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|  <p>Purpose:</p> | <p>Steps to a Healthy Diet Starch-Smartish</p> <p>Beginning Healthy Journey</p> | <p>Healthy Food Choices Starch-Smart</p> <p>Health Maintenance</p> | <p>Healthier Food Choices Starch-Smarter</p> <p>Optimal Lifestyle to Reverse the Onset of Disease, or Overweight</p> | <p>Healthiest Food Choices Starch-Smartest</p> <p>Therapeutic Living for Illness Reversal or Severe Obesity</p> |
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Ideally Suited for:

Those wanting to increase their intake of fruits and vegetables while moving toward a more natural, whole-food diet without completely changing their current eating style.

Those looking for a maintenance lifestyle that boosts energy and balances good nutrition with current preferences for flavors and seasonings.

For those wanting to optimize their health and longevity. Requires an openness to changing preferred tastes and habits for increased health benefits.

For those wanting to stop or reverse a diagnosed disease condition or those wanting a cleansing diet to reset their taste buds.

Calories from Fat:

< 25% calories from fat

< 20% calories from fat

< 15% calories from fat

~ 10% calories from fat

Vegetables:

Vegetables provide protein, carbohydrates, fiber, and fat, as well as vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Adding them to your diet either raw or cooked is a great choice for improving your health. The USDA recommends 3-5 servings a day, but why stop there?

Eat several servings of cooked or raw vegetables at two meals each day. Vegetables come in several categories; try to get some of each type--green leafy vegetables, root vegetables, tubers, seeds, bulbs, buds, stems, flowering vegetables, and succulents--on a regular basis.

Enjoy multiple servings of raw or cooked vegetables for breakfast and lunch. Include dark green, leafy vegetables at both meals for cardiovascular health. Starchy vegetables (tubers) like potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, taro, and yuca should help form the basis of both meals to meet energy and satiety needs. Add other types of vegetables to create a rainbow of colors in your diet. Do not juice the vegetables nor blend them in smoothies, although smoothies may be necessary for those with limited ability to chew.

Vegetables should be a cornerstone of your strategy to restore health, and the basis of breakfast. Eat vegetables cooked or raw, but not juiced or blended. Dark green, leafy vegetables are especially healing because they repair the arteries which then allows the blood to distribute oxygen and nutrition to the millions of cells in the body. Three to six servings of greens a day is recommended for healing. Sweet potatoes (or starchy tubers) are recommended as a daily essential. Smoothies may be necessary for those with limited ability to chew.

Legumes/Beans:

Canned or home-cooked, beans are packed with protein, carbohydrates, and fiber. They can be eaten as a stand-alone dish or added to an endless number of soups, salads, entrees, and side-dishes. Since canned beans tend to be high in sodium, rinse off the broth to reduce salt intake. Even better, buy the "no salt added" variety. Try to have some beans every day.

Super high in fiber, legumes contain energy-rich starch, which helps form the hunger-satisfying basis of any whole-food plant-based (WFPB) diet. Beans, lentils, and peas are packed with nutrients and help lower cholesterol. After about two weeks of eating legumes and avoiding animal products, the body adjusts and gas becomes much less of a problem. Plan to eat legumes at two different meals every day.

Breakfast and lunch should each include a healthy serving of cholesterol-lowering beans, lentils, or peas to provide the energy and satiety needed for the most productive hours of the day. High in fiber and other nutrients, legumes contain starch, which has sustained cultures down through the ages. Soy Curls and tofu are both minimally processed soybean products which, when used occasionally, can add interest and variety to the diet. Avoid hydrolyzed soy protein and soy protein isolates.

Breakfast and lunch should include beans, lentils, or peas for energy, satiety, and nutrition while the body is healing. Since a therapeutic diet must be based on very simple whole foods, even tofu and Soy Curls cannot be recommended for those wanting to reverse disease or lose large amounts of weight. Do not eat hydrolyzed soy protein and soy protein isolates.

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Grains:

Only breads or pastas labeled 100% whole grain can be trusted not to contain any refined flour. Refined grains like white rice and enriched flour have been stripped of the fiber and nutrients which naturally come packaged together. The synergy between fiber and nutrients increases the health-promoting value of grains in their natural state.

Carbs are good and starch is your friend as long as grain is eaten in its whole, unrefined state. Grains and grain-like seeds such as brown rice, barley, or quinoa make a good base for stir-fries and other one-dish meals. Pasta or breads should be labeled "100% whole grain" in order to avoid refined flour.

Grains and grain-like seeds are best eaten whole and well cooked. When whole grains are ground into flour, they become a more calorie dense food and thus may cause weight gain. One exception to this rule is 100% whole grain pasta because it has to be rehydrated.

All grains or grain-like seeds must be unprocessed (except for cooking), whole and intact. Grains should be cooked to help break down the strong cell walls so that the body can best access the nutrition in them. Because grinding grains into flour is a form of processing, the seriously ill should avoid food products made with flour of any kind.

Fruits:

Fresh or frozen fruit is a great way to sweeten your life and get vitamins and antioxidants. Eating the whole fruit provides nutrition as nature intended it; fruit juice spikes blood sugar and adds calories without keeping the stomach satisfied for long. The USDA recommends 1 1/2 to 2 cups of fruit per day.

Fresh or frozen fruit should be eaten daily. With grains, fruit makes a lighter meal that some people prefer first thing in the morning and others enjoy for supper. Fruit also makes a convenient snack or a sweet ending to a meal. Dried fruits are calorie dense foods; use them sparingly since it is easy to eat an excess of calories with very little volume. Fruits are best enjoyed whole rather than in a juice because juicing removes the fiber, leaving all the sugar.

Give your digestive tract a rest by eating a lighter meal of fresh or frozen fruit with whole grains for the third meal of the day. The fruit should be eaten in its whole state. Juicing and blending are processes that separate the fiber from the sugar in fruit thereby causing a sudden rise in blood sugar. Because the water has been removed, dried fruit is likewise a processed food that should be used sparingly. If you eat dried fruit, choose fruit preserved without sulfur and rehydrate the fruit by soaking it in water before eating it.

Fruit and well-cooked grains make a light evening meal which allows the digestive tract to be finished with its work before bedtime, giving us the deepest, most replenishing sleep. Dried, juiced, or blended fruits are processed foods and therefore are not recommended.

Animal Products & Meat Substitutes:

All animal-based foods cause inflammation and greatly increase the risk of disease. Pursuing optimal health means lessening dependence on animal-based foods. Premade veggie burgers and other meat-substitutes can aid the transition to new tastes and textures. Learning how animals are raised, slaughtered, and processed can motivate diet changes.

Completely exclude meat, eggs, and all dairy products from the diet. Prepackaged meat substitutes like frozen veggie burgers are factory-made, processed foods which are less than optimal for health. Tofu and Soy Curls are lightly-processed, whole-food products that may be used to add interest and variety to the diet.

Eat no animal products or meat substitutes whatsoever. Obtain all nutrition and energy from whole, unprocessed, plant-based foods. Tofu and Soy Curls are minimally processed whole foods which can be included in the diet, but should only be eaten occasionally and always with plenty of vegetables because of their higher fat content.

Research shows conclusively that there are no animal products which produce optimal health or healing. Avoid all meat, eggs, and dairy products--no exceptions. Because low-fat tofu and Soy Curls are minimally-processed, higher-fat foods, they should be excluded from a therapeutic diet.

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Oils, Nuts, Seeds, and other High-Fat Foods:

Because all oils have some saturated fat, they damage the arteries. Oil also adds unnecessary calories to meals. Nuts and seeds should be eaten raw or dry roasted. Chia seeds, freshly-ground flax, and walnuts are all whole foods that are high in valuable omega 3 fats.

Avoid adding oil of any kind to food. Raw or dry roasted nuts can be eaten sparingly (1-2 oz. per day). One to two tablespoons of chia or freshly-ground flax seeds per day may be used instead. Avocados and coconuts are high-fat whole foods. Avocados should be eaten sparingly, and coconut only rarely due to the high amount of saturated fat it contains.

No oil at all should be added to foods. If BMI is normal, raw nuts may be eaten sparingly (1 oz. per day). One tablespoon of chia or freshly-ground flax is also allowed. Because avocados are high in fat, they should only be used as a condiment; a one-ounce serving is about 1/5 to 1/4 of a regular-sized avocado. Coconut should be avoided because of the high saturated fat content.

In order to heal the circulatory system, all added oil is strictly forbidden. Walnuts, or chia seeds, or freshly-ground flax may occasionally be included in the diet, but not more than 2 oz. per week. Total avocado use should be restricted to 1/2 an avocado per month. No coconut should be eaten at all in order to regain health.

Timing of Meals and Snacks:

Timing of meals affects our health. Eating breakfast has been shown to reduce obesity. For weight maintenance, the majority of calories should be eaten before 3:00 p.m. If snacking is necessary, whole foods like carrot sticks, apples, or 1 - 2 oz. of nuts are a better choice.

Research shows that a strong breakfast and eating the majority of the day's calories before 3:00 p.m. helps prevent obesity. The adage "Breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, and supper like a pauper" is a good rule to follow for optimizing health. Try drinking a large glass of water when the urge to snack hits; the urge may pass within a few minutes. If it doesn't, having whole foods like grapes, apples, or carrot sticks on hand can help prevent snacking on junk food.

Breakfast should be eaten before 8:00 a.m. It should be the largest meal of the day and include plant foods from all four categories: beans, greens, squash, and yams. Although a slightly smaller meal, lunch should also be comprised of beans, greens, squash, and yams. Whole grains can be added to meals to increase satiety. Supper should be finished by 6:00 p.m. and ideally be a lighter meal consisting of whole grains and fruits. Avoid snacking by taking in enough calories at meal times and by drinking water before the urge hits. Eventually, the stomach will be trained and the urge to snack will greatly subside.

Beans, greens, squash, and yams are the categories of plant foods which should be eaten at breakfast and lunch. Intact whole grains can be added for satiety. A large breakfast should be eaten before 8:00 a.m. Lunch should come no sooner than four hours after breakfast and be a slightly smaller meal. A supper of fruits and well-cooked whole grains should be finished by 6:00 p.m. to allow for restful, healing sleep. Some people do better on two meals a day, one a vegetable/legumes (and perhaps whole grains) meal and the other a fruit/whole grains meal. Avoid eating vegetables and fruit at the same meal in order to promote optimal digestion.

Salt & Sugar:

Salt and sugar are not health foods. However, it is better to eat our fruits and veggies with salt or sugar than not to eat them at all.

Use only as much salt or sugar as is needed to make food palatable. Gradually reduce the amount of salt and sugar added to food. As the taste buds heal, the natural flavors of fruits and vegetables will become more appealing.

Breaking the reliance on salt and sugar optimizes health. Use the salt shaker sparingly at the table as needed, but add no salt to food during the cooking process. Salt can be replaced with lemon, herbs, and spices. To sweeten foods, dates make an excellent choice.

Sugar is a health-damaging additive. Avoid sugar use if at all possible. Salt should be used in limited quantities, sprinkled on the food after cooking, and only if absolutely necessary. Lemon juice, herbs, or seasonings are good substitutes for salt. Whole pitted dates, or other unsulfured dried fruits not sprayed with oil, may be used sparingly to sweeten food.

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Vinegar, Chilis, Irritating Spices, and Other Condiments:

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| <p>Know what's in your food. Read labels and choose foods with ingredients you recognize. Beware that condiments can add significant amounts of unwanted fat and sodium to your diet.</p> | <p>Although condiments add wonderful flavor and variety to meals, they can be a hidden source of oil, sugar, and sodium. Becoming a label reader can help you find and eliminate excess amounts of these health-sabotaging substances from your diet.</p> | <p>Nearly all premade condiments contain irritating or questionable ingredients. Many have sugar, oil, or high levels of salt. Most have vinegar or spices such as black pepper or chili peppers which may irritate the mucus membranes, causing gastric irritations or an increase in sinus mucus. Learn to enjoy the natural flavor of whole foods or try new recipes for homemade condiments free from unwanted ingredients.</p> | <p>Most condiments contain sugar, oil, or high levels of sodium. Vinegar, spicy chilis, and black pepper may irritate and eventually damage the respiratory or digestive mucus membranes. Do not use any of these substances. The natural flavors of food will become more appealing as our taste buds heal, and we can find recipes for condiments that do not contain any of these questionable ingredients.</p> |
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Beverages:

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| <p>Drink two glasses of water before breakfast to start the digestive tract working. Drinking 8 glasses of water a day keeps our digestion working well, our blood flowing smoothly, and our skin glowing. Try soaking mint leaves, cucumber, or raspberries in water overnight to give water a flavor boost.</p> | <p>Drink two glasses of water before breakfast to start the digestive tract working. At least eight glasses of water are necessary per day for keeping the body functioning well.</p> | <p>Drink two glasses of water before breakfast to start the digestive tract working. Adults should finish six more glasses before 5:00 PM so that nighttime sleep won't be interrupted by a need to use the bathroom. Avoid drinking at mealtimes or within 30 minutes of a meal.</p> | <p>Drink two glasses of water before breakfast to start the digestive tract working. Aim for at least eight glasses of water per day. Two glasses should be finished 30 minutes before breakfast. Finish three more glasses before noon. By 5:00 PM finish the majority of the day's water so that at bedtime the bladder will be empty.</p> |
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Alcohol:

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| <p>Alcohol use increases the risk of certain cancers; excess alcohol damages the brain, liver, kidneys, and immune system.</p> | <p>Cancer and other disease conditions plus many other societal problems are associated with alcohol use. Limiting alcohol is good, but eliminating it all together is better.</p> | <p>Alcohol use is implicated in Vitamin B12 deficiency as well as being a risk factor for cancer and other diseases. Alcohol is not part of an optimal diet.</p> | <p>Alcoholic beverages hinder disease reversal.</p> |
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Bedtime:

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| <p>Going to bed before 10:00 PM is beneficial because our body repairs itself most efficiently in the hours of sleep before midnight.</p> | <p>Our bodies repair themselves best in the hours of sleep before midnight. Aim for no later than a 10:00 PM bedtime.</p> | <p>Plan to be asleep before 10:00 PM. Our body does its optimal repair work during the hours of sleep before midnight.</p> | <p>To give our body the ideal conditions for healing. Plan to be asleep by 9:00 PM. Our body repairs itself best in the hours before midnight.</p> |
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Note:

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| <p>Weight goals should determine the calorie concentration of food choices.</p> | <p>Weight goals should determine the calorie concentration of food choices.</p> | <p>Weight goals should determine the calorie concentration of food choices.</p> | <p>Weight goals should determine the calorie concentration of food choices.</p> |
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