



David Sandstrom ND, CNC

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FOOD

# Forward

Thank you for putting enough trust in me to subscribe to my blog, and for giving me enough of your time to download, and read this e-book. I'm going to do my best to exceed your expectations.

If you're overwhelmed with the information overload found on the Internet, believe me when I say, I feel your pain. With this e-book, it's my desire to distill useful and applicable information down into practical, bite-size pieces. Yes, the pun was intended.

You should be able to implement these healthy eating tips and experience tangible benefits in a very short period of time.

Hippocrates said: "Let your food be your medicine and let your kitchen be your medicine cabinet."

The food we eat is foundational to a healthy lifestyle. The nutrients we get from our food are essential for efficient bodily function. The right foods will enhance bodily function. The wrong foods will inhibit efficient function.

Most of us eat at least three times a day, every day. Therefore, food truly is powerful medicine. The choices we make in this arena will affect every aspect of our lives.

Countless New Year's resolutions center around eating better and losing weight. I say great. However, we must understand that we don't lose weight in order to get healthy; we get healthy in order to lose weight. It is a healthy lifestyle that will bring about weight loss, if weight loss is necessary. And, we must remember, food is foundational to a healthy lifestyle.

Implement these Top Ten Tips for Healthy Eating and you'll be well on your way to building a solid foundation to your natural health lifestyle.

Yours in Health,

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## TIP # 1



# Eat Food As Close To Its God-Given Natural Form As Possible



The more man gets his hands on our food supply, the less healthy it is for us. Americans consume upwards of 90 percent of their nutrients as processed food. This is a very unhealthy practice.

Food processing takes on many forms. Food suppliers add chemical coloring, artificial flavoring, anti-caking agents, texturing agents, chemical preservatives and

more to our food. They may heat it, grind it, pulverize it, compact it or puff it up. Chemical cleaning agents from processing machines make it into our food as well.

Sometimes they're trying to make it taste or look better. Other times they're trying to make it last longer. Because most big food suppliers are more concerned with next-quarters profits than consumer health, most of the time they're trying to make that so-called "food" cheaper or less expensive.

Here are some broad guidelines to follow when selecting animal products:

Beef and dairy should be pastured, and grass-fed. Poultry should be free-range, and organic. Fish should be wild caught, not farm-raised. Farm-raised fish are fed an unnatural diet and often live in sewer-like conditions. Tilapia is almost always farm-raised and is among the lowest-quality fish you can buy.

When you go to the grocery store, use some common sense and ask yourself: "What kind of processing may have gone into this product?" If it's in a box or a package, it's always suspect.

Read ingredients, and look for minimal processing. A good rule of thumb is that if something has more than five or six ingredients, it's best avoided. Instead of buying hamburger, buy steaks and have the meat department grind it for you. Instead of frozen breakfast sausage, buy pork chops at the meat counter. Instead of breakfast cereal, buy whole grains such as wheat berries or amaranth and cook them yourself as you would rice.

The same goes for legumes such as beans and peas. Instead of buying a can, purchase them uncooked, and cook them yourself. Add flavoring to suit your taste. Instead of a can of broth, talk to your butcher about purchasing bones and make the broth yourself. This way you control what ingredients go in. Instead of a fruit

roll-up, buy fresh fruit (organic, local and in-season is best). Instead of potato chips, buy potatoes and bake them yourself.

Many legumes, most grains, and all meat should be cooked. However, when it comes to fruits and vegetables, raw is almost always best. When food is exposed to temperatures above 115 degrees fahrenheit, critical digestive enzymes are destroyed, and nutrients are lost. If you've never had a raw ear of corn, or raw asparagus, you're in for a taste treat. Raw foods are bursting with flavors many people never knew existed.

I know this may sound expensive, and in some cases it is more expensive. However, keep in mind that processed food is very expensive for the amount, and for the nutritional value, we receive. We pay for someone else to prepare that food.

Many times, buying food in its unadulterated form can be cheaper in the long run, especially if you can find a local farmer's market.

Another way to think of the up-front investment in healthy food is you can either pay now ... or you can pay later in the form of chronic health problems and mounting medical bills.

## TIP #2



# Prepare Your Meals In Advance



We all have busy lives. When we get busy, it's easy to settle for a trip to the drive through or a frozen, microwave dinner instead of something healthier. The defense against this trap is to have some healthy meals prepared in advance.

I like to take some time on the weekends to shop and prepare meals for a couple of days in advance. We get the kids involved and enjoy some family time in the process. It can actually be a lot of fun.

Sometimes we'll make a soup or a chili. Other times we'll make some gluten free pancakes and keep them in the frig for two or three days, ready to go. We do the same with boiled eggs. I like to cook up a big batch of minimally processed, uncured bacon on Sunday and eat it over the next few days.

There are a handful of kitchen tools that help facilitate this process. Glass Mason jars for food storage are a must. We have a [Tilia FoodSaver vacuum sealer](#) that can remove the air from the Mason jar and seal the lid. This helps keep our prepared food fresh longer. I also use the vacuum sealer to seal food in plastic, but I wrap the food in parchment paper so as not to leach chemicals from the plastic into the food. Never cook food in plastic either.

A descent food processor is very handy. The slow cooker or crockpot is a great time saver as well. Throw a whole chicken in the crockpot in the morning along with a little water, a few potatoes, some carrots, celery and onions and “voila”... a great dinner is waiting for you to enjoy that evening. With a little ingenuity you'll not only eat healthier, but you'll save time and money in the process.

## TIP #3



# Be Proactive When Going Out



This tip is related to Tip #2. We've all been there: We get invited to a party, and we just know there's going to be a plethora of junk food challenging our resolve. Or maybe you're simply going over a friend's house for dinner. Everyone wants to fit in (and not insult the host). There's a strong pull and no small amount of temptation to cave in and forget our healthy eating boundaries.

The best defense against this is to have a healthy snack before we leave the house. It's amazing how much easier it is to just say "no" to those potato chips and Cheetos when we're not famished. It's also easier to at least limit our portions of foods we otherwise would not choose to eat.

Another proactive step we can take is to offer to bring a dish. This way we can exercise more control over what's being served. But if we only eat what we've brought, we're likely to be labeled a zealot. Be social and indulge with the others, but you'll find it much easier to make better choices and limit portion sizes when you've eaten something already and are not starving.

Be intentional: Remember how good you feel when you eat the kind of food that nourishes and fuels your body. Also remember how lousy you feel when you eat junk. With a little planning, you can be the one on the offense and not on the defense.

## TIP #4



# Consume Healthy Fats



Fat has gotten a really bad rap from food faddism fueled by misguided science. This began in the 1970s and continues through today.

We've all heard that a low-fat diet is the healthiest way to eat. Proponents have argued that we can reduce our risk of heart disease and stroke if we follow a low-fat regimen. If that were true, wouldn't we see people getting healthier by now?

Heart disease has continued to rise at an alarming rates despite many Americans following these low-fat recommendations.

There's more than meets the eyes, ears and stomachs when it comes to consuming fats. Sure, there are fats we should avoid: namely hydrogenated oils and the so-called trans fats. These fats are highly processed and don't meet our first recommendation to consume food as close to its God-given, natural form as possible.

At all costs, stay away from margarine and any other form of butter substitute. I don't care if you "can't believe its not butter," or how beautiful the farm photo is on the package. Just say "no!" These highly processed vegetable oils are extraordinarily harmful to your health. Use real butter instead, from pastured and grass-fed cows.

Healthy fats include fats from: olive oil, coconut oil, avocados, nut and seeds and pastured, grass-fed animals. This includes dairy – as long as it's not from a factory-farmed cow.

A cow is a ruminant animal, meaning that they have multiple chambers to their stomachs where the food they eat is properly fermented and digested. A cow's natural diet is green grasses from the pasture. A cow in the wild would eat grass, clovers and the like. They would not consume grains.

All factory-farmed cows are fed grains in the form of corn-based feed. This disrupts the cow's natural digestive processes and makes their systems too acidic. It also all but eliminates the important fat called CLA (conjugated linoleic acid). All this makes the fat from grain-fed dairy or beef unhealthy for us.

Studies have also shown that when cows are switched from a grain-based to a natural grass-fed diet, the E.coli counts in their gut bacteria drop by 1,000-fold in less than a week.

Don't be afraid of beef or dairy if it's from healthy, free range, pastured, grass-fed and grass-finished cows. This especially includes butter. We like to use the brand Kerry Gold in our house.

Similar principles apply to poultry. Poultry should be free-range, pastured and fed a natural diet. A chicken is an omnivore, meaning in the wild they would consume both animal, and vegetable-based sources. A chicken will do well on a diet of worms and bugs as well as grains and vegetables. As long as your poultry is raised in this manner, feel free to enjoy it.



# Avoid Hidden Sugar



Know your glycemic index. A food's glycemic index is a measure of how easily that food will raise glucose (sugar) levels in the blood. We all need to keep our blood sugar at stable levels.

Glucose is important because the body uses it for energy. However, the body needs to keep our glucose levels within a surprisingly narrow range. When we consume sugary foods, we spike our blood sugar levels. The body must respond by re-

leasing insulin. Consistently high levels of insulin will cause all kinds of physical problems including obesity and type 2 diabetes.

This is another good reason to avoid processed foods, which are often loaded with sugar and sodium. However, we can also eat foods in their natural form and still have problems with blood sugar if we're not aware of their glycemic index.

Here, we must begin to understand carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are a measure of how much sugar is in our food. Carbohydrates come in two forms: simple and complex. Simple carbs are simple in their chemical makeup and, as such, the body can more easily break them down during digestion. This results in quicker absorption. This is why they tend to spike blood sugar more easily. When we consume simple carbohydrates, it is quite easy for our blood sugar levels to rise.

Natural simple carbs include carbohydrate from fruit, honey, maple syrup, molasses and the like. Processed simple carbs come from: high-fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, cane sugar, brown sugar, agave nectar, etc.

Whether from natural or processed sources, too much sugar is harmful. We all know that candy and doughnuts are full of sugar. But many foods that may sound healthy are full of sugar as well. Healthy-sounding foods typically high in sugar include: flavored yogurt, barbeque sauce (and most marinades), salad dressings, dried fruit, fruit juice, most snack bars, breakfast cereals, muffins and pastries and flavored vitamin water.

Another form of sugar that many people may not be aware of is grain. All grains are high in complex carbohydrate. Although they take a little longer for the body to break them down, they also quickly raise blood sugar levels.

A good rule of thumb is to think of grains the same way we think of sugar, because they behave much the same way in the body. Yes, white flour is more processed and turns to sugar more easily. But don't think for a minute that because you're eating whole-grain bread that it doesn't quickly turn into glucose and spike blood sugar levels. It most certainly does.

Another source of sugar is root vegetables. Potatoes, beets, turnips and carrots are all very high in sugar. This is especially true if they are used for juicing. Sure, they add some sweetness, but that sweetness comes at a cost to our blood sugar levels.

One final important point: Forget chemical sugar substitutes such as Splenda, NutraSweet, saccharin and the like. They are made in a laboratory, not natural and very harmful. Even stevia should be avoided because its sweetness is too intense, which only serves to keep your craving for sugar up.

Limiting our sugar intake is one of the primary ways we can improve our eating to improve our health.



# Practice Smart Hydration



Except for air, water is our most important nutrient. We can go for weeks without food, but we can only survive for a few days without water.

Let's start off with talking about water quality. City water in the United States is mostly free from bacteria and parasites. However, the chlorine used to disinfect

the water is very harmful. So adding chlorine to the city water supply is a very good idea. Not removing it before we drink it is a very bad idea.

You can remove a great deal of chlorine with an inexpensive charcoal filter attached to your kitchen faucet. You can do the same with your shower head. However, the best way to filter your city water is with a whole-house reverse-osmosis (RO) filter. We use an under-sink RO system we bought from [www.freedrinkingwater.com](http://www.freedrinkingwater.com).

All that said, I don't think drinking even RO-filtered water meets the ideal. The best source of drinking water is a pure spring water. Unfortunately, most spring water comes in BPA-tainted plastic bottles. If you can find spring water bottled in glass, that's probably as good as it's going to get. A great source of spring water in glass is Mountain Valley Spring Water. If you live in the Southeast, they'll deliver 5-gallon glass bottles to your house.

Now let's talk about how to consume water. A good rule of thumb is to drink  $\frac{1}{2}$  your body weight in ounces per day. In other words, if you weigh 140 pounds, you should drink 70 ounces of water in a day. Simple enough, right? Here's the tricky part. Our bodies can only absorb about 1 ounce every five minutes or 2 ounces every 10 minutes. So, we can't just chug-a-lug a couple of big glasses anytime we feel like and expect our hydration needs to be met. If we do so, we'll just pee what our body can't readily utilize out a few minutes later. We must sip water all day long in order to hydrate well.

Here are my recommendations for hydrating properly:

There are times, when our hydration needs are high, that our ability to absorb water more quickly is enhanced. These include: sweating during an intense work-

out, working outside in the yard, even lounging by the pool on a hot summer day. In these cases, feel free to drink at whatever rate feels comfortable and natural.

What might not be as obvious is when we get up in the morning. After a full night's sleep, our bodies have been hard at work repairing and detoxifying from the day before. We have an added hydration need in order to help flush toxins out when we first wake up. In addition, most of us haven't had anything to drink since before we went to bed the night before. So, go ahead and chug-a-lug a couple of glasses of water when you first wake up after you've brushed your teeth. Once you do this for a week or so, you'll really notice how thirsty you are if you don't get those couple of glasses in the morning.

Large amounts of water are also needed in the small intestine in order to properly digest food. However, large amounts of water during the meal will dilute our digestive enzymes. So, the best practice is to drink a full 8-ounce glass of water 20 minutes before meals. This way, the water will be in the small intestine where it needs to be when the food arrives. This will enhance digestion rather than dilute it. During the meal, avoid drinking altogether. If you must have some water, sip no more than a couple of ounces to help wash things down. Wait an hour or so after meals before resuming your regular sipping of water throughout the day.

Notice I've been talking about water, not soda, or coffee or tea. Nothing hydrates like pure water. In fact, caffeine is a diuretic and will deplete our water stores. So, don't count coffee or tea as part of your water intake.

## TIP #7



# Eat Natural And Organic When Possible



Prior to WWII, all farmers were organic. They didn't call it "organic," they just called it "farming." After the war, however, chemical pesticides and fertilizers (their constituents had been developed for chemical warfare) really took over the agriculture sector. In the 1950s, Dow Chemicals came up with the slogan, "Better living through chemicals," and the rest, as they say, is history.

The trouble is, no one stopped to ask what kind of an effect this widespread use of chemicals would have on our bodies and our brains. Since that time, we've begun using chemicals to kill weeds and fungi as well as pests.

The most recent "advancement" in agriculture is to genetically modify seeds so that they grow into plants resistant to the chemicals farmers want to spray on fields to suppress weeds. This is especially true of our soybean and corn crops, about 90 percent of which are now genetically modified. Again, is anyone asking the question: "What effect will this kind of a science experiment have on the population?" A few, but not many.

I say, stick to healthy eating Tip #1: Eat food as close to its God-given, natural form as possible. This means eating organic whenever we can, and avoiding GMOs at all cost. Remember, you can pay the farmer now ... or you can pay the doctor later.

Organic foods are not grown with chemical herbicides, pesticides or fungicides. Sewage sludge is not permitted as fertilizer, nor is genetic modification allowed. And, in the case of livestock, routine use of antibiotics or growth hormones is disallowed.

I know eating organic can seem expensive. One way to keep the cost down is by joining or starting an organic food coop. Global Organics in Sarasota, Florida, supports organic produce coops and will ship to most addresses in the southeast. With a little research, I'm sure you can find one in your area. It's also a great way to meet like-minded people. You can also save money by going in on purchases and buying in bulk.

Another way to reduce the cost of eating healthy is to "grow your own" and start an organic garden. Better yet, get a few of your neighbors to grow gardens as well and exchange food with them – or start a community garden together.

Another way to eat organic is to buy frozen. Whole Foods and Trader Joe's both have a fairly good variety of frozen organic fruits and vegetables reasonably priced. Produce that has been flash frozen right after harvest often retains higher nutrient value than that which has been fresh picked, then shipped to supermarkets clear across the country.

When you can't do organic (and, by the way, nobody can eat 100 percent organic, 100 percent of the time), buy from a local, enlightened farmer. Many small farmers are doing things right; they just don't desire to go through the hassle and expense of getting organically certified through the USDA. And since many of these farmers sell directly to customer, they don't feel they have to.



# Unwind Before Meals



It's crucial to be in the right frame of mind in order to properly digest our meals, and to ingest the nutrients from our food. Any form of mental/emotional stress is detrimental to our assimilation of nutrients.

Our autonomic nervous systems have two sides: “fight or flight” and “rest and digest.” When we’re in “fight-or-flight” mode, our bodies delay non-urgent activities to address the more urgent task of getting us out of danger.

Digestion is not a priority when we're running for our lives from a wild animal (or arguing with our kids). Getting blood flow to our large muscle groups and pumping out stress hormones such as cortisol, and adrenalin are far more important priorities when our stress response is active.

Even though most of us aren't running from lions these days, the body behaves much the same way when we're angry or stressed. If you've just had a fight with your spouse, it's best to wait until you've calmed down before you eat. If you've had a particularly stressful day at work or a stressful drive home, "chillax" a little before you eat.

One way to get in the right frame of mind before a meal is to pray or meditate. We especially want to experience gratitude. We cannot be angry and grateful at the same time. Having an attitude of gratitude is helpful anytime, but especially before we sit down to eat.

Another thing to do is turn off the television, especially if you're watching the news. The news media are experts at getting us wound up. It's good for ratings, but not good for our health, and especially not good for digestion. When you're about to eat, just say "no" to television.

Put down the cell phone. Forget social media. No checking emails. No text messaging. If possible, engage in pleasant conversation with another human being. Look them in the eye. Ask them about their day. At our house, we like to ask each family member: "What was the best thing that happened to you today?"



# Practice Intermittent Fasting



Nature speaks to the idea that there is an ebb and flow to all creation. The sun rises; the sun sets. The seasons come; the seasons go. The tide comes in; the tide goes out. The waves crash on the shore; they gently recede. Our bodies are made to embrace this same type of ebb and flow. We are to push into stress, and then pull back. Intermittent fasting fits very nicely into this model. There's a time for plenty, and a time for fasting.

Research is showing that intermittent fasting is extremely healthy. It's easy to see why. There's no health-building practice that gives us more bang for the buck. By fasting, we unload the body from the chore of digestion. Most people experience an increased sense of calm and more peaceful thoughts. This nourishes the soul. In addition, we are to fast for spiritual reasons as well. When we're fasting, it's a great time to spend some extra time in prayer. Fasting clears out the static between God and us, and allows us to hear from him more clearly. So, fasting benefits our bodies, our souls and our spirits. There is no other health-building practice that offers that kind of utility.

It's very much a health-building practice to abstain from food occasionally. For obvious reasons, our bodies must make digesting the food a priority. The body has no choice but to spend a great deal of available metabolic energy in this process. By unloading the chore of digestion, we facilitate other important bodily functions such as: immune regulation, detoxification and cellular repair.

The reason our first meal of the day is called "break-fast" is we're breaking our daily fast. You can practice daily fasting by skipping breakfast and making your first meal of the day around lunchtime, then eating another full meal again in the mid afternoon and again at dinner. This way you keep your 24-hour food intake the same.

You're just stretching the amount of time you go without eating. If you stop eating around 6 p.m. the day before and resume eating around noon, that's 18 hours every day without food. Many people find this type of intermittent fasting quite useful. If you're more adventurous, you can also choose to fast one day per week, or a couple of days per month.

Most people find that consuming a protein shake every few hours during a fast helpful. It assists with detoxification. Some people can benefit greatly from juicing

vegetables. If you choose this route, focus on green vegetables such as cucumbers, celery and spinach. Go easy on the root vegetables, such as carrots and beets, because they can easily spike your blood sugar.

A few words of caution:

- **Children should never fast.** A growing child needs to stay on a regular eating schedule. They especially need to keep up their protein and fat intake.
- **Consume extra fluids when fasting.** The regular guidelines for water consumption (1/2 body weight in fluid ounces per day) do not apply when fasting. Drink extra water during a fast.
- **Avoid water-only fasting.** For anything other than the 18-hour daily fast, I do not recommend water only. The body uses up nutrients in order to accomplish phase 1 and phase 2 liver detoxification. A water-only fast challenges our nutrient stores. Since most people are struggling to get enough nutrients into their systems, water-only fasting is not recommended.
- **Fasting is a form of stress,** and can engage our fight-or-flight reflex. If you have adrenal fatigue and the resultant low daily cortisol, you will find fasting challenging. If this is the case, you must go slow and enlist the advise of a competent healthcare practitioner experienced with intermittent fasting.

I struggled with including this tip here. This book is designed to be a starter book for healthy living. Fasting is a little more toward the advanced level. However, I've included it here because it's the only practice I'm aware of that can bene-

fit the whole person –body, mind, and spirit – simultaneously. One truly receives a lot of “bang for the buck” with fasting.



# Have Fun



Lastly, I want to remind you to have fun along the way. Once you implement these practices, they'll become second nature, and they won't feel like work. Shopping, preparing food in advance, even occasional fasting, will become more of a ritual. You won't even think about it. It'll just be the way you do things.

Being overly strict with your eating will create unnecessary stress. Embracing a healthy way of life is a marathon, not a sprint. Don't freak out if you slip up on a meal or two. You haven't completely blown it and ruined months of effort with a

single meal, or even from a couple of days binging on junk food. Just get back to your regular way of eating as soon as possible.

In fact, I would suggest that an occasional cheat is a good thing. It serves to help keep our sanity and sense of humor throughout the process. If you love chocolate cake, go ahead and enjoy it once and a while.

I enjoy ice cream. A couple of times a month or so, I have a big bowl with hot fudge and bananas. This doesn't mean I'm a bad person or that I've done something so off the charts that I may as well give up.

Quite the contrary is true. I know I eat well most of the time. This way, I'm not holding myself to some unrealistic, rigid, stress-producing standard. This would be counterproductive to my health.

So, don't forget to have fun ... and bon appet

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