

fats in our diet, foods like nuts and avocados. The Mediterranean diet is a prime example. There is evidence to suggest that the Mediterranean diet which includes fish, poultry, nuts and olive oil may result in less cardiac and stroke deaths than a low fat diet. The truth is that many processed “low fat” foods on their own would taste terrible. To make them more palatable, manufacturers add sugar and lots of it. Now we are beginning to uncover the dangers of excess sugar! Our nutrition labels do not help. Without a percentage of added sugar listed on the labels to guide us, we can easily be fooled by focusing instead on the fat content. There is a movement underway to change nutrition labels to include the amount of added sugar and hopefully, our new labeling will help us make better choices. While fats may not be as risky as we once thought, this does not mean we should turn around and eat unlimited red meat, especially processed meats which may well have their own negative health consequences. Leaner meats may be acceptable in moderation. It would be best if these animal products were the result of healthy conditions for the animals with more grass-fed and free range farming. Altogether, healthy natural fats should not be avoided in the same way we have been led to believe in the past.



**Five (Amanda Raposo, RD)** We need to stop telling people that the way to lose weight is to consume low fat foods. There are now well over thirty scientifically validated studies that show that diets low in carbohydrates but rich in fats, are more effective for weight loss, and

people are able to sustain these diets as a regular part of eating. Unfortunately both the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society continue to state: “Watching the amount of fat you eat is important because diets high in fat tend to be high in calories, and can contribute to weight gain.” While the first statement is partially true, good science and even the most casual observer knows that the second is patently false. If eating low-fat foods is so effective for losing weight, why is nearly everyone battling a bulging waistline? It’s time we retired the “low fat diet craze” and do something that makes sense to our bodies.



**Six (Helena daSilva Hughes)** Make some cultural adjustments when it comes to our favorite foods. Many people started eating a lot of starches like potatoes, rice and bread because they were too poor to afford meats, nuts, vegetables cheeses and other dairy products. While those

starches filled them up, they also created poor populations characterized by overweight and illness. Today, most people can afford to eat better foods and should be decreasing carbs and adding healthier options. In America, we spend the smallest percentage of our budget on food than any country in the world. Maybe it’s about time we spent a little more on what we put in our bodies and less on other pleasures, otherwise, we’ll pay for it in the end with much higher medical and insurance costs for everyone. For those who cannot afford these foods, we owe it to them to see that food pantries and soup kitchens serve healthier meals. A number of our local facilities are starting to do just that.



**Seven (Julie Kelly)** Teach people how to purchase and prepare better foods. The easiest way to eat today is to buy something in a package. Chances are, however, that that product is high in salt, sugar and refined grains. Selecting real food like vegetables, fruits, meats, nuts

and full fat dairy products is a start, but you also have to know how to cook. The Fall River Mass in Motion program has produced six half-hour video programs that can be viewed any time on-line that teach people how to purchase and prepare low cost healthy meals that don’t come in a box or a bag. The Women, Infants and Children’s Program, or WIC, also teaches thousands of mothers each year how to prepare healthy meals for their children. And, programs like the Diabetes Association also teach people how to prepare basic recipes on a budget.



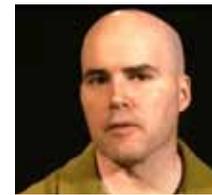
**Eight (Angela Bras)** Stop recommending high carbohydrate diets to people with diabetes. Unfortunately, even the Centers for Disease Control teaches people with diabetes that a diet of 150 carbohydrates a day will help them keep their blood sugar in control. That’s like telling

an alcoholic that what they need is a couple of beers a day to help them control their addiction to alcohol. While not every diabetic can easily follow a low carbohydrate diet at first, everyone should be offered information on how to do it, along with the support that anyone needs to make changes in the way they eat. And, when they learn that fats are part of a healthy diet, they won’t find themselves with the same cravings that they’ve always had on low-fat diets. And, for those who are truly addicted to carbohydrates, we need to offer the same kind of support we provide to those with other addictions.



**Nine (Jessica Williams)** Let’s stop making food a 24/7 opportunity. If people eat small meals throughout the day that include fats and proteins, like eggs, meats and cheeses, nuts and plenty of low-carb vegetables, then constant hunger

will not be a problem. And let’s take away the candy bars, drinks, chips and packaged food items found everywhere, like at check-out counters in stores. Even clothing stores sell candy bars at the register! What’s that for? And, let’s stop making food the universal option in our workplaces. There are other ways to be hospitable than to offer food at every meeting, especially when the options are usually the foods that we should only be eating on occasion, if at all.



**Ten (Rob Saint Laurent, M.Ed.)** We need to make exercise a regular part of the day. While we know from research that exercise by itself isn’t the most efficient way to lower body weight, we also know that regular moderate exercise is good for us, especially when part of our

routine and not as something we do once in a while when we have the time. There is more benefit over the long run from two daily fifteen-minute brisk walks than a two-hour workout at the gym once a week, and even more so when adding some resistance training to help maintain muscle and bone mass, functional strength and resting metabolism. The bottom line is that we need to make time throughout the day to be moving, whether at work or leisure. Can we find an alternative to those day-long conferences where the expectation is that we sit for hours on end without moving? People can listen just as well standing up for a while. And meetings don’t have to be in an office when a group can just as easily talk while walking.

**(David Weed, Psy.D.)** So, there you have it: ten recommended changes that can help us change course away from the poor nutrition and sedentary path we are following to a more natural way of living that fits what our bodies need. Of course, we didn’t say anything about reducing stress, getting more sleep or keeping our spirits up with joyous laughter and lots of communal celebration. But, let’s assume that we are truly in charge of the lives we are leading and not just enslaved by our political and economic structures that we have tolerated for so long. Making changes, even small ones, takes energy, sustained effort and courage, but the benefits can be enormous not only for ourselves but for the generations whose health will improve due to our willingness to change direction.

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# Fed Up on the South Coast Sequel Video Script

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This video, based on the contents of “Fed Up, The Movie,” was produced as an educational tool to increase understanding of the contribution of poor nutrition and lack of daily exercise to the poor health of the people living and working in the Massachusetts South Coast.

See the 20-minute video on-line at [www.gfrpartners.com/FedUp.html](http://www.gfrpartners.com/FedUp.html)

If you've seen the movie "Fed Up", you know that things have gone terribly wrong with the food supply in our country, and even all over the world. Not only are we eating too much food, we're eating and drinking the wrong food. Sugar sweetened beverages, added sugars in eighty percent of our food products, and a diet rich in refined grains and other carbohydrates is making a third of our population sick with diseases like diabetes and metabolic syndrome. Even heart disease and some cancers can be blamed on the diet we've been eating over the past thirty years.

Who's to blame for this emerging wave of obesity and related metabolic diseases? We've been told that it's our fault for not sticking to the low-fat diet recommended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture through its Food Pyramid, and now, MyPlate recommendations. We've also been told that we don't exercise enough. But, in fact, we have followed these recommendations. We've dropped the proportion of fats in our diets, and even increased our exercise over the past decade, but it hasn't worked. We're getting heavier and sicker every year, so something is terribly wrong with the advice we've been given.



Hi, I'm Dr. David Weed, and over the next twenty minutes, I want to follow-up the recommendations laid out in the film "Fed Up" as they would apply to people living in the South Coast, including the cities of Fall River and New Bedford.

Our area is already experiencing above average disease rates for obesity, diabetes, coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure and stroke. While the recommendations we're about to hear may seem controversial, they are based on good science and much more likely to lead to healthier lives than following the advice we've been given over the past thirty years that got us into this crisis in the first place."

In simple term, as the movie lays out in detail, on the advice of the government starting in the 1980s, food manufacturers began removing fats from many of the foods we eat. Everything from milk and yogurt, to bread, cereals, salad dressings and even baked potato chips and ice cream have all earned the "low-fat" designation thought to not only decrease heart disease, but also to help us lose weight. Boy were they wrong! With the fats gone, foods were soon laced with added sugars, a form of carbohydrate that's easily absorbed by the body, but, if not used for activity, immediately gets stored as body fat. We all thought that it was the fat in foods that was making us fat, when all along it was carbs. And, as the movie points out, even forty percent of the people who do not

gain a lot of weight on these foods still have gone on to develop metabolic syndrome and diabetes.

As we saw in the movie, people who struggle to lose weight eating low-fat foods continue to gain weight, even if they exercise strenuously and often. What they don't realize is that the excessive carbohydrates in these foods stimulated their bodies to produce more insulin which is the hormone responsible for storing unused energy as body fat. In fact, the recommendation of the USDA thirty years ago that all of us should eat six to eleven servings of grains, cereals, bread, potatoes and rice actually fueled the growing obesity crisis. With the help of government subsidies for sugar and corn, wheat and other grains, food producers followed suit with an abundance of products that were cheap and all so tasty. And, we were told that weight loss is all about "energy balance." But, what we haven't been told that a calorie is not a calorie if what we're eating is mostly sugar or foods that turn to sugar by the time they hit out stomachs. Today's USDA dietary recommendation still advocate a whopping 300 grams of carbohydrates a day, well over half of what most people can tolerate without steady weigh gain.

If we wanted to design a program to make the American population fatter, we couldn't have done a better job! Unfortunately, we're now stuck with a food supply that Nature never intended us to eat and that has addicted most of the population to eating, so much so that they won't easily give it up. And we don't just eat three times a day, because carbohydrates digest very quickly, we get hungry again in just a few hours. So, now, we have to "snack" throughout the day every few hours in response to the blood sugar crashes that we experience on this diet. Even our schools have responded with morning and afternoon snacks that simply maintain the carbohydrate addiction.

And, here on the South Coast, it doesn't help that our culture often reinforces the high carbohydrate consumption. Whether we're of Portuguese or Latino heritage, we're all too familiar with meals that include rice, potatoes and lots of bread. Add to that all of the pastries, cakes, cookies, ice cream and other foods that were moving from the category of occasional "treats" to standard parts of every meal, and you had a slowly-developing crisis in the making right here in our own community.

So, now not only are we as overweight and obese as the rest of the nation, the rates of diabetes, heart disease and some cancers are growing even faster. Right now, one out of five people over the age of sixty in our area has diabetes, and it's the single biggest

reason that people are admitted to our hospitals. While we're doing better at keeping people alive with these diseases, the length of time they are disabled with these illnesses is increasing as people are getting sicker at earlier and earlier ages. Even our teenagers are getting Type 2 diabetes, now the largest medical concern for this age group.

So, do we just sit by and watch these problems grow, or is there something we can do about it? While the solution is by no means easy, if we understand what made it happen, there are some solutions. As the movie "Fed Up" points out, it took over thirty years to get where we are now, so it's going to take a long time to fix the problem, but we can recall that we were in the same place with smoking thirty years ago. Over that time, we instituted laws, policies and regulations that gradually reduced the addiction to nicotine to less than half of what it once was. Can we do the same with our addition to high carbohydrate diets? Here are ten things we can do:



**One (Kim Ferreira, RD) Drastically reduce the quantity of sugar-sweetened beverages we consume.**

Already, many parents and our schools have gotten the message that soda is no longer on the menu. Unfortunately, youth use their own resources to continue to use these products, many of which are loaded with caffeine and can be very harmful when consumed in large doses. We need to stop offering these at other places where children purchase drinks, such as at sports events, festivals and entertainment venues. We should also recommend limitations on fruit juice and sports drinks which contains just as much sugar. And how about bringing back free water in bubblers in our parks and public places, most of which have gone unrepaired for years? Access to free water should be a right for everyone in every location. In addition, we need to teach people how to recognize and avoid added sugar in their food, much of which goes by many names. Let's teach people to read nutrition facts labels so they can limit the total daily amount of added sugars to 150 calories for men and 100 calories for women.



**Two (Derek Christianson) Get more locally-grown produce into the mouths of people on the South Coast.** A century ago, our area was one of the largest producers of fruits and vegetables, supplying Boston and New York City with fresh food throughout the growing

season. Fifty years ago, we started growing houses and malls, giving up some of our best land and losing important farming skills and knowledge in exchange for food imported from thousands of miles away. Now, our local farmers struggle to break even. We can reverse direction simply by purchasing local produce, even when it costs a bit more. Every purchase is a vote for local farms and farmers, and, in exchange, we get food that is not only fresher but grown not for its shelf-life but for its taste and nutrition. "Buy local" is not just a slogan, it's an investment in a future of healthier nutrition.



**Three (Marcia Picard) Stop kidding ourselves that the food we serve to children in our schools is good for them.** Yes, most of our schools are now compliant with USDA guidelines for healthy meals, but remember, it was these same

guidelines that got us into trouble in the first place. We need to be providing non-packaged, wholesome foods that tastes good, provide plenty of nutrition and teach children what healthy foods are. After all, these are schools we're talking about where children learn what we teach them about food as well as other subjects. So, in addition to buying locally-grown fruits and vegetables, and preparing meals that do not depend on the carbohydrates in potatoes, bread and desserts to satisfy children's hunger, let's get creative and make meals that they not only like, but are good for them. And, while we're at it, let's also make sure our hospitals are reducing the carbs in what they offer. It makes no sense to treat people for diabetes, then feed them high-carb meals when they come back for a visit. And our local employers should be encouraged to make those same changes in what they offer as well.



**Four (Mike Rocha, MD) Move away from "low fat" and "fat free" products.** Since the 1970s, we have been taught that fat is bad for us, but that is partially misleading. Recent research does not completely support the once accepted view

that saturated fat increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. While trans fats, most of which are man-made, do appear to negatively impact on our cardiovascular health, the other types of fats have not been shown to do so in a recent study. We need to shift our mindset and open ourselves to including natural