

The China Study

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Published in 2005, **The China Study** is a seminal work in nutritional science. It presents the findings of a 20-year epidemiological project—the China-Oxford-Cornell Diet and Health Project—to argue that a whole-food, plant-based (WFPB) diet is the key to preventing and reversing chronic disease.

1. The Core Research: The "Grand Prix" of Epidemiology

The study examined 6,500 adults across 65 rural counties in China, serving as a unique living laboratory due to diverse regional diets but homogeneous genetics.

- **The Control Group Advantage:** Rural Chinese populations offered a clearer look at diet-disease links than Western populations with uniform diets.
- **The Fat/Cholesterol Divide:** Researchers found more than 8,000 significant associations, linking animal-based foods to blood cholesterol and "diseases of affluence" like heart disease and diabetes.

2. Turning Cancer On and Off (The Casein Studies)

Before the population study, Dr. Campbell's lab research revealed a staggering discovery about casein, the primary protein in cow's milk:

- **The "Switch":** Cancer growth could be turned on/off by adjusting casein intake. A 20% casein diet promoted rapid liver lesions, while 5% halted development.
- **Plant Protein Distinction:** Plant-based proteins (wheat/soy) did not promote cancer growth, even at the 20% level.

3. Diseases of Affluence vs. Poverty

The authors categorize illness based on socioeconomic factors:

- **Diseases of Poverty:** Infectious diseases and malnutrition.

- **Diseases of Affluence:** Heart disease, obesity, and cancer. As nations gain wealth, they often swap plant diets for processed animal proteins, causing these diseases to spike.

4. The 8 Principles of Food and Health

1. Nutrition represents the combined effect of countless food substances; the body is an orchestra.
2. Vitamin supplements are not a panacea; nutrients work best in their natural matrix.
3. Animal foods offer virtually no nutrients that are not better provided by plants.
4. Genes supply the blueprint, but nutrition determines if they are expressed.
5. Nutrition can control the adverse effects of noxious chemicals.
6. Nutrition that prevents disease can also halt or reverse it in later stages.
7. Nutrition beneficial for one chronic disease supports health across the board.
8. Good nutrition creates health in all areas of our existence: physical, mental, and spiritual.

The Ultimate Takeaway: The China Study fundamentally altered the global conversation on veganism. Its call to reduce processed foods and animal fats in favor of plant-derived foods remains a pillar of modern preventative medicine.