

A professional dietitian visits APPA

March 7, 2009 Meeting

The guest speaker for **APPA's** March 2009 meeting was Ms. Kathryn Busey. She is a professional dietitian who works for St. Francis Hospital in Columbus, Georgia. She graduated from Lipscomb University in Nashville Tennessee with a B.S. degree in Dietetics and completed her internship at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. As Kathryn's grandparents met while working at Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation (RWSIR), she grew up visiting them in Warm Springs and hearing stories about polio and FDR. Her first employer was with RWSIR, where she worked directly with polio survivors and the support group there. She had the honor of having Jonas Salk and Heloisa Sabin as dinner guests and hearing their stories about the vaccines. This May, Kathryn will complete her M.S. degree with a focus on Community Nutrition.

She will be a featured presenter at the forthcoming Post-Polio Health International Conference meeting in Warm Springs, Georgia. With such a firm background in providing healthy diets for polio patients, Kathryn was warmly welcomed. The title of her presentation there is "Nutrition and Post-Polio."

Kathryn was accompanied by her mother, also a professional dietitian. Being raised by a mother who is a dietitian has afforded her a very healthy upbringing and a strong understanding of healthy foods. As her mother has been an active and successful campaigner for the elimination of Trans Fatty Acids (**TFAs**) in processed foods, Kathryn was not exposed to this processing additive (hazardous to humans) while growing up.

Kathryn believes the point of healthy eating is to make you feel good and be able to live your life to the fullest. She brought many food exhibits for the audience to see. She later provided a healthy treat for her audience. In starting her presentation, she distributed randomly specially marked pages of six questions (having several multiple answers) to the **APPA** members. She proceeded to read the question and asked the people to read their assigned response aloud. The first question (and possible answer options) was:

Q-1 Why do we eat "healthy"?

- 1) To look like Brad Pitt or Angelina Jolie.
- 2) To prevent future diseases or help manage current illness.
- 3) To make our doctors and mothers happy.
- 4) To feel good TODAY!

5) All of the above.

Although the audience laughed as each answer option was stated, there was a little truth and merit to each of these options. Of course, option 2 is the preferred answer as it relates to avoiding serious illnesses such as Cancer, Diabetes and other diseases.

Q-2 What is “Good Nutrition?”

- 1) Eliminating all sweets and snack foods from your diet.
- 2) Eating cabbage 3 times per day and an apple on Tuesdays.
- 3) Eating an all protein, no net carbohydrate diet.
- 4) Giving your body ENOUGH of the foods it needs to function at its best with the occasional cookie thrown in for good measure.

In briefly discussing each answer option, Kathryn emphasized that good health means eating enough good foods to sustain a healthy condition. If each of us really tries to do this our bodies will respond positively, entitling us the option of having those sweet desserts that we crave. The same logic applies to getting children to eat broccoli. If the child will only eat it if covered with melted cheese, then serve it that way. Answer option 4 may require the professional help of a dietitian or physician in selecting the appropriate food and their various forms. Her point for the food forms was expanded later in the presentation in considering Post-Polio patients (PPPs) with swallowing problems.

Q-3 How is Post-Polio Nutrition Different?

- 1) Huh? What is post polio syndrome (PPS)?
- 2) It isn't different. Just more exercise and less fast food like everyone else in America.
- 3) It is only different for those with Post-Polio Syndrome.
- 4) Polio survivors, regardless of PPS, have unique medical histories and current symptoms which need to be looked at comprehensively.

First of all, Kathryn believes that it is better for Post-Polio patients (PPPs) to eat a little less food than to over eat. Secondly, it is important for PPPs to eat more good and/or appropriate foods to be more consistent with the intent of answer option 4. She told the story of a vending machine outside a department office door. Someone left the vendor a note to please add strawberry short cake, banana pudding, and chocolate cake/cookies options to their selections. In response, Kathryn posted her own note to the vendor to please reduce selections that expand waistlines. With healthier selections, the temptation to buy food selections not good for us can be better controlled. In general, vending machine foods tend to contain more

Trans Fatty Acids (TFAs).

In addressing a question from the audience about what constitutes TFAs, Kathryn explained that these substances help in processing the food and that our bodies do not deal well with their consumption. TFAs do not necessarily impart any taste. These substances lead to heart problems and plaque buildup in the arteries. If a PPPs has heart problems these substances should be avoided.

TFAs can be hidden in the ingredients list in other names. For example, any mention of a hydrogenated chemical, such as hydrogenated soybean oil, should be avoided. Any use of the word hydrogenated in the ingredients infers that these substances have been converted to TFAs. Mrs. Busey mentioned that although the law states that the amount of TFAs per serving must be indicated in the ingredient list, the law allows quantities less than 0.5% to not be reported. This is an unfortunate situation that is likely to remain unchanged. On this basis, one has to avoid processed foods as much as possible to eliminate TFAs from their diet, and you must get into the habit of reading ingredient labels.

In response to a question about a butter substitute, Kathryn indicated that Smart Balance is safe to consume to avoid TFAs. It was pointed out that margarine has high levels of TFAs and should be avoided. It is necessary to eliminate TFAs altogether. Palm oil has a higher smoking point than TFAs and is used to process food. However, this is not healthy to consume either. Mrs. Busey said these types of processing substances induce inflammation of the many cells in our bodies. Such inflammation can be reduced with foods that act as an anti-inflammatory, such as walnuts, walnut oil, and fish oil capsules (make sure it is 100% fish oil). To avoid any after taste from taking fish oil in capsules, refrigerate them.

One can purchase pure liquid Norwegian fish oil if you have a problem with the synthetic coating materials used for capsules. Others reported consuming canned sardines for their Omega-3 anti-inflammatory content. However, caution should be taken in selecting the type of oil used in the sardine packing. Some have mineral oil that does not act as an inflammatory. There are some canned sardine and salmon products that include some bones. One **APPA** member reported that these bones help grow stronger fingernails.

There are butter products blended with canola oil or olive oil to reduce the quantity of TFAs in the butter product. The same principles apply to a butter spray product which Kathryn brought that contains soybean oil. However,

this product is lower in sodium and TFAs, and can be used in smaller quantities.

Finally, processed meats, including bacon, were discussed. She considered these products as not being good to consume in your diet. However, occasional consumption of low-fat turkey bacon in a BLT sandwich is acceptable. Kathryn showed a package of Morning Star Sausage Patties that she recommended as a substitute. These soy patties do not have the high fat levels or TFAs and have a good taste. Information about these foods can be gained on the web site www.consumerlab.com, per Kathryn's Mother.

Because having sufficient protein in a diet is important, the discussion turned to where best to obtain high quality proteins. The list included whole grains, soy patties, any kind of beans, fish and chicken. In response to why beef was not included as a good source of proteins and iron, Kathryn commented beef has too much fat content that leads to buildup in the blood vessels of consumers. Kathryn's mother commented that in treating many anemic women patients, she found that beef was not the best source of iron as commonly believed. She found that consuming turnip greens, orange juice, and other vitamin-containing foods increased the iron buildup in the blood faster. As dietitians, they encourage their patients to get their protein and other important needed nutrients from plant foods as a higher priority than from meats for their overall health benefits. In addition, they encourage their patients to eat foods that are not processed and to limit the amount of processed food consumed. The same principles apply to consuming carbonated beverages to avoid consuming synthetic sweeteners and/or many calories. Kathryn passed around a small cylindrical package containing a flavoring liquid that can impart its flavor to water and to foods for variation. It contained a small amount of synthetic sweetener. Equally important is limiting the sugar intake per day. Although sugar provides a lot of energy initially, it soon leads to feeling the blahs shortly thereafter.

Questions on the use of alcohol, tobacco, and coffee or tea came from the audience. Relating to consuming alcoholic beverages, she limited intake to two per day. With tobacco, Kathryn encouraged everyone to avoid using tobacco, particularly if you are having respiratory issues. Coffee and tea have published merits for their consumption; however, they increase blood pressure and act as a diuretic even with low consumption levels. You must consider your medical issues in deciding your consumption. She did not comment on using decaffeinated versions of coffee or tea.

Q-4 How much activity should a person with PPS get?

- 1) At least 8 hours of intense exercise/week.
- 2) None. A person with PPS can risk further harm by getting activity and should instead catch up on all day time soaps and reality television.
- 3) “Conserve to Preserve” means that any activity that causes fatigue, pain or weakness should be avoided, but that other non-strenuous activities should be pursued.

Obviously, option 3 is the desired approach to avoid damaging residual muscles in PPS. She recommended defining the best exercises through an experienced physical therapist, who will monitor any pain development and specify those exercises that do not exhaust or hurt the patient.

Q-5 Who should I see about swallowing problems?

- 1) A physician.
- 2) A registered dietitian (RD).
- 3) A respiratory therapist (RT).
- 4) Speech Language Pathologist (SLP).
- 5) All of the above.

In this question all of the answer options apply. Swallowing difficulties lead to choking and pneumonia. For people experiencing fatigue during eating, this is a sign of possible swallowing difficulties. Professional help can demonstrate techniques that can resolve many of the swallowing issues. Kathryn demonstrated how moving of the head and neck can act to facilitate swallowing. She indicated that use of a feeding tube will help to regain the health and strength of a person having swallowing difficulties.

Q-6 What if I am too tired to cook?

- 1) Grab a burger and fries.
- 2) Then just don't eat.
- 3) Mind over matter! Just work through the pain, ignore what your physical therapist says, and cook a three course meal!
- 4) Rest for twenty minutes, then grab one of your planned meals from the freezer and heat it in the microwave.

Answer option 4 is the right approach, as you do not want to be getting too tired in preparing a dinner. Also, it is better to eat something small than nothing at all, as this provides some energy and nourishment that the body needs.

At this point in her presentation, Kathryn demonstrated to the audience what can be done to eat a healthy breakfast and lunch. She had all of the ingredients in their original packages for these two meals that were passed around for the audience to review.

Breakfast

Kathryn recommends having oatmeal for breakfast creating her own from scratch, as well as preparing this breakfast in advance. The vessels (use one for storage, cooking and eating) for the oatmeal consist of a glass bowl that is able to withstand the shock of boiling water, and has a tightly held plastic lid. She indicated that she purchased the bowls and lids from Wal-Mart. She no longer buys the individual instant oatmeal packet forms from Quaker Oats, because it is a more expensive approach, one packet does not fill her up, and some are too sweet. Also, the typical proportion of the healthy nutrients in the oatmeal packets is not as high as when prepared at home. For example, they generally have about 5 grams of Oats, 3 grams of total fat and 4 grams of fiber.

To the bowl, Kathryn added $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of Quaker Oats Old Fashioned Oatmeal. Then, she added some of the following options to fit individual needs and for variety:

1. $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of Oats.
2. A pinch of salt.
3. 1 tbsp nuts (pecans, almonds or walnuts).
4. Seasonings (Cinnamon, etc.) to taste preference.
5. Raisins or dried fruits.
6. Sliced apples (kept in a sealed bag in the refrigerator and added that morning under the oatmeal in the bowl).
7. $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Whole Bran (found it stores) to add more fiber. $\frac{1}{4}$ cup =6 grams fiber.
8. Flaxseed (fresh flaxseed needs to be ground up to better digest the Omega-3 anti-inflammatory).
9. Brown sugar (uses only 1 teaspoon).

The above nine components can be mixed ahead of the breakfast and refrigerated until used. The fresh apples should be added on the day consumed for best results.

Water is added to a GE electric kettle that boils the water extremely fast. After adding $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of the boiling water (or milk), to the oatmeal and the lid is applied, the oatmeal is ready to eat in about 5 minutes.

A member of the audience also suggested consuming yogurt for breakfast. In particular, she said that she buys plain Greek yogurt produced by Fage. It has a less freely flowing nature and one small container provides nearly 16 grams of protein. She also adds fruit to provide different flavors. Kathryn's mother said this Greek yogurt may not be found in the general yogurt

section of the store but it is there at Kroger and Publix. Fage produces low-fat and non-fat forms also.

Lunch

Eating beans, vegetables and lentils is always a good thing to do, per Kathryn. These foods also have low sodium levels. She talked about having canned lentil soup and when heating it up adding fresh vegetables and/or spinach to provide more volume to the meal, as well as creating a healthy meal.

Many in the audience consume prepared frozen dinners for lunch. If these dinners are used she requested that you read the ingredients list and select the dinners with the lowest sodium content. She had a box of a frozen “Healthy Choice” sandwich and passed it around. She said this one is an acceptable option. She indicated that refried beans are also available with low sodium levels that can be used to prepare Mexican cuisine meals.

She had a “Kashi” frozen dinner called Lemongrass Coconut Chicken that was used to show how it could be modified to provide more nutrients. She likes the Kashi brand, as they have a good balance of whole grains and vegetables, and a lower salt content. There are many other varieties of dinners offered by Kashi also. She keeps a polyethylene sealed bag in her refrigerator to store fresh vegetables (green beans were demonstrated). Frozen vegetables can be used here too. She demonstrated how she could open the cellophane seal over the eating container, slip in some green beans, close the seal back up and then cook it in the microwave. She explained that there is enough sauce in the original frozen dinner to accommodate the green beans. However, it is important to make sure the frozen Kashi meal is fully cooked before eating.

Kathryn indicated that a white, whole-grain flour is available that comes in a blue box and is healthier than normal white flour. She did not offer a brand name for this flour. Most people in the audience appeared to be using whole grains in cereals, flour and in rice and agree that these foods taste better, besides being healthier for them.

In closing her presentation, Kathryn encouraged everyone to further enjoy their life with treats such as chocolate and ice cream (she buys these treats in individual small packets to control calorie intake). She served the audience a small cup comprising fresh strawberries and chocolate chips (Ghirardelli Chocolate, Premium Baking Chips, 60% Cocoa Chips, Bittersweet Chocolate).

During the presentation, Kathryn followed the Post-Polio Checklist that she gave to the audience to guide them through the presentation. Here is that

list:

Daily Post-Polio Nutrition Checklist

1. Fruits (the more the better).
 2. Vegetables (the more the better).
 3. Beans or Legumes (½ cup +).
 4. Nuts (1 tbsp).
 5. Whole Grains, Fiber (25-35 grams).
 6. Yogurt, Cottage Cheese or other dairy (2-3 servings).
 7. Anti-inflammatory fat (Oils, Fish).
 8. Protein rich sources (beans, fish).
 9. Water (25-30 ml/kg body weight).
 10. Something delicious
- And,
11. Rest! (Sleep schedule, small naps).
 12. Activity (Work with a professional, use “conserve to preserve rule”).
 13. Live! (Do something you love daily!).

For Recipe Ideas or Nutrition Tips, Kathryn recommended these sites

American Institute for Cancer Research

www.aicr.org

American Dietetic Association

www.eatright.com

American Heart Association

www.americanheart.org

American Diabetes Association

www.diabetes.org

American Speech and Hearing Association (dysphasia, swallowing tips)

www.asha.org/public/

APPA is appreciative to Kathryn for this very informative, beneficial and delicious presentation.

Summary written by Ron Swor, Cheryl Hollis, and Ivy Stiles.