The 5-Second Rule

Almost everyone has dropped some food on the floor and still thought about eating it. If someone saw you drop it, he or she might have yelled, “five-second rule!” This so-called rule says food is okay to eat if you pick it up in five seconds or less. Sorry to say, but it’s not a good idea to eat it; and here’s why:

A clean-looking floor isn’t necessarily clean. Some germs can survive on the floor for a long time. So chances are that some bacteria are probably living on your kitchen floor.

Faster is better. Food left on the floor less than five seconds will probably collect fewer bacteria than food sitting there for a longer time.

Fast may not be fast enough. Bacteria can attach to your food as soon as it hits the floor. And foods with wet surfaces can pickup bacteria easily.

When in doubt, toss it out. Some bacteria may not be harmful, but others can give you awful symptoms like diarrhea. Bottom line: when in doubt, toss the delicious morsel out.

Organic Food: Is it Healthier?

What does “organic” mean anyway?

Organic food is grown without the use of conventional pesticides or artificial fertilizers. Organic foods can be processed without the use of ionizing radiation or food additives. Organic meats come from animals that were raised without use of antibiotics and without use of growth hormones. Also, at all levels, organic food is produced without use of genetically modified organisms.

So, is organic food healthier?

The answer is no. People who assume organic products are somehow more nutritious are mistaken. Crops grown without pesticides are not safer, healthier or more nutritious. This recent finding comes from a study by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine after a review of literature going back 50 years.

If you choose NOT to buy organic, you can reduce pesticide residues on foods with these tips:

- Wash and scrub produce under streaming water to remove dirt, bacteria, and surface pesticide residues; even produce with inedible skins such as cantaloupe. Don’t use soap.
- Remove the outer leaves of leafy vegetables.

Bulletin Board

Take a minute to take the Real Age test.
Go to www.realage.com to determine the difference between your calendar age and “real” biological age. The results may shock you!

Tai Chi - Slow Dance for Health

Tai chi consists of slow, balanced, low-impact movements. You have probably seen large groups practicing outdoors under the guidance of a teacher. Unless you are adept enough to solo, you need an instructor. Classes are often available at health clubs, colleges, adult education centers, and the YMCA.

Tai chi combines elements of a workout, meditation, and dance. It involves dozens of postures and gestures, performed in sequences known as “sets” or “forms,” derived from animal movements. It’s a bit like slow-motion karate or swimming in air.

To do the sets correctly, you must learn controlled breathing, concentration, how to shift your body weight, and how to relax your muscles. Tai chi offers physical and mental benefits for young and old, healthy and less so. It’s especially beneficial and safe for older people, even the very old. It’s a good complement to aerobic exercise and weight training.

Recent findings show tai chi improves balance and coordination. It is a highly adaptable adjunct to physical therapy and rehabilitation and can also help to reduce arthritis pain. Tai chi promotes relaxation and can improve sleep quality. Inactive older people who started tai chi regularly improved their ability to walk, lift weights, and run during a six-month period.