

# Nutrition

Proper nutrients offer the environment for healthy cell regeneration. Every year your body literally replaces the vast majority of its cells, essentially creating a new you! Doesn't it make sense that cell replacement should take place under the best of conditions?

Empty calorie foods such as refined, processed products don't supply real value to the biological chain of events that brings yearly physical renewal of your body. Only vital, life-creating nutrients found in whole foods can fuel this continued rebirth. When new cells have the proper ingredients to be healthy, it slows the aging process. In contrast, the aging process accelerates with the intake of poor, denatured foods.

You, of course, are able to get the proper nutrients *if you're willing to change some habits you've developed over many years*. Once you change your habits for the better, you won't have to work any harder than you do now to decide what enters your mouth—and perhaps the mouths of your family members. You'll just be living smarter and getting all the health benefits that come with it, including a slow-down in aging and overall better health and vitality. You will also find that the “pleasures of your palate” have changed.

For example, if you enjoy eating out, whether fine dining or a quick lunch, you'll usually be able to find healthful choices because you'll know “how” to look and what to ask for. Both fine dining and fast food establishments now commonly offer healthy alternatives. When these alternatives are not offered, the waiter can usually alter the item of your choice to reduce calories and fat. You might ask for salad dressing on the side. You also can avoid dishes made with cheese or heavy sauces. Such choices are not difficult, but they add up to great advantage. And let there be no misunderstanding: selecting the right foods is a choice you'll have to make more frequently if you're planning to succeed in your body and health transformation.

And here's an important point. We know that the nutritional needs of adults differ from those of children. But what about older adults? Do they have unique nutritional needs as well? Absolutely.

Proper nutrition is crucial to maintain strength, flexibility, immune response, and mental agility as we age.

Life expectancies have increased significantly almost everywhere in the world. In order to reap the benefits of living a longer life, with the ability to cope with the mental and physical challenges that are part of the aging process, older adults do need to eat differently. In particular, the aging population needs to eat the following:

- An adequate amount of calcium, magnesium, and Vitamin D to promote healthy teeth and bones and avoid fractures and osteoporosis. The best sources of nutritional vitamin D are fortified cereals and fish, while non-fat dairy products and dark green leafy vegetables are good sources of calcium. The best overall source of vitamin D is sunshine.

- Fruit, vegetables and whole grains. They provide the fiber you need to maintain a healthy digestive system and regular bowel habits. Constipation is often a problem for older adults. Fiber-rich foods include pears, dates, corn, dried beans and peas, bran cereals and potatoes with skins. Water and regular exercise also promote regularity. By the way, folks tend to lose their sense of thirst as they age if they don't pay attention to hydration.
- Protein — especially vital for older adults who experience physical and emotional stress. Protein-rich foods include meat, fish, dried beans, and peas. These foods also help to reduce muscle loss caused by aging.
- Fats from fish, nuts, seeds, olive oil, and coconut oil are actually good for you. Fats to limit or avoid entirely are saturated (except for coconut and palm oils) and trans fats. Cheese, ice cream, high fat dairy products, meats, chicken skin, lard, and shortening, contain large amounts of saturated fats. Baked goods are generally loaded with trans fats. However, high-quality coconut oil, though heavy in saturated fat, no longer carries the stigma it once did. It has many health benefits and should also be used for high-temperature frying.

Because older adults are probably not as active as younger adults (though there shouldn't be *that* much difference if wellness is desired), calorie requirements are not as high. Often the body's metabolism has slowed down considerably if activity and muscle mass are not maintained. A more sedentary lifestyle and change in metabolism may cause weight gain. If this is the case, selecting foods with a higher nutrient content and avoiding empty calories in fats and sugars helps maintain a healthy weight. Another way to maintain a healthy weight is to maintain muscle mass.

On the other hand, some older adults suffer from malnutrition because they eat unhealthy diets or no longer cook for themselves. This is dangerous because malnutrition weakens the immune system, increasing the risk of infection. It can also contribute to mental confusion. The vast majority of health problems attributed to aging are actually self-induced through poor nutritional and fitness habits, and “dropping out of life” (discontinuing activities because you've been hypnotized into thinking they don't apply to “old” people). Just remember, regular exercise, whether swimming or brisk walking, can give you more energy and vitality, regardless of your age. Don't drop out of life!

## ***Simple Suggestions***

A thorough exploration of proper nutrition is not possible here. My program teaches you the fundamental principles of self-care with information. It has pulled so many of my patients from the brink of despair. But once you know the principles, you are the one who must extend them to embrace your wellness lifestyle. Even your level of self-education will evolve. Nonetheless, these simple guidelines will get you started:

- **Forego Processed Foods** – Minimize or avoid foods that come out of a box, a wrapper, or as a bottled drink other than water (of course, there are exceptions to the box-wrapper-bottle avoidance). Forgo baking goods (cakes, brownies, rolls, biscuits, etc.), cereal (Wheaties,

Cap'n Crunch, raisin bran), white pasta (macaroni and cheese), prepared sweets (cookies, candy bars, cinnamon crackers), sodas, juices, and other sweetened drinks.

- **Perimeter Shop** – The perimeter of the grocery store is filled with both the healthiest and the freshest food. Avoiding the center aisles will save you from unhealthy food and just may save you money.
- **Eat Raw** – This helps you eliminate or reduce your consumption of processed foods.
- **More Vegetables** – You need the enzymes in fruits and vegetables.
- **Supplementation** – You may be missing key vitamins and minerals.
- **Less Cooking** – Overcooking can destroy essential nutrients.
- **Eliminate Sugar** – Sugar in all its many forms stresses the body.
- **Eat at Home** – There's nothing as genuine, good as a home-cooked meal.

And here's a big one: **Understand the interests of commercial food manufacturers.** Your health is *not* at the top of their priority list other than staying out of court. The vast majority of commercial food interests want to keep their costs down and get you to eat as much of their products as possible. Their general approach is simple:

1. Replace natural ingredients by artificial ingredients when the latter are cheaper (which they usually are). By controlling ingredients in this way, it is also possible to make products uniform in taste, color, and consistency to meet expectations.
2. Introduce additives, preservatives, and extra processing steps into food production to reduce spoilage costs (increase shelf life) without obvious health consequences (hidden consequences are okay). But the preservatives that go into processed foods don't preserve you! In fact, you're lucky if they don't hasten your demise!
3. Make foods addictive using whatever legal means possible. This gets people to eat more product. High fructose corn syrup, which blocks hunger satiation signals, is an example.
4. Spend tons of money advertising products and manipulating public opinion.

Most of the foods found in the aisles of your grocery store are processed to increase shelf life. In general, the more vital nutrients a food contains, the more likely it is to spoil quickly. Do most of your shopping around the exterior walls of your grocery store, where you're most likely to find the refrigeration units and foods with shorter shelf lives.

## ***So, What Have I Been Doing Wrong?***

Here are six big mistakes:

1. Skipping meals, especially breakfast.
2. Falling for the idea that healthy eating cannot be pleasurable.
3. Becoming so inflexible in your dietary habits that there is no way you will be able to put up with it as a way life—the long term. Rigidity leads to failure. Your rigidity also bores and alienates your friends and associates!
4. Failing to understand the motives of the processed-food industry and therefore “shopping by commercial.”
5. Failing to find ways to keep up with the latest wellness information, which usually means information that doesn't come through orthodox medical and processed-food channels.
6. Failing to understand that wellness is 95% self care and that you can't assign someone to keep you well.

If you correctly exercise in a way that stimulates lean tissue growth, your body will need ample nutrients and calories to support that growth. Skipping meals not only will hinder this growth process, but it will actually lead to a slower metabolism and likely weight gain.

Never, ever miss breakfast, *even if you're not hungry!* It's the most important meal of the day. Skipping breakfast will slow your metabolic rate or create hormonal and blood sugar imbalances. Studies show that people who eat breakfast within two hours of arising feel better both mentally and physically than those who skip their morning meal. They feel perkier. British researchers at Cardiff University even found that eating breakfast is associated with lower levels of the stress hormone, cortisol.

I find that people who say they “can't eat breakfast” usually get that way because they habitually eat late at night, messing up their hormone balances. That needs to be gently shifted. Now I'm not suggesting that you “force feed” yourself, but you can always eat a small portion of something *nutritious* in the morning. You'll discover that it really pays dividends in how you feel and you'll also be able to control your weight more easily.

Breakfast “kick-starts” your metabolism. This meal, however, shouldn't include the typical breakfast foods such as cereal, pastries, and juice. These foods will only send your blood sugar through the roof, forcing your pancreas into overdrive. Over time, this can lead to insulin resistance and adult onset diabetes. Instead, choose protein rich foods such as eggs, lean meats, or even a protein supplement along with complex carbohydrates found in oatmeal or oat bran. Try to add some high fiber fruit such as apples or pears. These types of foods will not cause your blood sugar to rise too rapidly. Moreover, your body will use them more efficiently for growing lean tissue instead of fat tissue. Moving on to other meals ...

Sitting down to eat a Big Mac®, fries and a coke won't necessarily fill you up any more than a turkey sandwich and a salad. Both meals require about the same time to consume and will stretch your stomach about the same. So why is it that the person eating the turkey sandwich will probably fulfill his satiety level, and therefore lose the desire to continue eating, but the person

eating the Big Mac more than likely won't? Although the McDonald's meal contains roughly twice the calories, the calories are predominately processed carbohydrates and saturated fats.

Processed carbohydrates quickly enter the blood stream causing insulin spikes. Because these kinds of carbohydrates are processed so easily, the body will not need to use any of the ingested fat for immediate energy and will tend to store it.

With repeated and prolonged insulin spikes, our cells start becoming resistant to insulin. This means the body needs more insulin to do the same job it was doing before with less. In a sense, body cells become insulin "addicts" and require more and more to be satisfied. This leads to adult onset diabetes. Further, with prolonged, elevated levels of insulin, there will be an associated metabolic shift of cortisol. This shift will create leptin resistance (leptin is a hormone released from fat tissue). And since leptin is responsible for appetite suppression, resistance to its effects will mean more false hunger.

If you eat or drink too many foods containing fructose additives (e.g., high fructose corn syrup), you are simply asking for trouble. It now appears that fructose additives may be the primary culprit for the obesity and diabetes epidemic we see around us. One of the biggest offenders? Soda, of course, a sugar-laden beverage that causes weight gain and interferes with the absorption of calcium. The sugar-free stuff is even worse.

Fruit juice is too concentrated. Eat the fresh fruit instead.

For those who do enjoy fish as a main protein source, please stay informed of the mercury levels in particular types of fish.

## ***Wellness is 95% Self Care: Don't Forget to Take Care of You!***

There you go again, always taking care of someone else—your children, your aging parents, a sick relative or friend, an out-of-work sibling. But, what have you done for you lately?

While it's commendable to want to help others, charity begins at home they say. "At home" here means taking care of you, because if you don't do that, you certainly can't help any one else.

A holistic approach to taking care of yourself incorporates caring for your body, emotions, intellect, and spiritual Self from a wellness perspective. Here are some suggested behaviors for taking care of all four areas to help you be the best you can be!



- Taking care of yourself physically means the ability to apply your knowledge, motivation, commitment, behavior, self-management, attitude, and skills toward achieving your personal fitness and health goals. You can maintain physical wellness by applying the

knowledge and skills of sound nutrition, exercise, youth-extension strategies, and safety to everyday life. Hobbies can even play a large role! Physical wellness is characterized by high energy and vitality; freedom from or high adaptability to pain, dysfunction, and disability; a strong immune system; a body that feels light, balanced, strong and flexible and has good aerobic capacity; ability to meet physical challenges; and full capacity of all five senses plus a healthy libido.

- Taking care of yourself emotionally means the ability to meet your emotional needs constructively. It involves a positive attitude and the ability to respond resiliently to emotional states and the flow of every-day life. When you have emotional wellness, you can deal with a variety of situations realistically and learn more about yourself and how the things you do affect your feelings. You take responsibility for your own behavior and respond to challenges as opportunities. Emotional wellness is characterized by self-acceptance and high self-esteem; capacity to identify, express, experience, and accept all your feelings—painful, joyful, and everything in between; freedom from guilt (replaced by self-responsibility); awareness of the intimate connection between your physical and emotional selves; ability to confront your greatest fears; and maintaining and fulfilling your capacity to play.
- Taking care of yourself intellectually means having a curiosity and strong desire to learn. You value many experiences, stay stimulated with new ideas, and share your discoveries with others where welcomed or when invited. You respond to challenges and opportunities to grow, make plans, develop strategies, and solve problems. You engage in clear thinking and recall. Further, you think independently, creatively, and critically. Intellectual wellness is characterized by optimism; the capacity for peace of mind and contentment; loving what you do and doing what you love; a sense of humor; financial well-being; and preparing and living your life's vision.
- Taking care of yourself spiritually means being able to look within and work from your spiritual core on a moment-to-moment basis, allowing the spiritual to influence how you view and serve life. Spiritual wellness is characterized by the absence of fear; the ability to love unconditionally; holding a sense of purpose; the ability to be “present” whenever you choose; Soul awareness and a personal relationship with God or Spirit; trust in your intuition and an openness to change; the desire and willingness to smooth the pathway for others as well as yourself; gratitude for the richness and meaningfulness of life, no matter what experiences it brings (plus, gratitude for life, itself); and creation of a “sacred space” on a regular basis through prayer, meditation, contemplation, walking in nature, observing a Sabbath day, or other rituals that you consider sacred—rituals that promote the relinquishment of lust, anger, greed, vanity, and attachment to material things, and replace them with the virtues of discrimination, forgiveness, tolerance, contentment, detachment, and humility.

Taking care of your *whole person* is an important component of living the wellness lifestyle and enjoying a long, happy, and prosperous life to the best of your ability. When you let one part slide, you eventually suffer the consequences. Often, people feel that they can just take care of their bodies and they will be fine. Or, they ignore the spiritual and wonder why they are so miserable or can't hold things together in more challenging times.

## ***Why Calorie Cutting and Yo-Yo Diets Fail***

Cutting calories is the answer to weight loss *only if you're already in good health and follow a diet and exercise program tailored to your physical makeup and stress levels*. For most people with stubborn weight, the very last thing they should be doing is cutting calories because it doesn't work. *It doesn't work*. By the way, did I say IT DOESN'T WORK?

But, you might ask, aren't many people losing weight on modern weight-loss diets?

At the University of California, the world's largest study of weight loss has shown that *diets do not work for the vast majority of dieters and may even put lives at risk*. "You can initially lose 5 to 10 per cent of your weight on any number of diets," says researcher Dr Traci Mann, "But after this honeymoon period, the weight comes back. We found that the majority of people regained all the weight, plus more. Sustained weight loss was found only in a small minority of participants, while complete weight regain was found in the majority."

The UC researchers analyzed the results of more than 30 studies involving thousands of dieters. Although the overview did not name specific weight loss plans, some of the more popular diets in recent years have included the low carbohydrate, high protein Atkins diet, South Beach, LA Weight Loss, Nutrisystems, Weight Watchers, Slim-Fast, Mediterranean, and the GI diet, which is rich in wholegrain carbohydrates. Some of the specific findings:

- While most lose some pounds initially, more than two-thirds pile the pounds straight back on—and quickly. They end up heavier than they did to start with. It's the viscous cycle of going from fat to fatter—losing the same weight over and over and over again, and then gaining more back! Further, the strain placed on the body by repeated weight loss and gain means most people are better off not dieting at all.
- Dr. Mann's research showed that up to two-thirds of dieters put on all the weight they lose—and more—over a four to five-year period. Half of those taking part in one study were more than 11lb heavier five years later, while dieters taking part in another study actually ended up heavier than other volunteers who hadn't tried to lose weight.
- Research has shown repeated, rapid weight gain and loss associated with dieting can double the risk of death from heart disease, including heart attacks, and the risk of premature death in general. Such yo-yo weight loss has also been linked to stroke and diabetes and shown to suppress the immune system, making the body more vulnerable to infection.

People who continually try calorie-cutting diets do so because they don't know any better—or because they are addicted to hope rather than the pursuit of quality information. It's not that they lack intelligence. It's just that they put it on the back burner out of frustration. Most people on the "yo-yo train" are reacting to emotional devastation! Why is that? Because the emotional distress that comes with body distortion and premature aging begs for relief, NOW! What's more, the desire for quick relief simply overwhelms rational thinking about possible long-term

damage and failure. Let's face it: for many overweight people, this is a desperate struggle. You may even be one of these strugglers!

For such desperation, *anything* that seems to offer a quick, easy answer to weight loss or other health and fitness problems is a straw worth grasping for. But that's precisely the problem. Everywhere you look, people are offering you only straws to grasp, straws that come with great promises of quick, easy solutions (but their disclaimers about "atypical" results tell the truth). Somehow the promises just don't pan out because straws, no matter what shiny, new packages they are wrapped in, are still straws!

And how about *your* efforts?

If you've finally realized that fad diets and energy-draining exercise programs don't work for you and decided enough is enough, then you need to re-educate yourself with the shocking *scientific facts that have emerged in the last several years*. The missing link to a more youthful appearance—to radically increased levels of energy and a greater quality of life—are now within your grasp.

*To experience these tremendous benefits, you must understand how fat is burned and health is created.* There's no simple way around this if you have a stubborn weight problem. You must understand the latest facts science has revealed that proves what we've known all along: some folks, no matter how hard they work out or how much they starve themselves, cannot lose weight! The key to solving this heartbreak is to do what it takes to understand how your type of metabolism can be coaxed into burning off unwanted fat and cellulite. As a practical matter, you need to ask yourself what it's worth to you to fit into those slimming jeans you still have hanging in the closet!

## ***Foods That Energize, Nourish, and Burn Fat***

Do you think the fast food chains don't provide low-calorie, nutrient-rich foods? I regularly eat lunch away from home and find no problem staying away from hamburgers, French fries, and tacos. As things currently stand, Subway offers whole wheat breads, a variety of lean meats, and close to a dozen choices of vegetables. Chick fil-A offers a grilled chicken breast on a whole-wheat bun, served with a bowl of fruit and bottled water. Most chain restaurants have "heart smart" meals that usually consist of lean meats and vegetables while minimizing processed pastas and white bread. There simply is no excuse to blame lack of availability for your choices.

By far, your best source of complex carbohydrates comes from fibrous vegetables. You should be getting plenty of them in your diet.

If someone were to ask for a list of the top 10 most nutritious foods, no list would be complete without mentioning the following:

1. **Apples**— Loaded with Vitamin C, fiber and antioxidants, these crunchy snacks might actually help keep the doctor away, by reducing cholesterol and your risk for cancer and heart disease. But remember to eat the skin!



2. **Avocados**– Did someone say guacamole? Also high in antioxidants, they help to reduce cholesterol and your risk for cancer and diabetes.
3. **Beans**– Include many varieties (red beans, pintos, lentils, kidney beans, soy) that provide energy, protein and fiber to help regulate blood sugar and reduce your risk of heart disease and cancer.
4. **Blueberries** – A low-calorie fiber and antioxidant source, blueberries may help improve short-term memory and slow down the effects of aging on the brain (i.e., Alzheimer’s).
5. **Broccoli**– This highly nutritious vegetable, a relative of spinach, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, kale and collard greens, contains vitamin C and beta-carotene. Broccoli may help prevent diabetes, certain cancers and heart disease.
6. **Flaxseeds** – Reduce the risk for heart disease by providing plenty of omega-3 fats.
7. **Pomegranates**– These are receiving a lot of press lately, and little wonder! They contain three times the amount of antioxidants as those found in red wine and green tea. Long-term use of this juice helps to prevent heart disease and reduces the risk of certain cancers and some of the not-so-nice effects of aging (i.e., Alzheimer’s).
8. **Salmon**– A major source of omega-3 fats, decreases your risk for developing heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer’s, stroke, diabetes, and arthritis and may help with depression.
9. **Sweet Potatoes**– They’re loaded with beta-carotene and are great metabolism boosters! They are also a good fiber source, fat-free and low in calories – so they’re ideal for dieters!
10. **Walnuts/Almonds**– These nuts are good for you! Loaded with nutrients, antioxidants and omega-3 fats, they help reduce cholesterol and keep you heart-healthy. The protein, fiber and healthy fats they contain may make you feel full, so you might not be as prone to over-indulge in foods that are not so good for you!

## ***Can You Eat Well When Eating Out?***

Who doesn’t like to dine out? And with so many two-working-parent families and single working parents, it’s often easier to pile everyone into the car and hit the nearest restaurant for dinner. Not to mention those who live alone find it difficult to cook for only one. Question is – is it possible to eat well when you eat out?

The answer is yes, if you rule out fast food restaurants — major contributors to weight gain and the growing problem of worldwide obesity, especially among children and teenagers. Eating all the wrong foods can also affect your energy levels, strength, and mental and emotional



well-being.

There are usually healthy choices on the menu, so looking for them when you eat out can add variety and spice to your diet.

### **So, What Can You Do to Make Better Choices When You're Eating Out?**

- Forget the sugar or chemical-laden soft drinks! Go for bottled water instead.
- Order healthy salads as entrees, with the dressing on the side, that you can dip into rather than pour over.
- Order fish and meats that are baked, grilled or broiled, not fried.
- Pick fruit for dessert instead of a sugar-rich and fat-filled dessert – or order only one and share with the table!
- Avoid selections with mayonnaise, sour cream and butter.
- When you order pizza, ask for vegetable toppings instead of processed meats (pepperoni, sausage).
- Don't think you have to "clear your plate" just because it's in front of you – ask to take the leftovers home for another meal. Or two!
- Avoid bread and butter, French fries, onion rings, cream soups, gravies, heavy sauces (Alfredo, hollandaise), bacon and potato chips.
- Steer clear of the all-you-can-eat buffets and specials!
- Make sure you are not starving when you enter the restaurant. Much the same as food shopping on an empty stomach – you are apt to order everything on the menu!

Dining out should be social and enjoyable. Don't let bad menu choices ruin what should be a time to relax and unwind with friends and family. Remember, no one likes that feeling of fullness that accompanies an evening of overindulgence ...or the inevitable results the next day!

### **No Nos**

1. Run! Don't walk from foods and drinks supplemented with high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). More than any other factor, HFCS has added to the obesity and diabetic epidemic we have seen grow over the last 40 years. Soft drinks contain the greatest amount of HFCS. It is also found in candy, ice cream, frozen yogurt, popsicles, fruit bars, ketchup, pasta sauce, soups, and hamburger buns (this list is by no means exhaustive!)
2. HFCS is called by various names other names that hide its presence: fruit sugar, levulose, chicory, inulin, iso glucose, glucose-fructose syrup, and fruit fructose. Manufacturers like

to hide the facts because people are starting to catch on and sales are starting to drop. TV commercials are trying to fight back by characterizing it as a safe, “natural” ingredient. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

3. HCFS is not only very cheap for manufacturers to produce, but when ingested it also increases hunger tremendously by *blocking* satiation signals rather than by spiking insulin. HFCS is the manufacturers dream come true: It makes people fat and hungry! What more could they ask for?
4. Don't use a microwave oven to heat or reheat foods. Too much evidence of microwave dangers has accumulated not only in leaking radiation and overheating of liquids, but in biological effects of ingesting microwave heated foods and liquids. More important, too little interest in potential problems has been shown by the U.S. government or the many special interests that have everything to gain by perpetuating the microwave oven industry. I can't cover everything here. Start doing some of your own research (and toss your microwave in the meantime).

<http://www.mercola.com/article/microwave/hazards.htm>

Remember, self-care is 95% of the wellness lifestyle. This means you must start understanding more about benefits and risks than the orthodox “health care” community is willing or able to offer you. You must be willing to start challenging all those “authoritarian” voices you have allowed to implant themselves in your head. Some of them should be there, and others not. Don't give them a free pass. Make them work for their positions!

5. Stay miles away from aspartame, sucralose, and saccharine. They are dangerous chemicals that should be avoided at all costs. These chemical sweeteners are the basis of such common, popular products as Nutri-Sweet®, Equal®, Splenda®, and Sweet'n Low®. We've been finding with time that the artificial sweeteners are actually leading to more obesity (through different metabolic channels) than the old-fashioned sweeteners with calories. That's why wellness advocates must keep up to date with recent findings. The science is moving rapidly. Even table sugar is safer. If you must use a sweetener, safer choices are stevia or xylitol.
6. Unfermented, soy-rich foods are *not* healthy for you, even though the highly influential soy industry heavily promotes them as such. Soy protein is high in phytoestrogens, which are *endocrine disruptors*. Not only that, the large-chain molecules are difficult to digest and children have a devil of a time with them (as well as having their endocrine system damaged). Avoid all, unfermented soy products.
7. Don't use olive oil for frying. The high temperatures denature olive oil and create harmful free radicals. Use a good quality coconut oil instead.
8. Avoid all protein bars and cookies. If you must have a treat, a protein bar would be the better choice; but these foods are mostly junk and they slowly damage your health.

9. Don't get too rigid with your diet. For one, you won't "win friends or influence people" that way. It can carry a social stigma at times. Plus, depriving yourself of some forbidden pleasures now and then will just lead to binging when you finally break down—which usually happens to the best of us.
10. Don't keep "cheat foods" around the house unless you absolutely have to. Make it necessary to go out to get them when and if you decide it's cheat time (see *Reclaim 24* index for details). Instead, keep a variety of healthy snacks around such as naturally sweetened, whole grain treats, fruits, and nuts.
11. Don't allow boredom to set in with your nutritional approach or you may regress to old habits. Healthy, pleasurable eating will normally want to change with time because nothing stays the same. Get interested in what those changes might want to be.

## **Supplements**

Here is a list of supplements that should be a part of your diet.

- Protein powder (milk, whey, casein, but NOT soy)
  - Provides an excellent source of amino acids that deliver complete protein
  - Essential for lean tissue growth
- Essential fatty acids (flaxseed & fish oils, including krill oil)
  - Essential for cardiovascular health and endocrine (hormone) function
  - Provide phytoestrogens that help balance the ratio of estrogen to progesterone
  - Required for fat metabolism (fat burning)
  - Help to minimize or reduce inflammation in conditions such as fibromyalgia and lupus
- Vitamin / mineral supplementation
  - The American diet is deficient of key nutrients
  - Try to follow companies that have a proven track record and scientific research to back-up the efficiency of their products.
- Antioxidants
  - Often called anti-aging chemicals, these act as scavengers and bind up free radicals that cause cellular damage.

- Common antioxidants include: alpha lipoic acid, co-enzyme Q10, l-aurine, glutathionine, vitamins C & E, and selenium. Green tea, fruits, and vegetables are also good, natural sources of antioxidants.

## ***Common Myths***

**Myth:** Carbohydrates make you fat.

**Fact:** Excessive calories make you fat.

**Fact:** Processed carbohydrates make you fat

**Myth:** All carbohydrates are alike as far as the body is concerned.

**Fact:** Complex carbohydrates allow slow digestion without spiking insulin levels so much.

**Fact:** Processed carbohydrates increase the demand on the pancreas, which leads to adult onset diabetes.

**Myth:** Low carbohydrate foods are preferable.

**Fact:** Low carbohydrate foods are usually high in fat.

**Myth :** Excess calories from protein will be used to build muscle.

**Fact:** Excess protein will either be used as fuel or stored as fat.

**Myth:** Diets high in protein and fat, and low in carbohydrates, are best for losing weight.

**Fact:** These diets may be good for quick weight loss, but most of this loss will be in the form of lean tissue (muscle) and water. Further, these diets can actually slow your metabolism and are hard to maintain.

**Myth:** All proteins are equal.

**Fact:** Animal sources are superior as they contain all the essential amino acids. (Animal protein sources also include supplements made from eggs, casein, and whey.)

**Myth:** As long as my carbohydrate intake is low, it's okay to consume a moderate, high fat diet.

**Fact:** The typical American high fat diet is always unhealthy and can increase your risk of cardiovascular disease. This is a diet very high in omega 6's with too many animal fats, polyunsaturated fats, hydrogenated fats, and transfats.

**Myth:** You must cut out all fat when trying to lose weight.

**Fact:** Omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids are essential for fat metabolism. This means monounsaturated, polyunsaturated, and saturated fats from coconut oil and palm oil are essential. However, too many polyunsaturated fats can create a poor omega-3 to omega-6 ratio.

**Fact:** Fats play a critical role in our overall health, from hormone syntheses to the transport of fat-soluble vitamins.

**Fact:** Fats aid in satiety and prevent overeating.

**Fact:** Moderately high fat diets (high in omega 3's) are ok and can be valuable in minimizing fat storing hormones like insulin.

## ***It's Possible to Eat for Pleasure***

Eating definitely has a soothing effect on us that temporarily allows us to forget our troubles. This isn't a problem unless we head for the refrigerator every time we have a tough day. Eating should be enjoyable, but not at the expense of your health. So, when you eat, you need to ask yourself the question whether you're eating because you are truly hungry or because are you simply yearn for pleasure, perhaps in the company of others.

*There is no wrong answer on the face of it.* The key is to learn how to make eating a pleasurable experience while also ingesting foods that nourish and heal—foods that actually have life-creating value instead of those with empty calories and no vitality. Moreover, an occasional “luxury” isn't out of the question. I enjoy a slice of chocolate cake every once in a while. There's room for such enjoyments in my eating lifestyle. The key is to enjoy it infrequently.

You'll be happy to know that my nutritional approach allows for “cheat days.” But also keep in mind that with time, good nutritional choices will alter your sense of taste and pleasure. I don't get pleasure from a “sugar buzz” any more, so when I do decide to cheat, I'll look for alternatives that satisfy my desire but don't create so many negative repercussions. But I will say that my cheat desires have dwindled remarkably over time. I haven't had to do battle with them. Nor should you!

When we talk about wellness, we're talking about a sustainable way of life. In truth, very, very few people can stick to a way of eating that isn't pleasurable. That approach simply isn't sustainable for long periods. It just invites failure because you will almost surely fall off the wagon. Chronically sick people will often fall off the wagon when prescribed a “bland,” long-term, diet intended to keep them alive. They simply can't stand living without eating pleasure. They would rather take the chance of dying sooner. Eating pleasure is a very strong emotion!

So, here's a question for you: Can you accept disagreeable or barely tolerable eating for the rest of your life in the name of nutrition? I don't recommend you try. Don't put yourself in such a position. Instead, use your creative imagination and the information I provide to establish a foundation that supports both pleasure *and* nutrition. It will require habit changes for sure, but

you can make it work. If you're interested in wellness, you will make it work. It's not hard. It's just different.

You may need to bump up your level of nutritional knowledge. I offer you some good support for this in *Reclaim 24*. But if you have decided to live a wellness lifestyle, this will become an ongoing interest for you. Knowledge of nutrition keeps expanding. Expand with it (in knowledge only).

You will want to start *consciously* selecting nutrient-rich, higher-quality foods for your meals. And you should experiment with the pleasure principle as you do. For example, just the choice of spices can make a world of difference in your enjoyment of a meal.

You already know that spices can add some incredible taste sensations to your food – but did you also know that many spices have significant health benefits? In fact, many herbs and spices have been used for natural healing for thousands of years, and are still used today in place of medications that may cause unwanted or adverse side effects. And...they are fat-free and extremely low in calories!

Some herbs and spices better known for their healthy properties include:

- **Cinnamon** – Helps stop the growth of bacteria and fungi in the body and may help to increase brain function. It is also reduces blood sugar levels in diabetics and helps to lower cholesterol. As for antioxidants that help fight disease, cinnamon ranks at the top as an antioxidant source.
- **Parsley** – Known for its cancer-fighting properties, parsley is also rich in antioxidants and heart healthy vitamin C and beta-carotene.
- **Ginger** – Great for digestive health, ginger is used to calm motion sickness and stomach upsets associated with pregnancy. Ginger is another spice with antioxidant properties.
- **Turmeric** – The spice that gives the yellow color to mustard, turmeric is also loaded with antioxidants and it may help to guard against cancer and the inflammation that contributes to joint problems and Alzheimer's.
- **Oregano** – Armed with powerful antibacterial compounds, oregano helps fight infection and, when eaten fresh, has more antioxidant properties, per gram, than apples, blueberries, oranges, and potatoes!

Many spices have been around for centuries, and were used for all types of medicinal purposes long before the first pharmacy ever appeared on the scene. Maybe our ancient ancestors were wiser than we give them credit for!

Over time, you will revise your habits (along with the types of foods you bring home with you) and not have to place so much conscious attention on what you are doing. But make no mistake about it: you can't change habits for the better without conscious attention. Remember, wellness is 95% self care.

## ***Why Rigid Programs Lead to Failure***

Food plays a role in many aspects of your life from celebration to sorrow. The last thing you want is a rigid list of rules about what to eat. Good nutrition is more than just rules. No matter the basis of your personal food decisions, finding a balance and peace with food is key to a lifetime of health and well-being.

Information-based moderation is one of the most important aspects of a healthy diet. It involves making choices that allow flexibility and doesn't just follow rigid dietary rules. In fact, strict dietary rules often lead to failure in the long run—*and it's the long run that you must always be thinking about with your dietary regimen*. If you can't see yourself on a program for the rest of your life, you are looking at the wrong program. Yes, the program must evolve as new information becomes available to you, but you are moving from a life-long program that works for you to a life-long program that works even better. My information-based program gives you plenty of flexibility in your choices.

Remember, people are fundamentally pleasure seekers and pain avoiders. Although it's possible for long-term dietary rigidity to be pleasurable for a few unusual souls (anything's possible), it just drives most of us to the wall with frustration. When that pent-up frustration is finally released, it usually leads to binge eating quickly followed by self-recrimination. Then, not only are you back to ground zero, you may actually have lost ground with your well-intentioned efforts, both in health and in self-esteem. You can see how this works if you look at the history of “yo yo dieters.”

Here are some flexibility guidelines. You will be able to add to them out of your own experience and self-education.

- Rigidity leads to boredom, and boredom seeks relief.
- Consider the “big nutritional picture.” Evaluate success over time from many perspectives.
- Include your favorite foods. If you consider these foods “unhealthy,” think about how much and how often you eat them. Low levels of “cheating” are allowed for long-term success. However, you may find with time that cheating lessens because you don't “need” it so much anymore.
- Open your mind to healthy foods including whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and healthy fats.
- Set small, achievable goals.
- Implement changes that you can live with for the long run.
- Consider your individual needs.
- When your plan doesn't work, don't give up...make adjustments.