



NUTRITION FOR HEALTHSPAN

A non-judgmental
nutritional guide
for health



PREFACE

This booklet is designed to help you uncover the wisdom of food and learn the basics of eating for your health. If you give your body vibrant, healthy food it will help you become a vibrant, healthy human!

If you are looking to improve your energy or general well-being, the guidelines presented here will help you set up a good foundation. If you are struggling with illness, ill-health, or skin issue, and medical support is not providing the solutions you need, please read our advice with an open mind.

We recognize that changing food habits can be difficult and our intention is to inspire you to start with easy steps, understand your body and your unique needs, and learn how to give your body the best possible options so that you can function at your best. Even small changes can make a difference.

Our hope is that you will adopt some of the suggestions in this book into your daily life and the lives of your family. We wish for all people to live with vibrant and sustainable health, one healthy bite at a time.

This booklet was prepared by the Nutrition For Healthspan Initiative, part of the Global Wellness Institute. Contents have been contributed by professionals across the wellness industry, specializing in medicine, nutrition, coaching, hospitality, technology, skincare, spa and resort businesses, community-building and nonprofit organizations, healthcare, marketing, and travel. The team comes from Asia, Europe, South America, and the United States.

This booklet is a simple, non-judgmental guide to eating for health and healing and it's intended for a global audience. The information represents a broader framework that is applicable for everyone in the world. The basics of clean eating, a focus on whole foods, and bio-individuality—heeding one's unique needs — are the baseline. Specific foods and preparations can be adapted to different cultural practices and lifestyle preferences.

About the [Nutrition For Healthspan Initiative](#)

This initiative commits to developing simple tools for the industry to help disseminate practical and easy-to-follow guidelines on the how-tos of Nutrition For Healthspan. Our primary purpose is to provide wellness industry clients and employees worldwide, along with the general population of wellness seekers, with effective practices for improving nutrition in the home and eating for overall health.

About the [Global Wellness Institute](#)

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI), a nonprofit 501(c)(3), is considered the leading global research and educational resource for the global wellness industry and is known for introducing major industry initiatives that bring together leaders to chart the future. GWI positively impacts global health and wellness by educating public institutions, businesses and individuals on how they can work to prevent disease, reduce stress and enhance the overall quality of life. Its mission is to empower wellness worldwide.

The information contained in this booklet has not been evaluated or approved by any regulatory agency. The information is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, prevent, or otherwise reduce the effects of any disease or ailment. The information referenced herein is intended for educational purposes only and is not meant to and should not otherwise to be implied to substitute for seeking qualified medical care from a licensed medical doctor or to seek a prescribed treatment in lieu of a treatment prescribed by any licensed medical professional for a specific health condition. Consult a licensed and qualified health care provider for diagnosis, medical care, and treatment.

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INTRODUCTION

The best way to start this booklet is to read the first four sections, then go to any section that interests you. When it comes to changing food habits for better health, start with easy changes first and ease your way into creating new habits.

ASK YOURSELF

- ✓ If your body had a voice, what would it ask for?
- ✓ If you took a picture of everything you ate for a week and looked at the pictures collectively, what would they show?
- ✓ How are the food and beverages you consume serving you? Is your body asking for more of the same? Something different?

Tip for eating healthy: Think about all of the delicious foods you get to eat, things that are loaded with nutrients your body craves and uses to help you function at your best. Have you tasted a fresh peach in season? What about farm fresh green beans, or warm whole grains? Don't think about what you "can't" have, focus on what you "can" have. Once you start feeling strong in both body and mind, you'll naturally forget about processed food and reach for the good stuff.

Whichever changes you implement, stick with them for a few weeks before going onto something new. This way you can gradually create new habits that are sustainable for the long term. Don't beat yourself up if you slip sometimes, that's human nature. Just get back to it the next day. Go slow and steady and you will find that the changes you make lead to a happier and healthier you.



PREVENTION EQUALS PROTECTION

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes, are the leading cause of death in the world. The burden is growing - the number of people, families and communities afflicted is increasing. Common, modifiable risk factors underlie the major NCDs. They include tobacco, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diet, insufficient physical activity, obesity, elevated blood pressure, elevated blood sugar and elevated cholesterol. We believe all of these risk factors can be reduced with healthy food choices.

TOTAL NCD MORTALITY

41M

of the 55 million global deaths in 2019 were due to NCDs

PREMATURE NCD MORTALITY

47%

of NCD deaths in low- and middle income countries in 2019 occurred before the age of 70

RISK FACTORS

80%

of premature heart disease, stroke and diabetes can be prevented

A woman with curly hair, wearing a white lab coat over an orange top and grey pants, is in a kitchen. She is looking down at a white bowl filled with green leafy vegetables on a wooden countertop. She is holding a wooden spoon and appears to be mixing the salad. The background shows white kitchen cabinets and a tiled backsplash. The entire scene is framed within a vertical oval shape on a solid orange background.

KNOW YOUR BODY & MIND

Food may not be the real problem

KNOW YOUR BODY & MIND

Our body knows what it needs but too often we do not listen to it. For many of us, our habits, desires and circumstances are what drive our food decisions.

When we don't understand our body's signals or its resources for processing food and drinks, we end up with problems that become the cornerstone of many diseases.



The food you eat plays a major role in the development of chronic diseases and the “minor annoyances” that quietly persist day in and day out. Food also impacts your overall mental health.

Processed food is implicated as causing many illnesses and bodily ailments such as headaches, bloating, low energy, diabetes, obesity, gastrointestinal distress, poor cognitive function, and much more.

For some people, even certain healthy foods can trigger reactions in the body that make them sick.

Recognizing the impact of the food you eat will help make changes to shift how you feel.

Before moving forward, take some time to reflect on your habits by asking yourself the questions on the following page.

ASK YOURSELF



WHY DO YOU EAT?

Hunger?

For fuel?

Emotional trigger?



WHY DO YOU EAT THE WAY YOU DO?

Familiarity? Culture? Health? The love of food? To fuel your system? Connections with certain textures/smells? Availability?

Don't like to cook? Don't know how to cook? Don't have tools/resources needed to eat differently?



HOW DO YOUR THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS AFFECT YOUR EATING?

What is the story you keep telling yourself about food, what you eat, why you eat the way you do?

What emotions (positive or negative) come up when you eat (in general and around specific foods)?



ARE THERE TIMES WHEN YOU DON'T EAT? WHY?

Stress? Self image? Discomfort when you eat? Not enough food?

Intentional fasting for faith or health reasons?



DO YOU FEEL YOU NEED TO IMPROVE THE WAY YOU EAT?

If so, do you find it difficult to change your eating habits? Why?

Do you have certain types of cravings? Are these cravings triggered by a specific event?



DO YOU EXPERIENCE PAIN/DISCOMFORT?

Are there certain foods that, when you eat them, cause pain or discomfort such as bloating, gas, headaches and yet you continue to eat them? Why?

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR WELLBEING

There is no “one size fits all” menu for people to follow in order to achieve optimal health as each person’s dietary needs are as unique as they are.

The more you know your body, the more you will understand what it is asking for to stay strong and healthy.

Caring for your body does not have to be complex, but it does take some time and effort to ensure that you are treating it in a way to help it thrive.

Consider the following practices for wellbeing:

BREATH

Proper breathing starts in the nose and then moves to the stomach as your diaphragm contracts, the belly expands and your lungs fill with air. Exhale through the mouth. Spend time each day focusing on your breathing; slowing it down and allowing the oxygen to saturate your body.



HYDRATION

Guidelines for optimal health suggest you drink at least 2 - 3 litres of water per day, drink any time you feel thirsty.

MOVEMENT

Introduce daily routine of moderate exercise, walking, or other physical activity to keep your body engaged. During a fast, you may need to adjust rigor and duration of physical activity, but it is important to integrate stretching and movement into a fast.



REST/SLEEP

Allow yourself a time for relaxation and prioritize sleep. For most adults, at least seven hours of sleep is needed for proper cognitive and behavioral functions. During a fast, you may need some additional rest, especially if you are fasting from all food.

MIND/FEELINGS:

Take time to meditate, journal and find other ways to be present in the moment.





THE BASICS OF FOOD

Understanding the basic components of food is helpful in guiding your eating habits

THE BASICS OF FOOD

Nutrition is fundamental to every cell in your body, keeping all bodily functions working and regulating all organs and metabolism. It is the basic building block for your health and well-being. The more mindful you are with what you eat, the better your body will function, respond and appear.



Food is made up of thousands of components, which your body breaks down via digestive enzymes in order to absorb and utilize. These components are broken down into two major categories: macro- and micronutrients. All nutrients can be obtained from either animal or plant sources, though the body processes them differently depending on the source. A fully vegetarian or vegan diet may require a bit of planning to ensure adequate quantity and diversity of food is eaten to obtain all essential nutrients.

MACRONUTRIENTS

- Macronutrients include carbohydrates, fats and proteins.
- Each macronutrient is broken down into smaller compounds that your body can use: carbohydrates into simple sugars, fats into fatty acids and proteins into amino acids.

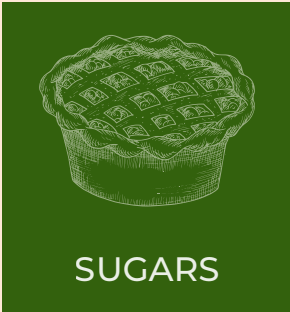
MICRONUTRIENTS

- Micronutrients are vitamins and minerals.
- Vitamins and minerals are essential for the body and they perform important roles. Our body cannot produce most of them, so they must be obtained through diet.

CARBOHYDRATES

The main role of a carbohydrate is to provide energy the same way that gasoline fuels a car.

There are two types of carbohydrates that can be broken up into 3 main categories:



Simple Carbohydrates

Found in foods such as pasta, bread, white sugar, white rice, breakfast cereals, cakes, pastries, boxed juice and milk.



Complex Carbohydrates

Found in vegetables and grains, such as potatoes, whole grain, red, black or brown rice, peas, and corn.



Complex Carbohydrates

Found in food coming from plants, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, beans and whole grains.

Wellness Wisdom

- ✓ Keep it simple: Avoid simple carbohydrates and enjoy complex carbohydrates
- ✓ Flavor water with fruit instead of picking up a soft drink
- ✓ Focus on whole-grain rice, breads and cereals

FAT

Fat plays an important role in the general function of your body. Key functions include: energy, brain function, hormone regulation, warmth, skin and hair health, absorption of vitamins and minerals.

The type of fat you consume is important in your overall wellbeing



Primarily found in plants and fatty fish, and includes Omega-3s(ALA, DHA and EPA). Ideal for long-term health, essential for body function, helps maintain an optimal weight.



Mostly comes from animal sources. Too much increases the cholesterol in your body, which is known as a risk factor for your cardiovascular system.



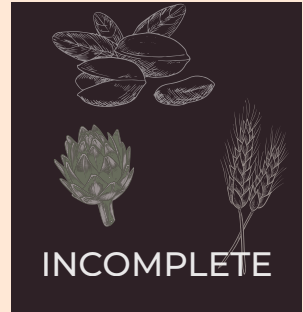
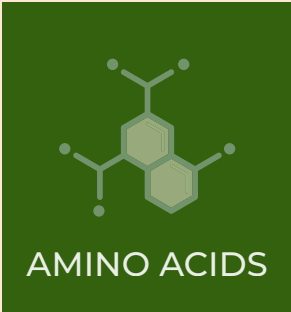
Typically found in processed food because it increases shelf life. Trans fat negatively affects the heart and raise bad cholesterol; it is best to be avoided.

Wellness Wisdom

- ✓ Increase your intake of olives, nuts, seeds, avocados, and coconuts
- ✓ Avoid food products that contain trans fats like baked goods crackers, cookies, doughnuts, frozen pizza, and fried foods

PROTEIN

Protein provides structure to muscle and bone, builds and repairs tissues, and helps immune cells fight inflammation and infection. The human body uses amino acids to make proteins.



Vital for functions such as protein synthesis, tissue repair or nutrient absorption. There are 20 amino acids that are the building blocks of proteins. Our bodies make some of these on their own, but there are 9 we need from food.

These are proteins that contain all 9 essential amino acids. They are often obtained from animal products (meat, poultry, fish, dairy, eggs) but can be found in plant products like soy, amaranth and quinoa.

Proteins that lack a full set of all 9 essential amino acids. You can create a complete protein from these sources by pairing two incomplete proteins. They are typically found in grains, pastas, nuts, vegetables and legumes.

Wellness Wisdom

- ✓ Protein sources should come mainly from whole, unprocessed foods
- ✓ Unlike fats and carbs, the human body does not store excess amino acids for later use - amino acids must come from your food every day

VITAMINS

We obtain most of our essential vitamins from plants and animals

There are 13 essential vitamins: A, C, D, E, K, and the B vitamins (thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin, B6, B12, and folate) for every function in the body, from resisting infection to regulating your nervous system, clotting your blood, digesting and extracting energy from your food.

Vitamins are either water or fat soluble. The B vitamins and Vitamin C are water soluble; vitamins A, D, E, and K are fat soluble.



WATER-SOLUBLE

- Absorbed directly into the bloodstream and when consumed in excess, are excreted through urine
- Produce energy for your body, build proteins and cells, support bones, teeth and the building of collagen, which knits together tissues

FAT-SOLUBLE

- Gain entry to the blood via the walls of the intestines
- Stored in the body and released when needed
- Over-consumption can lead to toxicity as there is no direct route for excretion
- Keep your eyes, skin, lungs, gastrointestinal tract and nervous system healthy

MINERALS

*There are two types of dietary minerals:
macro minerals and trace minerals*

MACRO MINERALS

- Include: calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, sodium, potassium, chloride and sulfur
- Maintain proper balance of water in the body, ensure healthy bones and stabilize protein structures, including some of those that make up hair, skin and nails.

TRACE MINERALS

- Include: iron, manganese, copper, iodine, zinc, cobalt, fluoride and selenium.
- Needed to transport oxygen throughout the body, helping blood to clot and forming enzymes, which enable other functions such as iron metabolism and the creation of hemoglobin that carries oxygen in the blood.

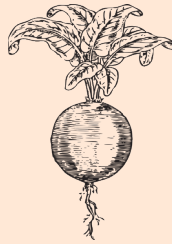
Wellness Wisdom



The most ideal way to get vitamins and minerals into your body is by eating whole foods that naturally contain micronutrients, which optimizes the absorption and utilization of other nutrients



There is growing popularity in taking supplements or eating foods fortified with vitamins but a word of caution: supplements and added minerals lack the accompanying nutrition (fiber, fats, antioxidants) that help our bodies effectively use these nutrients. Supplements can be helpful if you are not able to obtain all of your macronutrient needs naturally through food, but they should not be your main source for nutrition





DIGESTION AND YOUR GUT

The health of your gut is essential
in the digestive process

DIGESTION AND YOUR GUT

Your gut, the part of your body that turns the food you eat into fuel and repairs your body, includes two systems: the digestive system and the gut microbiome.

The digestive system includes the stomach, pancreas, liver, gallbladder, small intestines and colon.

The gut microbiome is made up of millions of microorganisms, including bacteria, fungi, viruses and protozoa that live in your digestive tract. These micro-organisms are essential for digestion.

These micro-organisms help break down the food we eat into the nutrients our bodies need; such as vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants, fatty acids, amino acids and glucose.



The food you eat has a major impact on the health of these essential microbes. When you eat lots of colorful, fresh, whole foods, your gut microbes get the nutrients they need and function well. When you eat processed, high-fat, high-sugar foods, the gut microbes not only lack nutrition, they have to work hard to find the right materials your body needs and also dispel those it doesn't.



PROCESSED VS WHOLE FOODS

Science is proving that highly processed foods
are linked to a host of diseases

PROCESSED vs WHOLE FOODS

Highly processed foods have a label, often with a long list of ingredients. They typically come in a can, box or a plastic bag, quick to prepare or ready to eat.



Minimally processed foods are whole foods that have been partially prepared to make them more convenient e.g., washed lettuce, dried oats, roasted nuts and seeds, frozen fruits or vegetables.



Whole foods are those that are freshly picked or harvested. Whole foods are brimming with flavor and vitality and they carry the innate intelligence to improve your health.



Wellness Wisdom

- ✓ Highly processed foods contain different types of additives, preservatives, chemicals, or hidden artificial sweeteners for taste and longevity purposes. Too much processed food weakens the gut microbes, and some may even disappear, leading to health problems like weight gain, bloating, pain, constipation, low hormone and energy production, depression, anxiety.
- ✓ To improve your gut microbiome in a short time, eat whole foods.



UNDERSTANDING LABELS

Bright colors, scientific names, health claims -
how do you decipher what's really good for you?

UNDERSTANDING LABELS

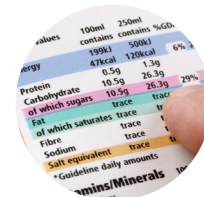
A lot of money is spent on food marketing to entice people to buy products. It is important to understand some of the language so you can make informed choices on the foods you put in your body.

Food packaging designs are created to catch your attention and tug on your emotions. Beautiful pictures, attractive characters, appealing made-up stories, and specific words tell a story to help sell products. Don't rely on pictures and stories, read food ingredient lists to get the facts.



Language on food packaging and advertisements often reflect current food trends more than a product's benefit. Words such as "natural," "organic," "healthy," and "good for you" are claims—they don't necessarily mean a food is good for you. Again, read the ingredient list and educate yourself on the impacts of those ingredients instead of relying on what the package says.

Ingredient lists give a better insight to a product's nutrition as they tell what the food in the package is made of. Ingredients are listed in order of quantity—the first one being the highest amount. Ideal foods have minimal ingredients. Beware of big words that are hard to pronounce, they are most likely additives, preservatives, chemicals, or dyes.



Nutrition labels show percentages of various nutritional allowances, but this information can be misleading. Processed foods may show higher levels of "nutrition" due to additives that our bodies do not process well. Additionally, numbers can often be deceptive by adjusting the serving size.



FOOD TRENDS

Buzz words give an impression of health, but
seldom deliver on their promises

COMMON FOOD TRENDS

Terms such as no-fat or no-sugar, low-fat or reduced-salt on food packaging may give consumers a sense of confidence before they purchase, but these claims rarely reflect the actual nutritional quality of the food. It is important to truly understand the basis behind these claims and what is actually in the foods you are buying so you can make the most informed decision.

Below are some common food trends and some of the cautionary items to watch for before making your purchase.

Diet Foods: low-fat, low-carb/low-sugar, high-fiber, and high-protein snacks and foods frequently target weight loss and are promoted as healthy. However, they often have a lot of chemical additives to make up for what's missing and to make them taste and look good.

"In many cases, foods containing low-sugar, low-fat or low-salt claims had a worse nutritional profile than those without claims," according to Lindsey Smith Taillie, a research assistant professor in the department of nutrition at UNC's Gillings School of Global Public Health. *"In fact, in some cases, products that tend to be high in calories, sodium, sugar or fat may be more likely to have low- or no-content claims."*

Vegan - Veganism itself is not just a trend; for a globally growing number it is a lifestyle which takes environmental, ethical, and health factors into account. However, just because a food is vegan (does not include animal or animal by-products), does not mean it is healthy. The same rules apply to vegan and vegetarian foods as animal-sourced products: choose unprocessed whole foods - i.e., choose a whole baked potato instead of potato chips.

COMMON FOOD TRENDS

Trans Fat-Free:

Processed foods often have “trans fat-free” on the label, but this claim doesn’t necessarily have to be true. Limits vary depending on country, but small amounts of trans fats per serving are permitted even with this claim. If the word “hydrogenated” appears anywhere on the label, the product contains trans fats and would be best to avoid.



Gluten-Free:

Processed products labeled “gluten-free” are generally not healthy. These foods are usually made from highly refined, high-glycemic starches, such as corn, potato or tapioca starch. They are often loaded with unhealthy ingredients like sugar and chemicals to replicate the taste and texture of regular gluten-based products. Eating gluten-free is best when eliminating refined cereals, cakes, cookies, pies and other baked goods and replacing them with real, whole foods.

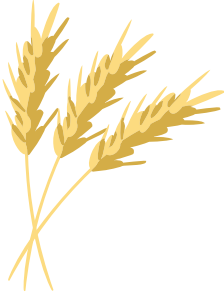


Hidden Sugar:

Food manufacturers often put different types of sugar in their products. Look for words such as high-fructose corn syrup, evaporated cane juice, agave, maltose, brown sugar, high fructose corn syrup, cane sugar, honey, fruit juice concentrate, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, levulose, lactose, invert sugar, molasses, aspartame, acesulfame-K, neotame, saccharin, sucralose, etc. It’s a clever way to mask the true amount of refined sugar or detrimental sweeteners in processed foods.



COMMON FOOD TRENDS



Includes ‘Whole ‘Grains:

Processed foods such as cereal and bread often claim to include whole grains. However, whole grains aren’t always “whole,” they’re often pulverized into very fine flour so slow digestion is lost, and these foods spike your blood sugar.

Convenience Food:

Packaged “Grab ‘n Go” products are only convenient because they’re ready to eat. Such foods are loaded with chemicals, additives, preservatives, and more to make them taste good, look appealing, and last on the shelf.



Apples, bananas, and berries are also convenience foods and 100% natural.



Fruit-Flavored:

Many processed foods have a flavor that sounds natural. For example, orange-flavored vitamin water may taste like an orange but it likely doesn’t contain any of the fruit. The sweet taste is from sugar and the orange flavor is from artificial chemicals. Again, check labels—fruit flavors may be known by such names as octyl acetate or neryl acetate.

WHAT'S HIDDEN?

Small Amounts of Healthy Ingredients

Processed products often include small amounts of ingredients that are commonly considered healthy, and they are prominently displayed on the packaging as a pure marketing trick. These include: whole grains, omega-3s, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. The amount of these nutrients is negligible and they are chemically derived.

Hiding Controversial Ingredients

Many people have adverse reactions to certain food ingredients and therefore choose to avoid them. However, food manufacturers often hide these controversial ingredients by referring to them with technical names that people don't understand. For example, in Europe MSG (monosodium glutamate) may be called E621 and carrageenan may be called E407. The same can be said for many types of sugar.

Wellness Wisdom



Limiting processed food and eating real, whole food is the best way to realize optimal health. That way, you don't have to worry about misleading label claims, confusing ingredient lists, and harmful chemical additives



Real food doesn't need an ingredient list; it IS the ingredient

MARKETING & GROWING PRACTICES

More and more growing practices are used as a selling point for many products. Often people assume this means the food is healthier or safer, but that is not always the case. It's important to understand these terms so you can make the most informed decision when purchasing your food.



ORGANIC
The production of food without the use of antibiotics or hormones, synthetic chemicals, pesticides, or fertilizers. Several countries have standards for organics that are upheld by the government, but many countries have no regulation around organic or the ability of a company to use the term.

LOCALLY GROWN

'Local' usually signifies that the food was grown or manufactured 100-500 miles from where it is being sold. This term does not have any bearing on the growing practices for the product.



NATURAL
This vague term is assumed to imply foods that are minimally processed and supposedly do not contain manufactured ingredients, but the lack of standards in most cases means that the term assures nothing.

SUSTAINABLY GROWN

Stewardship of both natural and human resources is of prime importance for those who use this label. Often these products are grown organically, but if a grower did not go through an organic certification process, they may need to classify products using terms such as "sustainably grown".



VEGANICALLY GROWN
Veganic growing is where produce is grown free from the use of animal products (manures, blood, bone or fish meals) and uses strictly plant-based materials for fertilization.

AQUAPONICS

Growing of fish and plants together in one integrated, soilless system. The fish waste provides a food source for the plants and the plants provide a natural filter for the water the fish live in.



HYDROPONICS
Similar to aquaponics, hydroponics is growing plants in water but without the fish. Chemically derived nutrients are added to liquid which is flushed around the roots of the plants. Hydroponic produce has been shown to have less nutrition than produce grown in soil.



THE TRUTH ABOUT SUGAR

Our bodies need sugar to function but it's the type and quantity that are important

THE TRUTH ABOUT SUGAR

Glucose (sugar) is the “gasoline” that fuels our cells throughout our body and the biggest consumer of glucose is our brain. If there isn't enough glucose in the brain, for example, neurotransmitters, the brain's chemical messengers, are not produced and communication between neurons breaks down.

Sugar is found in many foods and many forms. Whole fruits, vegetables and other natural sources have natural forms of sugar that generally are good for our bodies.

The sugar in these foods is paired with great-for-your-body things such as fiber and vitamins which cause your body to process the sugars more slowly. Processed sugar, found in many foods such as candy, cereals, biscuits, cake and flavored yogurt, is readily available

and goes straight into your bloodstream, causing many unpleasant effects on the body as a whole.

The World Health Organization recommends that only 5% of our daily calories should be from added sugars, but in many countries, consumption rates are double or triple this amount - largely due to the rise in consumption of processed food. Not surprisingly, sugar is added to 3 out of 4 products found on grocery shelves globally!



SUGAR CULPRITS

The following added sugars are some of the biggest culprits of the sugar crisis.

- Refined sugar
- Fructose
- Artificial sugars
- Xylitol
- Stevia
- Corn syrup
- High-fructose corn syrup
- Agave

In moderate amounts, some added sugars, such as honey, maple syrup and cane sugar, are good for your body. However, the question is what equals a “moderate amount” and why do people struggle with this moderation?







HYDRATION

How well hydrated you are plays a vital role on
your health

HYDRATION

The human body is composed of 60- 80% water and without it, your body cannot function properly. Your body is constantly losing water and in need of replenishment. The recommended amount of water you should drink per day varies, but on average, approximately 3 liters or more should be consumed if you live in a hot, dry climate, are very active or are breastfeeding.

Often, our body signals its need for water via a feeling of thirst, but in this fast paced world, many have tuned out these signals and often don't feel thirsty. If you've gone more than a few hours in your day without drinking anything and haven't felt thirsty, this is a signal your body is in need of hydration as well.

Your body uses water to:

- Regulate body temperature
- Moisten and protect organs and tissues
- Increase blood flow to the brain
- Carry nutrients and oxygen to cells
- Lubricate joints
- Flush out waste products

Not drinking sufficient water every day can result in these related conditions:

- Persistent headaches
- Sugar cravings
- Constipation
- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Mental fog
- Higher risk for stroke
- Skin issues
- Inflammation and chronic pain



DRINK OPTIONS

YOUR RESPONSE TO THIRST HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON YOUR OVERALL WELL-BEING. TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON HOW YOU HYDRATE YOUR BODY THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND WHICH DRINKS WILL SERVE YOU THE BEST.

WATER



The ideal form of hydration; cleanses and detoxes the system, maintains body temp, lubricates joints, protects sensitive tissues, regulates mood and brain function, improves blood oxygen circulation. Drink water from trusted sources so as to avoid bacteria and other chemicals. Filtration may be necessary for situations where the water supply is contaminated.



TEA

Teas come in many varieties - herbal, black, green, white. They have 0 calories and contain less caffeine than coffee and other caffeinated drinks. Teas, particularly green and black, are good sources of antioxidants. Watch out for teas with added sugars, colors, and artificial flavors and be wary of detox teas that suggest you will quickly lose weight as they often contain laxatives that can be harmful to your health.

FRUIT + VEGETABLE JUICES

Fruits and vegetables are naturally full of water that is easier for the body to absorb when eaten raw, which helps your body stay hydrated better than water. Blending or juicing fresh fruits and veggies is your next best option. Blending preserves the fiber and nutrients and keeps you hydrated. Juice from extractors and bottled juices lack fiber and some nutrients thus making them quickly digested and may cause spikes in blood sugar and may have other added ingredients that alter the health benefits.



COFFEE

Coffee primarily is made up of water. It contains antioxidants and other active substances that may reduce internal inflammation and protect against disease. Coffee has caffeine and too much caffeine can cause negative side effects. Additionally, coffee drinks with added creamers, sugars, and flavors do not support your health. Moderation is the key if you choose to drink coffee.

ENERGY DRINKS



Energy drinks claim to improve energy, help with weight loss, and improve concentration. Over time they steal your energy, stressing your adrenals and you! The main ingredients typically are caffeine, other caffeine-like ingredients, and a lot of sugar. This overload of caffeine and sugar may lead to sleep disorders, obesity, and dental problems. Stopping the consumption of these drinks causes withdrawal symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, trouble concentrating, and moodiness.

DRINK OPTIONS

HERE ARE A FEW OTHER DRINK 'GO-TO'S'. SOME ARE HEALTH 'POWERHOUSES', OTHERS ARE HEALTH DESTRUCTORS.

FLAVOR INFUSED WATER



Drinking infused water adds a bit of flavor without extra sugars or calories. The healthiest form of flavored water is one you make at home with real fruit and herbs. Be careful when purchasing flavored water, there may be added sugars, colors, or other hidden ingredients.



COCONUT WATER

Drunk straight from the fruit, it is one of the best thirst-quenching drinks for you. It's an electrolyte replacement with fewer calories, less sodium and sugar, and more potassium than a sports drink. Ideally buy products without any added ingredients or drink straight from the coconut. If you have kidney problems, you will need to be mindful of the potassium levels.



MILK + MILK ALTERNATIVES

Milk and milk alternatives are largely made up of water and have other nutrients to help fuel the body. Drink full fat and unsweetened milk and substitutes for the most benefits. Allergies, lactose intolerance, and certain cancers have been attributed to dairy milk, as well as concerns with antibiotics and hormones injected in the animals producing the milk.



SPORTS DRINKS

Sports drinks are designed to replace water, electrolytes, and carbohydrates that the body uses during activity. They often contain simple sugars (typically high fructose corn syrup) that have little nutritional value. Many often contain artificial colors which are known for negative health impacts. If you're not exercising long or hard, sports drinks could lead to weight gain. The sugars in these drinks can also lead to dental problems.



SODA

Aside from sweet-tasting, they contain many calories and no nutrition. Beyond weight gain, routinely drinking soda can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, other chronic diseases, and the risk of premature death. Additionally, diet sodas are linked to an increased risk of medical conditions, such as diabetes, obesity, dementia, stroke, liver problems, which include nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.

HYDRATION FOR HEALTH



While the consumption of water is important, it is mandatory to ensure your drinking water is safe.

If water is contaminated with harmful bacteria, germs and excessive chemicals it is necessary to remove the contaminants to make sure that water is safe to drink. Many think drinking bottled water is safe, but plastic adds more chemicals to water, which adds more toxins to our system.

Here are some tips for creating clean drinking water:

- Bring water to a full rolling boil for 1 minute (at elevations above 6,500 feet, boil for 3 minutes), then allow it to cool before use
- Boil tap water even if it is filtered
- Use a two pot filter, stainless steel
- Sand, charcoal, and stones purify water
- Adding a small amount of sea salt or electrolytes help restore essential minerals that were removed during the purification process; these minerals are important for staying hydrated
- Store water in glass, clay or stainless steel containers

THE SOURCE OF HYDRATION

Wellness Wisdom

If you want to ensure adequate water intake on a daily basis, introduce some of these practices into your routine:

- ✓ Drink water whenever you feel thirsty. Carry a water bottle, ideally made of stainless steel or glass
- ✓ Perk up your water by adding fresh fruit and herbs such as cucumber, mint, rosemary, ginger, strawberries, oranges, lemons, and berries
- ✓ Eat fruits and vegetables, they are made up of large percentages of water
- ✓ Incorporate tea into your routine to benefit from its polyphenols which combat cancer, cardiovascular disease and many others. Green tea especially contains some of the most powerful disease-fighting phytonutrients found in plants.
- ✓ Drink herbal teas and coconut water (without added sugars)
- ✓ Reduce technology use. Being around electronics for an extended time creates a build-up of toxins in our system (emitted from the technology) which puts added stress on the kidneys and uses up a lot of water
- ✓ Move! Movement actually draws hydration all the way through our tissues into our cells helping to properly hydrate the body



HEALTHY SNACKING

The snacking industry is a multi-billion dollar industry and continues to grow, but is snacking really good for health?

HEALTHY SNACKING

Global trends show more and more people preferring to snack or eat several smaller meals over eating three large meals during the day. In fact, 2019 brought in \$210+ billion to the snacking industry. Since the pandemic, snacking has risen even further. Comfort, convenience, and cunning marketing make snacks appear healthier are some of the drivers for this are on the rise. The snack industry funnels a lot of money into market research focused on learning about consumer behaviors, trends, and other insights to shape how they market and package their foods to make you buy more.



Have you considered your snacking habits and the overall impact on your health and well-being?

Often, we don't think much about why we're snacking, we just reach for food. Mindless munching can have serious negative health impacts. When you feel like snacking, stop for a moment and think: why are you snacking and not eating a full meal? Stop yourself and have a drink of water instead. Chances are, you're not hungry at all and a glass of water could be all you need. If you've never really thought about your motivations for eating, it can be a bit tricky trying to distinguish the real reason.

THINKING ABOUT SNACKING


Here are some tips to help reconsider snacking:


- Keep a notebook of your snacks and then reflect on what you ate and also your feelings before and after eating
- Before you pick up the snack, drink a glass of water, wait 10 minutes, and see how you feel; often thirst registers in our brains as a hunger
- Think about the actual item you are about to put in your mouth, is it something that will keep you healthy?
- Consider whether you are snacking because of hunger or a need for energy or something else?

If you're not hungry, go deeper for the reason: likely it will fall into one of these:

- You're bored
- You want to distract yourself
- It's available
- For comfort
- Mindless munching

Wellness Wisdom

 Many times we end up snacking as a means to “get through” to our next meal or as an alternative to eating larger meals. Studies suggest that the type of food you eat plays a greater role in overall health and well-being than the number of times you eat throughout the day.

 Research also indicates that those who snack more frequently throughout the day may be at risk for metabolic disease and other serious health conditions such as Type 2 diabetes and heart and blood vessel conditions. Before you reach for that next snack, consider the wisdom shared here and choose the healthy option for your situation.

SHIFTING HABITS

Create positive eating habits to avoid snacking and eating unhealthy foods



- Incorporate a variety of fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains
- Add foods from the following categories each time you eat:
 - Protein: nuts, lentils, chia seeds, quinoa, meat, fish and eggs
 - Fat: olive oil, coconut oil, full-fat butter, nuts, seeds, olives, avocados, and coconut milk
 - Carbohydrate: whole grains, fruits, and veggies

Allow your body to rest, also from food

- Adequate sleep is essential to overall well-being; observe your body and remove foods that may cause sleep disorders
- Stop eating at least two hours before going to bed; if you have to eat, make it something light
- Intermittent fasting, where you refrain from eating for 12-16 hours, has a positive impact on metabolism, lowers blood sugar, and inflammation in the body, and gives your body a chance to digest



IF YOU CAN'T RESIST

If you absolutely need to snack, consider these options

If you absolutely need to snack during the day, keep your consumption to a minimum and try to get whole food. Eliminate or reduce pre-packaged and processed food. Snacks made with “healthy ingredients” are often loaded with fat and sugar and they have been processed to a state where many ingredients are unhealthy and don't provide nutrients to your body.

Try pairing the following foods to tide you over and keep you from feeling sluggish:

- Veggies and nut butter or hummus
- Fruit and leafy greens
- Tuna or salmon and cucumbers
- Veggies and whole grains
- Avocado, nuts, seeds and olives

What To Do if You Can't Resist?



ASK YOURSELF, “DO I REALLY NEED THIS?”

- Ask yourself why you feel the need to eat and if it's not hunger, walk away.
- Ask yourself how you want to look and feel and whether this food, right now, will help you achieve your vision.

CHANGE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

- Have a discussion with those around you to see if something healthy can be provided, or be the one to create change!
- Find an activity you can do instead of eating: take a 5-minute walk, call a friend, or change your environment.



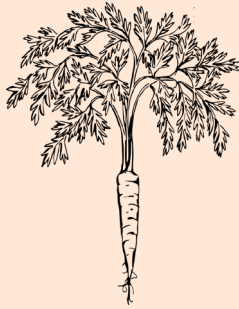
DON'T BUY IT!

- If snack and junk food is around, you're more likely to eat it just because it's there.
- Purchase healthy options such as fresh fruits, veggies, and nuts instead.

IF YOU REALLY NEED IT...

- Prepare a small meal rather than a quick “fix.” Give your body the nutrition that it needs so you can function at your best.
- If you absolutely need a snack, come prepared with your own healthy ones.





A wooden spoon and a wooden fork are crossed on a white plate. The word "FASTING" is written in large, green, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image. The background is a solid light orange color.

FASTING

Changing eating patterns requires discipline and it may not seem easy, however, it is possible!

CONSIDER FASTING

If you notice there are behaviors or types of food you eat that need to be changed, consider taking some time to fast in order to reset your body and your thoughts about food.

Fasting may sound challenging; however, once you make the commitment it will have an enormous and positive effect on how you relate to food and how you feel. The purpose of a fast is to separate yourself from something to slow your body or mind down, giving it a chance to reset and heal. Consult with your doctor before beginning a food-related fast, especially if you have any medical conditions or concerns about fasting.

Consider the following and find a method that is best suited to you.

- Find the right option
 - Eliminate all food for a period of time
 - Eliminate certain types of foods (junk foods, sugars, meats, food your body craves)
 - Fasting “things” such as television, technology, activities
- Choose a time frame for fasting and stick to it
 - Typically 1-5 days is ideal for those fasting from all food
 - Intermittent fasting typically lasts 12-16 hours
- Tell your friends and/or family so you get support for this challenge you are undertaking

“The philosophy of fasting calls upon us to know ourselves, to master ourselves, and to discipline ourselves the better to free ourselves. To fast is to identify our dependencies, and free ourselves from them.”

- Tariq Ramadan

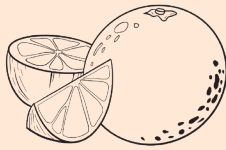
BREAKING A FAST

Transitioning from the time of fasting should be a slow process

Fasting is actually the beginning of the healing process. As you transition out of a fast, it is important to ease back into your daily routine and notice how your body responds to the things you 'consume'.

- Reintroduce foods slowly, starting with “lighter” foods first.
 - Some suggestions are: oatmeal, fresh veggies and fruits, water, herbal teas, whole grains and legumes such as brown rice, quinoa, amaranth, beans and lentils.
- Add other foods one at a time and wait 2-3 days before introducing another type of food.
- As you reintroduce foods, observe if you have bloating, headaches, stomach aches, or other general malaise after eating the food, you may want to explore further whether you have a sensitivity to that food.
 - Consider keeping a food diary during this time. Tracking what time you ate, what was eaten, portion size, and how you felt after eating can help to identify foods that cause any discomfort.
- If you chose a fast from non-food sources, such as technology, news, certain people, etc, notice the impact if you chose to go back to these things.

During the fast, reflect further on the questions above to better know your body and incorporate the following essential elements to wellness into your daily routine.



A woman with long braids is shown in a circular frame, holding an orange to her nose and smelling it. A basket of oranges is visible in the foreground. The background is softly blurred with greenery.

MINDFUL EATING

Take some time to pause before
you eat

MINDFUL EATING

Many people today find themselves eating “on the run,” in their cars, in front of their computers, or grabbing a quick bite before the next meeting or activity. It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to process whether you are full or not, so eating quickly often results in eating too much. Eating on the go also leads to other issues such as making unhealthy food choices, poor digestion, higher blood sugar, and higher levels of “bad” cholesterol.

Shift away from the “grab and go” meal mentality and turn to mindful eating. Mindful eating does not require a lot of time, but it does require you to slow down and be present and aware of what you are choosing and eating.

Some benefits of mindful eating are:

- Improved digestion
- Reduction in binge eating
- Weight loss
- Better heart health
- Increased insulin response and better blood sugar regulation
- Less stress and anxiety
- Improved relationship with food

When you take time to eat slowly, not only will you enjoy your food, you will also see positive health benefits. Find at least one practice to start with and integrate it into your daily routine. Taking a few extra moments to reflect on your food and how you are eating can make a world of difference on your overall well-being. The next page has some ideas for you.



MINDFUL EATING TIPS

- Reflect on what and why you are eating: ask yourself “Am I really hungry?”
- Practice gratitude. Say a prayer, take a moment of silence or pause to slow your body down before eating.
- Create an inviting environment. Ensure your environment is clean, inviting, and free of distractions.
- Find a way to eat more slowly. Take smaller bites, use chopsticks or use utensils with your non-dominant hand.
- Eat with your hands. This prepares your body to receive the food you are about to eat and allows for a multi-sensory experience of your food.
 - The nerve endings in your hands send information to the brain and stomach instructing the stomach to release digestive juices and enzymes, preparing the digestive system for what is about to be consumed.
- Chew your food. Chewing increases enzyme saliva production, supporting the digestive process.
 - As a general rule of thumb, chew your food at least thirty times before swallowing as food not properly chewed causes digestive problems such as gas, bloating, constipation, food reactions, headaches and lowered energy levels.
- Eat until you’re 80% full. You know when you are “80% full” when you begin to feel ‘pressure’ of fullness in your stomach.
- Choose to be deliberate with the amount of time you are eating.
- Set a timer to 20 minutes and take that time to eat your meal.
- Finish one bite before starting another.



A woman with curly hair, wearing a light-colored hat and a polka-dot dress, is smiling as she looks at fresh produce in a market. She is holding a bunch of leafy greens. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and market stalls.

SHOPPING THROUGH THE LENS OF HEALTH

Good nutrition starts with smart choices when
selecting your food

PLAN AHEAD

The process starts at home. Before you set out for the market (offline/online), plan for your meals for the week and create a shopping list. It takes a few minutes and saves time in choosing proper ingredients and avoiding running back to the store/market for missing items.

- ✓ Eat before you shop - shopping on an empty stomach is never a good idea
- ✓ Make an inventory of what you have at home prior to shopping
- ✓ Keep a notepad in the kitchen or use technology to remind you of items that are running low
- ✓ Keep in mind seasonal products to ensure rotation of nutrients
- ✓ Look for fun/easy recipes ahead of time
- ✓ Bring your bags (leave them in your car)



AT THE MARKET

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU GET TO THE MARKET:

- ✓ Spend the most time in the produce section, the first area you encounter in most grocery stores (and typically the largest)
- ✓ Choose a rainbow of colorful fruits and vegetables. The color reflects the different vitamin, mineral, and nutrient content of each fruit or vegetable
- ✓ Start with “dry foods” and finish with perishable, cold, and frozen items



EXPAND YOUR SHOPPING HORIZON

✓ **Online Shopping:** Find businesses that allow you to shop online. Remember to budget for delivery fees /tips

✓ **Farmers Markets:** A great way to shop local. The earlier you arrive, the fresher the food will be. Take time to talk to your local farmers and learn about how they grow the food.

✓ **Cooperatives:** Join forces with your friends and family to support local businesses and reduce costs. Share a membership or share your weekly haul with someone who needs it.

✓ **Imperfect Foods:** A lot of produce is wasted because it doesn't meet the 'beauty standards' that have been artificially imposed on foods. Find vendors that work to eliminate this type of food waste by selling products that are cosmetically challenged but still safe to eat.

✓ Start your own personal or community garden and share fresh produce. Find friends, family, or neighbors who are willing to grow different produce and share with the group.



TIPS

- ✓ Fresh products are the priority, but if you are unable to buy or if it's not feasible to shop as frequently, consider frozen fruits and vegetables. These are convenient ways to help to fill in the produce gap, especially in winter. They are ready for use and can also save time in preparation.
- ✓ Buying already chopped vegetables and herbs is convenient when you are in a time crunch. Make sure to look closely for any discoloration or mold and be sure to plan meals around the chopped items as they should be consumed within a few days.
- ✓ Keep a variety of vegetables, and beans packed in jars on hand to toss into soups, salads, pasta, or rice dishes for those days when you are short of time. Whenever possible, choose ready-to-use vegetables without added salt.
- ✓ If you have storage capacity, bulk shop to save time and money. Be sure you can eat all of your purchased products to avoid wasting food.







KITCHEN GARDEN

Indoor kitchen gardens allow you to pick fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs from inside your home

CREATING A KITCHEN GARDEN

WHY IT'S GREAT



An edible garden is a collection of fruit and vegetable plants grown in or near a kitchen, and an indoor kitchen garden can be any size. Adding freshly picked ingredients into home-cooked recipes and meals adds vital nutrients and wonderful flavors to any cuisine. You can pick herbs as often as you like to add to your meals, aim for a minimum of 3-4 times a week so you get the maximum benefits. You will enjoy watching the plants grow and you'll savor their fresh taste in everything you cook.

THE BEST LOCATIONS

Most indoor plants require at least 3-6 hours of sunlight daily so choose a spot with adequate sunshine. Herbs generally need 6-8 hours of direct sun while fruit needs at least 8-10 hours. Every few days, slightly rotate your plants toward the sun so they grow evenly. If you do not have adequate lighting, you can purchase a compact fluorescent lamp ("CFL") for artificial light.



Look around your home, if you have a window sill, a countertop with direct sunlight, a small table near a window, a balcony, or another space for a soil box, you can create a kitchen garden. Northern facing spaces provide the least amount of sunlight, so take the location into consideration. Edible plants also need good air flow and warm temperatures to thrive.

GROWING VESSELS



While earthen pots are readily available, do not shy away from reusing glass jars or plastic bottles. Choose containers that are 6 inches or taller to accommodate fast-growing roots. They should also have drainage holes so roots do not develop mold due to water clogging.

YOUR FUTURE INGREDIENTS



Grow what you love! Grow herbs and plants that you frequently use in the kitchen and those you love to taste. Great choices for a garden include beans, spinach, bell peppers, herbs, microgreens, leafy greens, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, and strawberries. Buy seeds or plants from your nearby nursery and transfer plants into larger pots to give them room to grow. When growing seeds, always cover your pot with a mesh top to prevent excess sunlight and air from impairing their growth.

It's important that plants receive good amounts of nutrients from the soil. You can use store-bought regular soil and add compost or potting mix into it. Be careful if using garden soil or leftover soil from other plants, you want to prevent transferring diseases or pests. Follow the fertilizing suggestions on seed packets and nursery stock for guidance on frequency and strength, and use organic fertilizer to help boost healthy growth. Alternately, you can fertilize monthly using vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, eggshells, or tiny pieces of dried banana peel. Prune regularly for sturdy growth, however don't cut more than 1/3 of the plant at a time.

FEEDING YOUR PLANTS



WATERING



While watering your plants, the right amount of water is important for healthy yields. Humidity and sunlight will affect how much your plants need so experiment in the beginning. Yellowing leaves indicate over-watering while wilting leaves indicate insufficient water. Roots should not sit much in water as they will rot. Generally, keep soil moist to the touch.

- Always read the growing directions for your seeds or seedlings to find the best soil and sunlight conditions suggested for your plant.
- Grow ingredients that you enjoy and that will also save you money vs. buying them in a store.
- Experiment with multiple locations by placing plants in different windows, counters, and outdoor spaces to see where they grow the best.
- Be cautious of using food scraps as fertilizers indoors as they may attract fruit flies. If you notice insects, place 1-2 cups of apple cider vinegar with a few drops of dish soap near the infested plants for a natural, chemical-free remedy. Cover the cup with plastic wrap and poke several holes in the top to trap the insects.

TIPS







KITCHEN DESIGN

Creating an inviting kitchen space is one of the best things you can do to encourage you and your family to eat well

KITCHEN DESIGN

Research indicates we are more likely to reach for health-giving fruits and vegetables if they are easily seen and accessible.

Having healthy foods visible helps you to make good choices and makes it easier to know what you need to restock.

“Farm to table” is one of the best ways to consider supplies in your kitchen. Stocking your shelves and refrigerator with local fresh food is a great way to have healthier and less processed food on hand in the kitchen.

A little creativity can easily improve an existing kitchen into an appealing environment.

Consider integrating some of these ideas into your kitchen space:

- Remove doors from the cupboards so all food is visible
- Prepare baskets to store and display your collection of rainbow colored vegetables and fruits
- Use spaces where there is natural light to grow some pots of fresh herbs that will add super-powered nutrition and flavor to your meals
- Scour flea markets or second hand shops for decorative glass jars and containers to put spices and dry food in, such as quinoa, brown rice or nuts, making them easier to reach and pretty to look at



SETTING UP THE KITCHEN

Create a space that's inviting to stay and cook in:

- Designate a space for preparing and cutting food
- Keep bowls, cutting boards, knives, and pans within reach
- A blender, mixer, and crockpot are “essentials” for quick, easy, and healthy home-cooked foods



Invest in good tools:



- Good quality, sharp knives are safest and make the work easier
- Hardwood or bamboo chopping boards with no grooves are ideal
- Cups and plates made of stainless steel, porcelain, or glass are the healthiest
- Glassware, cast iron, or ceramic cookware help to minimize exposure to chemicals typically found in plastic and easy-to-clean non-stick pans

Prepare and cook your food:

- Healthy eating often means lots of cutting, but remember time spent preparing food can actually help lower stress levels
- Embrace the motto “cook once, eat twice” - prepare extra and freeze the leftovers
- If you are strapped for time during the week, make meals on the weekend and freeze until you're ready to eat them



Keep food safety in mind:



- Ensure hands, cooking tools, and surfaces are sanitary
- Raw meats should be separated from raw produce; use different utensils and boards when prepping
- Cook foods to their proper temperatures
- Chill leftovers as quickly as possible

Integrate sustainability into your kitchen routine:

- Compost bin for food scraps
- Water filter as opposed to water bottles
- Recycle as much as possible
- Reuse glass jars for storage
- Reduce your use of plastic



INTENTIONALLY DESIGNED

As only you have the opportunity to design a new kitchen space, take into consideration lighting, windows, the environment, climate, space and budget.

- Allowing natural lighting and ventilation in combination with creating a user-friendly, sustainable space will make your kitchen more inviting.
- Look for energy-efficient appliances, buy up-cycled or sustainably sourced cabinets and countertops, and choose natural materials with easy-to-clean surfaces.
- Climate-controlled storage for fresh food with different temperatures is recommended.
- When buying a fridge consider two sections: fridge and freezer, this way you can freeze food you have made or use it to store frozen fruits and vegetables.
- A glass refrigerator door makes your food highly visible ensuring you use what you have and go for the fresh produce first.



THE KITCHEN: RE-IMAGINED

CONVENTIONAL

Pre-packaged food with preservatives, thickeners, colorants.

Packaged in paper, aluminum, plastic bags, jugs, boxes, cans.

Leads to leaching of chemicals from packaging.

Nutritionally depleted food stored in freezers or near-freezing refrigeration or at warm/room temperature behind doors and easily forgotten for weeks or even years.

Unhealthy additives allow for convenience and long shelf life.

Food stored using plastic, aluminum foil, styrofoam, or other one-time-use containers.

Pre-made and pre-mixed foods provide convenience for preparation, but also create excess waste and a host of health concerns due to unhealthy ingredients and additives.

Microwaves are used to reheat, thaw, and cook main dishes. Stoves and ovens are designed for high-temperatures and quick cooking. Food flavor and texture can be compromised.

Waste is bulky with lots of packaging, only some of which is recyclable.

Food is put in the trash and sent to landfills.

Excessive food waste due to products that sit on shelves for extended periods of time and never eaten or only partially consumed.

Fast, mindless eating habits increase portion size.

Consumption of pre-packaged, nutritionally depleted foods and those containing unhealthy additives that allow for convenience and long shelf life.

Formal kitchens are traditionally designed to prepare food in isolation before serving dishes in a separate space.

vs.

1.

DELIVERY

2.

STORAGE

3.

PREPARATION

4.

COOKING

5.

DISPOSAL

6.

CONSUMPTION

7.

SOCIAL ACTIVITY

WELLNESS

Fresh, unprocessed food harvested locally at the home, from a community garden, or via local farms using sustainable farming practices.

Minimal packaging but may include paper, glass, or earth-friendly materials.

Little to no pesticides or synthetic chemicals that cause harm to the body or the environment.

Most "live" food is consumed fresh so little is stored long-term.

Dried goods such as beans, grains, and flours are purchased in specific quantities and are not stored for extended periods of time and stored in a manner that is easy to see and access.

Homemade "canning" (in glass jars) extends the life of fresh food and makes it available when the growing season has ended.

Use of glass, leaves/husks, clay pots, or re-usable food storage containers made from sustainable materials.

Washing, cutting, and other food prep can be shared with friends, family, and neighbors who make great dining partners for meals, cooking parties, and sharing food. Other creative solutions bring more community and joy into the process and more people seated together at the table.

Food is cooked over a range of temperatures and from a variety of sources to maintain nutrients and enhance natural flavors.

Unpackaged, fresh food and re-useable containers keep trash minimal.

Food scraps, spoiled food, and organic matter is composted to enrich soil.

Less food waste overall since food is purchased according to what is fresh and stored visibly so it is not forgotten.

Mindful eating habits allow slow enjoyment of food and contribute to healthy digestion and nutrient absorption.

The kitchen is the heart of the home designed to gather, entertain, and nourish family and friends with multiple workstations and seating areas.



The image features a circular inset with a soft pink-to-orange gradient background. Inside the circle, there is a close-up photograph of fresh produce. In the center is a whole apple with a mix of yellow and red skin. Surrounding it are several stalks of green celery and several white mushrooms. The text 'PREPARING FOOD' is overlaid on this image in a bold, green, sans-serif font with a white outline.

PREPARING FOOD

There are practical steps to take to ensure the taste and quality of the food you are eating is optimal for health

WASHING, PREPARING & COOKING FOOD

What you can't see could harm you

Pesticides are used to control pests, weeds, and diseases in plants, but can be toxic to humans. Depending on type and usage, they can have both short and long-term negative health impacts. Some of the older, cheaper pesticides can remain for years in soil and water. These chemicals have been banned from agricultural use in developed countries, but they are still used in many developing countries. Studies suggest 70% of produce around the globe has traces of pesticides so it is essential to remove them before eating. The following guide from the Environmental Working Group can help you identify the best and the worst fruits and vegetables as far as pesticide use is considered.

The Environmental Working Group's 2020 Clean Fifteen List

The fruit and veggies with the least pesticide residues



For these “clean” fruits and vegetables, regular cleaning with water is fine.

The Environmental Working Group's 2020 Dirty Dozen List

The fruit and veggies with the most pesticide residues



Buying organic versions of the dirty dozen is the best option but if this is not available you should thoroughly clean before eating.

WASHING FOOD

We aren't able to see pesticide and herbicide residue with the naked eye but for our health, we should assume that most produce, unless certified organic, has pesticide residue. Vinegar baths are a safe, natural way to clean produce as vinegar reduces bacteria by 90% and viruses by about 95%. Follow these simple steps to create a vinegar bath:

- Fill a large bowl or sink with water
- Add 50ml of vinegar
- Place produce in the mixture
- Let soak for 10-15 minutes
- Rinse vigorously in filtered (ideally) or tap water for 30 seconds

It is ideal to do this just before using the produce.



PREPARING FOOD

Simple tips for preparing your food:

- Buy in season: Fresh-picked fruits and vegetables that are in season taste better and contain more nutrition than produce picked before it's ripe or that flown in from other countries.
- Buy in bulk: Many grocery stores carry a bulk section, which allows you to save money by purchasing only what you actually need. You can often find grains, pasta, beans, nuts, dried fruits, spices, tea, honey, coffee, and nut butters in bulk.
- Stock basic ingredients in your pantry: Dried beans/lentils, spices, rice/grains, onion, tomato sauce and root veggies. These ingredients keep well and can be used in a pinch.
- Use everything:
 - Vegetable scraps to make soup stock
 - Buy a whole chicken and use the left-overs for another meal
 - Roast the seeds from your pumpkin/squash



COOKING FOOD

Steam cooking anything from fresh veggies to fish fillets allows them to stew in their own juices and retain all their natural goodness. It's always good to add a little seasoning first, whether that's a sprinkle of salt and pepper or a squeeze of lemon juice.



Poaching means cooking food in a small amount of hot water, just below the boiling point. It takes slightly longer but is a great way to gently cook delicate foods such as fish and eggs,

Roasting is one of the simplest and tastiest ways to cook meats and vegetables as it draws out the natural flavours. It also creates a crispy outside and moist inside. Roasting entails adding small amounts of oil to the food and then cooking it in the oven. Use healthy oils such as extra virgin olive oil, avocado oil or sesame oil.



Broiling entails cooking food under high, direct heat for a short period of time. Broiling is a great way to cook tender cuts of meat but cooking veggies can dry them out easily.

Boiling is quick and easy. Put your veggies in a pot of water with a dash (approx 1/2 tsp) of sea salt. Some research suggests boiling is the best way to preserve nutrients in carrots, zucchini, and broccoli, but the high temperatures and the large volume of water can dissolve away water-soluble vitamins in other produce.



COOKING FOOD

Stir-frying is an excellent method when using oils with a high smoke point such as avocado oil, rice bran oil, ghee or olive oil. If oil smokes, it will create toxic fumes and harmful free radicals. Stir-frying is effective for bite-sized pieces of meat and thin-cut veggies or leaves.



No Cooking: Studies suggest raw foods can be a great addition to your diet as they can retain more vitamins, minerals and fiber than their cooked counterparts. Eating raw fruit is an easy way to incorporate this method. However, raw foods can be hard to digest so you may not want to consume all food this way.

Grilling imparts a smoky flavor while keeping meats and veggies juicy and tender but some research suggests that regularly consuming charred, well-done meat may increase your risk of certain cancers. Keep grilling to a minimum (once per month), stick to lean cuts of meat that require less cooking time, and don't burn your food.



Microwaves are handy for reheating prepared food. If using a microwave, it is important to use glass or porcelain containers. Plastic leaches chemicals into foods in a microwave. Steam ovens can be used for the same effect and have the additional benefit of being helpful for cooking from scratch.

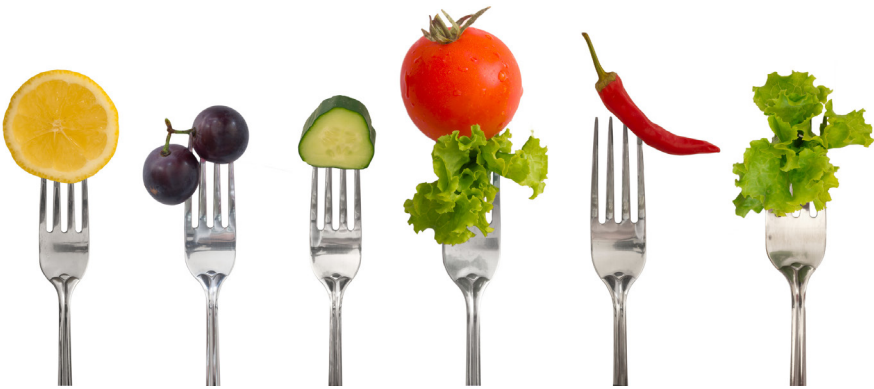
An oval-shaped image with a dark wood-grain background. In the center, an open book with white pages is shown. A magnifying glass with a silver handle and a circular lens is positioned over the right page of the book. The text 'MYTH BUSTERS' is overlaid in a bold, green, sans-serif font with a white outline. The word 'MYTH' is on the top line and 'BUSTERS' is on the bottom line, both centered horizontally.

MYTH BUSTERS

Are you missing out because of what you've
heard about healthy eating?

MYTH BUSTERS TO HEALTHY EATING

Delicious, nutritious food is not an oxymoron, but many people are missing out on some of life's greatest pleasures due to these common food myths. Read on as we reveal simple, everyday solutions to enjoy a flavorful and satisfying meal.



Healthy food is boring, bland, and restrictive. What to do?

Unleash your imagination.

- Explore fresh, wild, and natural foods; a juicy peach, garden string beans, and fresh-caught fish, for example, have outstanding flavors
- Get curious about the good stuff; fresh ground pepper, sea salt, olive oil, and vinegar can transform an average piece of lettuce into a mouthwatering super salad. Whether cooking at home or eating out, choose recipes that are simple and dishes that bring out a foods' natural flavor so you can actually taste the food, not a sauce or a topping
- Create appetizing combinations by mixing different textures, temperatures, herbs, spices, and flavorful add-ins

MYTH BUSTERS TO HEALTHY EATING

Eating healthy is expensive. What to do?

Get a return on your investment.

- Eating any food can be expensive, especially from restaurants and delivery services. Find fresh, whole food and ingredients at markets or grow them in a garden—then cook at home and save money. Plus, you get to control what goes into your food. You may start to look and feel better with more home-cooked food and that is priceless!
- Eating cheap, bad, “junk food” (highly processed, high in calories, added sugars, salt and saturated or trans fats) and “fast food” (prepared quickly and eaten quickly or taken out) can cost you much more than the price of the food. Long-term effects of eating these foods are linked to obesity, tooth decay, high blood pressure, depression, digestive issues, heart disease and stroke, type-2 diabetes, cancer, and early death. Add to this pain, frequent doctor visits, and poor quality of life. Is cheap food worth the price? Every meal is an opportunity to positively impact your health.

It's hard to eat healthy. What to do?

Start small and keep it simple.

Where does a new habit fit into your day? Look at your habits and attach a new one onto an existing one. For example, after your workout eat a healthy snack; when you work at your desk, drink a glass of water, or two, or three; cook dinner and make enough for another meal; brew your morning coffee and boil some eggs. Think of any opportunity to stick on a new habit, even if it's small, it will make a difference.

MYTH BUSTERS TO HEALTHY EATING

Only boring people eat healthily. What to do?

Face the facts. Common traits of people who regularly eat healthily:

- Tend to have higher energy
- Maintain appropriate body weight and muscle tone
- Have a clear mind and physical agility
- Get sick less often and have fewer illnesses or diseases than other people
- Are seen as conscientious, extroverts, agreeable, open, and fun-loving
- Care about nature, the planet, and people's overall well-being
- Have better relationships (and sex)
- Love life and see good food as part of living well
- Are open to trying new things, especially when it comes to food





MORE SUPPORT

This is just the beginning - continue to seek out support along the journey

MORE SUPPORT

If you need support, ranging from eating better to Nutrition For HEALTHSPAN, or an overall healthy lifestyle, consider connecting with experts in the following areas:

Functional medicine doctors focus on identifying and addressing the root cause of illness and disease. They look at your full history and collect detailed information about your overall lifestyle to identify the cause of your health problem. They provide more patient-centered care than conventional doctors who typically treat symptoms.

Nutritionists can help you choose what to eat, advise on the health effects of certain foods, and help you embark on a new way of eating (i.e., vegetarian, keto, etc.) in the healthiest manner.

Naturopathic doctors are primary care physicians who diagnose, prevent, and treat illnesses in licensed states. In most pre-licensed states, naturopaths cannot diagnose or treat illnesses but they can serve as health consultants and may use botanical medicine or homeopathy.

Certified health coaches can help you treat, manage, and prevent a wide range of health concerns, and also achieve whole-body health, through a combination of guidance, support, motivation, and accountability. Many emphasize integrative nutrition and take a holistic approach. Health coaches are not licensed to diagnose illness or prescribe medication, but they can effectively bridge the gap between you and your doctor by helping you implement and follow protocols from your medical professional. Health coaches may work directly in a healthcare provider's office or they may work independently.

MORE SUPPORT

Destination spas help people relax, unwind, and restore. They're a great option for people who want to make major healthy changes and need support. The mission of these businesses is often to help individuals develop a healthy lifestyle through healthy cuisine and nutritional education, fitness and stress reduction classes, therapeutic spa treatments, and workshops on how to keep up healthy habits back at home.

Media influencers are generally NOT experts on health and nutrition, no matter how much they talk about these topics. Their job is to promote something for the purpose of sales and marketing. It's fine to follow these people and you may even gather some useful information, but if you're looking for professional help concerning your body and your health, take it seriously and seek a licensed professional.





SUMMARY

Changing your eating habits can seem difficult, yet small, simple steps have lasting impacts on your health, your mind, your longevity, and your overall outlook on life. We hope this booklet inspires you to make positive changes to the things you consume and to your daily routine. Congratulations on any changes you have already made.

We are inspired by those who take control of their health through adopting healthy, healing food choices and healthy lifestyle habits. If you would like to share any of your experiences after reading this booklet, we would love to hear from you. Please use any of the emails below - our team speaks Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, German, Swiss, Hindi, Korean and English.

Thank you for reading and good luck in your health journey,

The GWI Nutrition For Healthspan Initiative Members
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GWI NUTRITION FOR HEALTHSPAN INITIATIVE TEAM

The contents and passion for healthy nutrition has been provided by the international team of doctors, nutritionists and wellness professionals.



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