



Nutrition Panel: What is the New Healthy? Rethinking Paradigms & Guidelines

Breakout Discussion Forum

Facilitator

Erica Orange, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, The Future Hunters, U.S.

Participants

Alfredo Bataller Pineda, CEO, SHA Wellness Clinic, Spain

Nils Behrens, Managing Director & Chief Marketing Officer, Lanserhof Group, Austria

Dondeena Bradley, PhD, Vice President, Global Innovation, Weight Watchers International, U.S.

Samantha Gowing, Chef, Nutritionist, Mentor, Australia

Dr. Adam Perlman, Associate VP, Duke Health & Wellness; Executive Director, Duke Integrative Medicine and Duke Diet and Fitness Center, U.S.

Key Takeaways

Alfredo Bataller Pineda:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) states that 60-75% of all premature deaths are caused by poor nutrition, lack of exercise and tobacco. In other words, we live in wealth but eat poorly.
- We should be promoting wellness through: diet; exercise; attitude; education; and natural therapies to improve quality of life, establish healthy habits, prevent disease, and promote physical and mental wellbeing.
- SHA nutrition is based on the healing principles of macrobiotics, but adapted to modern life. It's a natural way to establish and re-establish health, by means of a flexible diet that stays true to the principles of ancient Japanese wisdom and the gastronomic traditions of local culture.
- A follow-up to the SHA wellness program is iHealth which provides nutritional advice and guidance while traveling or on-the-go.

Nils Behrens:

- The gut is the “hearth of our health”; and there is a type of “gold rush mood” when it comes to microbiome research.
- We must rethink what healthy means and flip old/outdated paradigms (e.g., eating a salad at night is not as healthy as we think, nor is the green smoothie/drink trend. But the health benefits of butter is seeing a resurgence.)
- Digestion really starts at the mouth, not inside the body. We must rethink not just what we eat, but *how* we eat it (i.e., slowing down) and *when* we eat it (i.e., time of day).

Dondeena Bradley:

- How to navigate this whole landscape with regards to nutrition is very tricky. We tend to view things in their parts (e.g., calories, food labeling) versus a whole picture (e.g., how the body manages food, time). How can these be combined to create a better whole/create an integrated holistic approach to nutrition?
- The average American consumes 3,200 calories a day. It’s difficult to disrupt this system and cycle of eating. We tend to focus too much on calories (and associated feelings of guilt) versus nutrition (and associated feelings of happiness and wellbeing).

Samantha Gowing:

- Food is medicine, so as such, we must also rethink what we consider to be “healthy,” and not fall victim to the next superfood or diet trend. What we eat has changed more in the last 40 years than in the previous 40,000. And now have greater access to foods from around the world. But superfoods are on a collision course with sustainability: our importation of chia seeds, quinoa, goji berries, etc. is disturbing global ecosystems.
- Wellness is often a misunderstood term that often lacks authority. Samantha called for authenticity of nutritional claims and proof of ethical sustainability on menus that will service the hungry needs of a rapidly growing base of well-informed consumers who are demanding more from wellness tourism destinations and clean eating providers.
- The future will be about clean, sustainably-sourced (i.e., from our own backyard), hyper-local, “personally-intuitive” foods. This would bring about a welcome return to eating as pleasure.

Dr. Adam Perlman:

- There is a lack of precision when it comes to understanding nutrition. Nutrition, in the future, will become much more personalized.
- Of critical importance will be the emerging field of Nutrigenomics, which refers to the study of the effects of foods and food constituents on gene expression. Nutrigenomics research focuses on identifying and understanding molecular-level interaction between nutrients and other dietary bioactives with the genome. This will usher in an era of hyper-personalized nutrition.

- Functional medicine will also be a critical component. Functional medicine addresses the underlying causes of disease, using a systems biology-oriented approach. It shifts the traditional disease-centered focus of medical practice to a more patient-centered approach which focuses, largely, on correcting imbalance (e.g., inflammation, leaky gut).

Fast Forward: What This Will Mean in the Future?

Research suggests that what humans really need to survive is *nutrition*, not food. What if we could hack the way we eat, so that we could receive the nutritional benefits we get from food, without actually having to eat food in conventional ways? What if we could get everything we needed in pill form? Or some other novel delivery system? Your state of mind as you sit down to eat, and your perception of what you're eating can now be hacked through technology. This could considerably disrupt our current ideas of healthcare and wellness. Enter new solutions to "hack food" into its nutritional components:

- Time spent eating is actually considered inefficient by some in Silicon Valley. Elon Musk once said, "If there was a way that I couldn't eat so I could work more, I would not eat. I wish there was a way to get nutrients without sitting down for a meal." Coders, engineers and VCs are turning to liquid meals with names like Schmoylent, Soylent, SchmilK and People Chow. Demand for the powdered drinks is so high that some report being put on waiting lists for orders.
- The BUD is a tabletop device with a touchscreen and a "printer" that can cook up flavor. It offers a possible future kitchen where flavors can be sampled first. BUD will not be just a "taste" printer, it will have engaging games for kids about food and nutrition to increase engagement and exploration of their eating habits.
- And when it comes to hacking nutrition, it's not just about things we traditionally consider "edible." We can also, for example, receive required nutrition and nourishment from light. We've known for some time about the therapeutic effects of certain colors and wavelengths of light on our bodies. Shining red light on skin or cells in a dish gives an instant energy boost that could help heal wounds, relieve pain and combat medical conditions such as male infertility and even Parkinson's disease. The red light alters the physical properties of water, which turbocharges the chemical reactions that provide a cell's energy.

Underlying all of this is the notion of time. Globally, time is a more precious (and scarce) commodity than ever before. Is it practical to consider a long-term future where people shortcut eating food, to simply acquire nutrition in time-saving, practical ways? Some would likely consider it the ultimate behavioral efficiency. Others, however, might complain about sacrificing the "experience" of eating. Whether related to urban agriculture, vertical farming, underwater crops or terraforming in outer space, the food frontiers are exploding. Adding 3D printing, greater knowledge of the light spectrum, genetic engineering, logistics and waste prevention further expands the food horizons.

We also see the future of nutrition and food increasingly pivoting around a host of disruptive technologies:

- **Virtual reality (VR):** As VR becomes more sensorially-immersive and life-like, it will be used to aid in weight loss and weight maintenance.
- **Augmented Reality (AR):** AR headsets (e.g., Google Glass) will be used to trick people into eating less. New research from the University of Tokyo shows that a very simple AR trick can reduce the amount you eat. By donning the glasses, the software automatically scaled up an Oreo to 1.5x its natural size. Using an algorithm, the person's hand was manipulated so that the giant Oreo appeared. This was enough to reduce the amount of food eaten by 10%.
- **3D Printing:** 3D food printing has the potential to revolutionize food production by boosting culinary creativity, food sustainability and nutritional customizability.

Eventually, will we see a future where doctors write recipes as prescriptions, or insurance companies treat food as a reimbursable expense?

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