

TOGOM

Last month, the organization now aptly named by the acronym, The Old Gang Of Mine, had its last dance of its existence. Formed during the depression to keep kids out of trouble, activities included neighborhood gardens, baseball and dancing. Most of the surviving octogenarian members that were not scattered by Katrina's winds could still dance to the tunes of the 1930's. I attended a conference at the World War II Museum with two of the TO GOM members. One of the speakers, discussed what people ate during the pre and post War years. There was a diet diary, shown in a 1942 *Life Magazine*. All patriotic Americans had their very own victory gardens; each ate from fresh and likely organic food. Recently reviewed USDA data showed that the soils in our farmlands in many states are deficient in zinc, selenium and other such micro minerals. So much for eating whole foods! Our addiction to sugar and the foods of convenience processes out any further nutrients in our diet. Our winters are great for cruciferous vegetables, cabbage and broccoli, which help down regulate our estrogenic overloads and toxic pollution. Also beneficial is getting some outdoor exercise, as the sun provides needed vitamin D. Most of the vegetables found at wild foods stores are often conventional, not strictly organic and usually a bit more expensive. Two patients I'll call Betty Boop and Steve Sadsack are both representative of what I see in my daily practice. Betty has osteoporosis, fatigue, lack of memory and abdominal bloating. Steve has low libido to contend with, joint pain and a lack of endurance. A nutritional evaluation indicated that Betty was skipping protein because it was not easily digesting and, of course, she was taking Nexium and dieting. Steve was low in testosterone, however prescribing testosterone cream each month was not the answer. For Betty, IV/ IM vitamins taken orally worked for her. Although it can sometimes take up to a year for oral vitamins to take effect. Through her vitamin regimen, Betty found she had more energy, her memory returned and her bone density was still at a plateau. Steve found out his system had evidence of increased body burden of heavy metals (he fished in the Gulf). Once this was dealt with, his testosterone levels and more importantly his nutrition improved. By the way, he finally got his wife pregnant and was the second patient to inform me that he was no longer infertile. How do you stay in good health? One TO GOM member once told me, "For every convenience, there is an inconvenience." My long term prescription: inconvenience yourself, go dancing, take a multivitamin and grow a garden.

Robert Fortier-Bensen MD, ND, CCN is a naturopathic and nutritional physician who teaches patients about lifespan extension and healthy aging in order to help them make decisions to improve their ability to enjoy a full life. His office is located at 723 N. Causeway Boulevard in Mandeville. Call 985-626-6174 for more information.