

stateside



HEALTHY FOOD IS BECOMING THE
DRUG OF CHOICE IN THE US.
HY MARIAMPOLSKI DIGESTS
SOME EXAMPLES

YUMMY DRUGS

The lines between foods and pharmaceuticals are blurring as Americans persist in expecting their meals to be more than nutritious and delicious. They increasingly want distinct therapeutic benefits from foods—sharpened attention, energy, relaxation, disease prevention, anti-aging and palliative care.

Americans, panicked by security threats and fearful of body invasion by microbes and

pathogens, have adopted ideas about disease suggesting that human ills may be managed by reducing stress and consuming curative foods. Furthermore, the AIDS crisis and the aging of the Baby Boomers have left everyone fretful about the strength of their immune systems.

“Yoga moms” concerned about what their children are ingesting, parents are demanding not only pure and wholesome foods but also

ingredients that toughen their kids against the chemical assault surrounding them.

Interestingly, much of the activity is taking place in categories normally associated with “junk food” – where competitors typically are condemned for causing obesity and tooth rot.

Miracle ingredients increasingly are the focus of functional foods. A line of pomegranate juices marketed by Los Angeles-based POM

Wonderful emphasises heart benefits in its packaging and promotions. “Amaze your cardiologist,” reads one ad featuring this brand’s curiously anthropomorphic bottle attached to the wires of a cardiogram.

A trip to the treats counter nowadays requires ploughing through numerous snacks promoting their antioxidant content and other remarkable ingredients, such as soy protein, omega-3 fatty acids and yerba mate. Eating GeniSoy bars daily in such flavours as Arctic Frost Crispy Chocolate Mint claims to be “A Good Habit for Better Health.” Luna Bars by Clif Bar Inc. based in Berkeley, CA targets the women’s market directly and implies its health benefits by supporting the Breast Cancer Fund.

No one is surprised that a newly launched lunch destination in downtown San Francisco’s upscale Crocker Galleria has chosen the name “Medicine.” It features such innovations to the American menu as Sesame “Tofu” and a “cold soup of kanten and silver ear mushroom shavings in sweet coconut broth.” Seeking to re-appropriate the idea of medicine away from the “prescriptive and reactive directions” of the American medical-industrial complex, co-owner Skye Thompson particularly recommends Medicine’s Maitake Mushroom Tempura as a delicious way to reduce risks of lung and breast and liver cancer.

According to Packaged Facts the dramatic growth of functional food products is due to their “rapidly finding a place in mainstream grocery channels and on mainstream American tables” rather than being confined to smaller health food outlets.

We may not think of maitake mushrooms quaffed down by a bracing açai juice as American food just yet; however, the “food-as-drug” category is expected to continue growing substantially for quite some time.

Fieldwork Please

47 London Road
Enfield
Middlesex
EN2 6DS
tel: 020 8245 8000
fax: 020 8245 8080
info@indiefield.co.uk

indiefield

www.indiefield.co.uk