

The Importance of Health and Diet Seen in Latin America

A Unification Church Missionary in Latin America

May 1976

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The Latin American diet includes a preponderance of starches and sugars, which contributes to obesity and a variety of other health problems.

Health is not a usual category for a report, but I think it's probably an important one in these countries. Even though both of my friends came from middle-class families they have a number of health problems caused by a poor diet. Most Latin American women are overweight by age 30, often before. One of my friends knows about health and nutrition and he has counseled both of them.

The primary problem is that people here don't like and don't eat very many vegetables. Their diet is primarily starches and meat, sugar, oil, and fruits. We think this is a big reason for their many health problems. One of my friends didn't eat vegetables before, but now she has begun to eat and like them. As a result, most of her health problems (i.e., allergies, skin infections, constipation, tiredness) have cleared up. Also, both she and the other one have lost weight.

The people here also "run on" coffee, which is very bad for their health. I've stopped drinking coffee and we only occasionally eat anything with sugar in it. This has also helped me spiritually and physically. Improving my friends' diets has been quite a big factor in how well they feel and can work each day. It's clear that in these countries poor diets slow down the achievements of the people.