

Food as Medicine Summit & EXPO

Backgrounder

Chronic diseases are at epidemic levels, costing millions of lives and billions of dollars every year. One in three deaths is attributable to heart disease. One in three American adults is obese. Over 30 million Americans have diabetes and 54 million Americans have arthritis. More than 5.4 million people have Alzheimer's. We have been led to believe that these diseases have no cure or prevention.

Physicians are trained to treat the symptoms with pharmaceutical drugs and costly and often debilitating surgery. These methods, for the most part, do not cure or prevent the disease but merely sustain the disease. Case in point, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "More than two-thirds of all health care costs are targeted at treating chronic diseases and less than one percent of health care dollars are spent on prevention to improve overall health." The majority of our chronic diseases such as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, obesity and many cancers are directly related to the Standard American Diet. This means that we could eliminate these diseases by improving the way we eat.

The simple fact that "food is medicine" should be good news for the millions suffering with chronic disease, yet many haven't heard about, or don't understand, the healing power of a plant-based, whole-foods diet. Most physicians do not employ the power of food in the healing of their patients and, as a result, the impact of our current diets on our health and wellness continues to go unchecked.

We are bombarded with dangerous messaging about what we should and should not eat and much of this messaging is tied to corporate dollars. "Milk does a body good," "Meat – it's what's for dinner," "Got Milk," "Arby's has the meat," and "the incredible edible egg" are examples of taglines and jingles that stay in our minds as we go through our day, influencing our dietary choices. The meat, dairy and egg industries have incredibly strong and powerful lobbies ensuring their place on our tables, in our grocery aisles and in restaurants and fast-food locales. Those are billion and trillion-dollar industries that have a lot to lose if people start to question the impact of those foods on their health and wellbeing.

What if the simple solution to our skyrocketing incidence of disease and unwellness is at the end of our fork? What if making simple changes to the way we eat would relieve us of pain and suffering? What if adding healthier alternatives to our plates resulted in getting us off our

prescriptions, saving us thousands of dollars a year? What if thinking differently about food and adopting a better way of eating could add years of good health and wellbeing? These are life-altering queries and those seeking answers will find them at the inaugural [Food as Medicine Summit & EXPO April 24 – 25, 2020](#) in Dallas.

Event organizers have long been working to prevent and reverse the unhealthy and costly trend of such chronic diseases as heart disease, cancer, arthritis, autoimmune disease, hormone imbalances, MS, and Type 2 diabetes by hosting educational seminars and teaching plant-based nutrition and cooking classes. While the local DFW classes and lectures continue to be popular and well-attended, Food as Medicine Summit & EXPO Founder and President, Patricia Thomson, Ph.D. sought to expand the reach to more people including the media and decision makers in key industries such the healthcare, insurance, retail, food and education sectors. This led to creating the Food as Medicine Summit & EXPO, the first one in Dallas. Plans quickly materialized in the spring of 2019 as Dr. Thomson assembled an impressive roster of world-renowned physicians and experts in science-based nutrition to participate in the inaugural event.

More than 750 people from Texas and surrounding states and beyond are expected to attend the inaugural event and, for many, this will be the first time to meet world-renowned experts in science-based nutrition. Physician speakers include Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) Founder and President Dr. Neal Barnard, Cleveland Clinic's Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn, Dr. Michael Klaper, Dr. Brooke Goldner, Victoria Moran, Dr. Linda Carney, Drs. Munish and Bandana Chawla, Dr. Nancy Eriksen, Dr. Milton Mills, Dr. Niraj Mehta, Dr. Rizwan Bukhari and Dr. Jimmy Conway.

Other plant-based experts in nutrition and fitness include Brenda Davis RD and Fat-Free-Vegan blogger Susan Voisin, The Plant Chics, Food Saved Me Founder Katherine Lawrence Ireland, Patricia Thomson, Leslie Harrison, Anita Amit, Karoline Mueller, Pure Action Yoga, Adriana Soto, Brooke Ali, Nature's Plate, Gabrielle Reyes, Robin Everson, Dianne Doyle and fitness experts Thomas Tadlock, Ellen Jaffe Jones, Josh LaJaunie, and No Meat Athlete Matt Frazier.

In addition to the speaker Summit, the exhibitor EXPO will feature health and wellness-related sponsors and exhibitors as well as a diverse range of attractions including cooking demonstrations, book signings, movie screenings, social mixers and expert panel sessions.

An exclusive fundraising dinner entitled "Your Passport to the Vegan World" will be held the evening of Friday, April 24th and will benefit the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM). PCRM's Founder and President, Dr. Neal Barnard is the guest of honor. Special guests Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn, Victoria Moran, Dr. Bandana Chawla and Dr. Munish Chawla will also be in attendance. An interactive, vegan, plant-based dinner with a focus on International Cuisine will be prepared by Weight Watchers and Oprah-endorsed, Viridescent Kitchen. Attendance is limited to 100 and tickets are \$300.

The Food as Medicine Summit & EXPO will be held at The Richardson Civic Center, 411 W Arapaho Rd, Richardson, TX 75080. Tickets for the Summit & EXPO are \$279. The event begins at noon Friday, April 24 and 8:00 AM. on Saturday, April 25.

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