

“Don’t talk, just act. Don’t say, just show. Don’t promise, just prove.”
– Anonymous

I so love this quote because many things about it remind me of my dad. Anything that reminds me of him tends to make me smile. He used to always say, “*Actions speak louder than words*” and they really do. People tell you they’re going to do something, but until they actually do it, the words are meaningless. The same can certainly be said about promises. People can make you promises, but until they actually follow through on them, they’re worthless. Finally, based on what we’re witnessing right now, I’ve learned that you can’t tell people about something, you have to show them before they’ll really believe it. The important thing here is that I’ve learned you have to be a person of substance, a person of action and a person who does what he or she says will be done. If you do all those things, you earn trust. Whether it’s in a friendship or in a relationship, all bonds are built on trust and without it, you have nothing. Learning to trust someone is probably one of life’s most difficult tasks. I’ve often told my son that it takes a really long time to earn someone’s trust, but it takes only an instant to lose it. Trust is built with consistency. Having trust in someone means you should give that person the benefit of the doubt if there’s ever a question about something. Ultimately, I think trust is to relationships what faith is to Christianity. It is the beginning place. It is the place where a foundation can be built and can continue to grow. Where there is trust, love can truly flourish.

Yours in health,
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Beware of the Dirty Dozen



Summer is in full swing, which means fruits and vegetables are in ample supply. It’s one of the things I really love about this time of year. It’s so easy to find a local farmer’s market and pick out the freshest of everything. While these foods are exceedingly healthy, something is lurking in many of them that can make some of the healthiest foods become somewhat toxic. I’m sure you’re wondering what I’m talking about and the answer is simple: pesticides. Once these unsafe chemicals (think Monsanto’s Roundup) are applied to fruits and vegetables to keep bugs and other pests away, they’re really hard to eliminate. I make my own fruit and vegetable wash from a mixture of food-grade hydrogen peroxide, filtered water and lemon essential oil. But I don’t think even that completely eliminates the pesticides on produce. So what’s a person to do? The simplest thing is to choose those foods wisely.

Hopefully you’ve heard of the Dirty Dozen and the Clean 15. The former are the most pesticide-heavy foods that you should buy organic. The latter are the ones least likely to contain the residue from pesticides that you don’t need to spend extra money on organic. Buying organic is certainly more expensive, but can you really put a price on your health? The Environmental Working Group (www.ewg.org) (“EWG”) is a fantastic source of information on this topic. Each year, they provide a list of “The Dirty Dozen” and “The Clean 15”. The lists are updated annually and here are their lists for 2023:

The Dirty Dozen

Strawberries
Spinach
Kale
Nectarines
Apples
Grapes
Peaches
Bell and Hot Peppers
Pears
Cherries
Blueberries
Green Beans

The Clean 15

Avocados
Sweet corn
Pineapples
Onions
Papayas
Sweet peas
Asparagus
Honeydew
Kiwi
Cabbage
Mushrooms
Mangoes
Sweet Potatoes
Watermelon
Carrots

A good rule of thumb is that if it the fruit or vegetable has some kind of rind or other cover on it (think pineapple and melons), odds are the level of pesticides will be pretty low and you don't need to buy organic. Another rule of thumb is if it has a shiny or waxy exterior (think cherries, peppers, nectarines), it will have a lot of pesticides. The EWG also notes that a small amount of sweet corn, papaya and summer squash sold in the US is produced from genetically modified seeds. They recommend buying organic of these items, even though they are on the clean list above. EWG also has a Healthy Living App, which you can download and get ratings for more than 120,000 food and personal care products. If you care about this type of thing like I do, I encourage you to check out their website.

Strawberries are the most toxic of those on the list. Although I'm not fan of the USDA, between January 2015 and October 2016, the agency tested 1,174 batches of conventional strawberries. The results were stunning. A whopping 99% of those sampled had detectable residue of at least one pesticide. A total of 30% had residues of 10 or more pesticides. Some strawberry samples contained residues of 81 different pesticides!!! Please buy organic if you love to eat them. The EWG website has an entire article on strawberries that's pretty shocking.

Unfortunately, a large part of our food supply is pretty toxic and it's not limited to just produce. Cows are fed growth hormones and antibiotics, which end up in our meat and milk. But I digress.

If you can't get fresh produce, a good substitute, believe it or not, is frozen. The reason is because these products are typically frozen with a few hours of being picked, which makes them pretty fresh. Additionally, frozen foods retain almost all of their vitamin C, but do lose some of their Vitamins B6 and E.

Canned produce is another good option. Did you know that canned pumpkin contains more carotenoids than fresh pumpkin and canned tomato sauce and ketchup have more lycopene than fresh tomatoes?

I'll close with one other interesting item to note. Sometimes the parts we don't typically eat can often be very nutritious. Onion and apple peels are rich in quercetin. I wrote an entire newsletter on this very important supplement in February 2022. Eggplant skins have anthocyanins, which are thought to be an antioxidant. Citrus peels are full of limonoids, which can help fight certain cancers. I have a recipe to make hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) from the peels of oranges and grapefruits. If you're unsure about eating the skins of certain foods, throw them into a soup that you're cooking. They'll add flavor in addition to antioxidants. Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Have a wonderful month.