

The Art of Balanced Health

GENERAL DIET PLAN

Credited to Dr. Mona Morstein

This General Diet Plan will help guide you in making healthy diet choices. It is a general plan, and your doctor will emphasize what is important *for you*. Some important points:

- Read labels on everything you plan to buy.
- Regarding ORGANIC FOOD, the rule is if it is AVAILABLE AND AFFORDABLE, buy it. If not one or the other, then don't and just bless and eat your normal food. Your doctor will tell you if there are particular foods that you should definitely eat organic.

OILS

It is important to eat good oils--they contain essential nutrients that nourish keep us healthy. There are also very harmful oils we need to avoid entirely. Neutral oils found in dairy and fat are okay in moderation.

- Avoid Partially Hydrogenated Oils (PHOs). You will see these listed on food labels as Vegetable Fat and Vegetable Shortening. This type of oil is the number one food additive in our foods, and is *very unhealthy!* Read labels because many packaged foods contain PHO's: margarines and other fake butter products, Crisco/shortenings, cookies, crackers, peanut butter, candy, pastries/muffins, butter-flavored microwave popcorn, Cool Whip, potato chips, tortilla chips, non-dairy creamers, frozen tater tots...essentially most frozen and prepared foods.
- Good Oils To Use In Your Home: Organic butter, extra virgin olive oil, unrefined, high oleic safflower oil, coconut oil. If you are dairy sensitive, you can buy Earth Balance at health food stores. Canola oil is not a great choice unless you must buy a refined oil. If you have the option, buy oils in dark, glass containers rather than clear plastic ones. Refrigerate all oils but the extra virgin olive oil, which you can just store in a cool, dark cabinet.

GRAINS

- Always use whole grains: 100% whole wheat/other grain bread, brown/wild rice, whole grain crackers/pasta/pancake/muffins, whole wheat bagels, etc.
- Crackers: Buy whole grain ones without PHOs: Here are some healthy choices: Rye-Kris, /RyVita, Wasa, Ak-Maks, rice and popcorn cakes (eat only the plain variety in the Quaker Oats Brand; all Hains/Health Valley ones are okay), Finn Crisp.
- Hot Cereals: Any unsweetened hot cereal is okay--oatmeal, cream of rye/rice/wheat. Avoid sweetened instant packets. Try to avoid cream of wheat simply to add variety to your grain intake. Steel cut oats are preferable to instant oats. Next best is rolled oats.
- Cold Cereals: There are many different healthy cereals at health food stores or in the healthy aisles at supermarkets. Do your best to avoid sugary cereals. The only regular cereals that are whole grain, sugar free, and don't have PHOs are Plain Grape Nuts, Perky's Nutty Rice, and Unfrosted Shredded Wheat.
- Wheat: Aim to limit wheat intake to once a day. Americans eat too much wheat, which is a very common food allergen. There are many other excellent grains out there to eat and experiment with: oats and oatmeal, kamut, spelt, millet, barley, rye, corn, amaranth, quinoa, teff, rice. For example, eat a wheat free cereal for breakfast, have a sandwich at lunch, and then have brown rice or millet or potatoes with dinner.

Vegetables

- Eat at least 5-9 servings of vegetables everyday (a serving is ½ a cup): First choice is fresh, next best is frozen. Avoid canned veggies. For preparation, try these: stir-fry, sauté, steam, roast, bake, or raw. If you steam the vegetables, drink the water that's left over. It contains most of the potassium and several B vitamins that get leached from the veggies when they are cooked.

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- Greens: no head/iceberg lettuce due to lack of nutritional value. Choose red or green leaf lettuce, romaine, spinach, kale, cabbage, collard green, beet greens, mustard greens, turnip greens, escarole, chicory, endive, arugula.
- These are especially healthy: veggies from the cruciferous family like broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels' sprouts, radish, cabbage; onions and garlic; the orange veggies like carrot, squash, yams, sweet potatoes, tomatoes; and the deep green leafy ones listed above. But, ALL veggies have their worth and you should strive both for frequency and variety of intake.
- Salads: Get creative with salads! Try adding pickles, capers, olives, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, soy nuts, raisins, dried cranberries, fresh fruits, grated cheese, feta cheese, tuna, canned salmon, sardines, anchovies. Avoid heavy dressings like blue cheese, thousand island, etc., and instead just use olive oil with vinegar or lemon juice, Italian, Caesar, vinaigrette. A great dressing is flax seed oil and balsamic vinegar. DO NOT USE FAT FREE DRESSINGS! These are high in sugar or high fructose corn syrup.
- Incorporating vegetables: An easy way to incorporate veggies into your diet is to add leaf lettuce, tomatoes, onions, sprouts, etc., to your sandwich at lunch; then eat a baked potato and some peas, or half a squash at dinner. That would make up two cups. Munch on carrots, celery, jicama, or cherry tomatoes for a snack, and so forth.

FRUIT

- Eat one or two pieces of fruit a day. Fresh fruit is preferable to juices or dried fruits, and canned fruit is least desirable. If you do eat canned, make sure it is canned in water or juice rather than syrup.

PROTEIN: Non-Vegetarian

Meat

- For people who consume animal products, wild and/or organically grown is the best type to eat regularly. Some examples include organic buffalo, venison, chicken, beef, ostrich, lamb, pork.
- Optimally, don't eat meat more than once per day. Some people may need to eat meat less often than that—please consult your healthcare practitioner for specific guidelines for you.
- Grass fed meat is healthier for us to eat than grain fed meat. Animal fat contains saturated and unsaturated fatty acids. While both Omega 6 and Omega 3 fatty acids are essential for us to eat, the *ideal* ratio of unsaturated fatty acids for humans to eat is a ratio of Omega 6: Omega 3 fatty acids of about 3 or 4:1, or even lower. Our typical diet has become highly imbalanced so that the ratio we consume is much higher than that—closer to 16:1 for many people. The fat of cows or bison fed *grass* has a ratio of Omega 6 to Omega 3 fatty acids that is closer to the ideal ratio of 3:1 than animals fed grains (20:1). Furthermore, the longer cattle are fed grains, the greater the imbalance. When the balance of omega 6 and omega 3 fatty acids is tipped, health problems ensue.
- Grass fed beef also has less saturated fat than grain fed beef. In fact, grass fed meat has about the same amount of fat as skinless chicken or wild deer. When meat is this lean, it may actually *lower* LDL cholesterol levels.
- Making sure that the animals are “grass-finished” is just as important as ensuring they are “grass-fed.” When a grass-fed animal is sent to a feed lot to be “grain finished” (that is, it eats grain for the last segment of its life to be fattened before slaughter), the healthy ratio of its fats is altered back to the standard higher ratio of Omega 6: Omega 3. DO NOT eat a lot of meat if conventionally-raised supermarket meat is your only source of meat.
- Roasting or baking meat is the healthiest method of preparation. Frying and barbecuing are the worst, due to changes in the fats with frying, and the possibility of conversion of some of the proteins to carcinogenic substances with barbecuing.
- Organic meat contacts: Here is a list of resources for organic meat. When you contact the meat distributors, be sure the animals are grass-finished. At the health food stores, ask the sales clerks for help in identifying grass-fed meat:
 - [Yankee Farmer's Market](#)- buffalo, venison, ostrich, and more. 603-456-2833
 - [Organic Meat .com](#) - order a variety of excellent, all grass fed and finished meat products.
 - Wayne and Sue Arnold: tpbison@3rivers.net (grass fed bison, bison jerky)
 - [Vital Choice Seafood](#) - sells wonderful wild salmon products from Alaska.
 - Daily Blessing Foods: 888-862-5785. Certified organic beef, pork, bison, lamb and poultry.
 - Check with your local grocer to see if they have or can order organic meats for you.

- Avoid high processed meat products unless prepared by an organic rancher: hot dogs; sausage; pepperoni; bacon; bologna, salami; and beef jerky. These are poor quality meats full of nitrates, and other chemicals/hormones/etc. which cause cancer, unless organically made.

FISH:

- *Eat oily fish 2-3 times a week:* salmon, herring, cod, trout, sardines, halibut. Canned fish is fine, especially canned wild Alaskan salmon. Don't eat too much canned tuna; it can be contaminated with heavy metals. Avoid tuna steaks, mackerel, catfish, sturgeon, swordfish, and shark due to high environmental toxin content and worries of extinction. All fish are a bit contaminated, but some more than others. Other fish, such as perch, red snapper, orange roughy, tilapia, etc., do not contain good oils in them, but are not overly polluted, so are okay to eat. Shrimp, clams, mussels, crab, lobster and so forth are also okay to eat. Avoid FARMED FISH if at all possible—"Atlantic Salmon" is farmed salmon and has less health benefits and high amounts of toxins.

EGGS:

- If possible, look for organic eggs, not just "free-range."

DAIRY:

- AVOID ARTIFICIAL CHEESES--Velveeta, Pasteurized Process Cheese Foods, American cheese.
- Cheeses: generally buy low fat (made with some skim milk). Farmers and ricotta are naturally low in fat. Buy organic cheese whenever possible.
- Milk--Use organic milk whenever possible.
- Yogurt--Use PLAIN and add your own fruit. All fruited yogurts are highly sweetened.

PROTEIN: Vegetarian

- Beans, peas, lentils: If you are new to beans, follow these procedures to decrease the likelihood of gas: Soak the beans in water overnight, then throw that water out and use new water for cooking. Cook beans with spices such as mint, seaweed (dulse, kombu, etc.) or coriander seed to reduce gas. Crock-pots are an excellent way to cook beans; you can start them cooking in the morning and they are ready to eat when you get home from work.
- Raw nuts: Peanuts should be eaten roasted, but other nuts should NOT be roasted or dry roasted except occasionally. You will obtain more nutrients from raw nuts. Try walnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, cashews, pecans, filberts, almonds, macadamia nuts, havelnuts, brazil, etc.
- Nut butters: Try almond butter, cashew butter, soy nut butter, or tahini (from sesame seeds) in addition to peanut butter. Choose peanut butter with no added sugar or partially hydrogenated oils. A tip for storage: stir the nut butter well to combine the oil and solid layers, then store the jar upside down in the fridge; that way the oil will naturally be mixed in with the nut butter and not sit on top.
- Soy products: These are protective against breast cancer, prostate cancer, balance out female menstrual problems, and lower cholesterol. If you start eating a lot of soy foods, then you should begin eating seaweeds, too, as soy can lower the functioning of the thyroid, and seaweeds will help prevent that. Here are some categories of soy:
 - Tofu, tempeh, miso soup. The Tofu Handbook is a great guide for how to use tofu in cooking. Basically getting firm or baked and slicing and dicing and adding to soups, stir fries, casseroles, lasagnas, etc. is an easy way to go. With miso, use miso paste in soups, sauces, and marinades.
 - Soy meat analogs: soy hotdogs, soy sausage; soy bologna; soy pepperoni and Canadian bacon; soy burgers (aka veggie burgers); soy bacon. Due to the high amount of fillers and processing, soy meat analogs should not be a staple of your diet. Items in category (a) are preferable.
 - Soy dairy alternatives: soy milk (unsweetened is preferable because soy milk can be high in sugar), soy cheese, soy yogurt, soy ice cream, soy sour cream.
 - Roasted soy nuts
 - Edamame: cooked soybeans ready to eat- look for these in the frozen vegetables section of the supermarket.
 - Soy Nut Butter

FAST FOODS

- People should eat out no more than 1-2 times a week. Restaurant food tends to be higher in saturated fat, unhealthy oils, and hidden sweeteners.

- Avoid fast foods and deep fried foods: About the only fast foods worth eating are: whole wheat Subway subs (or other companies) with all the veggie fixings, hold the cheese; Mexican food is not generally that bad (watch the sour cream); vegetarian pizza, and so forth. For the most part, try to prepare your own food so that you don't often have to rely on fast food.
- Regular restaurants: The healthiest choice is to order a piece of meat, fish, or chicken, with baked potato, salad, and skip dessert. Avoid fried foods, creamy pastas, and eating too much. Many ethnic foods such as Mediterranean, Chinese, Indian, Japanese, etc. are quite healthy.

DRINKS

- Avoid these: Pop, sweetened ice tea drinks (Arizona, Lipton, Snapple), sweetened fruit drinks (Ocean Sprays, Lemonade, Kool-Aid, Powerade, Gatorade, Sunny Delight, Crystal Light, Hawaiian Punch, all the other sugar water products in pretty bottles on the supermarket shelves, etc.), and most all the colored and caffeinated drinks in the supermarket aisles, cocoas/hot chocolate/chocolate milk. Those "healthy herbal" drinks are also very sweetened. Avoid! Read the ingredients and avoid those drinks that contain high fructose corn syrup.
- Coffee/Decaf: If you can have it, please limit the amount to a maximum of 1-2 cups a day.
- These are okay to drink: water; unsweetened fruit juices (maximum of 6-8 oz/day, though may dilute with water to make 12-16 oz/day); unlimited veggie juices (low salt V-8, low-salt tomato juice); milk; soy/rice milk; herb teas; green tea; naturally carbonated, plain sparkling mineral waters/club soda/seltzer water (add lemon juice or fruit juice); coffee substitutes: Pero, Cafix, Roma, etc. (instants); Teechino (brewed, espresso, or French press).
- Alcohol: Ask your doctor about your alcohol intake.

SWEETS/SUGAR

- Reduce intake of white and brown sugar, honey, artificial sweeteners: Use honey minimally. A little mannitol or sorbitol in gum is fine, but these and other sugar alcohols are not recommended in large quantities. Stevia is an acceptable substitute, in moderation. Sugar in any form, "healthy" or otherwise, promotes the need to have things taste sweet to be good.
- Synonyms for white sugar: sucrose, glucose, fructose, dextrose, maltose, corn syrup, corn syrup solids, high fructose corn syrup.
- Sweets that are okay to eat daily: fruit; unsweetened fruit juice; a small amount of unsweetened dry fruit (raisins, dates, e.g.); all-fruit jams (Smucker's Simply Fruit, Polaner's Fruit Spread, Sorrel Ridge); all-fruit syrups. Occasional intake of 100% Maple Syrup and canned fruit in fruit juice only (no light or heavy syrup) is fine.
- A goal to strive for is a maximum of 1-2 sugary foods at most per WEEK. Many people find it is helpful to choose one or two days a week on which they can eat something sweet (e.g.. Sundays and Wednesdays), and then avoid eating sweets on the other 5-6 days.
- Alternative sweeteners for baking: unsulphured blackstrap molasses; date sugar; fruit concentrate; brown rice syrup; malted barley syrup, stevia.
- Watch out for hidden sugars!--LOW FAT AND NONFAT FOODS ARE ALMOST ALWAYS VERY HIGH IN SUGAR. Avoid packaged low-fat and non-fat foods. READ LABELS!!
- My Favorite: Stevia