

## In This Issue:

The Halo Effect of Organic Foods

Managing Your Medical Records

JUNE SPECIAL: Hour Massage for \$50

Women's Wellness Center is  
Expanding!

Summer is in full swing and the specialists at RWWC want to help you look and feel your best! Throughout the month of June, we are offering special deals in the areas of nutrition, fitness, and beauty. Read below to learn more!

## The Halo Effect of Organic Foods

By: Jackie Wojciechowski, RD



In recent years "organic" foods have made their way into our lives, and even chain supermarkets. And most Americans purchase organic foods at least occasionally. However, the nutritional content of these foods may not vary greatly from conventionally produced foods. In addition, consumers typically consume larger portions of these foods merely because they are labeled "organic." Research on the nutritional differences between conventional and organic products is ongoing at this time. However, so far, few differences have been identified and were not across all products.

Organic foods are produced under the USDA's National Organic Program regulations. These regulations include specifications about how the foods are produced and the process practices required for a food to be certified organic, however these regulations do not claim nutritional or food safety benefits for organic products. This continues to be an ongoing debate among nutrition experts. However, the term "organic" comes with what experts are calling a "halo effect." The "halo effect" is how we as consumers perceive the nutritional content of a certain food, and extrapolate the same nutrition content to other foods with the same label.

This "halo effect" results in consumers perceiving an organic food to be more nutritious, and letting their guard down when it comes to being careful about counting calories - ultimately leading them to overeat or feel entitled to indulge. Research shows that consumers are more likely to claim that "organic" labeled products taste better, are lower in calories, lower in fat and higher in fiber. In most studies, no organic products were present, but merely labeled as "organic" to test consumer's perception.

There are still benefits to our population for eating and purchasing organic foods such as reduced nutrition pollution, improved soil organic matter, lower energy use, reduced pesticide residues in food and water and enhanced biodiversity. Some organic foods may contain more phytochemicals such as antioxidants compared to conventionally grown products. Organic food purchases can often integrate small to medium sized farms into high-value food markets. Overall facilitation of organic foods can be considered creating a healthful, sustainable food system.

So what can you, as a consumer, do to buy/use the best products on the market?

1. Read the Nutrition Label - The Nutrition Facts panel was designed for the consumer to make better nutrition-related decisions. This is the best way to differentiate between organic, local and conventional food items. Become familiar with nutrition and ingredient labeling as a means of choosing healthy products that will help in meeting your daily Food Guide Pyramid needs.
2. Reduce Your Calorie Intake - In order to make sure you are not experiencing the "halo effect" with organic food - first guess the caloric value of a food, and then double it. You'll end up being more accurate on calorie intake and you might even eat less.

*Jacqueline Wojciechowski is a registered dietician for Rittenhouse Women's Wellness Center. She has extensive experience in individual nutrition counseling with a special focus on weight management and diabetes patients.*

# Managing Your Medical Records

By: Dr. Jillan Rowbotham, Internal Medicine

Whether you have been relatively healthy your whole life or have been juggling a few chronic medical conditions, everyone can benefit from keeping a home record of their medical history. Though our office Electronic Medical Record system is able to keep an up to date account of your medical history, you want to be prepared for when medical emergencies happen on vacation or if you find yourself moving out of town or out of state. After all, you are your first and best healthcare advocate. Whether you want to store your information in a computer file or Google document or prefer to write things down in a dedicated notebook, every home medical record should contain the following:



- Current and previous medical conditions and any past surgeries, including when and why they were done.
- A current account of your family medical history including your siblings, parents, and grandparents.
- Allergies you have to any medications or foods.
- A list of current medications, don't forget to include any vitamins or supplements. You should also keep a separate list of medications you have taken and did not like or did not find helpful so that these can be avoided in the future.
- Dates of any adult vaccinations – you need a tetanus booster every ten years so this is one that people often lose track of.
- Dates and results of screening tests like PAP smears, mammograms, and colonoscopies. This will help ensure you do not fall behind on important cancer screening tests. Also, some insurance plans will not cover these tests if they are done too soon so knowing the dates can keep you from having to foot the bill.
- Any blood work and imaging tests (X-rays, CT scans, MRIs, etc) and when, where, and why they were done (i.e. what symptoms you were having that prompted the testing).
- Names of previous doctors you have seen and the practice address and phone number in case records need to be obtained at a later time

It can be useful to obtain and keep a copy of blood work or imaging studies for your own records but keep in mind lab and radiology reports are written by health care professionals for health care professionals. Many times the significance of results needs to be interpreted in the context why the tests were ordered. Variation from the range of normal does not necessarily indicate a serious problem and there are many things that may be incidentally discovered on CT scans and MRIs that don't mean anything negative to your health. Please be judicious with what and how you Google and if you ever have questions about previous blood work or imaging results please let us know! We would be happy to answer any questions you have.

*Dr. Rowbotham is a board certified internist who earned her medical degree from Philadelphia College of Physician and was one of the top residents at Main Line Health's Lankenau Hospital. Dr. Rowbotham is the co-founder of Physicians for Humanity and is also an active member of the American Medical Association, American College of Physicians, The Obesity Society and has been awarded the William Dickerson Memorial Award*

## JUNE SPECIAL: Hour Massage for \$50

### Only \$50 for an hour massage!

Therapeutic massages are recommended to address neck pain, depression, high blood pressure, lower-back pain, stress, constipation and improve athletic performance. Benefits experienced by individuals who receive regular sessions include improved circulation, the easing of aches, pain and stiffness, and improved flexibility. Massage also helps promote good digestion, better posture and restful sleep.



Call us at (215) 735-7992 or email us at [info@rwwc.com](mailto:info@rwwc.com) for an appointment.

## Women's Wellness Center is Expanding!

We'd like to thank you - our patients - for the wonderful positive feedback and loyalty we've received over the past two years! The response to our Center in the Rittenhouse and greater Philadelphia communities has been so great, we will be opening new **Women's Wellness Centers** in the surrounding areas in the very near future. We hope the expansion will help us serve you better through:

- more location and appointment options
- increased access to our doctors and experts
- better communication through online access



We are also very excited and proud of our updated website [www.rwwc.com](http://www.rwwc.com). We would love for you to explore it and hear your feedback. Simply email us at [info@rwwc.com](mailto:info@rwwc.com) with any comments. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to stay tuned in to upcoming openings and events!

## About Us

The Rittenhouse Women's Wellness Center provides Internal Medicine, Nutrition, Fitness, Emotional Well-Being and Skin Care Services for women. Our goal is to provide our patients with an integrated approach to health and well-being.

