

## Healthy Eating

People are so confused about what they should and should not eat. There is so much conflicting information about diet. Registered dietitians talk about the food pyramid, which would give you a diet heavy in grains. Dr. Atkins talks about carbohydrates as being the source of all our health woes. Dr. Dean Ornish and Covert Bailey decry the evils of fat. John Robbins makes a strong case for a totally vegan diet. The Zone diet seeks to give a balance between protein, carbohydrate and fat. *Sugar Busters* seeks to reduce insulin production. A lot of the information seems to be conflicting and the various dietary gurus have harsh things to say about each other's diets.

None of the dietary experts can dispute the nutritional rules below. They may offer refinements like, "Watch your fat consumption," "Watch your carbohydrate consumption" or "Stay away from animal products," but none of the experts would say there is anything wrong with the following list of dietary advice. There may also be a little controversy about the implications of not following the advice. (Some may dispute that sugar consumption will cause yeast to grow in the intestines, for example, but they would not dispute that consumption of refined sugar is a bad thing.) The advice about water has become controversial, but drinking a lot of water isn't a problem if you are not drinking a lot of coffee, tea, sodas or other drinks.

### BASIC DIET

**1. Drink plenty of water each day:** You need water to keep your cells hydrated and protected, to eliminate waste and ensure the health of your mucus membranes. Adequate hydration will improve a number of health problems including sinusitis, constipation, inflammation, allergies, fatigue, joint pain, headaches and many other afflictions.

Your body cannot adequately eliminate waste products without enough water. If toxic chemicals or heavy metal poisoning is at the root of your health problems you will have a much easier time getting better when you are properly hydrated. Drink more water and less soda, coffee, tea or juice.

**2. Eat plenty of vegetables:** Plenty means that at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the food you eat (by volume). Vegetables are very high in fiber, vitamin C, folic acid and minerals. They provide you with many health benefits, such as the following:

- Fiber in vegetables slows the absorption of fat and toxins. One of the best ways to lose weight is to eat plenty of fiber. Eating adequate fiber can help normalize cholesterol levels and blood pressure.
- Vegetables nourish normal flora, which in turn nourish the lining of the GI tract, produce vitamins and inhibit yeast and other undesirable organisms.
- Vegetables speed up bowel transit time, which reduces bowel toxicity and prevents irritation of the GI lining.
- Vegetables contain folic acid, which is necessary to produce serotonin (preventing depression and overeating), increases energy and helps reduce the chances for a heart attack.
- The minerals in vegetables help prevent osteoporosis. (Other

nutrients besides calcium are important for healthy bone.) Minerals are also important enzyme co-factors, so most major functions of the body are dependent on minerals.

- Eating vegetables can reduce the instance of cancer and heart disease, increase your energy and mental clarity, reduce the problems caused by bowel and liver toxicity, help reduce the symptoms of allergies, asthma, arthritis, skin problems, digestive problems, sinusitis, chronic pain and many other health problems.
- Eating vegetables helps to alkalize the diet. (We will go into the concept of alkaline and acid ash foods in the next section.)

Ideally  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the volume of the food you eat should be vegetables. Corn and potatoes don't count as vegetables. Fruit is also good for you; it is a good source of vitamin C and fiber. Eating vegetables is stressed here because when people are told to eat more fruits and vegetables, they tend to increase fruit intake but not vegetable intake.

**3. Avoid deep fried food, trans fats, partially hydrogenated oil and hydrogenated oil:** As time passes, we keep finding more bad things about hydrogenated oil and fried foods. Hydrogenation is the food industry's way of turning liquid oils into solid fats. This gives packaged foods a longer shelf life than if they were made with natural oils. Hydrogenation produces trans fats, which have been linked to a number of health problems such as the following:

- Cancer: Women with higher levels of trans fats in their cells are much more likely to develop breast cancer than women with low levels of trans fats.
- Pain and inflammation become much worse for patients who consume hydrogenated oils. They chemically prevent the formation of natural anti-inflammatory substances that are normally produced by the body. If you suffer from chronic pain or have recently been injured, strictly avoid hydrogenated oil. Many people are amazed at how much better their pain becomes after giving up trans fats.
- Heart disease: High levels of trans fats create platelet aggregation, which is the beginning of the plaque associated with coronary heart disease. Lately a lot has been written linking inflammation with heart disease.
- Trans fats are incorporated into the cells and make them less resistant to chemicals, bacteria and viruses. This could be a source of immune system problems.
- There may be a link between trans fats and ADD, depression and fatigue. Brain and nerve tissue have a high content of fat. Some researches believe that when trans fats are incorporated into the nerve cells they affect function, creating problems like ADD and depression.
- Muscle fatigue and skin problems are also linked to hydrogenated oils.

Most chips and fried snacks contain hydrogenated oils. Hydrogenated oils are found in a lot of packaged foods like crackers, cereals and even bread. They are often found in margarine (margarine is much worse for you than butter); mayonnaise; and a lot of bottled salad dressings. Read labels.

Not all fats are bad for you. Permissible fats include raw nuts (not

roasted), virgin or extra virgin olive oil and avocados.

**4. Avoid refined sugar:** The average American eats 150 pounds of refined sugar per year. Compare that to seven pounds per year consumed in England in 1750. Refined sugar increases insulin and adrenal hormone production and can cause the following health problems.

- Increased production of adrenal hormones causes the body to excrete essential minerals.
- Sugar consumption increases the body's need for vitamins B and C.
- Eating a lot of sugar aggravates many of the problems we associate with emotional stress. Sugar stresses the adrenal glands.
- Sugar feeds yeast and other one-celled organisms found in the bowel, causing them to multiply. These organisms produce toxins, irritate the lining of the GI tract and take the place of normal, more beneficial flora, thus removing the benefits of helpful bacteria.
- Eating sugar causes blood sugar swings. Blood sugar increases immediately after consuming sugar, prompting the body to produce insulin. Excess insulin creates more sugar cravings.
- Eating sugar causes fatigue. People who give up refined sugar are often amazed at how much more energy they have.
- Eating sugar creates insulin insensitivity. More sugar is eaten, more insulin produced, etc. This stresses the pancreas and sets the stage for adult-onset diabetes.
- There is a connection between sugar consumption and high cholesterol. Patients with Syndrome X (high cholesterol, high LDL, low HDL and high triglycerides) often have the problem because of consumption of sugar and refined carbohydrates.
- Sugar consumption can make pain and inflammation worse.
- Sugar can cause or aggravate allergies, sinusitis, asthma, irritable bowel, Candidiasis, migraine headaches, fatigue, depression and even heart disease.

**5. Avoid refined carbohydrates:** The average American gets 50% of his or her calories from refined carbohydrates. Refined carbohydrates are grains that have had the fiber, vitamin E, B vitamins, bran and germ removed. In other words, the nutrients have been removed and you are left with the starch. They create all of the same health problems created by refined sugar. Go back and read the problems caused by refined sugar and realize that the list is exactly the same for refined starches

Refined carbohydrates fill you up—but not with vitamins and minerals. This stresses your digestive system and your endocrine system. Eating refined carbohydrates uses up precious vitamins and minerals.

Often people eat refined carbohydrates because they are low in fat and mistakenly think that because they are “complex carbohydrates” that they are actually good for you. Refined carbohydrates include white bread, white rice, and pasta that are not labeled *whole grain*. Read the labels on bread. Brown-colored bread labeled *wheat bread* isn't usually whole wheat. If the label says *enriched*, *white flour* on it, you're not getting a whole grain. Use brown rice instead of white rice.

**6. Avoid chemical additives:** Avoid processed foods and chemicals. The

average American consumes 10 pounds of chemical additives every year. This has had a devastating effect on our health. The FDA tests single additives, but no one has any idea what combinations of additives do to us. Stay away from packaged foods with chemical additives and you will be much healthier.

**7. Eat slowly, chew your food thoroughly:** Ideally, chew your food until it is liquid. You will be satisfied with less food and you will have better digestion. Your saliva has enzymes that facilitate digestion. Also, it is easier to digest small particles than large ones. Most people eat too fast. Not chewing well stresses your digestive system and can lead to poor absorption of nutrients, digestive problems like gas and bloating and promote the growth of harmful bacteria in the digestive tract.

**8. Never skip meals:** Skipping meals stresses your adrenal glands. If you are trying to lose weight, not eating is a poor strategy because your metabolism will slow down to accommodate the reduction in calories. As a result you become fatigued and will ultimately gain weight.

### **Alkaline Ash Diet**

Having given you a list of noncontroversial ways to improve your diet, let's add one controversial subject, the alkaline ash diet. People who follow the concepts you are about to read really seem to enjoy better health than people who do not.

Proponents of the alkaline ash diet believe that we eat too many acid-forming foods and that excess acid is a source of many of our chronic illnesses. Critics of the diet say that the body's pH is tightly regulated and cannot be affected by subtle changes in diet. What the critics do not say is that they tried putting chronically ill people on the diet and did not see good results. You won't hear critics say this because the opposite is true. People who go on this diet usually are rewarded with better health. This diet is appropriate and beneficial for just about any chronic health problem.

The critics may be right about the diet directly affecting pH. In all likelihood the diet probably affects the body's ability to buffer acids. In other words, the "acid" diet probably doesn't change the pH of the body but rather makes the body work harder to maintain its pH.

According to proponents of this diet, eating the wrong foods creates acid systemically. Diets that are high in fat, protein and simple sugars are too acid. To reduce the acid burden the body links acids with alkaline minerals (like potassium, calcium and magnesium) and excretes them.

The excess acid load has a negative effect on energy production in the cells, enzyme function and tissue resilience and repair. This acid burden, when coupled with constant exposure to pollution, food additives, and poor digestion, burdens the immune system and exceeds the body's reserves. A continuous state of distress can emerge, resulting in the increase of the chemical messengers of distress (such as cortisol, adrenaline, and insulin).

Some practitioners believe that we don't live off the food that we eat; we live off the energy in the food we eat. They believe that it is better to eat live, raw foods than it is to eat cooked foods. Some confusion in terminology has

resulted because of the way that the discussion evolved. In investigating how different foods might affect the acid-alkaline balance, various foods were burned to ash in the laboratory, and the pH of the resulting ash was measured. These foods were then classified as acid, alkaline or neutral ash foods.

In fact, if you read various authors about the alkaline ash diet you will see lots of inconsistencies. One author will say that nuts are all acid; another will say the almonds and cashews are alkaline. Quinoa is either acid or alkaline depending on whom you read. There are differences in opinion about how pH should be measured. One author will say the urine should be pH 7, another will say that a pH of 6.8 is good.

Various alternative practitioners have referred to acid- and alkaline-forming foods, based on the reaction of foods in the body. One thing that is considered a highly acidic way to eat is the combining of carbohydrate with protein.

In general, alkaline ash foods contain more magnesium, calcium, potassium and/or sodium. These are minerals that form alkaline compounds. Most fruits and vegetables are considered alkaline. Acid ash foods contain more chloride, phosphorus or sulfur, minerals that form acid compounds. These acid ash foods include meat, fish, poultry, legumes and grains, which all contain high levels of phosphorus, and mustard and eggs, which contain sulfur. Some fruits like plums, prunes, cranberries or rhubarb are considered acid-forming since they contain either oxalic or benzoic acid, organic acids which are not completely broken down in the body.

There is some individual variation as to whether foods are treated as alkaline or as acid. Genetics also plays a role; some groups can handle protein better than others. One possible explanation may be that people of different blood types handle protein differently. People who are blood type O seem to do better with more protein. Many groups of people who have not been exposed to civilization and therefore enjoy life relatively free of our civilized chronic degenerative diseases eat a diet that is a little more acidic (according to the model presented) than what is recommended here. Their diets are very nutrient-dense and that is at least as important as pH balance.

For regaining health, eating 80% alkaline foods and 20% acid foods has been recommended. Eating four vegetables and two fruits to one starchy food and one protein food approximates this number. The reason this proportion works well here is that most Americans eat a high-acid diet. We eat a lot of grain and protein and not a lot of vegetables. We also tend to combine starch and protein. Changing these eating patterns often has dramatic results in improving health.

The excess acid load has a negative effect on energy production in the cells, enzyme function and tissue resilience and repair. This acid burden when coupled with constant exposure to pollution, food additives and poor digestion burdens the immune system and exceeds the body's reserves. A continuous state of distress can emerge, resulting in the increase of the chemical messengers of distress (such as cortisol, adrenaline and insulin).

Whether or not you believe in the effect that food can have on your systemic pH, the alkaline ash diet is a very healthy way to eat. In fact, the issue may be more about our capacity to buffer acids or alkaline foods. A diet that is

too high in protein and refined foods may make it harder for you to regulate pH; it doesn't put you in acidosis. Blood never becomes acidic during life; the critics of this way of thinking are right about that. The diet is, however, effective for restoring health—for whatever reason. Increase the amount of alkaline foods and decrease the amount of acid foods to help to restore your health.

There are those who have taken this information to mean that all acid foods are bad all of the time and that you should never eat animal products, and that all acid-forming foods are akin to poison.

There are some problems with this way of thinking; a diet in which these acid ash foods are absent can lead to deficiencies that undermine the body's ability to maintain the proper blood pH. Meat and other animal foods provide protein and vitamin B<sub>12</sub>; red meats provide zinc. Both are needed for the regulation of acid-base balance. Fat-soluble vitamins and protein found in organ meats, shellfish and meat in general help maintain the health of the lungs and kidneys. Good lung and kidney function is necessary for good acid-base regulation.

The concept of alkaline and acid ash is a good one, but you also have to take into account the need to eat natural, nutrient-dense foods. With that in mind, take a look at what kinds of foods improve alkalinity.

***Alkaline foods:*** Fruit (most), vegetables (except peas, beans), lentils (some consider lentil acid, others consider them alkaline), spices, herbs and seasonings, seeds and nuts.

***Acid foods:*** Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, grains and legumes.

Of course, this is a generality. Some grains, like wild rice, quinoa and oat are mildly alkaline. Quail eggs and duck eggs are mildly alkaline. Nuts are generally alkaline, but walnuts and Brazil nuts are acidic. There are books written on the alkaline diet, or you can ask your health care provider. If you want to get into more accurate detail, Dr. Russell Jaffe has written a book on the subject, *The Alkaline Way*. In general, alkaline ash foods are those that contain large quantities of magnesium, calcium, potassium and/or sodium—minerals that form alkaline compounds. Most fruits and vegetables are considered alkaline. Acid ash foods are those that contain chloride, phosphorus or sulfur—minerals that form acid compounds. These acid ash foods include meat, fish, poultry, legumes and grains, which all contain high levels of phosphorus, and mustard and eggs, which contain sulfur.

Many foods that seem acidic to us are actually alkaline. Foods like lemons, oranges and tomatoes, for example, are considered alkaline.

It must be stressed that these lists vary and sometimes it is best to follow the general rules: grains and proteins are acid, and fruits, nuts, seeds and vegetables are alkaline. The important thing to do is to eat a lot of produce and to eat whole and unprocessed foods (like the advice given in the Basic Diet).

If you want to restore your health, about 80% of your diet should be alkaline foods. In more practical terms, the recommendation was four vegetables and two fruits to one starchy food and one protein food. This is the proportion of foods for the day. If, instance you have 3 oz. of protein one day,

you need 12 oz. of vegetables and 8 oz. of fruit for the day. You are also allowed 3 oz. of grain, but it is not to be eaten with the meat.

Maintaining health is easier. If you do not have any major health problems, you need eat 60% alkaline foods to maintain your health. This translates to one protein, one starch, two vegetables and one fruit. If you have 6 oz. of protein, you then need 12 oz. of vegetable and 6 oz. of fruit for the day. You are also allowed 6 oz. of grain—but it is not to be eaten with the meat. When you eat this way, fruits and vegetables will dominate your diet; if these are fresh and raw, so much the better. If you can get organic produce, that will remove the burden that pesticides place on your body. There is a fair amount of variation in what is considered alkaline and what is considered acid. For that reason, we are going to try to avoid all of the controversy and make it simpler. If you want to follow this in more detail, get Dr. Jaffe's book.

Animal products are on the list of acid foods, but you are allowed some of these—unlike those eating a strict vegetarian diet, you can have some meat. It's like following Thomas Jefferson's advice to use meat as a condiment, which may be healthier than a strict vegetarian diet.

Grains are on the list of foods that should be minimally consumed. What do Americans eat? They eat sandwiches, chicken and rice, meat and potatoes and other combinations of meat and starch, in other words, an extremely acid-forming diet. Eat more alkaline foods and fewer acid foods and your energy will increase and your health will improve.

Americans tend to eat a lot of grains. Grains are considered acidic and we probably eat more than are healthy for us. Limiting grain consumption may be a good idea. Many patients do better when they limit or eliminate grains.

If you need more energy or if you have *any* chronic health problem you need to follow the preceding diet. Even though there is a lot of controversy about the alkaline ash diet (even among proponents who can't seem to agree on particulars), patients do very well when they follow it. There are a few controversial concepts added to the Basic Diet like food combining and alkaline ash eating, but try it. This diet does seem to help a lot of health problems.

## **HEALING DIET**

1. Drink at least 8, eight-ounce glasses of water each day.
2. Eat plenty of vegetables.
3. Avoid deep fried food, partially hydrogenated oil and hydrogenated oil.
4. Avoid refined sugar.
5. Avoid refined carbohydrates.
6. Avoid chemical additives.
7. Eat slowly, and chew your food thoroughly.
8. Never skip meals.
9. Follow the rules for more alkaline eating. These include the following:
  - If you have any chronic health problems eat 80% alkaline ash foods and 20% acid ash foods. In more practical terms, eat four vegetables and two fruits to one starchy food and one protein food.
  - If you enjoy good health, maintain it by eating 60% alkaline ash foods and 40% acid ash foods.
  - Eat mostly *raw* produce. It is okay to eat cooked food, but we are going to follow Dr. Reams' idea that we don't live off the food that we eat, we live off the energy in the food we eat. It is better to eat live, raw foods than it is to eat cooked foods.
  - Do not eat protein and carbohydrate together—this acts to acidify the body.
  - Do not eat fruit with grains or other foods—this acts to acidify the body.
  - Realize that alcohol and caffeine are extremely acidic and should be limited.

When you follow the basic diet you are still able to follow familiar eating patterns. You can have meat and potatoes, a sandwich made with protein and a whole grain bread or fruit in your oatmeal. Adding the disciplines of the alkaline ash diet may make it so you have to change how you think about eating. You really have to just think of eating as providing your body with fuel and not about likes and dislikes. You will probably have to plan your meals in advance and not just grab food on the run. Try it very strictly for 30 days. Most people can do anything for 30 days. It will improve your health and energy and help you to see the connection between how you eat and how you feel.

***Because eating this way is so different, here are some daily menu suggestions.***

<b>Day 1:</b>	Breakfast	Apple with almond butter
	Lunch	Tuna (mix it with olive oil chopped onion and celery); celery stalks, carrot sticks or cucumber slices
	Dinner	Sweet potato (you can use some clarified butter, which is alkaline), large green salad (oil and cider vinegar) and mixed, cooked vegetables.
	Snacks	Any fruit, nuts or any vegetable
<b>Day 2:</b>	Breakfast	Oatmeal
	Lunch	Turkey, large green salad
	Dinner	Brown rice, cooked vegetables, large green salad
	Snack	Any fruit, nuts or any vegetable
<b>Day 3:</b>	Breakfast	Quinoa
	Lunch	Chicken vegetable soup, large green salad
	Dinner	Chicken, large green salad, cooked vegetables
	Snacks	Any fruit, nuts or any vegetable
<b>Day 4:</b>	Breakfast	Melon
	Lunch	Hommus, taboule, goat feta cheese and cucumber slices
	Dinner	Beef vegetable soup, large green salad
	Snack	Any fruit, nuts or any vegetable.
<b>Day 5:</b>	Breakfast	Vegetable omelet (chopped onion, spinach, tomatoes and bell peppers [if nightshades are not a problem for you]).
	Lunch	Stir fried vegetables and brown rice
	Dinner	Broiled salmon, avocado and a green salad

Try to dominate your diet with raw foods. If your meals have a lot of cooked food, add raw vegetables to your diet. If you must snack, snack on raw vegetables (it is better not to snack, if you can avoid it). Another way to get raw, alkaline food in the diet is to make fresh vegetable juice. If you are busy, simply eating protein with a lot of vegetables is a quick, easy way to make a meal. For example, you can broil a chicken breast, boil some broccoli and make a large salad. It's fast and it's fairly alkaline. Another strategy for busy people is to make stews or soups and eat them throughout the week. Just snack on raw vegetables to make sure that you get enough raw food.

In restaurants it isn't that difficult to eat a relatively alkaline meal. In an Italian restaurant you can order chicken, fish or meat with cooked vegetables and a large salad. Even at McDonalds you can take the bun off of your quarter-pounder and order a salad. McDonalds even has a salad with chicken in it. Many fast-food restaurants now have salad bars. Some will question the quality of even the "good" food at a fast-food restaurant, but the issue here is how to get the best possible meal in a given situation. In a Mexican restaurant you can order fajitas without the tortilla. In a Chinese or Thai restaurant you can get stir-fried vegetables; you can also get a non-fried spring roll as an appetizer.

Raw foods are very good for you. There may be some validity to the argument that we consume the energy from the food we eat. Raw foods have enzymes and higher levels of vitamins like folic acid and vitamin C. Some people, however, have problems when they eat a lot of raw vegetables. If you are such a person, call this to the attention of your health care practitioner. You may need nutritional support for the gall bladder. (Beta-TCP, by Biotics Research helps thin bile.) If someone pokes you under the right side of the ribcage, does it hurt? This may be an indication of problems with the gall bladder. You may need bile salts or you may need pancreatic enzymes.

***This dietary approach will actually do a pretty good job of addressing many core health problems that you will see in your office:***

- Helps bring blood sugar and cholesterol under control
- Improves digestion
- Facilitates detoxification
- Balances bowel flora
- Improves adrenal and thyroid function
- Increases energy
- Improves nutrient absorption
- Helps balance the endocrine system—very well may eliminate PMS
- Improves liver function
- Is high in antioxidant protection
- Is low in hidden allergens

***Many complaints will respond to this approach:***

Gastric Reflux \*\* Allergies \*\* Chronic Pain \*\* Asthma \*\* High Cholesterol  
\*\* High Blood Pressure \*\* Fatigue \*\* Fibromyalgia \*\* PMS \*\* Headaches  
\*\* Acne \*\* ADD & ADHD \*\* Sinusitis \*\* Immune System Problems \*\*  
Candidiasis \*\* Osteoporosis \*\* BPH \*\* Arthritis \*\* Dry Skin \*\* Obesity \*\*  
Adult Onset Diabetes \*\* Insomnia