WELLNESS FULFILMENT LONGEVITY
How to live a disease free and amazing life

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Chapter 2 - Longevity Nations: The Hunzakuts

Jay Hoffman in Hunza, Secrets of the world’s healthiest and oldest living people agrees with doctors and medical professionals who theorise that human beings can live to 120 and beyond. Dr Edward L Bortz, former President of the American Medical Association, claims that man should have a life span of 150 years, “A dog is full grown physically at 2 years and has an average life expectancy of 12 years. At 1 ½ years of age a cat is fully grown and has a life expectancy of 10 years. At 4 years a horse is fully grown and has a life expectancy of 25, accordingly if a man is physically mature at 25, then he should have an average normal life span of 150 (1, Pg.232).”

The Hunzakuts, commonly referred to as the Hunza, reside in the Hunza Valley of the Karakorum Mountains in Northern Pakistan. This fair skinned race of people are said to descend from several soldiers of Alexander the Great’s army who arrived in the region in the 4th century BCE though genetically, they are linked to the Afghans, Sinti Romani, (Gypsies), and East Asians. They are recorded to have lived up to 120 although some dispute this.

The Hunza region of the Himalayas is of exceptional beauty and legend claims that it is the mythical home of the lost city of Shangri La. Unlike the myth, the Hunzakuts are very real but they did possess some extraordinary characteristics that have drawn researchers to the remote valley since the turn of the 20th century.

In stark contrast to the tribes surrounding them, the Hunzakuts are endowed with long, strong, healthy lives. Their remarkable health and endurance was kept a secret for nearly 2,000 years because of their remote location, however the age of exploration exposed them to enquiring doctors, scientists, and researchers who traveled to the region to study and document the diet, lifestyle, customs, and philosophies of this curious and remarkable nation of people. Unfortunately, a modern transport network has been built in the Hunza Valley, exposing the people to different diets and customs. Currently, they eat a more Western diet and disease now exists within their community, thus, the following description of their way of life is written in the past tense.

Not only did the Hunzakuts outlive surrounding tribes, they also outlived the average Westerner and they did so in complete health and disease free. Men were able to father children into their 90’s and women were blessed with abundant fertility. Most Hunzakut men and women surpassed their centennial birthday but hardly looked over half a century old. Cardiovascular disease, the number one killer in the Western world, did not exist in Hunza. Cancer was unknown as well as strokes, digestive disorders, and mental health troubles. There was no crime, therefore there were no jails or police yet they were no more supernatural than you or I. Their vitality, virility, wellbeing, and happiness were a direct result of their simple and rich diet and lifestyle.
At the turn of the 20th century, a renowned English surgeon, Dr. Robert McCarrison sought to discover the origin of disease in Asia and to what extent diet played a role in the individual's health. Among those he studied were the Hunzakuts.

“My own experience provides and example of a race unsurpassed in perfection of physique and in freedom from disease in general. I refer to the people of the State of Hunza, situated in the extreme northernmost point of India. The Span of life is extremely long amongst these people and such service as I was able to render them during the seven years I spent in their midst was confined chiefly to the treatment of accidental lesions, the removal of senile cataracts, plastic operations for granular lids, or the treatment of maladies wholly unconnected with food supply. During the period of my association with these people, I never saw a case of asthenic dyspepsia, of gastric or duodenal ulcer, or appendicitis, of mucous colitis, or cancer….Among these people the “abdomen oversensitive” to nerve impressions, to fatigue, anxiety or cold was unknown. The consciousness of the existence of this part of their anatomy was, as a rule, related solely to the feeling of hunger. Indeed, their buoyant abdominal health as, since my return to the West, provided abdominal contrast with the dyspeptic and chronic lamentations of our highly civilized communities (2, Pg 95).”

Many factors contributed to the extraordinary health and longevity of the Hunza people including their unique and isolated location with its mineral rich soil, pure glacial waters, and clean high altitude air. However, there are many tribes who inhabit the same general area, benefiting from the same pure resources but they are plagued by disease. Those who traveled to the region and lived among the Hunzakut people revealed that the mystery of their incredible wellness, longevity, and fulfilment was simply a healthy diet and lifestyle.

**Vegetables**

A remarkable characteristic of the Hunzakuts was that they subsisted mainly on vegetarian foods. This was because they did not have enough land to graze a large number of cattle. What land they had was used for the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, and grains, the basic foods of the Hunza people.

The Hunzakuts ate large quantities of spinach with every meal as well as carrots, potatoes, radishes, pulses that were carefully sprouted, lettuce, peas, turnips, and various herbs. Their cooking capabilities were limited by their lack of fuel so they either ate their vegetables lightly cooked or lightly steamed. Salads were popular and served with either grape vinegar or apricot kernel oil.

**Fruit**

Apricots were the staple of the Hunzakut diet. Every family grew as many trees as their land would support and every part of the fruit was consumed. In the summer months apricots were eaten fresh while preparations were made for the long winter months. Apricots were sun dried on rooftops so they could be eaten year round.
The apricot, however, has a secret. The kernel of the Apricot, or pit, that is most often discarded is a nutrient powerhouse and the Hunzakuts ground it into oil which was used on salads, for cooking, as a food supplement.

The Hunzakuts also grew and ate peaches, cherries, pears, and apples. The Hunzakuts did not have toothpaste, brushes, or dentists yet they had healthy white teeth. The apple is one method used to aid dental hygiene as its acid acts as a potent germicide in the mouth while also cleaning and massaging the gums with each bite.

**Meat & Poultry**

While the Hunzakuts were not strict vegetarians, they rarely consumed meat. The Hunza people did not have enough food and pasture land to raise animals for slaughter. The lack of refrigeration meant that when an animal was slaughtered for a special occasion, the meat was consumed immediately. The Hunzakuts did not keep chickens because they ate the seeds that the Hunzakuts use for their own consumption and food production. Therefore they did not eat poultry including eggs.

**Dairy**

There were few cows in the Hunza Valley. It is a harsh environment where the cow struggles to survive and it competes for vital resources. Instead the Hunzakuts raised goats and yaks in the higher altitude areas of the valley. From the milk of the goat they produced buttermilk, yogurt, and cheese. The curing process removed casein and lactose. They did not consume animal milk.

**Grains**

The first crop of the year was barley, then millet, wheat and then buckwheat. The Hunzakuts also produced and consumed large amounts of millet, an ancient and highly nutritious grain.

The Hunzakuts made bread called chapatti which, depending on the season, used wheat grain, millet, barely, buckwheat, and ground pulses such as chickpeas and ground beans. While they did eat bread, grains accounted for a very small portion of their diet which shall be discussed in further chapters.

**Sugar**

The Hunzakuts had no refined sugar. The only sugar in their diet was found in their fruits which were “astonishingly sweet and of magnificent quality (3, Pg. 105).”

**Drinking and smoking**

The Hunzakuts consumed moderate amounts of red wine and tea. There is no indication from the research available whether they drank coffee and they did not smoke.
The Hunzakuts believed in the power of prayer, in the benefits of positive thinking, mindfulness, and love for their fellow man. They were committed to their way of life and lived in the moment without stress or fear. They were truly a nation of happy people which contributed to their health and longevity. The impact of stress on our bodies will be examined in chapters to follow.

Below: a must see clip on Hunzakuts

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHFljio9KhI&feature=related

There are other nations living today with evidence of longevity. The link below is a spreadsheet I have assembled containing a comparison of eight longevity nations in the world today including the Hunzakuts, the Okinawa of Japan, the Bama of China, the Symi of Greece, the Compodimele of Italy, the Nicoya of Costa Rica, the Loma Linda of the USA, and the Montacute of England.

For mobile phone and tablet users it would be best to see below link on a large screen.


The current Western diet revolves around our taste buds and cravings. I love food as much as the next culinary enthusiast but I have come to understand that we truly are what we eat, as the old saying goes. Every fiber of the human body is run on the food that we eat, “ Should we eat good nutritious food, we are going to have healthy bodies: but if we eat food that is demineralized, devitalized, and diseased, it is only natural that we will have sick bodies. Modern civilization today does not think that way. All that the average Mr. and Mrs. Public consider is the way food tastes. Most people are more interested in the type of oil they put in their automobiles than they are in the type of food they put in their stomachs (3, Pg. 231).”

Whether by trial and error, hereditary knowledge, or simply instinct, the Hunzakus had a diet that was complete in minerals and vitamins in amounts exceeding the modern daily recommended allowances by sometimes up to 100 times. This was the key to their exceptional health. Their diet was 99% vegetarian, yet there are many people today who eat a plant based diet and live a healthy lifestyle, yet they have not escaped from disease. There are plenty of vegetarians who have cancer, for instance. The key is providing the body with all the minerals and vitamins it requires. Take one key mineral or vitamin away and the whole system can malfunction. If you can imagine for a moment, the mechanics of a car: it needs fuel as the body needs nutrients. In order for the car to move, the spark plugs needs to fire to push the pistons down and ultimately make the car wheels turn. The waste of the burning fuel is then sent to the catalytic converter where it is cleaned and leaves the car via the exhaust. In the body, pH (which will be discussed in the chapter to follow) acts as the spark and the waste material is sent to the organs via the lymph system. Leftovers are expelled via
the digestive tract. Conveniently, the catalytic converter in a car can be changed. Should one piston stop firing over time the catalytic converter will melt and the car will come to a halt. In our body our organs and critical systems of the body cannot be replaced (other than via transplants), therefore, the fuel put into the body must be nutritious and complete in all minerals and vitamins to keep its parts in healthy working order. Without every piston firing in a car, the machine will over time not operate. Without all the minerals and vitamins in the body present and in adequate quantities, it cannot function.

In later chapters I will explain how to plan your diet to make sure it contains all the correct minerals and vitamins in the necessary amounts.


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