



# Diet & Nutrition – Defining The Difference

## Diet and Nutrition are Not The Same!

By Dr. Donna F. Smith

The terms “Diet” and “Nutrition” are often used interchangeably. However, according to the Taber’s Medical Dictionary, they have distinctly different scientific meanings. Diet is defined as ‘what you eat and drink’ and Nutrition is Nutritional Biochemistry, i.e., the metabolism of what is consumed or enters body openings, such through the skin. Nutrition is the “internal processing (metabolism) of foods, beverages, (and other substances).” Metabolism is ingestion, digestion, absorption, assimilation, distribution, and elimination.” Confusion today about Nutrition is from not understanding the differences in the terms and research of these two distinctly different nutritional sciences, “Dietetics” and “Clinical Nutrition.” This chart will provide:

1. A brief definition of a few dietary and nutrition research terms to help you understand their differences
2. Followed by a brief overview of the scope of practice of a Certified Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.), who is trained in nutritional biochemistry (i.e., human nutrition), since people are more familiar with the practice of a Dietitian.

Dietary Research	Nutrition Research
Dietary research classifies calories as a nutrient (“energy”) in a food item. For example, refined, white bread and whole grain bread contain approximately 60-70 calories per slice <sup>1</sup> and are, therefore, considered dietary equal.  <sup>1</sup> Reference: “ <i>Food Values Of Portions Commonly Used</i> ” by Jean Pennington	Nutrition research classifies foods by their nutrient value. Whole grain bread, for example, is complete in its nutrient value because it contains all of its vitamins, minerals and other nutrients in their original whole food design. Nutrition research has shown that commercialized, food refining and processing techniques deplete nutrient values.  Nutrient deficient foods cannot be digested, absorbed, assimilated or eliminated properly. Therefore, they produce putrefied and fermented by-products that interfere with biochemical processes. Whole foods, however, are beneficial for all biochemical processes of the mind and body. Nutrition research classifies calories as a measurement of energy in foods, not nutrients.
Dietary research views the quality of foods in respect to freshness or spoilage. Spoilage refers to decay of food and contamination, such as due to parasitic factors (e.g., germs) .	Nutrition research views the quality of foods in respect to complete nutrient value content and being void of chemical additives and preservatives. Additives and preservatives cause vitamin and mineral deficiencies and interfere with the “nutrition” of the body.
Dietary research evaluates the quantity of food by standard measurements in ounces, cups, quarts, gallons, etc.	Nutrition research evaluates the quantity of food by ratios of proteins to carbohydrates to fats/oils for a balanced intake of nutrients that must work together synergistically to promote biochemical balance, i.e., homeostasis.
Dietary research focuses on the external effects of environmental pollution of air, food, and water, e.g., sanitation and hygiene.	Nutrition research focuses on the internal effects of environmental pollution of air, food, and water on the biochemistry of the mind and body. For example, ingested pollutants inflame cells and tissue and produce toxic by-products which interfere with the “nutrition” of the body.

In reviewing the differences of these two nutritional sciences, it should be obvious that both fields of study, research and professional practice are essential. In fact, Nutrition research led to the establishment of the Board Certified Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.) in 1983, a little over a decade after Dietary research led to the establishment of the Registered Dietitian (R.D.).

**BOARD CERTIFIED CLINICAL NUTRITIONISTS (C.C.N.):** C.C.N.s are trained in human “clinical” nutrition. “Clinical” Nutrition refers to macro-nutrient (protein, carbohydrate and fats/oils) and micro-nutrient (vitamins, minerals and water) deficiencies at a cellular and tissue (clinical) level that lead to biochemical imbalances, organ/gland dysfunctions and eventually to disease. The C.C.N. applies biochemical, biological and physiological principles in the assessment of a person’s nutritional needs to achieve normal physiological function, promote health and prevent disease. Assessment includes case history, anthropomorphic measurements, physical signs, laboratory tests (blood, urine, hair, saliva, stool, etc.) and nutrition/lifestyle analysis. The C.C.N. then recommends nutritive supplementation to restore sufficiency and for detoxification of toxic substances, provide educational protocols, such as diet, nutrition and lifestyle modification, understanding of biochemical and physiological pathways and the cellular/tissue regenerative processes. The C.C.N. provides assessments, counseling, therapeutic programs and education for individuals and groups. The C.C.N. may choose to work in private practice, or as a staff Clinical Nutritionist or in partnership in a variety of healthcare settings, e.g., hospitals, clinic, wellness/fitness clubs, corporate wellness centers, etc.

For more information and to obtain a Clinical and Sports Nutrition Analysis of your nutritional biochemistry contact Dr. Donna F. Smith, who holds a Ph.D. in Clinical Nutrition, is a Naturopathic Doctor (N.D.), a Certified Dietitian-Nutritionist (C.D.N.) and a Board Certified Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.). **Call (940) 761-4045** [www.AdvancedClinicalNutrition.com](http://www.AdvancedClinicalNutrition.com)