

What Most Physicians Don't Know About Nutrition, Health Span, and Lifespan

By Robert Ferguson

Before we begin, I want to speak from the heart.

This article is not an attack on doctors. I have the deepest respect for physicians and the sacrifices they make to care for others. I hope that you'll read the following with humility, curiosity, and a willingness to consider what many people, including some of the most well-meaning doctors, don't yet know.

Because here's the truth: most physicians receive very little training in nutrition. And that creates a huge blind spot, especially when we're talking about optimizing *health span* (how long we live in good health) and *lifespan* (how long we live, period).

The Missing Piece in Medical Education

Medical school is rigorous. It equips future doctors to diagnose diseases, prescribe medications, and perform life-saving procedures. But when it comes to *nutrition*, the curriculum often falls short—sometimes dramatically. On average, U.S. medical schools provide fewer than 20 hours of nutrition education over four years of training. Some offer less than 10. Some, none at all.

That's not the fault of the physicians. It's a systemic issue.

The result? Many doctors graduate without understanding how food influences inflammation, cellular health, chronic disease, energy levels, mental clarity, or even medication effectiveness. They're trained to manage illness, not necessarily to promote wellness. Yet for many patients, doctors become the first (and sometimes only) line of advice when it comes to health decisions, including nutrition.

Let Me Talk to My Doctor First

One of the most important supplements I recommend is called **BalanceOil+**. I don't say that lightly. I encourage nearly everyone I work with, clients, family, and friends, to consider taking it.

Why?

Most people, children and adults alike, live in a state of **omega-6 to omega-3 imbalance** and have **suboptimal omega-3 index levels**. Based on global data and third-party testing, it's estimated that over **95% of the population** would benefit from correcting this imbalance.

BalanceOil+ is a scientifically backed supplement made from wild-caught fish oils and polyphenols extracted from cold-pressed, unripe olives. Together, these ingredients are designed to restore omega-6 to omega-3 balance, increase your omega-3 index, and reduce chronic inflammation, factors that are deeply linked to your health span and lifespan.

Full disclosure: I am a partner with **Zinzino**, the company that makes BalanceOil+ available worldwide. But I don't solely promote this supplement because of a business relationship; I partnered with them because of the clinical results I've witnessed and the quality of the science behind it.

Still, even after this explanation, what I often hear is:

“Let me talk to my doctor first.”

And that's where things get complicated.

On the surface, consulting with your physician is a smart and responsible step. I support it, especially when it comes to medication interactions, new diagnoses, or major health interventions. But when it comes to nutrition and supplementation, most doctors are not trained or equipped to offer sound, evidence-based feedback.

Most physicians receive **less than 20 hours of nutrition education** throughout their entire medical school training. So, while institutions like the **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**, **Mayo Clinic**, **Cleveland Clinic**, **Harvard Medical School**, and **MD Anderson** acknowledge the clinical relevance of the **omega-6 to omega-3 ratio** and **omega-3 index**, these critical markers are not part of routine screening or patient education in most primary care settings.

Here's why these matters:

- An **imbalanced omega-6 to omega-3 ratio** promotes chronic inflammation and contributes to heart disease, insulin resistance, obesity, autoimmune conditions, and cognitive decline.
- A **low omega-3 index** is a strong predictor of cardiovascular events, mood disorders, and a shorter lifespan.
- Raising your omega-3 index (to 8–12%) and correcting fatty acid ratios improves cell membrane function, immune regulation, metabolic health, and even mitochondrial energy production.
- Omega-3s are essential to **brain structure and function**, and studies led by researchers such as **Dr. Joseph Hibbeln**, formerly with the National Institutes of Health, have shown that low levels of omega-3s are linked to increased risk of **depression, violent behavior, ADHD, and developmental challenges, including autism**.

With growing concerns about mental health, cognitive decline, dementia, and neurological disorders, improving omega-3 intake is not just helpful, it's critical. Dr. Hibbeln's work has emphasized the powerful behavioral and cognitive improvements seen when omega-3 levels are optimized.

These markers are now considered *predictive biomarkers*, as meaningful as fasting glucose or blood pressure, but most physicians are unfamiliar with how to test or address them.

This is why I often equip my clients with peer-reviewed articles and published research to take with them to their doctor. The goal isn't to override their physicians' authority, but rather to fill the gap with science and context that doctors may have never been exposed to.

And yes, there have been times when doctors initially told my clients “No” to BalanceOil+, only to reverse their stance after I followed up directly and provided them with the supporting evidence.

Here's the takeaway: Don't let a white coat stand in the way of a better conversation about your health. Ask better questions. Share the science. And recognize that improving biomarkers like the omega-3 index and the omega-6 to omega-3 ratio is not fringe, it's foundational.

Why Nutrition Must Come First

Consider this:

- Nearly 93 percent of American adults have some form of metabolic dysfunction, including insulin resistance, fatty liver, and high blood pressure.
- Chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and even some cancers are largely preventable, and sometimes reversible, through proper nutrition and lifestyle changes.
- The quality of your nutrition affects how your cells function, how quickly you age, how you feel day to day, and how long you ultimately live.

We now know that nutrition plays a central role in optimizing both health span and lifespan. But if your doctor never learned how to use food as medicine, how can they help you do it?

A New Era of Test-Based, Personalized Nutrition

We are in a new era, one where we can measure specific biomarkers that guide nutrition decisions. From dried blood spot (DBS) tests that reveal your omega-6 to omega-3 ratio (a key predictor of inflammation and disease risk), to insights on vitamin D, gut health, and fasting insulin, we can now test instead of guess.

But again, most physicians haven't been trained in how to interpret these tests, or how to make practical recommendations based on them.

As a clinical nutritionist, I often work with people who have been told their labs are "normal," when their levels are far from optimal. What's considered normal by outdated standards can still leave you fatigued, inflamed, and vulnerable to disease.

Let's Build a Better System, Together

I believe in building bridges, not burning them. Doctors play a vital role in diagnosis, emergency care, and medications. But when it comes to *living better, longer*, nutrition is foundational.

It's time for more collaboration between physicians and nutrition professionals. It's also time for patients to feel empowered, not just to take prescriptions, but to ask better questions, pursue better testing, and explore food as a powerful form of therapy.

You deserve more than symptom management. You deserve vibrant health.

If you would like to learn more about the at-home test and BalanceOil+, contact the person who shared this article, [schedule a free consultation](#), or email me with your questions and interest at robert@dietfreelife.com.

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