



THE POWER OF NUTRITION

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Welcome to your comprehensive guide to a healthier and more balanced lifestyle through the power of nutrition.

Our modern lives are often filled with unhealthy food choices and habits that can lead to a variety of health problems, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. In this ebook, we will explore essential principles for optimizing your nutrition, nurturing your body, and supporting a strong foundation for overall well-being.

The journey to better health begins with understanding the importance of balanced meals, proper hydration, the role of whole food protein sources in supporting muscle growth and repair, the importance of colorful fruits and vegetables, the impact of gut health and eating seasonally and according to our circadian rhythms on our overall well-being.

Throughout this ebook, you'll find practical tips and guidelines for incorporating these principles into your daily life. From crafting the perfect breakfast to designing a diverse and delicious meal plan, we'll provide the tools and knowledge you need to make informed decisions about your nutrition. Our aim is to empower you to take control of your health and well-being, one meal at a time.

Let's get started on the path to optimal health and well-being together.

Breakfast



A well-balanced breakfast is crucial in setting the foundation for healthy eating habits throughout the day. By focusing on a meal high in protein, essential fats, and fiber, you can prevent sugar cravings and maintain consistent energy levels until your next mealtime. Quick release carbohydrates, like sugary cereals, and beige foods that contain a high amount of saturated fat and sugar together, will not only leave your body feeling empty once the sugar-high wears off, but you're also setting yourself up to eat like that for the remainder of your day! A high protein breakfast it's like "filling your gas tank before a road trip".



Hydration for health and performance

Hydration is crucial in maintaining overall health and well-being. Staying hydrated to maintain homeostasis in the body is particularly important during physical exertion. Exercise is a stressor all on its own, so if you add dehydration, your body has to work in overdrive to maintain fluid balance, optimal performance, and safe bodily functions. Proper hydration before, during, and after a workout can enhance performance during the activity, protect your organ systems, and improve your recovery following a challenging session. Optimal hydration is also essential for brain health and function, proper hydration can improve concentration, memory, and reaction time.

The importance of protein



Protein is an important nutrient for everyone, not just athletes. That doesn't mean you need to start drinking protein shakes every day. Most people can get the protein that they need from a healthy and balanced diet. Here's why protein is important, how much protein you need each day, and some great protein-rich foods.

Why is protein important?

Humans can't survive without all nine essential amino acids. Protein is essential to building bones, and body tissues, such as muscles, but protein does much more than that. Protein participates in practically every process of a cell. It plays a part in metabolic reactions, immune response, protein provides a source of energy, assists in cellular repair, form blood cells, and more.

How much protein do you need?

Protein provides the same energy density as carbohydrates. However, the body does not store proteins in the same way it stores carbohydrates and fats. This means that you need to consume protein everyday. There are different opinions about just how much protein you need each day. However, this is due in part to the number of things that affect how much protein your body needs.

The amount of energy your body uses, your age, sex, body weight, activity levels, health conditions, and a number of other factors influence how much protein you need. If you're an athlete, or you do strengthening exercise every day, you may need more protein than the average recommendation. In general, consuming at least 30g of protein from whole foods (minimally processed/refined, free from additives/artificial substances) at each meal supports muscle growth and repair, stabilizes blood sugar levels, and enhances feelings of fullness.

Whole food sources of protein, including oily fish, lean meats, and plant-based options like beans, lentils, and tofu, provide a nutrient-dense alternative to processed options. Prioritizing quality protein sources, such as wild-caught fish, free-range poultry, and grass-fed meats, bio tofu can offer additional health benefits like increased omega-3 fatty acids and reduced exposure to antibiotics or hormones.

Fruits and vegetables



Fruits and vegetables are a good source of vitamins and minerals, including folate, vitamin C and potassium. They're an excellent source of dietary fibre, which can help to maintain a healthy gut and prevent constipation and other digestion problems. Consuming a diverse range of colorful vegetables and fruits provides essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants for optimal health. Try to eat at least 5 portions of vegetables and fruits daily. Additionally, include a mix of red, orange, yellow, and purple produce to ensure a broad spectrum of nutrients.

To get the best health benefits:

- *Eat fresh fruit and vegetables as soon as possible rather than storing for a long time, or use frozen instead*
- *Don't overcook*
- *Avoid leaving any vegetables open to the air, light or heat if they have been cut - always cover and chill them, don't soak because vitamins and minerals can dissolve*

Eat Seasonally



Seasonal eating is a sustainable way of changing your diet that has health advantages. This lifestyle encourages you to only eat fruits and vegetables that are in season for your geographic area, like eating pears in the fall, oranges in the winter, tomatoes in the summer, and so on. Foods that are in season taste better and offer greater nutritional value, the quality and freshness of in-season produce are better than out-of-season produce. Because demand for certain crops is high year-round, they are modified to grow in bulk and to resist disease, but these modifications take away some of their nutritious benefits. When fruits and vegetables are grown during their natural timeframe, they will grow and thrive without any harmful additives. And buying them can support local farmers and your community's economy.

Nature is wiser than we acknowledge and seasonal foods support season specific needs. After a long winter, the human body craves detoxification and longs to shed the extra weight of winter. Spring vegetables like spinach help to alkalize our bloodstream and energize us for the warmer months when we typically expend more energy being active. On a deeper level, eating in harmony with the cycles of nature connects us more deeply to the earth and fosters in us a respectful reverence for the food we eat. Getting in touch with the earth helps us get in touch with ourselves and our natural rhythms.

Circadian rhythm

A circadian diet is a meal plan designed to support the body's natural circadian rhythm, which is a 24-hour internal clock that regulates the sleep-wake cycle, hormone production, and other bodily functions. This diet is based on the idea that by eating at certain times of the day, we can optimise our metabolism and improve overall health.

"The circadian diet entails eating during specific times of the day, such as consuming most of your calories earlier in the day and limiting food intake in the evening. This aligns with the body's natural rhythm and can improve digestion, energy levels, and weight management. The diet also emphasizes nutrient-dense whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and healthy fats.

Some potential benefits are:

- 1. Improved weight management:** *Eating within a 12-hour window and avoiding late-night meals can improve weight loss efforts and help regulate appetite hormones.*
- 2. Better sleep:** *Aligning your eating patterns with your body's natural clock can improve sleep quality and duration.*
- 3.** *Reduced inflammation: Eating in sync with your circadian rhythm can help reduce inflammation levels and improve overall health.*

4. ***Improved metabolic health: Eating during the daytime and avoiding late-night meals can help regulate blood sugar levels and improve insulin sensitivity.***
5. ***Increased energy levels: Following a circadian diet can help regulate energy levels throughout the day, leading to improved productivity and overall well-being.***

The circadian diet emphasizes eating in alignment with the body's natural circadian rhythms, which regulate numerous physiological processes over a 24-hour cycle. This involves eating within a certain time window each day, typically 12 hours or less, and prioritizing nutrient-dense, whole foods to support optimal health and metabolism.

The diet is recommended for people who want to improve their overall health and well-being, as well as those who want to lose weight. However, it may not be suitable for individuals who have specific dietary requirements, such as those with medical conditions that require specific meal timings or nutrient restrictions. Pregnant and breastfeeding women should also consult with their healthcare provider before starting the diet. Also, individuals who are prone to disordered eating or have a history of eating disorders should approach the diet with caution and seek guidance from a healthcare and nutritionist.

Support your gut health

Gut health plays a vital role in overall wellness, as the gut microbiome influences immunity, digestion, mood regulation, and metabolic function. By integrating both prebiotic and probiotic foods into your daily nutritional plan, you can maintain a balanced gut microbiome that promotes optimal health.

Probiotic-rich foods, like kefir and yogurt, supply beneficial bacteria essential for a healthy gut. These microorganisms contribute to improved digestion and immune function while potentially preventing harmful bacteria from overpopulating the gut.

Prebiotic foods, such as onion, and bananas, contain indigestible fibers that serve as nourishment for the beneficial bacteria in the gut. These fibers support a thriving gut environment by promoting the growth of good bacteria.

To foster a healthy gut microbiome, incorporate a diverse range of plant-based foods in your diet, as these foods provide the nutrients and fibers necessary for the beneficial bacteria to thrive. Regularly consuming a mix of prebiotic and probiotic foods can contribute to improved digestion, enhanced immune function, and overall better health.



How to plan your meals



A well-rounded meal plan includes a variety of nutrient-dense, whole foods that provide a balance of macronutrients (protein, carbohydrates, and fats) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). By incorporating the principles outlined in this guide, you can create a meal plan that supports your overall health, fitness, and well-being. Consider your individual needs and preferences when designing your meal plan. A meal plan should not feel restrictive, instead, it should encourage you to enjoy and appreciate the many benefits of a balanced, nutrient-rich diet.

Now, let's see an example of delicious and nutrient-dense meals.

Omnivore:

Breakfast	Omelette: eggs, mushrooms, peppers, feta cheese wholemeal bread	Yoghurt with forest fruits, buckwheat flakes, honey	Smoothie: Milk Protein Berries Banana	Scrambled eggs, mushrooms, peppers, feta cheese wholemeal bread	Wholemeal bread with smoked salmon avocado, cucumber	Wholemeal bread, chicken, lettuce, mustard, parmesan	Wholemeal bread With smoked salmon, avocado, cucumber
Lunch	Wholemeal pasta, ground beef, grated cheese, boiled broccoli	Chicken, basmati rice, grilled vegetables	Lentil soup or salad, feta, wholemeal bread, olives	Beef or chicken burger 2 small potatoes, A choice of colourful salad	Peas Baby potatoes, carrot, feta cheese, olives	Fish Potatoes or sweet potatoes, rocket salad, spinach, kale	Rice with Prawns in red sauce Feta cheese, lettuce, tomato, cilantro
Dinner	Chicken with raw, black rice, grilled vegetables	Dakos with feta or cream cheese, tomato, olives	Grilled tuna or salmon, baby potatoes, brussels sprouts	Quinoa or bulgur with shrimps, avocado, vegetables Tahini dressing	Pasta salad with seafood mix, pepper, roasted carrots	Lean beef with raw black rice and asparagus	Chicken with sweet potatoes, beetroot

Vegetarian:

Breakfast	Omelette: eggs, mushrooms, peppers, feta cheese wholemeal bread	Yoghurt with forest fruits, buckwheat flakes, honey, flaxseed	Smoothie: Unsweetened oat or almond milk, pea protein, berries, banana, flaxseed	Scrambled eggs with mushrooms, peppers, feta cheese, wholemeal bread	Smoothie: unsweetened oat or almond milk, pea protein, berries, banana, flaxseed	Yoghurt with forest fruits, buckwheat flakes, honey, flaxseed	Smoothie: Unsweetened oat or almond milk, pea protein, pineapple, spinach, flaxseed
Lunch	Buddha bowl: quinoa, beluga lentils, arugula, baby spinach, sun-dried tomato, mustard sauce and honey	Quinoa bowl: quinoa, organic boiled eggs, tomato, cucumber, zucchini, peas	Chickpeas with basmati rice, spinach and olives	Pasta salad with tofu, sautéed broccoli, corn, sun-dried tomato	Stuffed with buckwheat or quinoa Feta cheese and green vegetables	Falafel with sautéed broccoli, avocado, sun-dried tomato	Whole wheat pasta with organic tofu, valerian salad
Dinner	Dakos with feta, tomato, olives	Quinoa with falafel, baby spinach, avocado, sun-dried tomatoes, capers	Pumpkin stuffed with buckwheat and feta cheese	Taboule: Bulgur, avocado, vegetables Tahini dressing	Dakos with feta, tomato, olives	Scrambled eggs with mushrooms, peppers, feta cheese Whole wheat bread	Quinoa with falafel, baby spinach, avocado, sun-dried tomatoes, capers

Vegan:

Breakfast	Pancakes: Oat flour, banana, pea protein, tahini	Organic soy yoghurt with berries, kiwi, buckwheat flakes, molasses, flaxseed	Smoothie: Unsweetened oat or almond milk, pea protein, berries, banana, flaxseed	Scrambled tofu with mushrooms, colorful peppers, dinkel bread	Smoothie: Unsweetened oat or almond milk, pea protein, berries, banana, flaxseed	Dinkel bread, hummus, tofu, tomato	Pancakes: Oatmeal, banana, pea protein, tahini
Lunch	Quinoa bowl: quinoa, red beans, coriander, tomatoes, walnut spinach. Dressing: balsamic vinegar, olive oil	Fava with roasted sweet potatoes and pumpkin seeds	Spaghetti Bolognese: wholemeal spaghetti, organic tofu and nutritional yeast	Black-eyed peas with lily, lemon and millet	Peas or okra or okra stewed, Tofu, fresh tomato sauce	Stuffed peppers with lentils and rice	Mousaka with soybeans
Dinner	Quinoa with falafel, baby spinach, avocado, sun-dried tomatoes	Dinkel bread, hummus, tofu, tomato	Pumpkin with chickpeas, tempeh, broccoli, dinkel bread	Taboule: Bulgur, avocado, vegetables, tahini dressing	Vegetable soup with tofu	Tofu with vegetables Wholemeal bread	Risotto with mushrooms and nutritional yeast

CONCLUSION

Starting your day with a well-balanced breakfast, staying hydrated, prioritizing protein from whole foods, embracing colorful fruits and vegetables that are in season, nurturing gut health, and hydrate your body properly.

By incorporating these strategies into your daily routine, you can create lasting habits that support your overall health, fitness, and well-being. With a holistic approach to nutrition, you'll be well on your way to achieving optimal health and enjoying the many benefits of a balanced, nutrient-rich diet.

Maintaining a healthy weight can help you reduce your risk of illnesses. It can also help you feel good about yourself and have more energy to do the things you love. It is important to make sure to eat enough calories to support your training. Your body will struggle to workout if you are not fueling it correctly. If you are not eating enough calories, you will not have the energy to train properly and if you are not eating the right types of foods, you will not be able to recover properly from your workouts. On the other hand, if you're eating too much of the wrong types of food you may feel sluggish during your workouts.

If you're looking to maintain your weight, you'll want to be consuming around the same amount of calories as you're burning a day and if you want to gain weight you'll want to eat more calories than you're burning and if you want to lose weight you'll want to eat less calories than you are burning.



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