

# Lifestyle

## Bring Back The Orange

By Dr. Rex Stevens

On another routine Fall Saturday in SLO, seemingly half of the city congregated to share in a simple game of American soccer that was sure to make you smile. Young lads and gals kicking, tripping, stumbling, and high-fiving all while learning, growing, and sharing in the simplicity of one ball and one open field.

It all seemed so primed for bliss until those first few moments that fol-

lowed the customary 'rah, rah,' sportsmanship cheer that so often reeks of procedure. Nonetheless, the bliss of hard work, sweat, and celebratory raucous that ensued when the least adept at the craft of athletics poured the modern fluorescent pill into the back net of the latticed fabric seemed to rein.

And then, and then, out poured the post game munchies. The responsibility placed on one family each and every week to refresh our children with a quick refreshment, a nibble, a pickings of good eats to both reward our little darlings for their hard work but

also to nourish their germinating frames.

'Dad, look what I got!' my son shouts out with a newfangled excitement to food products he was inaugurally being introduced to. To my astonishment, the products were all too familiar from my days as a youngster. Cracker Jacks? Pringles? Sugar Free Drinks? Really?

It is certainly not in my nature to blame, chastise, or accuse anyone of attempting to poison my child and make them sick. It is an issue, even so, that is worth addressing. As parents, we simply do our best. Within that mindset and construct, we still fail regularly. We are routinely deceived through clever marketing, mixed messages, and colorful campaigns into believing in this case that over-processed, artificial, and genetically modified products

are ok in 'moderation'.

What is moderation? Every Saturday after a soccer game? Three times a week in a lunch box? Weekend evening desserts? When it's convenient? And how is it that we come up with these rules, conclusions, and justifications? Cracker Jacks? Poison. Period. Pringles? Toxic. Period. Sugar-free drinks? Crazy. Period. Read Russell Blaylock's, MD book 'Excitotoxins' if you're skeptical with what I'm referencing.

The facts are that no industrialized nation since WWII has ever witnessed a population of youth sicker than that in North America today. Adult onset diseases now seen in kids, obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, autoimmune disease, autism, ADHD, allergies, and asthma plague our children so severely that for the first time, experts suggest



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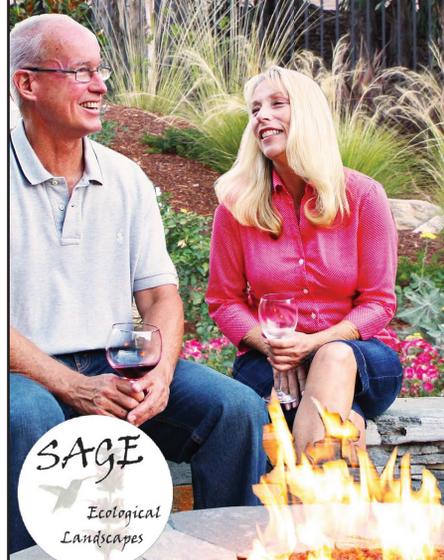



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that today's youth will not out live their parents.

Forget research and the latest million dollar study to come out of the 'genius think tank'. Let's get back to common sense and just for a moment ask ourselves these simple questions. Does it seem reasonable to eat a diet consisting of processed sugar? Is it prudent to color our consumable liquids, artificially flavor it with chlorine (a known carcinogen) based molecules and share it with our innocent young? Should distributing genetically modified products such as corn, wheat, or soy concern us in the least?

I'm more than aware and feel sensitive to the fact that allergies among our adolescents can induce a lethal outcome. Peanuts, dairy, soy, shellfish, and eggs can create a host of worries among parents fearing that their child may sacrifice their life if unknowingly exposed.

But what about an orange? I haven't been made aware of a plague full of citrus allergies and am stunned that we've veered as a society away from one of the most basic, replenishing, and restoring

bittersweet treats that used to frequent soccer fields across America as regular as turkey crosses the dinner table on Thanksgiving.

In our fourth week of the season a parent magically presented themselves on the field with a bucket of oranges and watermelon. Not only did the kids rush to the canister with urgency, the adults couldn't keep their hands out of this seemingly 'pot of gold'. Wow! Incredible! So sweet! Brilliant! Parents seemed more amazed, engaged and thankful by the simplicity of a snack that has stood the test of time yet today has become so unfamiliar.

I write in an effort to kindly urge you, please oh please, bring back the orange. Families uniformly don't want artificial popcorn, chips, drinks and popsicles at the end of a heated athletic contest. However, each week passes without an ounce of discussion. Bring fruit. Bring back the orange. The water, the citrus, the vitamin C, and the hilarity of our kids shoving wedges in their mouths and smiling should be enough to rid ourselves of the pressures that force us into buying



and distributing fuel sources that we know to be unreliable, risky and perilous to our children's health.

Cheers to sunshine, water, and nature's sugar in the form of fruit as we roar from the sidelines applauding and grinning every play. And perhaps, just maybe, those beaming pearly whites will be replaced if only for a moment by that illustrious simple orange. Catch you at the fields. ❖

*Dr. Rex Stevens is a chiropractor and passionate educator at SLO Wellness Center where he utilizes his experience in chiropractic neurology and performance enhancement to create an atmosphere centered on a patient's personal desire to obtain optimal health.*

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