



# Eating for Health™: A New System, Not Another Diet — PART TWO

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The core principles of the **Eating for Health™** system were introduced above. Primary among this holistic approach is:

- Bio-individuality
- Four Levels of Eating
- Whole Food Synergy

The following concepts and practices will come forward:

- Diet & Disease Connection
- Food & Health Connection
- **Eating for Health™** Food Groups

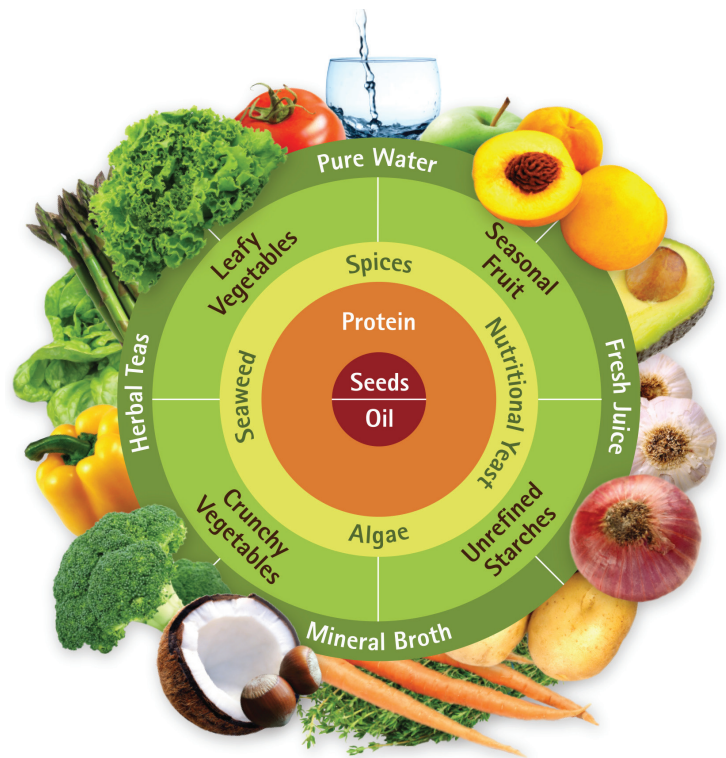
## Diet Direction

The impact of nutrient-depleted, chemically-altered food, combined with stress and environmental toxicity is a growing threat to all species and the natural order. The **Eating for Health™** diet, lifestyle, and attitude aims to shift the mass food paradigm from convenience to conscious eating.

## Diet & Disease Connection

Statistics for 2014 indicate that heart disease causes almost one third of all U.S. deaths (1). More than 68% of American adults over the age of 20 are overweight or obese; 8.3% of our adult population has diagnosed type-2 diabetes, while about half that many are thought to be afflicted with it but undiagnosed; and another 38.2% of adults have pre-diabetes (2), an almost equally dangerous condition of high blood sugar.

Current research acknowledges that the standard American and global commercial food dietary pattern, with its emphasis on processed, packaged, and fast foods full of damaged fats, refined flours and sugars and lack of nutrient density, leads to profound



changes in metabolic functions. These changes eventually lead to inflammation, the key causative factor in obesity, blood sugar disorders including type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other chronic degenerative conditions (3, 4, 5, 6, 7). Damage from toxins, both from the food supply and the environment, creates an additive effect (8), as do stress and lack of physical activity.

From 1910 to 1970, the American food supply underwent profound changes, as it became decentralized and industrialized. The proportion of traditional animal fat in the American diet declined from 83% to 62%, and butter consumption plummeted from 18 pounds per person to 4. During the same period, the percentage of dietary vegetable oils in the form of margarine, shortening, and refined oils increased about 400%, while the consumption of sugar and processed foods increased about 60% (9). Add to this, the huge

increases seen since World War II in the use of chemicals that rid our foods of insects, fungus, and weeds and the recipe for a diet detrimental to health, starting in childhood or earlier, is complete.

For the first time in history, the next generation will not live longer than their parents. Diseases such as type II diabetes, high blood pressure, heart conditions, and joint deterioration — once considered adult diseases — are regularly diagnosed in children. What is particularly tragic is that studies have suggested that obesity in children today may contribute to a 2–5 year decline in their life expectancy, shorter than that of their parents, due to obesity-related diseases that are preventable (10).

## Food & Health Connection

Traditional healing systems such as Ayurveda, Chinese medicine, Greco-Roman, and naturopathic medicine, echo the advice given by Hippocrates over 2,000 years ago to use food as medicine. More recently, research has made a compelling case that nutrient-rich food is a primary promoter of health and protector from disease. Fresh whole food, grown on nutrient and micro-organism rich soil, supports life and health by providing digestible proteins to build and repair body tissue, nourishing fats that support nervous and endocrine function, colorful carbohydrates that provide fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phyto-nutrients that lower inflammation, favorably influence cell metabolism, genetic expression, and detoxification.

Recent studies show that nutrient-rich foods play a key role in promoting health and preventing disease. In India, where spices are part of everyday cooking, a fascinating study reported that spices significantly stimulated pancreatic enzymatic production. Pancreatic amylase, lipase, and disaccharidase enzymes (sucrase, lactase, and maltase) were enhanced by the addition of ginger and turmeric. Other spices evaluated that increased enzymatic production included coriander, ajowan, fennel, cumin, asafoetida, capsaicin, and piperine (11). With a greater output of pancreatic enzymes, digestion and assimilation will be more efficient, yielding a greater uptake in the

quantity and variety of nutrients to nourish, protect and heal body tissues, organs, and stressed body systems.

A meta-analysis of 206 epidemiological studies found the ingestion of raw vegetables to have the most consistent and powerful association with the reduction of cancers of all types, including stomach, pancreas, colon, breast (12). Lightly cooked, baked, or sautéed vegetables would also be of value if they are not overcooked and the nutrients in any cooking stock are not discarded.

The prospective *Physicians Health Study II* tracked the dietary patterns of 21,454 male physicians for 17 years (13). The most dramatic relationship between survival and food intake was nut consumption. A comparison of the cardiovascular function of doctors who ate nuts and seeds two or more times per week as compared to no nuts or seeds. Those eating nuts and seeds showed favorable results. Nuts and seeds were linked to anti-arrhythmic and anti-seizure benefits, reducing sudden cardiac death by 60%. Low fat (10% of calories from fat or less) diets with no nuts or seeds increased the risk of ventricular fibrillation or other life-threatening arrhythmias.

Nuts and seeds, positioned at the center of the **Eating for Health™** model are an excellent plant source of protein, fatty acids, vitamins, minerals, and phyto-nutrients. A meta-analysis of 23 interventional trials involving nut and seed consumption noted those eating 1 ounce per day, 2 or more times per week showed:

- A large drop in LDL cholesterol, especially the most dangerous small dense LDL
- A significant rise in the beneficial HDL
- A reduction in C-reactive protein and plaque adhesion molecules
- Improved vascular elasticity. (14)

The longest-lived societies have the following behaviors in common. They eat no processed foods, mostly homegrown vegetables. They are physically active throughout their lifespan and have warm social rela-

tionships outside of their primary family. They do not overeat. In long-lived societies, females averaged 1200 calories per day as compared with the American average 1600 calories, while males averaged 1900 calories per day as compared to the American average 2600 calories (15).

Beyond the hubbub of the “which diet is best food” debate emerges one common denominator: the claims of superiority of one approach over another are heavily exaggerated because the “eating patterns associated with meaningful evidence of health benefit overlap substantially” (16). All that healthful dietary approaches have in common is precisely what the **Eating for Health™** program has proclaimed since its inception: that real, whole food, minimally processed, and with an emphasis on plant foods is life- and health-supportive and disease-preventive (17).

“Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.”

— Michael Pollan

## Food Fortification & Supplements

The United States has been supervising the fortification of packaged foods for decades, to reduce nutrient deficiencies in susceptible populations. However, in addition to the problem of supplying just a few of the known nutrients, and in synthetic forms, scientists from the *United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)*, and other top nutrition researchers, have acknowledged that in trying to remedy the nutritional deficits of a few, we run the risk of “over-fortification or under-fortification in the food supply and nutrient imbalances in the diets of individuals” (19). It is estimated that close to half of American children aged 8 and younger are consuming potentially harmful amounts of vitamin A, zinc, and niacin because of excessive food fortification (20). The message from this study can be construed as meaning that optimal nutrition results from a diversified diet of real foods, not from the addition of government-blessed nutrient supplements.

The researchers urge consideration of all segments of the population and not simply those who may be at risk of deficiency and they question the enrichment of foods with nutrients that may or may not be part of a food’s natural nutritional profile. Most

importantly, they note that while vitamins are added to foods, minerals (other than iron and calcium) are not, which could lead to serious imbalances. The study suggests that the best nutrition comes from a varied diet of real foods, rather than government-approved supplements. Nearly half of American children under eight may be getting too much vitamin A, zinc, and niacin from excessive food fortification (20).

While the **Eating for Health™** program recognizes that nutrient supplementation is commonly required for optimal health, blanket enrichment of the country’s processed food supply can be a potentially health-impairing practice, and one that allows an attitude of complacency among individuals rather than one of taking responsibility for one’s health. This concern is justified, since four in five Americans buy foods and drinks for their added benefits or fortification. One-third believe that fortification has a moderate or significant impact on their overall health. A little more than one-quarter indicated that fortified foods have a great or moderate impact on their food purchasing decisions (21).

The dietary supplement industry, too, has matured in the past few decades and is now showing signs of huge growth, as products are available online, at convenience stores, in grocery stores and through health care professionals. The issues associated with food fortification apply here, as well, and the health promises promulgated through advertising rarely deliver, as supplemental nutrients cannot take the place of a diverse whole foods diet. With professional guidance, they can help address nutritional gaps and support treatment of various health conditions. With professional guidance, supplements can address nutritional gaps and help manage various health conditions.

## Eating for Health™ Food Groups

Eating for Health™ is described as a system rather than a diet — a framework of principles designed for developing a balanced eating approach and lifestyle — so its food groups are defined mainly by quality criteria. Therefore, recommended protein foods include those from plants as well as from animals and their by-products. Animal foods are best when as organic as possible and raised on species-appropri-

ate foods, free of growth hormones, antibiotics, and additives. Organic sources are also recommended for plant-based proteins. This encompasses grass and pasture for sourcing animal protein, including that for laying hens. Regarding fish, it is recommended that they be obtained through sustainable wild capture rather than aquaculture. Proper preparation helps maximize their nutritional value. This means using grass or pasture for animal protein (including laying hens) and recommending that fish come from sustainable wild catches, not farms.

Recommended fats are primarily those found in whole foods, such as olives, avocados, nuts and seeds, and organic animal sources. The addition of fats and oils separately is also fine, provided they are minimally processed and of the highest quality, especially for the polyunsaturated fats, whose structures render them extremely sensitive to heat and light. Fats of all types — saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated — all have health benefits, providing they are consumed according to one's needs at any given time, and with attention paid to existing health conditions. Organically grown is of extreme importance, due to genetic modification and heavy pesticide use in conventional varieties. Environmental toxins build up in the fatty tissues of food plants and animals, reaching higher concentrations in top-level animals. Unprocessed saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated fats can be included in the diet as appropriate to an individual's needs and health conditions.

The same principles apply to carbohydrate foods, since choosing organic grains, fresh vegetables and fruits always ensures higher levels of nutrients and lower levels of contaminants than do conventional varieties (23, 24). However, purchasing as locally as possible, organic, or not, often provides extremely important levels of nutrients, due to freshness (25). **Eating for Health™** carbohydrate foods include non-starchy vegetables, whole fruits and fresh fruit juices and unrefined starches; whole grains and root and tuber vegetables. Because the plant world provides the highest concentration of anti-inflammatory nutrients, consuming broths from vegetables, and fresh juices or smoothies from both vegetables and fruits, on a regular basis, is a recommended way to obtain

an abundance of this goodness. However, because of its reliance on scientific research as the guiding principle in its food recommendations, **Eating for Health™** also places great emphasis on keeping the gut's bacteria plentiful and balanced as a means of providing the conditions necessary for obtaining the most benefit from these plant compounds (26), which leads us to our next group.

## Booster Foods

This is a term coined by Dr. Bauman to describe nutrient-dense foods, condiments, and food supplements that can give a strong nutritional boost to our everyday diets. Given the increased nutrition needs for those recovering from a standard American diet, experiencing ongoing stress or toxicity, or who are recovering from illness, this is a concept that we hope to see more of in the research literature as the field of nutrition science progresses. Adding booster foods to the diet is a better way to provide an energy boost to one's day, without having to rely on stimulants, such as sugar and caffeine. Among the booster foods are lacto-fermented foods — vegetables, fruits, grains, and dairy — that provide valuable beneficial bacteria to our gastrointestinal tracts. These powerful modulators of digestive and immune function help us extract vitamins and minerals from our foods and neutralize anti-nutrient factors, such as phytates and oxalates, which prevent us from obtaining a food's full complement of nutrients (27).

Booster foods include herbs and spices, used as condiments or in teas. Gram for gram, they contain greater amounts of nourishing and anti-inflammatory phytonutrients than any other food source, though algae, such as spirulina, chlorella, and sea vegetables come remarkably close. These three are highly recommended — spirulina and chlorella in powder or pill form, and sea vegetables as tasty additions to broths, salads, and grain dishes. Other booster foods include nutritional yeast, bee pollen, fermented foods, condiments such as miso and vinegar, and a small one ounce piece of 70% dark chocolate or cocoa powder.

Booster foods provide the very nutrients often missing in action in the American food-supply — healing

micronutrients and phytonutrients. Adding these daily reduces the need for dietary supplements. Booster foods can easily and deliciously be part of one's diets, even that of very fussy eaters if they are not overpowering. As one widens his or her food choices, one's palate can also change to appreciate new flavors that are bitter, pungent, savory, and astringent.

## Beverages

The final **Eating for Health™** food category is beverages, which are sometimes not given as much attention. Yet with bodies that are approximately 70% water, beverages play a vital role in our health and vitality. The number one beverage is clean water, which often means filtered or from glass bottles. The use of plastic bottles for water is not recommended because of the potential for chemical leaching. Beverages also include black, green, and herbal teas; organic coffee (1 cup per day), broths, fresh diluted vegetable and fruit juices, and unpasteurized fermented drinks, such as kombucha and kvass.

## Diet Direction

One can use the **Eating for Health™** model to establish a **Diet Direction** in a simple and practical way. If one aspires to following a **Cleansing Diet**, emphasize foods from the outer rings of the model in abundance. This would mean increasing the quantity and quality of beverages to include purified water, fresh, diluted juices, mineral broths, and a variety of organic teas. The next category to use as the basis of one's food plan would be colorful carbohydrates as represented by fresh seasonal fruits, leafy vegetables, crunchy vegetables, starchy vegetables, and unrefined (gluten-free) grains. These health supportive beverages and plant foods could be further enhanced by the addition of booster foods, consisting of herbs and spices, algae and seaweed, nutritional yeast, and condiments such as raw apple cider vinegar, and miso. A cleansing diet should include some high-quality protein and fats, but mainly emphasize colorful, high-fiber, unrefined carbohydrates. A cleansing diet includes high-quality protein and fats in smaller amounts, prioritizing colorful, high-fiber, unrefined carbohydrates.

The reverse would be true for a **Building Diet**. For this direction, one would build a meal from the inside out, starting with high quality fats and protein, plentiful booster foods, fewer servings of unrefined starches and fruits, but unlimited amounts of leafy and crunchy vegetables. Beverages remain the same, with emphasis on vegetable rather than fruit juices.

A **Balancing Diet** direction provides a broad range of choices, providing macronutrient ratios in-between Cleansing and Building, but maintaining unlimited amounts of leafy and crunchy vegetables, which form the firm foundation of Eating for Health™ food choices.

## Commitment To Choice & Change

Change is the one constant in our lives. **Eating for Health™** teaches people to change for the better and improve their health, their metabolisms, brain function, and ability to self-heal. Cleaning up the diet by clearing out the debris in one's pantries, refrigerators, and medicine cabinets is a good start. Finding out how to shop for, prepare and enjoy healthy foods is the key that unlocks the door to renewed health and vitality. A step towards guiding a person to formulate a personalized cleansing, building or balancing diet of wellness is for them to work with a holistic nutrition professional to receive an in-depth assessment and analysis of their current eating habits, choices, and health issues. A nutrition professional can review and evaluate their diet, inform them about the latest scientific research, and advise on specific amounts and combinations of therapeutic foods, herbs, and nutrients to promote healing and help that engaged person integrate holistic self-care with allopathic medical care.

## Mindful Eating Keys

1. Slow down and allow yourself to find joy in being active in your learning and cooking experience.
2. Nutrition is a science. Cooking is an art. Learning to be well is a skill that ripens over time.
3. Open your mind and senses to receive current information, try new foods, new tastes, and new cultural influences.

4. The best food plan for you is the one that has staple foods you can easily digest and assimilate.
5. Eliminate common food sensitivities such as gluten, dairy, sugar, soy, corn, eggs, meat, and peanuts for a period of 2–4 weeks. This is an effective way to lower inflammation in the body. As you re-introduce foods one at a time, symptoms may return, warning you to refrain from eating the offending food.
6. Eat enough to be comfortable, but not stuffed. Eating to 90% fullness is a recipe for longevity.
7. Maintain a positive attitude. Align with others with positive values.
8. Stretch, move, and breathe deeply throughout the day.
9. Connect with your own true self to discern truth from falsity.
10. Connect with the source through service, spiritual practice, and love of life.

## Conclusion

You and your food choices are co-creators in the Eating for Health™ system. Allow yourself to create a delicious path to health and vitality through the goodness of whole foods nutrition, enjoyable physical movement and a sustained connection to community that encourages the cultivation of virtues and the activation of timeless values. Eating well daily, with gratitude and awareness, rather than stress or judgment, allows a person the freedom to make practical, non-dogmatic, food choices that will support a life of health, healing, happiness, and service. Eat in peace and rejoice that there is nourishing food to eat.

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