

Interview with Victoria Boutenko and Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo: Transcript



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Introduction



Introducing Victoria Boutenko

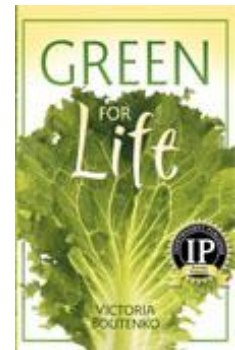
Victoria Boutenko turned to raw foods in desperation when the health of her entire family was failing. In spite of much resistance, the family made radical changes to their diets and radical recovery to their health.

This excerpt is from Victoria's website, <http://www.rawfamily.com>

"We are the Boutenko family, also known as the Raw Family. The four of us embarked on a diet of entirely raw foods in 1994, when we became seriously ill. Victoria had arrhythmia and edema and was obese and depressed. Igor suffered from painful rheumatoid arthritis and had severe hyperthyroid. Sergei was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes and was supposed to go on insulin. Valya had asthma.

After we went on a raw diet, we healed all of our health problems. You may read our complete story in our book **Raw Family**."

A few years ago, Victoria began to research for further refinements to the family's diet and wrote the groundbreaking book, **Green for Life**. In it she presents convincing information about the value of blended greens in the diet. Her book and subsequent DVD, **Greens Can Save Your Life** have had a positive impact on countless lives.



This following interview was conducted on Sunday, January 13, 2008. Many thanks to Victoria Boutenko for taking time from her busy schedule to answer our questions and share her latest research.

With Love, Health and Joy,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Ritamarie Loscalzo'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'L' at the end.

Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo

Interview

Dr. Ritamarie: Welcome. My name is Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo. I'm excited to be here tonight with very special guest, Victoria Boutenko. Many of us have spent the last week drinking green smoothies, either exclusively or primarily as our food intake, as part of a green cleanse.

It's been exciting, and we're excited to have Victoria on the line to give us some insight from her research on green smoothies. I have a list of questions. Thank you for submitting some wonderful questions.

Most of you already know Victoria's story, but many of you may not. I'd love to hear it again. I always love to hear the story of how the Boutenko family got started.

Victoria Boutenko is the award-winning author of several books. *Green for Life* is the one that many of us are most familiar with. One of my favorites is *The 12 Steps to Raw Food*. She has produced DVDs, and is in the middle of producing another book.

Victoria: I'm working on a new book called *The Green Smoothie Revolution*. It's about deficiencies and how to nourish the body. It's a very exciting book. It's going to be my best book so far.

Dr. Ritamarie: Wonderful. You have a good track record, so you must be working really hard to try to beat that.

Victoria: Right now I'm working on it about 19 hours every day.

Dr. Ritamarie: Wow. Are you powering yourself on green smoothies?

Victoria: Actually, right now I'm fasting, but yes, green smoothies.

Dr. Ritamarie: Wonderful. That's where you get all that energy. Go ahead and tell us a little bit about yourself and your family's journey. We would love to hear it.

Victoria: About 15 years ago, my family became ill. My two younger children, my husband and I became very sick. The doctors told us we would die soon from different illnesses.

I had an arrhythmia, which is an irregular heartbeat. That's the disease that took my father's life. Also, I was morbidly obese. My husband had rheumatoid arthritis and hyperthyroidism. My daughter had asthma. My son had diabetes.

The doctors told us that our conditions were irreversible. After about two months of researching alternatives, I met a lady who was a raw foodist. I believe she was the only raw foodist at that time in Colorado.

Then I started researching more about raw foods. Eventually I saw that it was very promising. I started to dream about it. Several months later, our family became a raw family. January 21, 1994 was our raw family birthday.

When we went on a raw food diet, we reversed all of our illnesses and felt great for several years. After seven years, we reached a plateau where our health started to reverse. It was not as perfect.

We were beginning to have some severe problems with our teeth. Our nails were brittle and our hair was falling out. We had gnawing appetites, especially in the evenings. Each of us developed at least one wart, which is a symptom of a low or weak immunity. We also felt tired.

It was not satisfactory anymore. I began to research and realized that we did not consume greens. I studied chimpanzees, and I found out that they are 99.4% similar to humans, in terms of genes. About 40% of a chimpanzee's diet is green leaves. Humans consume only about 2% or less green leaves in their diet.

In my family, we did not consume enough greens simply because we didn't like them. Personally, I felt nauseous after eating more than two leaves of greens, or drinking any green juice.

I was not attracted to that. Then I did more research and became very excited about how nutritious greens are. I never knew how it all worked.

Green leaves are the only living thing we can consume that can transform sunshine into energy. Any creatures on earth can consume them. The chlorophyll actually is nothing but liquefied sunshine.

The chlorophyll is also the basis for any molecule of any sugar. There are no carbohydrates known to us that did not originally come from a molecule of chlorophyll.

The plant sends about half of its sugar to the fruit, and half to the root. We all understand why fruit is sweet. It's to bribe us to be attracted to it and help the plant spread the seeds, to propagate.

I didn't understand why the root is supposed to be sweet. All of the roots have a lot of sugar. That is what we make refined sugar from. Beets, carrots, yams and potatoes are full of sugar. The roots are sweet to feed the microorganisms in the soil.

Science today knows of 2,500 different microorganisms that live in organic soil. These microorganisms make all of the minerals and nutrients we need to be completely healthy available, including essential minerals like calcium, potassium, iron, copper and zinc.

While the plants drink water from the ground, they sack those nutrients from the soil, inside the plant. The plant actually stores those nutrients in the leaves. They use the green leaves as storage for nutrition.

The green leaves are the prime force of nutrition and nourishment from the planet earth. Everything else comes from there. The green leaves have the most nutrition before blooming, and before the seed is formed.

Then most of the nutrition is transferred into the seed, because the seed is the baby of the plant. The seed is supposed to be well nourished because it has to survive for months or years.

Then the seed needs to give life to the sprout and the plant. Sometimes that sprout has to go through rocks, soil and asphalt. It has to be very strong to survive a drought or cold temperatures. The seed is supposed to be very well nourished.

After the seed is gone, the greens stop being nutritious. They become brown or yellow, harsh, bitter and not nutritious. That is why we consume green leaves before blooming.

However, because we stopped consuming green leaves about 180 years ago, our bodies became depleted, especially in zinc. We lost the ability to digest them properly. That's how we also lost our attraction to greens. Most people don't like greens. Most people don't feel greens are attractive or palatable.

Many people even say that they are gross, and they don't care for a green salad or green drink. You even have to hide the green color in a non-clear cup, because you don't want your children to say, "That doesn't look attractive."

While I was looking for a way to consume greens in a palatable way, I developed a green smoothie as an aid to my family, first of all, and then for the rest of the people.

I consider the green smoothie to be the most palatable way of consuming large quantities of greens, and nourishing your body with all the nutrients that were formed in the process of the plant growing.

Dr. Ritamarie: You have so much information. Every time I hear you speak, you add more and more. It gets deeper and deeper. You paint such a wonderful picture.

Victoria: Isn't it exciting?

Dr. Ritamarie: Yes, it is. The zinc deficiencies, and the soil, and losing the ability to digest them, is why you were not fond of them and had a hard time eating them.

Victoria: Yes. Since I started drinking green smoothies, many of my deficiencies reversed. Not only can I digest greens now, but I'm very attracted to them.
Very often when I look at greens I salivate, which I would have never imagined would be possible. I would salivate looking at chocolate or something else, but not greens.

Many people probably listen to me and don't believe it's possible.

Dr. Ritamarie: I believe you. When I went shopping last week at Whole Foods, I was filling up my cart with lots of greens and fruits for the cleanse. And I caught myself munching on dandelion leaves as I walked through the store! I loved them. I didn't even notice that they were bitter or anything.

Victoria: Dandelions are my favorite.

Dr. Ritamarie: It's a great one. Someone asked that question, "What is your favorite green?" That one is a great one. Do you think they have the highest nutritional value, or is there another one you think has a higher nutritional value?

Victoria: I believe we need to rotate. This is very important. Nature is very wise, and has a reason for everything. For example, a tree doesn't mind if we eat old cherries or old apples off of it. It will actually be very happy.

That's why fruits don't have any poison or alkaloids in them. The tree doesn't want us to stop eating from them when they're ripe. When they're not ripe, they will be so unpleasant and so unattractive, we won't even think about eating them, because the seeds are not ready to be propagated.

If we take all the greens off of the plant, the plant is going to die. Nature placed a little bit of poison, a little bit of alkaloids in every single green on the planet. Nature placed a different variety of alkaloids in all the greens to force us to rotate them.

That is why all the deer, goats and other animals will nibble off one plant and then move to another. In nature, you will never observe a deer come and eat an entire lilac tree. They'll eat a dozen leaves off of it and then move to the next plant.

That's what we have to do. We have to rotate. Even though I love dandelions, I still rotate. I don't allow myself to drink a dandelion smoothie more than once a week.

Dr. Ritamarie: Is that an exclusively dandelion smoothie, or do you put little bits of dandelion in other smoothies?

Victoria: It doesn't matter. I could put anything with it. For example, if I don't have enough dandelions, or I have a different flavor, I could put a variety of greens in the drink.

Dr. Ritamarie: Are you recommending that we don't eat the same greens more than once a week, or that we don't eat large quantities of the same thing?

Victoria: Rotate as much variety as you can. I know today there are more than 100 different greens available to most people. I list them in my new book *The Green Smoothie Revolution*. In *Green for Life*, I list 53 different greens. Native Americans used 1,643 different plants. Most of them had edible greens.

Once we knew all of that. We forgot it with the Industrial Revolution. We forgot how to properly eat. We have to reintroduce ourselves to this valuable nutritious food.

Dr. Ritamarie: There are less than 100 varieties of greens found in the supermarkets. Are you recommending that we go out and forage for them?

Victoria: That's why I say that throughout the week, you should consume not less than seven different greens. This is a minimum. Otherwise, you will begin to experience different symptoms.

One lady asked why she is so cold after drinking smoothies. She is probably drinking a smoothie made with kale. This particular green has alkaloids that may suppress the thyroid. If you are only using kale, eventually you will begin to feel cold and should not consume kale for about a month. Instead use chard, spinach, parsley and the variety of greens that are available in your store. Then you can come back to kale.

Dr. Ritamarie: If we're rotating about seven different greens on a weekly basis, do you think it would be a problem to use small amounts of seven different greens in one smoothie and drink that every day?

Victoria: No. That's not a problem. You can do it that way. It would be easier to do a different one every day, because you will get tired of the same taste.

Dr. Ritamarie: That makes a lot of sense.

- Victoria: Also, you can use carrot, beet, radish and mustard tops as an option.
- Dr. Ritamarie: All the things they typically take off and throw away.
- Victoria: And then you boil the roots, right?
- Dr. Ritamarie: Right.
- Victoria: I have the comparison tables in *Green for Life*. It shows how much more nutrition is in the green part of the carrot, beet or parsley than in the roots. Roots mostly have more sugar. They have very little of everything else.
- Dr. Ritamarie: In your DVD, you said you should throw away the carrots and eat the tops.
- Victoria: That's a little bit extreme. You can eat carrots, but the most important part is the green part. You can feed the carrots to your animal.
- Dr. Ritamarie: We had a couple of other questions that came up specifically about this cleanse we have been on. People were drinking almost exclusively green smoothies. When they weren't drinking green smoothies, they munched on a piece of fruit or greens.
- Some issues came up about people being underweight. How do we cleanse and not lose weight?
- Victoria: I have discovered that people who have a skinny constitution usually have very low hydrochloric acid in their stomach. That is a condition that is necessary in order to absorb nutrition.
- People who don't have enough hydrochloric acid, or have zero hydrochloric acid, don't absorb. No matter what they eat, they keep a skinny figure. Green smoothies help to put the weight on, because they reverse the condition in the stomach.
- Last year, I met a man who was wasting away. The doctors gave him six days to live. He was 66-years-old, 6 feet tall, and weighed 90 pounds. He was brought to my lecture in a wheelchair. After he listened, he started drinking half a gallon of smoothies every day. He gained 20 pounds in two weeks. It's amazing.

Very often, this is the result of a deficiency, and specifically a deficiency of zinc. According to my research, 91% of Americans are deficient in zinc.

When we're deficient in zinc, our body cannot produce enough hydrochloric acid. If we don't have hydrochloric acid in our body, we cannot absorb anything. Food just goes through us, wasting our energy and not giving us anything.

Dr. Ritamarie: Correcting the deficiencies helps explain why after a month of green smoothies, people start producing hydrochloric acid.

Victoria: Yes.

Dr. Ritamarie: You're replenishing all of those deficiencies.

Victoria: It's wonderful that people are drinking green smoothies. It's a complete food. You could live on green smoothies, but of course there's no reason to take away the pleasure of eating a fresh organic fruit or organic nuts. Smoothies have all the nutrition we need.

Dr. Ritamarie: That was a question that came up. How long do you think people could comfortably stay on a green smoothie diet? Are you saying indefinitely?

Victoria: I don't know yet. It's something new. One woman named Valerie Winters lives in Washington State. She sends me emails. She stayed on green smoothies alone for six months, just because she wanted to know if she could.

She says that she never felt better. She stopped doing this in August because she wanted to enjoy the fruit during the harvest season. You can look her up on Google. She has a big blog with pictures and a wonderful story.

Dr. Ritamarie: I did see that the other day as I was getting ready for the cleanse. It's a very empowering story.

Victoria: As we go, we will find more and more people doing that.

Dr. Ritamarie: She lost 125 pounds doing that.

Victoria: Yes, but she was around 400 pounds. She was very obese, and nothing helped her before. She said her cravings diminished.

Dr. Ritamarie: So how much green smoothie do you drink every day, Victoria?

Victoria: At least a quart, sometimes two quarts. I don't miss any days, except when I am fasting. I do either green smoothies, green pudding or green soup.

Dr. Ritamarie: What's your favorite?

Victoria: It depends. I always do what my favorite at that moment is. Sometimes I like the pudding. Sometimes I like just the smoothies. Sometimes I get tired of the sweet flavor and just want to have something more green.

Dr. Ritamarie: A variety. What quantity of greens do you eat daily? And what are some of the noticeable differences since you started?

Victoria: There is a big difference between how much you should eat if you smoothie them, or if you eat them just in a salad. If you consume greens whole, especially in a salad, then you have to eat a lot more, because not all of the nutrition will be absorbed. The body cannot absorb from something that is not liquefied.

When it's blended in a very high speed blender like K-tec or Vitamix, you can consume less greens. In the beginning, I calculated that you need to have two bunches of greens per day. That equals almost two gallons of green smoothies a day.

I thought that was what you were supposed to take. Then I understood that you don't have to drink two gallons. It's too much. If it's blended in a high speed blender, it could be one or two quarts. One hundred percent of it gets absorbed. Of course you have to drink it slowly. You cannot just gulp it.

Dr. Ritamarie: Could you address that a little bit more? I'm guilty of drinking them too fast. I would like to hear more about that.

Victoria: For many people, if they drink them too fast, they will develop gas, bloating and indigestion. You need to drink them slowly. When you

drink them slowly, some of them will begin to absorb right in your mouth under the tongue.

You should pretend that you are eating them. I bought several coffee mugs with good nontoxic plastic. Then I fill them with smoothies and put them next to my computer where I'm working on my book. I sip on them. It takes me about an hour to sip through one mug.

Dr. Ritamarie: Is that a 16 or 32-ounce mug?

Victoria: Thirty-two.

Dr. Ritamarie: That's good to know.

Victoria: I also always make sure my smoothie is very delicious. I use the best organic food ingredients I can get. I don't ever save money on my food. I would rather have one pair of shoes, or less dresses or old furniture. I don't want to save money on my food.

We're talking about nourishing the body. We're deficient. I'm deficient. Everybody's deficient. We're living in a time of deficiency. That's another story.

I want my smoothies to be delicious. My smoothies are always like a piece of art. They look good. They're smooth. They don't have any froth. I have perfected making smoothies really yummy. Everybody likes them. If your smoothie is not delicious yet, then you need to practice or change your blender.

Dr. Ritamarie: "Change the blender" is probably a good one for a lot of people. When you say you've perfected the art of making smoothies, is there some specific technique you can share with us? Is it just the way you combine the ingredients?

Victoria: It has to be thoroughly blended. It has to be like sour cream or whipped cream in consistency. It shouldn't look like pieces of green grass floating in water. In the beginning, I usually recommend you add enough fruit to make it tasty.

I recommend up to 60% fruit and 40% greens. You'll notice as you drink them daily, you'll want less and less sweetness. You'll notice

eventually you'll drink 40% fruit and 60% greens, or even 80% greens and 20% fruit.

In the beginning, you need fruit to make it palatable. As your digestive system restores and recovers from whatever deficiencies it has, you will crave greens. You will actually want the green taste.

Sometimes when I drink my smoothie, other people say it smells like wheat grass. I don't notice that. I recently introduced a friend to green smoothies. When she tried my dandelion smoothie she said, "This is so bitter, how can you drink it?" She was nauseous and had stomach cramps after she drank it in spite of my being very careful.

One month later, I made her the same smoothie. She had no ill effects. She didn't say it was bitter. As we progress toward nourishing the body, we enjoy more greens.

At different times of the day, I like a piece of fruit.

Dr. Ritamarie: You just eat a piece of fruit?

Victoria: Yes. There are some things that are my favorites with smoothies, like pineapple and mango. Now is the season for mangoes. Two months ago, there were no good mangoes. I used pears exclusively. Pears are another favorite.

If there is froth, add a cube of ice and there will be no froth. For example, if somebody makes a smoothie with apples, apples tend to create foam on top. Ice will dilute it. Bananas are very good too.

Dr. Ritamarie: Bananas make it creamy.

Victoria: In the summer time, I try to use as many wild edibles as possible. If you pick wild edibles, you need to be careful not to pick up anything poisonous. You need to study. There are not many poisonous plants. There are 23 very poisonous plants in the United States and 150 mildly poisonous. The 23 very poisonous plants include things like hemlock and foxglove. You need to know what they are.

It is very easy to find out what dandelion and purslane looks like. They are very distinctive. The wild edibles are not very abundant in the forest. You may only find a handful at a time. There is not that much.

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When I go to organic farmers, I buy boxes of weeds from them in the summer. This is wonderful.

My favorite is probably chickweed. It has tiny white flowers and is so rich in nutrients. Chickweed is very abundant in the spring time. The farmers just throw it away. They kill it. They throw it in black plastic bags. They fight it so it doesn't spread its roots and grow back.

Stinging nettles are wonderful. There is red clover and purslane. I have them all listed. Wild edibles are much more nutritious.

You've heard about soils being depleted. The wild edibles have more nutrition. Their roots are very long.

If you ever had or worked in a garden, you noticed that if you tried to take one leaf of romaine lettuce, the entire plant might come up. The roots of cultivated romaine lettuce are only 1 or 2 inches long. They're not big.

Have you ever tried to pull a dandelion up by the roots? It's impossible. They're roots can be 20 to 30 feet long. They reach to the most nutritious layers of the ground and soil, where there are still a lot of nutrients. That's what we want. We're going for nutrition.

Dr. Ritamarie: Isn't it fascinating how we eat the foods that are harder to grow and less nutritious? We throw the foods that are easier to grow and more nutritious in the weed pile.

Victoria: It is very strange. Since finding out the facts about greens, we stopped growing cultivated greens. They waste space in the garden. We now have a very neat garden with rows of wild edibles and weeds. We grow weeds in our garden. I come every morning and harvest baskets and boxes of it every day. I have a variety of them.

I put them in my blender. I don't ever go to the store to buy greens in the summer. Only during the winter do I buy greens in the store.

Dr. Ritamarie: Doing this is not only healthier, it can be more economical.

Victoria: Absolutely, it's actually free, in many cases.

Dr. Ritamarie: You don't even have to pay for the seeds.

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Victoria: You can go to the farmer's market and ask farmers to give you their carrot tops. They'll be happy to give them to you for free. Once when teaching a class in Ashland I shared how I go to our small town's farmer's market every Tuesday and ask for the free carrot tops. The next Tuesday there were no carrot tops available at the market. The *following* Tuesday they were selling them for \$1 a bunch. They were in demand as a result of the class I taught!.

Dr. Ritamarie: You created a demand. This week a lot of us have only been drinking smoothies. A lot of questions came up about what's next. How do I transition back to food? What kind of food should I eat? Would you like to address that?

Victoria: You progress to the diet you believe is the healthiest for you. It is not a big thing. The green smoothie has fiber in it. I don't know of any particular restrictions when going back to eating.

I wouldn't start eating cooked meats right away. I would start with salads first. If you eat oil, eat salads with oil. If you eat cooked vegetables, add those next. Next would be cooked protein and animal food.

Dr. Ritamarie: Do you recommend or advocate that people eat cooked animal food or cooked food in general?

Victoria: I don't recommend cooked food in general at all. I believe that 100% raw is the optimal diet for humans, with an emphasis on greens. I don't know. I truly don't know about vegan or not vegan. I think it became such a sensitive topic.

I think there should be freedom of religion and food choice. Sometimes I'm afraid to say what I think because I will be followed by people who are angry. I do love animals. I don't know.

I don't eat animal food. I do lots of anthropological research. Most tribes in history consumed at least insects.

In my book *12 Steps to Raw Food*, I have a chapter called, "What about Insects?" I don't know. Maybe humans are supposed to eat something like 2% of their diet from an animal source. I don't know what it is. I want to stay open to that. I don't want to be too idealistic.

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Dr. Ritamarie: Insects are eaten in many places. If you're doing wild foods and not scrubbing them under the faucets to remove pesticides, there will be some insects.

Victoria: I hope so. I hope that's where I get my small amount of animal food. I actually did research on a vitamin B-12 issue. I noticed that some people who eat raw foods have vitamin B-12 problems and some don't. In my family, we don't have that problem.

After questioning people from both groups, I found that those people who clean everything thoroughly and even soak their greens, vegetables and fruits in chlorinated water and eat non-organic usually have a vitamin B-12 problem. Those who eat predominantly organic and don't clean as much don't have problems with vitamin B-12.

That gave me an idea about the tiny insects that we don't see and are invisible to the human eye. I bought a magnifying glass at Staples and went to the farmer's market. I scared the farmers to death when I started to look at kale and chard through the magnifying glass. They didn't have any idea what I was looking at.

I saw those tiny green insects covering those greens, which is normal. It's normal for them to be there. As soon I took the magnifying glass off, I didn't see anything. I understand when we eat greens and we don't wash them, we do consume a small amount of insects.

I think that's okay. It's absolutely nontoxic. That's the source of vitamin B-12. I don't want to make a big thing out of it. I find it repulsive. I'm not attracted to it, but I understand that is what happens.

Dr. Ritamarie: We shouldn't be so focused on washing the greens with sprays. We should do what the animals do.

Victoria: If we nourish our bodies, we'll have stronger immune systems. When we have plenty of vitamin A, vitamin C and plenty of sunshine, we have strong immunity. A strong immune system is the only thing that can fight any pathogenic bacteria or parasites. I believe that chemicals cannot fight parasites. Chemicals can only kill us or make our immune system weaker.

I believe we have to nourish our bodies to have strong immunity. Then we don't need to be afraid of parasites. Then we don't have to clean with chemicals.

In my new book I argue that we should reduce our production and use of chemicals by any means to slow down the malnourishment we have today in ourselves and our children.

We use so many chemicals. Every day chemical production increases. As a direct result, we become malnourished. Our children are malnourished to such a degree that many children have poor vision.

Many children have to wear braces because their jaws are too narrow. They need to take out their wisdom teeth because the jaw is so narrow there is not enough room for their teeth.

The ears become what are called "cupped ears," they're small, curved ears like older people have. If you're attentive, you'll see that older people have larger ears with larger ear lobes. They have flat noses and dimpled nose arches.

There are many symptoms of multiple and severe deficiencies in us and in our children. It's progressive. The only way to stop it is to rebuild ourselves.

That can only be done by reducing chemicals. We need to learn to live without chemicals, or at least a minimum of chemicals.

Dr. Ritamarie: Do you have energy to answer a few more questions?

Victoria: I have plenty of energy.

Dr. Ritamarie: You've been fasting and doing green smoothies. One question came from a woman who has a 15-year-old daughter. During a soccer physical, the girl informed her doctor she drinks green smoothies with kale, spinach, flax seeds and all this other great stuff in it rather than milk. The doctor said that she needs to take a calcium supplement.

Victoria: I was reading the research on calcium today. This research says that until now, there was not one single case of calcium deficiency in

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anybody. Osteoporosis is caused by a deficiency in exercise and vitamin D.

Vitamin D comes from the sunshine, and cannot be substituted by fish, fish oil or tanning salons. It has to come from the sun. It doesn't matter where you live, you need to absorb sunshine. That will eliminate any problems with calcium.

There is plenty of calcium in greens. You can see on the charts and tables how many minerals are in it. Greens have more calcium than anything else. Where does the cow get her calcium? From greens!

I'm not a medical doctor; I cannot give medical advice. But my children have not consumed any milk since they were 8 and 9 years old and they have very strong bones. In fact, when Sergei broke his clavicle twice, it grew back quickly. Within one and half weeks, he was already using his hands to put his shirt on. Within three weeks he was on a trampoline.

Dr. Ritamarie: They *do* have strong bones.

Victoria: My daughter was in a car accident and broke her wrist. She had an appointment to get a cast. By the time she went to have a cast put on, her bone was already grown back.

Dr. Ritamarie: How long was this?

Victoria: Four or five days. They said, "You don't need a cast." They put a small brace on her hand. That's all.

Dr. Ritamarie: We have few questions that are not specifically related to greens. They're related more to a raw diet and a couple of them are about children. How do you start a raw diet with children ages 2 to 8 years old?

I know you started by going cold turkey, but that may not go over as well with the general population. Do you have any suggestions?

Victoria: I think children are supposed to be breast-fed for several years. When I was in the Bahamas, I met children who were 4 and 5 years old, and they were still breast-fed partially. I don't know. I've noticed that when

children are placed on a vegan-only diet, they may be small and unable to thrive.

If you cannot breast-feed your children, substitute goat milk or (even better) goat yogurt. *It has to be raw.* If it's cooked, it turns toxic and is absolutely poisonous. It just needs to be a small amount, maybe a half cup every other day.

Other than that, a child can be primarily vegan with an emphasis on greens. Children love green smoothies. When they don't have deficiencies in their digestive track, they respond very well to the taste of smoothies. I know my grandson loves green smoothies. He demands them every day.

My oldest son, Stefan, never went on raw foods. He eats a typical, standard American diet. His son drinks one cup of green smoothie every day. He's now 3 years old. The doctor says he's the healthiest boy in his district. That is from drinking one green smoothie a day.

Dr. Ritamarie: That's with a standard American diet with the addition of just a green smoothie.

Victoria: Yes. They take him to McDonald's. They buy him ice cream and chocolate cake for his birthday. That was our agreement. I said, "You don't change anything, just drink one cup of green smoothie."

I understand that they are not in a position to change their diet right now. I wish they would, but they won't. That is the compromise decision we made.

Dr. Ritamarie: Any other thoughts on getting kids to do more raw foods?

Victoria: No pressure or pushing. No saying, "If you don't eat this, you eat that." That will backfire. Be a good example. Explain it to your children.

Talk to your children – not as if they are small or less important than adults but like you talk to your best friend or neighbor. Explain everything to them. They may even suggest it have suggestions.

You can say, "You know what? I just figured out that your old cereal contained 80% sugar." Eighty percent of all commercial cereal is sugar. Your child may feel compelled to say, "Wow, maybe we

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shouldn't eat sugar anymore. Maybe we shouldn't eat cereal anymore. Maybe we should eat something else instead. Mom, what do you suggest? Dad, what would you like?"

Talk to them so they will feel attracted to this idea. Don't introduce raw food to your children with wheat grass juice. Make something very palatable.

Buy some ripe organic mangoes. Make a good tasting smoothie, maybe even something pink. Make it a bright color if you think they already don't like the color green. You can make a green smoothie and serve it in a non-clear cup.

Dr. Ritamarie: Then they can't tell. Use a cup with a lid and a straw. Then they can't see it. That's great advice. I seem to recall reading that Sergei and Valya just wrote a new book. Did they address some of these issues in that new book?

Victoria: Yes, they did. Valya has a whole chapter about helping children become healthier. There are lots of examples and suggestions. The book is called *Fresh*.

Dr. Ritamarie: When can we expect to see it?

Victoria: It's coming out in March. It's already available on Amazon. It's called *Fresh*.

Dr. Ritamarie: I was privileged enough to be able to read it before it went to press. I was very impressed. If you haven't read stuff by Sergei or Valya yet, you're in for a treat.

Do you have any advice on transitioning to a primarily raw diet from a standard American diet?

Victoria: Our bodies are malnourished. We are malnourished. There are definitely the symptoms of malnourishment in many Americans. Some of the symptoms are depression, fatigue, sleep problems, lack of drive motivation and lack of focus. Those are all symptoms of deficiencies and indigestion.

When our body is malnourished, the body responds with two main reactions. Number one, it gains weight or holds onto fat. The body is

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confused and thinks it is starvation time. The second is the body develops a strong appetite. It's not only an appetite. It's an urge to eat, an *overpowering* urge to eat.

When you abruptly go on a 100% raw food diet, you will feel a strong urge to eat because your body is deficient. It will be hard for you to work and concentrate on what you do. You will constantly think of food.

For this reason, I suggest you go on a green smoothie cleanse or add green smoothies to your existing diet. Have a green smoothie for breakfast. Don't ever skip breakfast. Breakfast is the most completely absorbed meal. Our digestive tract works the most from 6AM to noon.. Then from noon on it begins to slow down. After. 6PM it stops working altogether.

Take one quart of green smoothie for breakfast. Then eat whatever you eat the rest of the day. Within a maximum of two months, you'll begin to feel fewer cravings for unhealthy foods, fast food, junk food, white bread, potatoes, meats, candy, coffee, wine or cigarettes.

You will notice that you have fewer cravings for stimulating substances. That will be a good time for you to switch to all raw food. I believe that some people have the ability to stay on 80% to 90% raw and the rest cooked without sliding back. These I call the "normal eaters"; they stop eating as soon as the body is satisfied instead of when the stomach is full.

Unfortunately, more than 99% of us are compulsive eaters. For compulsive eaters, the only way is to go 100%. Compulsive eaters are those who continue to eat after their stomach is full, or eat when they're not hungry but the food is free or their favorite food is being served.

Dr. Ritamarie: Say somebody is a compulsive eater, they don't quite want to go to 100% and they include some small amount of steamed kale, broccoli and other kinds of vegetables. Do you think that triggers the same compulsion?

Victoria: It will be less. It's okay. You can do whatever you want. People could go 50%, 60% or 70%, whatever they choose.

The higher the percentage of cooked food, the more often they will be sliding off into a cooked food diet and not feeling superb. Also, they will be craving worse food, less nutritious and more toxic.

The more higher the percentage of raw food in the diet, the better you will feel better, with more energy and less toxic food cravings. For example, if you eat 90% raw, most of the cooked food cravings would be for things like green soup or steamed vegetables.

Dr. Ritamarie: There are worse things than craving steamed vegetables I guess.

Victoria: Yes. As I say, my older son is not going to go raw, so they just included one cup of green smoothie, not even a quart. In the beginning, the smoothie was yellow because they couldn't tolerate any greens. It was just one or two leaves of greens in the smoothie.

Even though they did lose some weight, they improved their health and stopped drinking coffee as a result of it. They're progressing slowly, but surely.

Dr. Ritamarie: How do you make the raw foods more warming in the winter without adding a lot of spices and peppers?

Victoria: I'm not a medical doctor, but according to my research, not being able to feel warm in the winter is a symptom of a lack in some essential amino acids. If you don't have enough amino acids, your hormonal glands begin to react.

When you don't have enough thyroxine, which is a hormone, you cannot tolerate heat or cold very well. As you begin to drink green smoothies, you nourish your system and replenish your hormonal system. It takes about a year to nourish your body to such a degree that even your hormonal system works better.

You will begin to feel improvements within two weeks, but it takes about a year to completely feel comfortable in the wintertime. You will notice that you can stay in a t-shirt almost year-round without feeling cold at all.

It could also be some specific deficiencies. For example, some people with a zinc, selenium or deficiency can sometimes feel cold feet or cold fingers in a warm temperature just because of the deficiency.

Again, we need to nourish the body because most people don't feel cold.

Dr. Ritamarie: There are two issues. One is feeling cold when it's really not that cold. The other issue is it's a cold day and you've just walked in and you have that urge to drink or eat something warm.

Victoria: Just add more ginger to stimulate circulation of the blood, do 20 push-ups or put on an extra sweater.

Dr. Ritamarie: What do you think about making green soups, just warming them up using the Vita-Mix and running it a little bit longer?

Victoria: You can do that. Actually, one cup of soup is not going to really warm you up. You'd have to take a bath in warm soup in order to warm your body. Maybe taking a bath would be more warming than taking a cup of warm soup.

Dr. Ritamarie: Another question comes from the same person. She tends to be underweight and feels like she needs more carbs to sustain her. When she does all raw, she just can't keep up her energy level. She's tried to eat more raw squash, but it's really hard to digest. Do you have any suggestions?

Victoria: Yes. Why did she pick hard squash? I am not very attracted to that. I would eat more fruit, avocados and something that has natural fat like coconut. I've noticed that my children consume more seeds and nuts in the winter, specifically sunflower and pumpkin seeds.

They also increase the consumption of coconuts. They buy them in the wintertime by the case and make a very delicious smoothie with it. I'm talking about Thai coconuts, not the mature coconuts. It's the one in the white shell.

They take the gel from inside the coconut, blend it together and add either a little bit of agave nectar or honey to it. Just blend it and drink it. Sometimes they add some cinnamon. It tastes like eggnog. It's so delicious and it is very dense. It keeps you fed longer.

Dr. Ritamarie: It sustains you longer. A lot of people are concerned about eating too much fruit because they have yeast or Candida issues. Can you address that?

Victoria: On this issue, I did a lot of research. I have a lot of friends who did have Candida. I agree with Doug Graham, Rozalind Gruben and Tonya Zavasta and other researchers that the problems with Candida are caused not by the sugar, but by the fat.

When our body cannot absorb fat due to deficiencies, then the fat covers circulating molecules of sugar with a film and makes it impossible for insulin to reach the sugar. The body continues to demand insulin while the sugar is still there, undigested. That creates a problem.

Candida actually comes as a savior to consume this extra sugar. Anybody who has problems with Candida, no matter how chronic and horrible the stages, sees a dramatic decrease in symptoms as soon as they eliminate all the fat from the diet for a few days

My friend, Elizabeth, has been hospitalized for Candida. She had it chronically for years. After giving up fat for five days she had no symptoms of Candida. I do believe that it had to do with the fat.

You need to understand that it means no fat at all, not even sunflower seeds, a cracker, avocado, olive or coconut. No fat for several days. It's very hard to do because the body craves fat, but that's the only way to control the Candida.

When people attempt to control Candida with antibiotics, they are successful for a short time only. But then the condition worsens.

Dr. Ritamarie: When you say no fat, you mean just for a period of a week or so?

Victoria: For a period of time. Then when you reintroduce this fat to your diet, you have to introduce it in very small increments and watch how much your body can tolerate without getting worse. Sometimes it will be a sliver of avocado a day. It could be five olives. Then you just slowly increase.

You have to nourish your body. The problem is malnourishment and deficiencies, and the body is unable to process fat properly.

Dr. Ritamarie: That's great information for us who have just finished up this green smoothie cleanse. One of the things we did was avoid all fat for this

week. A lot of people have noticed improvements in various health conditions. That would get back into terms of reintroducing foods this week.

Victoria: Maybe somebody who already had symptoms of Candida and did the green smoothie fast already noticed.

Dr. Ritamarie: Yes, a lot of people have said that. Those people who are out there, just remember Victoria's advice to reintroduce the fat very slowly. That's great advice, Victoria.

We had another question. Are there any fruit seeds that should not be eaten in the blender drinks?

Victoria: Do you know there are more than 300 fruits in the world? I might not know all of them. There are only 23 fruit varieties available in supermarkets. You just have to look at it. For example, I would not put lemon seeds in, not because they're not nutritious, but they're just bitter.

When we're talking about apples and pears, I put them entirely in the blender. I even learned to make smoothies with avocado pits. The recipe will be in my new book.

Some people crave the avocado pit, including my daughter. It's a very distinctive flavor and has a very good amount of soluble fiber.

Many fruits have seeds which you cannot possibly take out, such as raspberries and strawberries. That gives me the idea that we're not supposed to take them out. Of course, I wouldn't put mango seeds in the smoothie because they would ruin the blender.

Dr. Ritamarie: Avocado seed won't ruin the blender? It seems pretty hard.

Victoria: It's bitter and you don't want a lot of it. You cannot possibly eat all the pits of avocados, but maybe once a month, you can consume one pit. It has a very distinctive flavor that you get fed up with very quickly.

Dr. Ritamarie: The Vita-Mix can handle that?

Victoria: Yes, easily. It's really soft.

Dr. Ritamarie: We covered most of the food questions. There were a few health questions. You probably saw them.

Victoria: I don't really want to answer health questions because I'm not supposed to. From the information I shared today, most people who had health questions should have an idea of what to do.

I've met so many people who had prostate problems. Then they adopted green smoothies and the problem was under control or gone completely.

Dr. Ritamarie: Broccoli sprouts have a really good effect on PSA levels and prostate problems, so that's something to include as well. You can put those in your smoothies.

One last question was about pH. Do you have any experience with pH?

Victoria: I believe that urine testing is pretty accurate. I just use litmus paper that has yellow, green or purple indicators. I consider both yellow and purple to be bad. Purple is not too alkaline, but it means even more acid than yellow. There's purple because the body is so alarmed with being excessively acidic that it pulls some of the calcium from the bones and throws it in urine, making it on the alkaline side.

I think litmus paper is very indicative. If you take it at home and practice, you'll see how your body reacts to consuming acidic food.

Sometimes you will be eating perfectly and you'll just eat a handful of nuts and instantly, your urine tests acid. If you eat any cooked food, you'll see that it permanently stays acid, as yellow as it can be.

It takes several days to get it back to the green color. Your urine doesn't lie. It shows what's going on in the body.

Dr. Ritamarie: Great answer. Thank you so much. I thought we might have time to answer some questions. We had so many that were written in advance that we won't have time to open it up for questions, as we are at the end of our time..

I want to thank you so much, Victoria, for such an enlightening talk.

- Victoria: Thank you so much for having me. I'm very honored. Whenever I have time, I would love to do it again.
- Dr. Ritamarie: Great. We will take you up on that one because we would love to have you back. I'd like to let everybody express their thanks to Victoria for taking time.
- Victoria: Not only thanks, but if there are any challenging questions or comments, I'm open to it.
- Dr. Ritamarie: Before I open the line, I'd like you to tell us about the book you're writing, when you will be done and when we'll be able to get our hands on it.
- Victoria: This book was due long ago. The deadline already passed almost a year ago. I hope it will be done by the end of this month or next month. It will be on my website as soon as I have it.
- Dr. Ritamarie: Would you tell everybody what your website is?
- Victoria: www.RawFamily.com. Because we are family.
- Dr. Ritamarie: If you haven't already read *Green For Life* or watched "The Greens Can Save Your Life" DVD, it's amazing. It's very enlightening, inspiring and informative.
- Victoria: If anybody likes either the DVD or book, please feel free to write a comment on Amazon. That will help other people choose to buy this book. I would really appreciate that.
- Dr. Ritamarie: That's a great idea. We'd be happy to do that for you. The other book I really loved is the new version of *The 12 Steps to Raw*. It's completely rewritten from the original version. It's probably twice the size, wouldn't you say, Victoria?
- Victoria: Maybe three times the size and the information is approximately 80% different.

Dr. Ritamarie: It's so much different and more evolved. It has a lot of the green smoothie and green research information in it, as well as steps for transitioning, as well as the whole issue of addictions and how to handle those. It's a fantastic book. I highly recommend it.

I have stacks of them on my shelf that I sell all the time. I would highly recommend that you look into getting that book.

Participant: I'm a big fan. I just want to say that I haven't read your books. I'm new to the raw community. I heard you for the first time when Kevin did The Raw Summit in September. I'm the one that asked the question about children.

You didn't mention anything about sea greens. Would those be recommended, like the spirulina, chlorella and the blue-green algae? Would those be beneficial, when you talk about the greens?

Victoria: They are secondary to the greens that grow on the surface of the earth. The most important greens are the ones that grow on the surface of the planet. The second most important would be sea vegetables like kelp and dulse.

The third would be algae and spirulina because they are a little bit different than just greens. The chlorophyll is different. Many people say that they are beneficial. My son Sergei likes spirulina.

But I have also heard that they contain a B-12 analog that is toxic. I wouldn't be very brave with the supplements because they are concentrated amounts. Of course, it's better than french fries.

Participant: Of course. I read somewhere that if you eat a lot of fresh greens, you don't necessarily need to drink a lot of water. By cooking your greens, you're actually depleting all the water in them. If you're on a green diet, how much water are you actually drinking? What do you think about the water intake?

Victoria: I don't think people who've eliminated table salt and cooked food from their diets need to drink eight glasses of water unless they live in dry environments like Colorado or Texas. I personally consume so much water with my smoothies, that I rarely drink water next to it.

- Participant: A lot of people on a well-balanced diet also take supplements. What's your take on supplements and all those extras?
- Victoria: There is a place for supplements, but in my family we do not take them. I do buy supplements for my brother who is a truck driver and not on a raw food diet. I hope that they help him somewhat.
- Participant: If someone is eating all natural fruits, veggies and greens, and not doing any supplements, animal products or milks, do you recommend any type of probiotics or do you feel that the food is enough?
- Victoria: No, I don't.
- Participant: Wonderful. Thank you very much. I really appreciate it and I can't wait to read your new book.
- Victoria: Thank you.
- Dr. Ritamarie: We can go ahead and thank Victoria for taking time out of her busy schedule to come and visit with us tonight and offer so much great information.
- Participants: Thank you so much, Victoria. It was illuminating.
- Dr. Ritamarie: I was talking to Sergei about coming out and doing a little talk for us sometime when he gets this way again. Hopefully, we'll make that happen and we'll let everybody know.
- Victoria: Great. He's doing a wonderful presentation mostly about wild edibles that I don't even know.
- Dr. Ritamarie: That would be very good. That's one subject I would like to learn a lot more about. Victoria, do you have any parting words or anything you want to say?
- Victoria: Yes I do. Hey everybody, enjoy your greens!

Dr. Ritamarie: Yes, Enjoy your greens. Everybody, thank you so much for taking time out of your busy night to come out and hear Victoria.

Victoria: Thank you, Ritamarie.

Dr. Ritamarie: You're welcome. We're going to be doing another green cleanse in March and you're on the list. I will email you when we do another one. Hopefully, those of you who were unable to participate this last time and want that support of a group doing it all together can join us next time. Thanks again, Victoria.

About Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo



Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo is a leading authority on Nutrition and Health. She's an author, speaker and health practitioner with over 2 decades of experience with empowering health through education, inspiration, and loving care. She's a doctor of chiropractic with certification in acupuncture, a certified clinical nutritionist, a Diplomat of the American Clinical Board of Nutrition, and a medical herbalist.

Dr. Ritamarie's passion for creating delicious foods that support optimum health led her to develop recipes that not only taste great, they energize and heal as well. She's been teaching the power of raw and living foods

for over 2 decades and she lives the vibrant life that eating this was creates.

Because most people bite off more than they can chew when they embark on a new health regimen, Dr. Ritamarie focuses on simple, effective ways to change your diet to achieve optimal good health. She dishes out simple steps with a dash of fun to motivate you to achieve your health goals.

As the mom of 2 energetic boys, raised on whole plant based foods, she has developed routines and recipes that kids of all ages love.

Dr. Ritamarie resides in Austin, Texas with her husband and sons. She can be reached at www.DrRitamarie.com.

For a free packet of recipes and information on creating optimum health through good nutrition, visit www.JumpstartYourEnergy.com.

