

6 Medical Myths Busted

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When making the choices needed to optimize health, it is critical to have accurate information. Otherwise, our diet and lifestyle sacrifices, for which we sometimes give up things we enjoy, may kill us instead of helping.

Because of this, I would like to look at common, and simply wrong, medical myths about things we avoid for our health, and then let's look at what the science really shows. Along the way, you may find you get to enjoy your pleasures again — guilt free!

Let's examine 6 medical myths, along with my "bust" for each of them!

Medical Myth 1 — Skinny People Live Longer

What the science shows:

[\[Excess Pounds, but Not Too Many, May Lead to Longer Life](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/26/health/26weight.html?_r=2&em)
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Being overweight won't kill you — it may even help you live longer. That's the latest from a study that analyzed data on 11,326 Canadian adults ages 25 and older who were followed over a 12-year period. The report, published recently in the journal *Obesity*, found that, overall, people who were overweight but not obese were actually less likely to die than people of normal weight.

By contrast, people who were underweight were more likely to die than those of average weight. Their risk of dying was 73% higher than that of normal weight people, while the risk of dying for those who were overweight was 17% lower than for people of normal weight. The finding adds to a simmering scientific controversy over the optimal weight for adults.

Medical Myth 2 — Salt is Bad for You

That myth has been well busted. Repeated studies show that people with higher salt intakes live longer.

Not if they're taking IODIZED salt.

Medical Myth 3 — Oily Food is Bad for You

This depends on the kind of fat. Trans fats (added to many processed foods — **especially margarine**, (which was touted as more "heart healthy" than butter) are a major killer. Butter is much healthier.

Fish oil is especially healthy. Fish oil deficiency is the 6th leading cause of death in the U.S.

Omega-3 deficiency is the sixth biggest killer of Americans and more deadly than excess trans fat intake, according to a new study. The Harvard University researchers looked at 12 dietary, lifestyle and metabolic risk factors such as tobacco smoking and high blood pressure and used a mathematical model to determine how many fatalities could have been prevented if better practices had been observed.

But you lose the dietary benefits of eating fish if you FRY them. Steaming is best.

Medical Myth 4 — Eggs Raise Cholesterol and are Bad for You

Over 6 studies (at my last count) showed that eating 6 eggs a day for 6 weeks had no significant effect on cholesterol levels. Meanwhile, eggs are the best (most complete) protein source available — short of being a cannibal and eating other people!

Medical Myth 5 — Chocolate is Bad

Dark chocolate has been shown to be high in antioxidants and offers numerous health benefits. Simply enjoy it in moderation.

You see? My taste buds were right all along. Chocolates are good. It's the pasteurized milk and sugar that are bad.

Medical Myth 6 (the Most Deadly Myth) — Avoid Sunshine

This especially dangerous piece of medical mal-advice is causing an epidemic of vitamin D deficiency, and is estimated to be causing 85,000 excess cancer deaths a year in the U.S. Vitamin D deficiency also contributes to obesity and numerous other medical problems (see [Vitamin D Could Save Your Life!](http://www.endfatigue.com/health_articles_t-z/Vitamin_d-could_save_your_life.html) http://www.endfatigue.com/health_articles_t-z/Vitamin_d-could_save_your_life.html). The proper advice? Avoid **sunburn**, not sunshine!

The Overriding Fallacy?

The great fallacy is that things that make you feel good are bad for you. I suspect it is quite the opposite, and that these are the things that are GOOD for you!

Listen to your body, and see how you feel overall with different pleasures. If they leave you feeling better overall long term, I suspect that odds are they are beneficial. I trust what our body and feelings tell us much more than the busted myths put out by our usually well meaning, but our often wrong, medical system.