

# OPTIMIZING HEALTH: GENERAL RULES FOR HEALTH PROMOTING DIETARY HABITS

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*“The people need to learn that the natural condition of human beings is one of health, and that every instance of sickness and suffering, unless caused by accident, is caused by some wrong doing on the part of the sufferer.”*

—Dr. Harriet Austin, 1850

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- Eat food in as whole a state as much as possible. For example, a piece of fruit (a sugar food) is more desirable than an equivalent amount of refined sugar, such as fruit juice.
  - Eat organic foods whenever possible rather than conventionally raised foods.
  - Eat small meals whenever you are hungry. Let your appetite dictate eating times.
  - Eat fruits and desserts separate from the meal. One hour before a meal or two hours after a meal is best. They require little digestion and will ferment in the digestive process causing gas and bloating.
  - Eat some raw (uncooked) food with every meal.

## Vegetables.

We all know that we need to eat more vegetables, our mothers told us so when we were younger. Almost all vegetables promote health, some more than others. As a rule the more color it has, the more life-benefiting phytochemicals it contains. The darker and deeper the color, the greater the phytochemical content and therefore its nutritional value. The minimum daily recommendation is three to five one-half cup servings, more is better!

Not all vegetables are created equal though. Organically raised vegetables are superior to conventionally raised. By choosing organic, not only will you limit your exposure to potentially harmful substances such as herbicides, pesticides and insecticides, but you will receive greater nutritional benefit also. Research has shown that organically raised vegetables contain significantly more vitamins, minerals, cofactors, coenzymes, and phytochemicals.

Research has also shown fresh raw vegetables to be the best. Lightly steaming them is also acceptable. Frozen is the next best thing. Cooked foods were found to contain fewer live enzymes which led to mild changes in white blood cell counts, indicating that they were triggering allergic reactions in even otherwise healthy individuals. Pressure-cooked or canned foods caused moderate increases in blood composition, so they should be limited. Artificial and highly processed foods (all boxed and prepared foods) do not contain enzymes and caused significant increases in white blood cell counts.

If you have special dietary needs, for example, weight loss or candidiasis, your treatment recommendations will further clarify choices for vegetables. For now just try to increase your consumption of vegetables.

See the section on washing of fruits and vegetables for non-organic vegetables.

## Fruits.

Organic is again best. Choose locally grown fruits when possible. Fruits should be eaten by themselves, at least one-half hour before meals or two hours after. Try eating 2 –3 servings of raw, ripe fruit daily as a snack between meals or first thing in the morning.

Since fruits are loaded with enzymes they are easily digested. If they are eaten with other foods, their digestion will be interfered with and they will begin to ferment. The fermentation will result in intestinal gas production and may potentially toxify the intestines.

See the section on washing of fruits and vegetables for non-organic vegetables.

## Healthy Fats.

Without fats we could not exist. Your brain is 60% fat. Fat is used in the membrane of every cell in your body. We use fat to power our cells, clot our blood, and to make hormones. There are three critical facts we need to consider: 1) too much fat can lead to disease, 2) too little fat can lead to disease, and 3) the type and balance of fats is absolutely essential. Healthy fats are essential to optimum health.

Use only organic seeds or oils. When choosing oils use cold-processed, expeller-pressed oils exclusively. Coconut oil, butter or ghee (clarified butter) are perhaps the best high-temperature (375° F/190° C) cooking oils. Olive oil is a reliable cooking oil for moderate temperatures (325° F/163° C). Sesame, pistachio, hazelnut, and almond are also good moderate temperature oils. For lower temperature (212° F/100° C) cooking safflower, sunflower, and pumpkin are good choices. For cold uses as condiments and salad dressings flax and walnut are good choices. Keep oils in dark containers and in the refrigerator when not in use. This is especially true for flaxseed oil. Oils can also be frozen to prolong freshness.

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential fatty acids, as they cannot be made in the body. They must be included as part of a healthy diet. Flax seed oil is one the richest sources of omega-3 fatty acids. DHA is another important omega-3 essential fatty acid and comes primarily from cold-water fish. If fish is not a regular part of your diet (2 – 3 servings per week) then in addition to supplementing your diet with flax seed oil you should also add fish oil or DHA to your program. A natural health care practitioner can help you determine your need and dosage.

Raw flax seeds, which can be ground in a food processor or coffee grinder, are an excellent source of essential-fatty acids. They are also one of the highest sources of omega-3 fatty acids. Raw sunflower and pumpkin seeds are also good sources of essential fatty acids. A healthy diet would provide for all of these on a regular basis.

Your hair, skin and nails will be noticeable benefactors to increased intake of good oils. Lowered cholesterol, improved hormone and immune function, clearer thinking, as well as other health benefits will become noticeable.

## Grains.

High fiber complex carbohydrates, including whole grains and whole-grain products such as barley, brown rice, oat and wheat, are needed in limited quantities by most. Four grains that are loaded with nutrition and low in gluten and therefore less likely to cause allergic reactions are: amaranth, buckwheat, millet, and quinoa (pronounced “keen-wah”).

I do not recommend a high-carbohydrate diet, but I certainly recommend eating some complex carbohydrates daily. White flour and white polished rice are not whole foods and do need to be eliminated.

Make sure you read labels. If the label says “enriched” you know that it is not a whole grain and it also contains synthetic vitamins to replace a fraction of the real ones removed during processing. Make sure that the label says “whole-wheat

flour” so that you are not paying extra for a little caramel coloring to make it look like whole-wheat flour. Squeeze the bread, if it is not firm and heavy it is not whole grain bread and should be avoided.

Try “sprouted” grain breads. It is a naturally sweet, nutty bread that you will find as delicious as it is nutritious. The grains are sprouted, crushed and then formed into a loaf and baked at a low temperature for a longer time. The best choice of all is to buy a flour mill and grind your own wheat. We have done it in our family for years, and we all agree it is worth it.

Never overindulge with grains as they tend to slow digestion, and increase the release of insulin which can lead to obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

## Protein.

Contrary to what the food faddists might say, most American adults do not get enough good high quality protein. The average adult needs 60 – 150 grams of protein per day. Of course this depends upon a person’s body weight, body type, gender, activity level and whether or not you are pregnant. For a rough estimate of your protein need, take your weight and think of the number as grams. Multiply that number by 0.5 to 0.7, higher numbers for athletes in training.

e.g. a 200 pound male who works out, figure 0.6 or 60%,  $200 \times 0.6 = 120$  or 120 grams of protein per day.

Remember from our discussion earlier, try to avoid meats that are not organically raised and free-ranged animals. Grass-fed beef is higher in omega-3 fatty acids, conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and a cancer-fighting compound known as nitriloside or B17. Try to avoid the hormones and antibiotics that are in most conventionally raised beef. Remember our goal is to promote health.

Eggs are a great source of protein as well as being packed with other health promoting nutrients. Eggs are not all created equally though, it is important to look for organically fed free-ranged chickens as their nutritional value is much greater. Eggs contain DHA, an omega-3 fatty acid that is important for mental health, intelligence and eyesight. They also are rich in carotenoids, choline, and other vitamin and minerals.

But aren’t eggs bad for cholesterol? In two words, Absolutely Not! In fact there are factors in the eggs that actually help maintain healthy cholesterol and fight heart disease. As with any food and most things in life; Moderation is the key. Limit your consumption to two or three eggs, three or four times per week.

Include legumes as a protein sources. Try to rotate your protein sources. This is important in reducing the chances of developing food sensitivities.

## Beverages.

Your primary beverage needs to be pure water if true health is your desire. A minimum intake should be at least eight glasses daily. A better guide for health optimization is to divide your body weight by two. This equals the number of ounces you should drink daily. For example, a 256-pound individual would need 128 ounces or one gallon per day; a 128-pound person would need 64 ounces or 1/2 gallon per day. Requirements differ widely. For example, a 5 foot 2 inch female working indoors is certainly going to have a different requirement than a 6 foot 3 inch male doing heavy construction work in 90-degree heat.

It is best to drink water at room temperature. Ice water can damage the delicate lining of your stomach. As a general rule, drink two eight-ounce glasses of water before breakfast, a glass of water about a half hour prior to lunch and supper. Drink an additional two glasses between meals and before bed to adequately hydrate your body. **The best rule is: drink water whenever you are thirsty!** Prior to your first drink in morning, run the water for a minute or so, as water sitting in the pipes can leach toxins from them.

Freshly pressed or squeezed fruit or vegetable juices are also healthful beverages. If you use a juicer, I recommend consuming the fiber along with the juice. Herbal teas are also good. Coffee is not an acceptable water substitute as it does contain caffeine, which depletes water reserves, and decaffeinated coffee can contain several chemicals. Coffee beans generally come from countries where there is little if any concern over the use of herbicides and pesticides. A cup or two daily of fresh ground organic decaffeinated coffee is acceptable.

Spring or filtered waters are the preferred source for water. Most of the water supplies in this country have been polluted with a number of dangerous compounds, posing a serious health threat. If you do have your own well make certain to have your water tested. Check with your local extension office for a simple test. I recommend a very detailed test with a nationally certified lab. Contact me if you need more information.

**Do not drink tap water** if you are on a municipal water supply. Chlorine and fluoride (chemicals used to treat tap water) are extremely detrimental to your health as they are toxic substances in even small quantities. Even bottled water can legally contain up to 50% tap water. Instead, I strongly encourage the use of water filters, for further information contact the clinic.

Avoid distilled water as all of the minerals have been removed. This acts to draw the minerals out of your body. As well, other changes that occur in the distillation process make it an undesirable water source. Distilled water for a short course of detoxification may be recommended to help pull impurities out of your body.

The shower and bathtub are areas that are usually overlooked, yet are a significant source of chlorine exposure. Hot steam opens pores and increases chlorine absorption through the skin. Additionally, it increases chlorine gas inhalation via the lungs. Chlorine is highly toxic to the body. Shower filters to remove chlorine are inexpensive. Your hair and skin will notice a pleasant difference quickly. Additional information is available at our clinic.

## **Salt.**

Like eggs, salt has been falsely labeled as an unhealthy food. Some researchers have admitted that they would like to retract their statements about the dangers of salt. The truth is: Salt is essential to life! The refinement and processing of salt makes it unhealthy.

Most of the salt sold in this country, whether it is sea salt or land salt, is equally inferior and will not be beneficial to your health. The life-benefiting trace minerals are removed in the refinement and processing. All that remains are the sodium and chloride ions which are truly plentiful in our American diet. Refined sodium chloride (table salt) without the trace minerals is what is damaging to your health.

We have found Celtic Sea Salt™ to be beneficial to everyone, even those who may have been instructed to restrict sodium in their diet. The trace minerals as they are found in this naturally occurring real sea salt are essential and health promoting. The truth is, it is the kind of salt which makes a difference in your health.

Celtic Sea Salt™ is quite different in color and appearance from the salt you are familiar with. This is because the salt is not treated in any way and comes to you with all of the trace minerals, enzymes and valuable cofactors still present. Synthetic mineral supplementation cannot equal its rich mineral content. It can be difficult to find so we do make it available in our clinic.

## **FOOD COMBINING PRINCIPLES**

Food combining is the practice of eating compatible foods during the same meal. Like other principles discussed, food combining is important for health promotion. Certain foods just naturally combine better with other foods, which reduce

digestive overload. Since acids and bases have the effect of neutralizing each other, different types of foods affect digestive enzymes differently. Different foods digest at different rates and under the influence of different digestive enzymes.

Proper food combining will result in greater: energy, mental ability and clarity, emotional stability and stress handling capabilities. Improper food combining can lead to digestive stress, which causes gas, bloating, and constipation. One leads to better health, while the other leads to ill health and disease.

### **Food combining can get quite intricate. I have tried to simplify the basic principles here for you:**

- Eat fruits by themselves. They digest easily and tend to ferment if eaten with other foods causing gas, bloating and a potentially toxic bowel situation. Eat fruits a half hour before or two hours after a meal. Eat melons and citrus by themselves, as they do not combine well with other fruits or foods.
- Do not eat starches (pasta, rice, potatoes, carrots, corn or bread) with proteins.
- Protein can be eaten with non-starchy vegetables (asparagus, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, kale, leafy greens, peppers, radishes, watercress, and sea vegetables).
- It is best to eat only one protein type at a meal. Proteins include: Eggs, beans, meats, nuts and seeds.
- Proteins and fats or oils do not combine well. Seeds can be loaded with oils, which require longer digestive times and therefore, should be eaten by themselves.
- Fats, oils and seeds combine favorably with vegetables (both starchy and non-starchy).
- Do not eat desserts shortly after a meal. If you must have a dessert wait two hours. Since they are generally loaded with sugars, they will ferment in the intestines causing gas, bloating and a potentially toxic bowel syndrome.

### **FRUIT, LEGUME AND VEGETABLE WASHES.**

Daily we hear and read reports about the dangerous chemicals in and on our food. An often overlooked yet important step is the proper washing of fruits, legumes and vegetables. If you are not able to obtain organic vegetables make sure that you thoroughly wash your produce. It is a good idea to use a light rinse even on organic foods because of dirt and insects. There are several methods to help reduce pesticide residue.

#### **The basic methods for removing most of the fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, pesticides and waxes are:**

- Mix a half-cup of freshly squeezed lemon juice (juice, rind and all) per gallon of clean water and use as a food wash. Follow with a clear water rinse.
- Mix 40 drops of liquid grapefruit seed extract in a gallon of water and use as a food wash. Follow with a clear water rinse. You can put this solution in a spray bottle and use as a ready mix spray.
- Mix 1 tablespoon of 35% food grade hydrogen peroxide in a gallon of water as a food wash. Follow with a clear water rinse. This can also be used as a pre-mixed spray form.
- Add one half to one-cup vinegar to a sinkful of water and soak for 20 to 30 minutes. Again rinse after this soak. This is for foods for which you have a little more concern.
- Diluted formulas of Shaklee's Basic H™ or Amway's LOC™ make good food rinses. There are also prepared food washes available in the grocery or health food store.
- Some recommend soaking the vegetables in a 1% Clorox bleach solution for several minutes. This would be a tablespoon or two in a sinkful of water. Make sure you thoroughly rinse the produce in clear water for 30 minutes. I am sure this is an effective method, although it is not my preferred method.

## **BEAUTY AND PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS.**

Chemicals used in the manufacture of personal and beauty products can be absorbed through the skin. If you aren't convinced, try this little experiment; Take a clove of garlic, cut in half, and rub liberally on your big toe. About 30 minutes later give someone you love a kiss. See if they don't notice the garlic. Conclusion: If you do not want it inside your body, do not put it on the outside of the body.

Generally I recommend to my patients they choose commercially available natural beauty and personal care products. In particular, avoid antiperspirants as they contain aluminum, with which a number of health problems are associated.