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Food for healthy bones and proper brain function

Whether we like it or not, it seems that everywhere we go we are being asked to pay attention to our health and our body, to treat both carefully and with respect. The social consensus requires that the handling of the resource "human" is oriented on performance. Health insurances urge us to lose weight and to improve our fitness. In Japan, this has already turned into a huge "must do". Government, employers and health insurance companies, in a concerted action, have committed the people to diets and physical activities.



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This trend will certainly be a long lasting one, because the fact is that people are getting older and the costs for healthcare are skyrocketing and as a result certain counter measures are needed. This development is also good business creating new jobs and markets, therefore contributing to its longevity.

The food industry has also discovered this market. Increasingly food products are assuming the task that nutritional supplements have carried for a long time, namely to revive hope that the intake of such products will remedy various ailments, correct misbehavior and delay ageing. The EU with its health claims and the respective high requirements for scientific verifications has tried to stop the easy going way of handling promises of salvation, but this will not halt the development.

The consumers will give in to the social pressure of a fit and efficient appearance. Even pupils are trimmed for performance with nutritional supplements and sometimes even drugs because parents fear that their offspring might not be able to cope with the competition.

This trend initiated a change of paradigms on the food market in terms of claimed properties. The promises are no longer "against something", but rather "in favor of something", not against lack of selenium but for a healthy metabolism of the body's cells. This approach facilitates marketing and usage as everybody wants to do something for the good, especially if it is much easier than getting information about foods, their quality and effects on the human body or just being concerned with a balanced diet.

The number of functional ingredients and their promised functionalities are on the rise. In the future, consumers can chose what to buy in order to do themselves or their loved ones something good. Cereals for breakfast promote attention and cogitation, a lunchtime snack can activate the metabolism, in the afternoon a sweet treat lifts one's spirits without weight gain and in the evening there is dinner that supports healthy bones or is good for virility.

Up to now, the baking industry was rather cautious in terms of functional ingredients. The largest hit was omega-3, but this was some years ago. In the future, will it be sufficient to say "bread is healthy" or will the industry need a differentiated approach to this subject? Is it possible, after all, to combine baked goods and functionality? In some cases, perhaps, but not always! It is necessary to deal with this subject because the other industries providing water, non-alcoholic drinks and dairy products are already active on the functional food market and the capacity of a human stomach is limited.

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