

It is said that food is information that influences your genes, hormones, immune system, brain chemistry, and gut flora. The DNA in our food literally communicates with our own DNA. What we eat can send our genes good information if we are eating whole fresh, unprocessed food as the main component of our diets.

Whole Vegetables and Fruits

Whole vegetables and fruits contain nutrients your body needs including vitamins, minerals, and fiber. They are excellent sources of energy providing carbohydrates. Eat a colorful variety from the rainbow spectrum! A reasonable goal would be 1 ½ - 2 pounds per day. It sounds like a lot, but is really about 4-5 servings of vegetables and 2-3 servings of fruit.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are best for optimal benefit, but frozen follow close behind. If you buy frozen or canned (in BPA free cans), watch out for added sugar.

Whole vegetables –

Carrots, beets (beet greens too), turnips (greens too) cucumber, broccoli, radishes, squash, mushroom, celery, asparagus, zucchini, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, pumpkin, tomatoes, eggplant, red, green, and yellow peppers, garlic, onions, jicama, sweet potatoes or yams. Limited amounts of white potatoes,

Leafy greens –

Spinach, kale, romaine lettuce, chard, collards, cabbage, watercress, spring mix, sea vegetables.

Whole fruits –

Olives, avocados, banana, mango, watermelon, apple, cantaloupe, strawberry, coconut, blackberries, raspberries, cranberries, blueberries, mulberries, pears, oranges, tangerines, grapefruit, nectarines, papaya, grapes, pineapple. Dried fruits can be good also but note serving sizes and if they contain added sugars.

When possible buy local produce as there is less time from farm to your table, which may preserve more nutrients. See page with the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen

Protein –

Protein from diverse sources – (preferably hormone/antibiotic/steroid free) chicken, turkey and other meats from animals, eggs. Fresh fish such as wild salmon, (sockeye OK in cans), tilapia, mackerel, flounder, sardines, herring. Other seafood – shrimp, oysters, scallops.

Beans/legumes

Dried beans/legumes are best – that you prepare and cook yourself. If using canned, then BPA-free is preferred. Legumes that are rich in protein include kidney beans, black beans, chickpeas, navy beans, lentils, pinto beans, fava beans, lima beans, snap beans, chana dal, peas, snowpeas, and pigeon peas. Peanuts are also considered to

be legumes (if using peanut butter, choose the kind without added sugars – what may be labeled as “natural”)

Healthy Fats –

Nuts and seeds provide protein as well as fats. Eating nuts/seeds and legumes on the same day helps to round out the protein for the day.

Healthy fats from nut sources - almond, walnut, pecans, macadamia, cashews (raw is best, followed by dry roasted, without added oils)

Healthy fats from seed sources – flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds, chia seeds, hemp seeds

Healthy oils – extra virgin oil and seed oils sesame, flax, grapeseed, coconut

A teaspoon of cod liver oil or 1-2 teaspoons of fish oil provides EPA and DHA, fatty acids that are excellent for you.

Avoid these options

Large amounts of sugar, especially refined sugars, artificial sugars, artificial sweeteners, High fructose corn syrup (found in most sodas, ice cream, many breads, some catsups, salad dressings, syrups, and other foods). Read labels carefully

White flour and limit processed packaged foods or preservatives

Minimize soy products – you may see in chips, crackers, etc.

Gluten and wheat- it is hard to estimate but potentially up to 50% of individuals are at least mildly (if not moderately or severely) gluten intolerant but undiagnosed in addition to the 1% of celiac disease patients. Wheat is highly genetically modified in the United States and this may have contributed to the increase in allergies and intolerance.

Dairy- intolerance to casein and lactose in cows milk products can cause or aggravate GI and respiratory problems.

Minimize processed meats like deli meats, bacon, hot dogs, and precooked sausage

Better Options

Natural options such as raw honey, maple syrup, stevia

Eat fresh raw fruits, sun-dried fruits and berries, fruit sorbet, smoothies, and honey. Choose dark chocolate with at least 85% cocoa. Try a smoothie with fruits and vegetables such as mango, spinach, Kale, banana with water or coconut water.

Other tips

Drink 10-12 cups of water daily. May add a fresh lemon or lime juice if desired

Milk substitutions with good source of calcium include almond milk, coconut milk, flax milk, or rice milk (typically have calcium added).

Use the Fooducate free app (<http://www.fooducate.com/>) to browse their extensive database to find the healthiest food options

The Dirty Dozen & The Clean 15! Learn the top 12 most contaminated and sprayed fruits and veggies, and also learn the safest 15 to eat! Which foods are best to buy organic? Money saving produce tips here: <http://youtu.be/dXy3v0oXH2U>.

Here is the dirty dozen and the top 12 fruits and veggies purchase organic if you can. If not, rinse well.

Dirty Dozen:

Apples
Celery
Tomatoes
Cucumbers
Grapes
Nectarines
Peaches
Potatoes
Spinach and all green leafy veggies
Strawberries
Blueberries
Sweet Bell Peppers

Also: Green beans and kale are moving up on the most sprayed list as well. Here are the Clean 15, and these are the fruits and veggies that you can eat conventionally because they are not sprayed as heavily with pesticides.

Clean 15:

Onions
Avocado
Sweet Corn (watch for GMO)
Pineapple
Mango
Sweet Peas
Eggplant
Cauliflower
Asparagus
Kiwi
Cabbage
Watermelon
Grapefruit
Sweet Potatoes
Honeydew Melon