Sage	Tea tree
Wintergreen	Wormwood

* Do not apply to skin.

6) Don't use topical essential oils before spending time in the sun. These can cause the skin to burn (which could result in even second- or third-degree burns).⁷

7) Keep essential oils away from your eyes or mucous membranes.

Choosing the best essential oils

You can find high-quality essential oil formulations at your local natural food store, along with natural aromatherapy candles and diffusers.

But unfortunately, there's no standard definition for the purity or therapeutic benefit of essential oils. So you may have to do a little sleuthing to find the most effective products.

Look for labels that list the Latin botanical name (to make sure you're not getting a generic "sandalwood" for instance), country of origin, and expiration date.

To help ensure purity, choose organic or wild-crafted oils, which usually don't contain pesticides. And check to see that the formula is 100 percent pure essential oil. Some manufacturers dilute pricey oils, like rose, with vegetable oils to create more volume.

Essential oils should also be sold in dark glass bottles. This helps prevent light from entering, which can cause

the oil to spoil. And be sure to avoid plastic containers, which can degrade and contaminate the oil.

Why even the toughest "superbugs" are no match for essential oils


All of this research shows that essential oils can be effective at fighting infections and disease in both humans and animals.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this story, essential oils have been shown to effectively prevent illness and infection. But what about the possibility that bacteria may become resistant to plant oils, as has happened with antibiotics?

My colleague Dr. C. Norman Shealy (whom I first met at a conference on faith healers in the Philippines in September 1976) has said that bacteria may become resistant to a single kind of chemical in plant oils.

But in my view, that's highly unlikely, because plants and their essential oils contain many different kinds of chemical compounds.

It's like the concept of synergy for herbal treatments, where multiple related compounds work together against the infection. Since no single compound is responsible for the effect, there can't be resistance to the overall treatment.

So the verdict is in—and this is one wellness trend that certainly lives up to the hype. I encourage you to consider adding essential oils to your natural medicine chest, your pantry, *and* the air throughout your home. 

From anxiety to toothaches—essential oils can soothe what ails you

Essential oils have a wide variety of uses. Aside from creating delicious aromas, flavors, or inducing relaxation, they can also be used to treat an array of medical issues.

Here are a list of some common ailments soothed by essential oils³:

Cedarwood and Sandalwood: Brain fog or trouble focusing

Clove: Toothaches

Eucalyptus: Nasal decongestant and disinfectant. (*Do not ingest, inhale vapors only.*)

Ginger: Pain relief, mental clarity

Lavender: Anxiety or insomnia. (*Do not ingest, inhale vapors only.*)

Lemon: Depression

Oregano: Immune system support

Peppermint: Digestive disorders

Rosemary: Stimulates circulation and blood flow (especially in people with Raynaud's syndrome)

Tea tree oil: Skin infections. (*Do not ingest, use topically only.*)

NEWS ALERT: Popular plant-based diets are not as healthy as they claim

What you should REALLY be eating for a stronger body and longer life

The nuttier (so to speak) elements of the natural products industry are breathless with excitement about what they call a new "megatrend of plant-based eating."

On the surface, they try to make a plant-based diet seem like a good thing. After all, I'm always telling you to eat more fruits and vegetables. But two alarming new reports show there's

a more sinister intention behind this popular plant-based eating concept.

Instead, this manufactured "megatrend" is a thinly disguised effort to promote unbalanced diets

and fake vegetarian “foods” that are unhealthy for both you, and the planet.

Read on and I'll tell you what you *really* need to know about this bogus new diet—and what you should be eating instead.

The dangers of promoting worldwide vegetarianism

The first report in favor of plant-based eating comes from DuPont Nutrition & Health.

DuPont surveyed 1,000 Americans and concluded that 52 percent are consuming more plant-based foods and beverages. And almost 60 percent hope their vegetarian diets become permanent.⁴

Meanwhile, a new report from a Stockholm-based nonprofit—unironically called EAT—calls for a “Great Food Transformation” by 2050 in order to improve the health of both people and the planet.⁵

This transformation is, not surprisingly, a plant-based diet.

The EAT report, which was done in conjunction with the medical journal *Lancet*, says people around the world should slash their meat consumption in half, eat fewer than four eggs a week, and consume one or NO servings of dairy a day.

This frighteningly unsafe eating plan is thankfully already getting backlash.

John Ioannidis, chairman of disease prevention at Stanford University, told the Associated Press that the report's recommendations don't actually reflect the current science about nutrition and health.⁶

But that doesn't mean that the pressure to go vegetarian or vegan will let up anytime soon—especially since there's money to be made in unhealthy, manufactured plant-based “foods” and beverages.

Vegetarian Frankenfoods

Some in the nutrition industry are salivating over this new plant-based diet. In fact, the hypesters at DuPont (whose slogan is ironically “better living through chemistry”) are deploying monthly updates about this trendy dietary preference. One of the latest updates highlights soy, naming it the number one “natural” food perceived by consumers.

However, most soy grown in the U.S. is genetically modified (GM)—far from what I'd call “natural.” Soy, specifically, and GM foods in general, cause a great deal of damage for both the humans who eat these foods and the soil in which it's grown. (More on that in just a moment.)

Other major types of recommended plant-based products include cereals, “energy” and “sports” bars, protein powders, meat substitutes, and dairy alternatives.

Sounds sort of healthy, maybe. But from all of the science I've seen (and I've seen *a lot*), these “foods” and beverages don't promote nutrition and health—for you or the environment.

Let's take a look at two of the top offenders.

1) Plant protein powders.

Consumers are reportedly rushing out to buy pea, hemp, and quinoa protein powders because they consider them to be healthier than animal proteins. But proteins from plants are typically “incomplete”—meaning they don't contain the full range of different amino acids needed to properly nourish the body.

As I often report, animal proteins are the best source of amino acids. And time and time again, the science shows that protein deficits in the diet usually occur because people don't eat enough full fat dairy, meat, and seafood.

And all of the plant protein in the

world can't fix this key aging-related nutritional challenge, according to the serious science.

2) Nut “milks.” Common dairy alternatives like soy and nut milks are thought by some people to be healthier for them and the planet.

Nuts, of course, are a great source of essential fatty acids and other nutrients. So while they're not necessarily better for you than dairy, they're still a healthy choice.

But they're a disaster for the environment. Almond milk in particular is making the California drought much worse. Research shows it takes 15 gallons of water to grow just *16 almonds*.⁷

Debunking more major vegetarian myths

People who are fans of vegetarian diets claim they give you more energy, improve digestion, and are effective in helping you eat “cleaner,” safer foods and beverages. This makes for some nice promotional hype, but what does the science have to say?

Well, as I just discussed, basic nutritional science shows that plant-based diets are low in energy-rich essential fatty acids and proteins. So I'm not sure how following a strict vegetarian or vegan diet will make you feel more energetic.

And improving digestion is all about following a balanced diet that supports the countless strains of beneficial probiotic bacteria in your GI microbiome. Sure, plant-based foods can do that. But you also need prebiotic foods to feed those probiotics, and many of those are dairy-based.

Plus, reducing chronic (and deadly) inflammation between your GI system, your brain, and the rest of your body relies on a wide range of nutrients that can't all be found in plants.

Not to mention that study after study shows that balanced diets with diverse food groups include optimal levels of *all* nutrients. And that's the number one way to prevent and reverse chronic diseases—hands down.

Why vegetarianism can be bad for the planet

Despite what the vegetarian gurus say, you—and the planet—won't avoid toxic chemicals simply by eliminating animal-based foods from your diet.

As I briefly mentioned earlier, conventionally grown crops are laden with pesticides that can destroy your health and the health of our soil, water, and air. This includes GM crops, and more and more are being planted around the world each year.

In fact, I'd argue that the reality of plant-based crops today is largely an unprecedented environmental disaster. And GM crops are the worst new global environmental problem of them all.

When it comes to livestock, there are also some very valid concerns about how farm animals are raised and the amount of methane gas they emit into the environment.

I'm quite concerned about the ethics of how we treat animals. There's much needless cruelty to animals in both the medical and agricultural realms. Back when I was working in Washington, DC, I volunteered with the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, which works to end animal abuse.

I'm also an advocate for raising livestock on grassland rather than in feedlots. This is not only healthier for the animals—and for your health—but it's also key for maintaining the sustainability of vast areas of land not suitable for growing crops.

One other thing worth noting: There's growing scientific evidence that plants manifest some kind of

consciousness, and may “feel” things too. Many studies show that plants can respond to stimuli, including emotional energy from humans, as well as environmental factors.

So while we can't do much about plants' feelings, we can solve many of the other issues I just discussed by eating organic plant *and* animal foods. Organic regulations don't allow crops to be grown with pesticides or GM seeds. They also require that farm animals are treated humanely. This includes at least 120 days of pasture grazing per year.

Bottom line: Cutting out animal products but still eating conventionally grown plants isn't going to make you or the environment any healthier.

The one good thing about plant-based diets... and it's not what you think

As you know (and the science shows), a balanced diet that includes plenty of full-fat dairy, fish, and meat, as well as nuts, fresh fruits, and vegetables, is much healthier than a vegetarian diet.

That's because if you only eat plants, you can easily end up with serious deficiencies in protein, B and D vitamins, and minerals like iodine—especially as you get older.

Which leads me to the good thing about vegetarian diets. I'm only half kidding when I say they're a boon for the dietary supplements industry. The more people who fall victim to the plant-based megatrend hype, the more need for high-quality nutritional supplements. All from people eliminating entire categories of healthy foods from their diets.

Science-based supplement suppliers will continue to formulate herbal remedies (which are necessarily plant-based) based on the burgeoning science showing their benefits for health, as well as optimal nutrition.

What the plant-based diet megatrend *really* means

Sadly, this new plant-based diet hype is just another industrialized approach to capitalize off human nutrition, with product ingredients that are much less expensive (and thus more profitable) than healthy, whole foods.

As people get wise to the profitable but deadly sugar industry, food manufacturers are moving on to other fake foods under the guise of “plant-based,” “natural,” and “healthy.” But don't be fooled...

The bottom line is this: Skip all the useless protein drinks, powders, potions, “energy” bars, meat substitutes, and other unnatural confections and concoctions playing to the manufactured plant-based diet megatrend. Stick with a balanced diet and the high-quality, science-backed dietary supplements I've been recommending all along. Because when it comes down to it, science never lies, no matter what's trending at the moment. **IC**

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Protect Yourself from Inflammation

I'd like to announce the launch of my newest online learning tool, *Dr. Micozzi's Protocol for Eliminating Deadly Inflammation*. If you're serious about reducing inflammation, this is your go-to, one-stop source for all the right supplements, exercises, foods, lifestyle interventions, and medical recommendations to end the vicious, disease-causing inflammation cycle.

This protocol is a remarkably fast and easy way to reverse the number one cause of disease and aging.

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