

What took us away from Grandmother/Mother's nutritious food? Is it time to return back?

by- Mahi Doshi

As someone who is living away from my hometown for studies, I think I can easily tell what is the one thing that I dearly miss apart from my family. It's homemade food. I remember growing up in an environment that was rich in food and nutritional value. I grew up seeing my mom using all the special culinary tricks that she learned from her mother while cooking. There is nothing that can stop me from having that sambhar she cooks or the dhokla she makes. Not only was the food cooked at home nutritional but also had its intricacies and burst of flavors. Don't you agree? Can I also just give a special mention to the fact that homemade food is cooked with love that will always remain unmatched?

We progress and migrate to different cities for better opportunities at jobs and further studies. One thing that we miss out on is nutritious food. Doesn't this sound like something foreign to our ears now? In fast-paced cities with hectic jobs and exhausting lifestyles, we overlook our food habits. And it starts naturally. We are ready to have that packet of chips anytime but we might not choose that packet of dry fruits that has been sitting in the kitchen cabinet for so long.

Living in a fast-paced lifestyle, we tend to look for shortcuts. It's easier to order food than to cook a meal. Especially after a long exhausting day, nobody has the energy to cook. And it is one of the many differentiating factors about why we have closed our eyes to nutritious food prepared by our grandmothers and mothers. There are complexities and intricacies involved in the food cooked by our moms and grandmothers. Making homemade food that is high in nutritional value is an art. I have seen my mom making her special spices. Will I ever do it? I might not be able to since it's time-consuming and requires patience that I might not have the bandwidth for. Our mindset has eased to having processed food because it's convenient and easy has outweighed every little thing we have grown up with.

I see different advertisements for the "nutritional value" of processed foods. And I think marketing has also been a factor contributing to it. A child might not have that Turmeric milk that is rich in nutritional value but will have that chocolate powder in the milk. The fact has to do with not only the marketing gimmicks of processed foods but also the fact that how easily we get swayed by them. We as humans are always in search of a quick fix.

At this point, we just care about the fact that we are eating something and not about what we are eating. Nutrition is what keeps our body going. Yes, these days, those modern processed foods are our savior when we don't want to cook. But our bodies cannot entirely work on it. Even those supplements for vitamins can only take us so far.

We must see our bodies as a gift and not just put about anything edible for the sake of it. We have all grown up hearing "health is wealth." That is the truth in all its glory. So, take small steps for your health. Eat the fruits you brought home before they get spoiled. And hey! Cooking is an essential learning activity for all. We cannot rely entirely on processed foods for our entire lives. Learn one of the culinary tricks from your grandmother or mother over a call and try it out on the weekends. Try to have oh-so-body-loving nutritional food and your favorite processed foods in a balanced way. Beginning with small steps is okay. Small lifestyle changes are the key to living better.