

## **Food Faddism**

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### **Summary**

Food faddism is as an exaggerated belief in the impact of food and nutrition on health and disease. Food faddists insist that food and nutrition are more significant than science has established. Such thinking frequently leads people to overestimate the beneficial effects of some foods (e.g., whole grains such as unpolished rice) and condemn others (e.g., refined sugars, flour and grains such as polished rice). Apprehension about particular foods or food components or about food manufacturing processes has led many people to adapt unorthodox food practices and to seek nonconventional approaches to nutrition. Many sensible, sincere people are also motivated to seek alternative food styles for ecological reasons. They are worried about environmental pollution through the use of agricultural chemicals and have turned to "organic" and other types of "health" foods. People have been led to believe that food grown without the use of pesticides or artificial fertilizers but with the application to the soil of natural fertilizers and other organic matters are more nourishing and less hazardous. They put an absolute faith in "organic" food and, as a corollary, ask for provision of evidence of absolute safety, an unrealistic and unattainable goal, with the application of new technologies such as genetic engineering to food production. When scientists discover that some component in a conventional food staff can be the risk factor for some life-style related disease, many people lose their faith in conventional nutrition and adopt approaches with the emphasis on new materials. Heightened health awareness caused by increase in information transfer, mainly through the mass media, has created expectations that at present exceed the ability of science to deliver. So-called health hustlers with application of pseudoscience take advantage of this situation. They promote tailor-made products and systems, which they insist, help one to resist disease, improve overall health or slow the aging process.