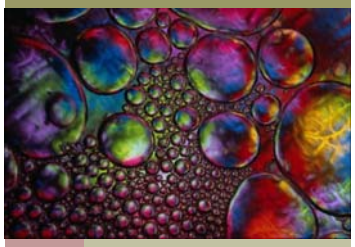


THE WOLFE CLINIC

OXYGEN AS A NUTRIENT

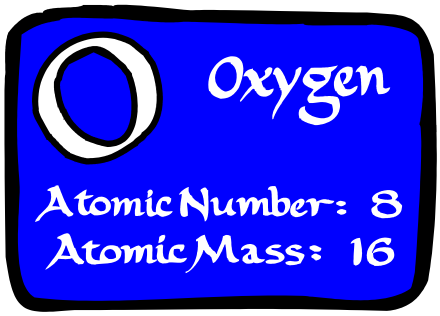
# Oxygen... The Breath Of Life

Let's set the record straight once and for all: Oxygen IS the most VITAL nutrient the body needs. It needs a CONSTANT supply of oxygen and can NEVER do without it! You can put this simple but powerful truth to the test: See how long you can hold your breath before passing out. A person can survive for days without water, weeks without food, but only a few minutes without air!

Yet in spite of the obvious fact that oxygen is absolutely essential to the sustaining of human life, nearly all nutritionists refuse to recognize it as a valuable nutrient. To make my point, two pieces of evidence are presented, one from orthodox science and the other from alternative health side.

Principles of Nutrition by Eva D. Wilson, Katherine H. Fish, and Pilar A. Garcia, has been a standard textbook in college and university nutrition classes for some years. The 4th edition (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1979), while a bit dated in some of the information, still pretty much typifies the attitude that is prevalent regarding what the proper nutrients ought to be.

"The science of nutrition is the science of nourishing the body. To function, the body needs certain chemical substances, for which the general term is nutrients. Some of the nutrients cannot be synthesized by the body – at least not in amounts sufficient to satisfy the need for them; others the body can produce. Food is the source of the nutrients the body cannot synthesize (except for vitamin D) and the source of the chemical elements to produce the others. Nutrition deals with THESE nutrients.




## The most VITAL nutrient...

Foods provide six major classes of nutrients: carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, minerals, vitamins, and water, each serving specific functions in the body. Some of THESE nutrients supply energy. All of them build and maintain cells and tissues and regular the body processes."

As useful and instructive as the foregoing excerpts may be, there is no reference made anywhere to oxygen – none whatsoever! Foods are the only emphasis given as being the primary source for the essential nutrients listed. But what about air? Isn't oxygen (and the other gases mixed with it) just as necessary and purposeful? One would expect such narrowly defined thinking from the orthodox crowd; but what about those from the alternative health side? Since they seem to be quite open-minded on other non-orthodox health matters, one would think they might include oxygen as a needful nutrient.

The apparent lack of virtually all nutritionists to properly recognize oxygen as the legitimate nutrient it is, stems from how they were taught by their predecessors and those before them and so forth. The ignorance of the matter is continually perpetuated because no one seems to know any better.

# The most VITAL nutrient

By the very reasons of how they interpret their own science of nutrition, nutritionists should regard oxygen as a valid nutrient. Were they to do so, oxygen would be treated just as any other officially recognized nutrient is:

The nutritive characteristics of oxygen would be examined.

The nutritive functions of oxygen would be investigated.

The body's quantitative need for it would be studied.

The effects of an inadequate intake OR sometimes excessive intake of oxygen would be looked into.

Oxygen's role in the digestion of food would be taken into account.

Oxygen's participation in the absorption of the end products would be clarified.

The manner in which oxygen is fully utilized in the body would also be of great interest.

The interrelationships that occur between oxygen and nutrients would become part of any legitimate research.

A study of those internal systems that salvage oxygen for reuse or eliminate it as part of byproduct waste would, likewise, be initiated.

The forgoing steps have been taken by the science of nutrition in its methodical and careful exploration of every single nutrient which has thus far been classified as such. Only oxygen remains on the outside looking in, un-included more out of ignorance than anything else. The irony becomes even more striking when one realizes that the average lay person with just a little intelligence can see the common sense of classifying this invisible gas a nutrient, whereas the most learned nutritional educators around would likely see no need for something such as this.

If the science of nutrition is, indeed, the science of nourishing the body, then, pray tell, what does oxygen do? It's certainly more than just another atmospheric element through which birds and planes fly. It is, after all, the essence of our very existence. For oxygen nourishes us in ways we know and in ways we know not of (as yet).

In a popular rock song of the early 1970's, the singer says that all he needs in the air that he breathes and to love his

# Nutritionists recognize oxygen as a legitimate nutrient!

lover. The admission in a love song that respiration comes before romance is a potent testimony to the fact that breathing is our most urgent need. The trillions of cells in the body require a continuous supply of oxygen to carry out their many vital functions. We cannot live without oxygen for even a few minutes, as we can without food or water. Furthermore, as our cells use oxygen, they give off carbon dioxide, a waste product the body must get rid of on a regular basis.

The major function of the respiratory system is to fulfill these needs, which are to supply the body with oxygen and dispose of carbon dioxide. To accomplish this, at least four distinct processes, collectively called respiration, must occur:

1. Pulmonary ventilation. Air must be moved in and out of the lungs so that the gases in the air sacs (alveoli) of the lungs are continuously changed and refreshed. This movement is commonly called ventilation or breathing.

2. External respiration. Gas exchange (oxygen loading and carbon dioxide unloading) occurs between the blood and air at the lung alveoli.

3. Transport of respiratory gases. Oxygen and carbon dioxide must be transported between the lungs and the cells on the body. This is accomplished by the cardiovascular system, which uses blood as the transporting fluid.

Internal respiration. At the systemic capillaries, gases are exchanged between the blood and the tissue cells. (The use of oxygen and the production of carbon dioxide by tissue cells, called cellular respiration, is the CORNERSTONE of all energy-producing chemical reactions in the body.)

The lungs are the chief organs (other than through the skin) through which we obtain nearly all of our necessary oxygen. Since the heart is tilted slightly to the left of the median plane of the thorax, the two lungs differ slightly in shape and size. The left lung is somewhat smaller than the right, and the cardiac notch – a concavity in the left lung's medial aspect – is molded to and accommodates the heart.

The lungs consist largely of air tubes and spaces. The balance of the lung tissue or its stoma is a framework of connective tissue containing numerous elastic fibers. As a result, the lungs are light, soft, spongy, elastic organs that each weighs only about 1.25 pounds. The elasticity of healthy lungs helps to reduce the effort of breathing.

Each lung, if viewed sideways, appears as an overspreading, multiple-branched tree. Paralleling the 23 orders of air tubes in both lungs are divisions and sub-divisions of primary bronchi emanating from

# Nutritionists recognize oxygen as a legitimate nutrient!

where the trachea or windpipe divides itself at the bottom of the neck. Around, in between and alongside these cause numerous sized veins, range large pulmonary arteries to threadlike pulmonary capillaries. Because of its complex branching pattern, the conducting network in the lungs is often referred to in modern anatomy as the bronchial tree. From which, wonderful and sustaining oxygen is conducted into the body and depleted waste gases are exited.

Think of oxygen as a single currency before it's inhaled. But once taken inside the lungs' banking system and diverted to a number of different exchanges, it becomes converted into other forms of chemical currencies which makes it more easily spent. This way it can be used and appropriated wherever needed, even down to the tiniest of tiny cells. But just as troubles routinely occur in the world's financial systems, so do some biological problems occure with the lungs' own bank to slow or decrease the in-flow of oxygen and the out-going of carbon dioxide.

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