

What Message Do You Want To Send?

by Ann Carey Tobin, M.D., FAAFP

You are what you eat, but did you know that you are also what you think? Everything you put into your body is information. What you ingest, inhale, rub on your skin, think/feel, and how you move all translate into messenger molecules that affect the workings of the cell, down to our DNA. In other words, your choices are translated into data that manifest in expressions of health and well being, or dis-ease. So, what message do you want to send?

The foods we ingest carry information. The traditional and [phytonutrient](#) content of a dark green leafy vegetable in its whole food, closer to nature state, will provide calcium and magnesium to support nerve, muscle and bone function. Magnesium will serve as a co-factor in 300 different biochemical reactions. Vitamin K is present to collaborate with calcium for bone and circulatory health, and the mother omega 3 essential fatty acid, ALA, will go on to birth EPA and DHA for anti-inflammatory, anti-clotting and immune support. All of this, and much more, are packaged in a bundle of other vitamins, minerals and fiber (to assist in GI, and blood sugar regulation, again, to mention just some of the benefits of adequate dietary fiber). Contrast that with a processed, refined white flour product repackaged with synthetic vitamins. The messenger molecules released will instigate a surge of blood sugar and pro-inflammatory molecules that will trigger a cascade of unhealthy messages. We are all witness to the consequences of eating this way as a life style choice—obesity and the incidence of diseases of an “affluent” society are increasing.

Add to that the messages sent in the presence of danger. Your mind and body will react with an exquisite sequence of events designed to ensure survival. However, if that fear response is ever present, the messenger molecules unleashed, such as cortisol, will begin to send inappropriate messages. Eventually, persistent stress may contribute to mid-line weight gain, and other pro-inflammatory health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, dementia, auto-immune conditions, osteoporosis and cancer. This is an illustration of the relationship of the mind and the body—they can not be separated. The mind is in the body, and the body is in the mind. [Dr. Mark Hyman's](#) latest book, [The UltraMind Solution](#), expands on this concept. He discusses the various ways inflammation is created in our internal milieu, and emphasizes that inflammation in the body translates into inflammation of the brain. Therefore, you need to attend to the body to heal the brain and mind. Everything you put in your body and mind is information to be used to support health or create dis-ease.

A fascinating aspect of our internal information highway system is the concept of [psychoneuroimmunology](#). This is a well-researched field championed by [Candace Pert, PhD](#). Her books, [The Molecules of Emotion](#) and [Everything you Need to Know to Feel Go\(o\)d](#), document her journey and the discovery that the cells of different systems are communicating with each other, through various messenger molecules and their corresponding cell membrane receptors. The small monocyte cell of the immune system carries the same receptors on its surface as the brain cell. The majority of the

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neurotransmitter serotonin is actually manufactured in the gut, not the brain. The cells and their systems are all networking—gut to immune system, immune system to brain, brain to gut—coordinating our health and well-being. So, what message do you want to send?

Be well.

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