More Claptrap from the American Dietetic Association
by Dr. Jonny Bowden, Ph.D. CNS, aka "the rouge nutritionist"

The American Dietetic Association is at it again, working tirelessly to make sure that the only nutrition information you get is from members of their union.

I've said it before and I'll say it now: I consider the American Dietetic Association one of the most destructive influences on eating behavior in America.

They never met a government policy they didn't like. They believe supplements aren't important. They've continue to promote high-carb low-fat diets. They believe there's no such thing as a bad food, no surprise since a huge percentage of their corporate sponsorship comes from industry and Big Food. They've never had an original thought in their collective head.

One small story about the ADA that may help shed light on just what they're all about. The American Dietetic Association once tried to stop the late nutritionist Shari Lieberman, PhD, CNS, RD from using her RD as a professional credential.

Why, you ask? Because she broke from the party line and actually recommended vitamin and mineral supplements.

Lieberman sued the ADA, won full rights to her degree, then promptly stopped using it. "The CNS exam asks you what enzyme activates the pancreatic enzyme trypsinogen into its active form", she once told me. "The RD exam asks you questions like "how do you make a lemon meringue pie."

Remember, folks, next time you're in a hospital, these are the people responsible for the jello, mashed potatoes and apple juice.

Asking the American Dietetic Association to be the final say in nutrition education is like asking the Taliban to teach a college course in world religions at Harvard.

This time the ADA is up to its old tricks again, working behind the scenes to try to insure that anyone who is not an RD will be unable to dispense advice about nutrition. In California, the bill eliminates from legitimate nutrition counseling practice all CNs, CNSs, CCNs, and those with graduate degrees including PhD's.

The fine for practicing "dietetics" (a vague and incompletely defined term) without an RD is $1000.00 and/or six months in jail.

They've done this before, notably in Wisconsin and New York, and now they're trying to do it in California.

Here's the drill. Lobbyists for the ADA- with lobbying firepower second only to the NRA — attempt to get legislation passed to create stringent licensing for all nutrition professionals. Sounds good, right?

They hide behind the mask of trying to "protect" the public from unscrupulous practitioners and unqualified "experts", something no one- let alone time-pressed legislatures – would object to.

After all, who would object to licensing professionals? Who wouldn't vote for a bill to protect consumers and make sure that people practicing in the health field knew what they're talking about?

Problem is, it's all a crock. The only purpose of the legislation is to limit the practice of nutrition to RDs only.

This is union protectionism at its worst. The ADA essentially fights to keep anyone who is not in their "union" from practicing nutrition. This includes- hold on to your hats- MDs, Chiropractors, Clinical nutritionists, licensed acupuncturists, CNS's, CCNs and even folks with a masters degree in nutrition. Under the ADA- sponsored bills, my friend Mark Houston, MD– a professor of medicine who also holds a masters in nutrition from the rigorous Bridgeport University nutrition program— would not be able to dispense nutritional advice professionally.

If you think these bills are about protecting the public, I've got a nice bridge near Brooklyn I'd like to sell you.

One recent horror story: Liz Lipsky, PhD, one of the foremost nutritionists in the country, was denied licensure in North Carolina and is now appealing through the courts. She sent in her CV, doctoral thesis, doctoral course materials, master's thesis, CCN scope of practice, descriptions of every course she had taken that might meet their minimum qualifications, lists of all conferences she has attended since 1979, papers she's published, books she's written, etc.

She was still denied licensure because she didn't meet their "minimal requirements" (an RD- aka "union card").

Yet the ADA would have you think that these politically motivated bills are about protecting the public against advice they might get from the likes of Dr. Lipski.

I'm frequently asked about the differences between dietitians and nutritionists, so here's the executive summary:

Dietitians

*****have a policy that there is no such thing as a good or bad food. They endorse white refined sugar, egg beaters (fake eggs), Ensure, McDonald's meals, and chemical and bioengineered additives including MSG and rBGH bovine growth hormone.

*are extremely cautious in recommending supplementation, and in the circumstances when their policy does allow for this, it is limited to the RDA (recommended daily allowance suggested by the US govt.)

Nutritionists

*recognize the positive and negative effects of different foods, such as the type of fat content, amount of processing/refinement, and chemical properties and additives, including as they relate to clinical conditions.

*utilize current bio-nutrient research to recommend diets and/or supplements appropriate for individual's specific condition.

Examination Preparation An excellent way to illustrate the difference between Dietitians and Nutritionists is by the test question categories used by their certification boards to evaluate skills.

Registered Dietitian Certification

Majority of questions (60%) are on non-science topics, such as:

1. Purchase of kitchen equipment and its placement for efficient operation.
2. Institutional cooking and food preparation techniques
3. Inventory control and buying practices
4. Labor management, time management, etc.
5. Economics
6. Government programs such as food stamps, surplus, etc.

Nutritionist Certification

Majority of questions (over 90%) are on nutrition science topics such as:

1. Human anatomy and physiology
2. Disease states
3. Metabolic pathways
4. Interpretation of blood and urine analysis as it pertains to nutritional status
5. Drug and nutrient interactions
6. Vitamin, mineral, amino acid, and dietary and herbal therapies

What you also need to know is that virtually all the information you get about nutrition from popular magazines can be linked back to some official party line from the American Dietetic Association. Trust me, I know. Having written for popular magazines for almost 20 years and dealt with editors and administrators from almost every well-known publication in America, I can tell you that most are almost afraid to publish anything about nutrition that does not contain the phrase, "According to a spokesperson from the American Dietetic Association..".

When I hear the phrase, "According to a spokesperson from the American Dietetic Association….", I run the other way.

I'm all for licensing and for professional standards.

But the idea that only RDs meet the requirements for licensing is simply absurd.

It’s a political maneuver by the ADA which has absolutely nothing to do with protecting the public, and *everything* to do with protecting its membership.

Shame on you, American Dietetic Association.

Once again.

More about Dr. Jonny Bowden