Foods to Emphasize for Healing

For individuals with a diagnosis of atherosclerotic heart disease, peripheral vascular disease, cancer or chronic inflammatory illnesses, a plant-based diet is recommended. The following suggestions can help in gaining, and maintaining, health.

**Enjoy Fresh Raw or Steamed Vegetables:** The more colorful are best, especially leaves, sprouts, shoots, stalks and stems, flowers and seeds. Lightly steamed or fresh raw vegetables are preferred, but frozen is okay if they have not been processed with additives; do not add sugars, salt, cheese, preservatives or sauces.

**Enjoy Whole Fresh Fruits:** No juices. The more colorful the fruit the better, including all berries, apples, pears, melons, citrus oranges, grapefruits, kiwi and similar mildly sweet fruits. Minimize very sweet fruits like grapes, pineapple, figs, etc. Wash the fruit well and eat the entire fruit if possible, including the skin and usually the seeds. Fruit skins and seeds are packed with vital vitamins, phytonutrients and powerful antioxidants that are not common inside the sweeter flesh.

**Enjoy Beans, Peas and Legumes:** These high protein and high fiber foods are satisfying and healthy. This group includes most beans and legumes; lentils, pinto and kidney beans, Garbanzo or chickpeas, green peas, green beans, Chinese pea pods, sweet English peas, black-eyed peas, lima beans, and navy beans.

**Enjoy Grains:** Rice, oats, rye, wheat, corn, barley, triticale, sorghum, and millet are true cereals which are grasses. Amaranth, quinoa and buckwheat are pseudo-cereals which are broad-leaf plants or non-grasses.

**Nuts and Seeds, Sparingly:** Flax seeds, hemp seeds, sesame seeds, almonds, walnuts, pecans, pine nuts, hazelnuts, brazil-nuts, and peanuts, most fresh or dried nuts and seeds, without salt or added oils. If roasting, bake at lower temperatures for shorter periods. Nuts and seeds and nut butters are high fat and should be consumed in small amounts.

**Fresh Wild Fish, Sparingly:** Includes wild Alaskan salmon, mackerel, herring, cod, trout, catfish, and sardines; choose fresh or frozen, not canned and never farm-raised. Buy fish that have been tested to have low levels of mercury and other pollutants, if possible. No more than 2-3 oz. a week.

**Lean, Non-Grain Fed Meats, Sparingly:** Wild or free range turkey, chicken, pheasant, quail, Cornish hens, bison or buffalo, elk, venison, grass-fed beef and lamb. Serve skinless and well-trimmed of fat. No more than 2-3 oz. a week.

**Enjoy Herbs and Most Spices, Except Salt:** Ginger, cinnamon, turmeric, clove, anise, basil, oregano, rosemary, black and white peppers, nutmeg, paprika, red pepper, chile pepper, garlic, onion flakes. The list seems endless, but in general the more colorful, and the hotter or spicier the flavors, the better they are for your health. Many spices like turmeric, ginger, cinnamon and oregano have proven to be medicinal in their effects and are often prescribed by natural physicians.

**Enjoy Green and Brown Teas, and Many Herbal Drinks:** Green tea should be taken several times a day by most people since its health benefits seem endless. Brown tea appears safe and reasonably helpful for many people, as do many herbal drinks such as chamomile, spices like ginger, or herbal stimulants such as ginseng. Use the caffeine-free types if possible, especially if you have heart disease or high blood pressure.

**Remember:**

Eat 4 servings of fruits per day
Eat 5 servings of vegetables per day
Foods to Avoid to Reduce Inflammation and Insulin Resistance

**Avoid All Dairy Products:** Milk, cheeses, yogurt, milk powders and other products containing cream, butter, buttermilk, including cottage cheese and low or non-fat milk products. Try almond milk, it is surprisingly similar to the taste of cow's milk without the saturated fat and cholesterol.

**Avoid Fatty, Grain-Fed Meats or Farm-Raised Fish:** All choice or prime cuts of meat, and any grain-fed farm animals, including most beef, pork, lamb, duck, goose, sausages, hamburger, hot dogs, farm-raised salmon, tilapia, trout, catfish, perch, etc. Wild fish are okay, but may contain high levels of mercury and other pollutants.

**Avoid Most Cooking and Salad Oils:** Butter, all vegetable shortening, all margarines, all corn oils, safflower, peanut, canola, and other vegetable cooking and salad oils. One quarter cup of apple sauce can be a substitute for one quarter cup of oil. Bananas can be used for oil in baking recipes.

**Avoid All Fried Foods and Foods Cooked at High Temperatures:** Hamburgers, chicken, shrimp, french fries, onion rings; anything deep fried or pan fried, barbecued, charbroiled or grilled.

**Avoid Eggs:** Includes fresh and powdered eggs. Powdered eggs are especially damaging as the cholesterol in them has been oxidized. Avoid pancake mixes, bisquick and other products that contain powdered eggs.

**Avoid High Fructose Corn Syrup:** Includes most soft drinks and sodas, candies and snacks sweetened with High Fructose Corn Syrup, including many health food meal replacement bars and so-called diet drinks.

**Avoid Sugars and Sweets:** Avoid all artificial sweeteners and foods with them, containing aspartame, saccharin or sucralose. Try substituting Agave Nectar Syrup or Stevia liquid or powders.

**Avoid Refined/Processed Carbohydrates:** Pastries, pies, cakes, cookies, crackers and dip-chips, etc. These typically are white flour products with a high amount of added fat and sugar.

**Avoid Addictive Foods and Products:** No tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, or chewing tobacco. No alcohol drinks and products, including, beer, wine and whiskey or liquors. No other recreational drugs, legal or not.