

DASH DIET

***Lose Weight FAST! The Essential DASH Diet
Weight Loss Guide and Cookbook!***



By

By

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Introduction

The DASH Diet, currently named the healthiest diet in the US, is taking the world by storm, due to its simple, yet effective nature. The DASH diet is special because of its versatility; it can be used to achieve whatever end you are looking for. Looking to be healthier? The DASH diet can reduce your risk of heart disease and lower your blood pressure. Looking to lose some weight? The DASH diet is one of the most effective weight loss diets of the decade, and will easily supercharge your weight loss progress. No matter what your health goals are, the DASH diet can almost certainly fulfill them, which is what makes this diet one of the best diets currently out there.

Since you are reading this book I can assume that you're interested in one of these goals, whether it's to lose weight or to live a healthier life in general. The purpose, and reason why I wrote this book is to educate people like yourself and provide you with the best tools necessary to begin and conquer the DASH diet. The DASH diet is truly a diet that can change your life. Unlike other diets that require you to starve yourself or workout excessively, the DASH diet makes an effort to only slightly change your current lifestyle so that the diet is sustainable for the rest of your life, since eating healthier for a long period of time is the only true way to maintain true health. Unlike other diets, you won't feel restricted and hungry all the time, which is what makes the DASH diet work. When you're finished with the DASH diet you will feel better and you will be better.

The book contains two parts. The first is an all-inclusive guide that will provide with instructions and tips to learn the DASH diet. You will find all you need to know about beginning and maintaining the DASH diet, as well as detailed guides on what to eat and what not to eat. I will discuss the history, as well as the core fundamentals in the DASH philosophy. The second part of the book is a collection of recipes that I've personally tried which I believe will give you a smooth transition into the diet.

Overall I hope that this book can be your one stop shop resource to starting and learning how to live the DASH diet lifestyle.

Thanks again for downloading this book, I hope this book will give you the knowledge you need to start a healthier life!

PART ONE:

*Everything you need to know about
DASH*



Your Ultimate Guide to The DASH Diet

The DASH Diet – What it's All About?

The History Behind the DASH Diet

The DASH Diet is a revolutionary approach to eating. It's not so much of a diet, but a change of lifestyle geared towards making you a healthier and better individual.

During the past few years, The DASH Diet has been one of the most recommended diets for staying healthy. When DASH was originally created, its purpose was to treat high blood pressure. Hypertension was becoming a large issue in the medical industry, which created a demand for a diet that would work well to help treat these problems. DASH was an immediate success for treating blood pressure, but even though the diet has had great progress for treating medical problems, health organizations soon realized the hidden potential this diet also had for weight loss.

DASH has a long history, so I'll be brief. The diet originated during a series of dietary studies where researchers were trying to discover the best high blood pressure diet by testing out different combinations of foods. The DASH study began in 1993, and went on for 5 years, finally ending in 1997. The studies consisted of three diets, two experimental and one control group. The first experimental group consisted of a high fruit and vegetable diet, and the second group was the DASH diet. The DASH diet group was different from the fruit and veggie group because it also focused on low fat content and high protein and fiber levels. Instead of just eating fruit and vegetables, the DASH diet experiment had participants eating fish, chicken, whole grains, and meats. The Results looked like this:

Diet Group	Effect
Control Group	No Effect
Fruit and Vegetable Diet	Small Positive Effect
DASH Diet	Significant Blood Pressure Drop

Out of the three diets that were running through clinical trials, the DASH diet came out to be the most effective, and showed the most potential to lower blood pressure (11 systolic and 6 diastolic was the average). Researchers immediately studied why this diet was so effective compared to the others they tested. Once they realized the possibility of what they had found they were able to turn their observations into the DASH diet.

At the time the purpose of the research study was only to look at how diet effected blood and therefore didn't focus on weight loss very much. Since the diet was solely going after hypertension the original diet was high in starchy foods and refined grains. Since then, although the basics of the diet have remained the same, it has undergone somewhat of a shakeup. Along the way, research that is more recent has optimized the diet even further, showing even better results than the original research.

The new research has shown that by getting rid of the empty carbohydrates and adding more good lean fats as well as protein, blood pressure could still be improved while at the same time helping the dieter achieve massive weight loss. This is what made the diet such a successful and popular diet.

The letters in DASH stand for **Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension** since the original purpose of the diet was to help those who suffer from hypertension. Hypertension is one of the most prominent diseases of our time, and it affects nearly 1 billion people across the world and around 50 million of those in the US alone. High blood pressure can be a serious medical condition due to the correlation between high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. People with high blood pressure in general will be three times more likely to suffer from a heart attack, as well as a multitude of other undesirable conditions. The higher your blood pressure is, the more chance you have of suffering from a heart attack, stroke, heart failure or kidney disease and, for those within the age range of 40-70, an increase of 20 mm HG in systolic or 10 mm HG in diastolic blood pressure equates to double the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Before the DASH diet, and often times still today, most physicians will tell their patients with high blood pressure to go onto a low sodium diet. Low sodium diets work to reduce blood pressure since salt is a direct contributor to high blood pressure, but overall, a low sodium diet is generally not enough to completely stop hypertension since the body will often adjust to the low sodium diet and again return to having high blood pressure. The DASH diet on the other hand is much more than

just a low-sodium diet. It is based on proven research with a plan that involves eating fresh fruit vegetables and low or non-fat dairy. It ditches the refined grains in favor of whole grains and is rich in magnesium, potassium, fiber and calcium. The plan is wholly recommended by: wholly

- The American Heart Association
- The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- US Guidelines for treating hypertension

Because obesity is on the rise, more and more people are looking for a weight loss diet that really works these days. Thanks to new research done on old data, the DASH diet has been revamped so it not only lowers blood pressure, amongst other things, but it also helps you to drop the pounds, and fast.

DASH Diet in a Nutshell

DASH is pretty easy to follow. It simply focuses on having you eat healthier foods while cutting out foods with high fat content or high carb content, especially refined grains. The major focus for this diet is to eat foods that are rich in vitamins and minerals, foods that have good fats (such as the fats in olive oil), and foods with high fiber content. That's DASH in its simplest form, not so hard to remember.

DASH Diet Essentials
Foods with High Vitamins
Unsaturated Fat content
High Fiber Foods

The biggest DASH diet no no's are foods that are excessively sugary and excessively greasy. DASH promotes the consumption of "good" fatty food but is against the consumption of bad fats, such as trans and saturated fats. Additionally you should heavily cut back on alcohol content and caffeinated beverage consumption, as these are loaded with unnecessary sugars and carbs. Finally, though not as bad as the previously mentioned groups, DASH wants you to limit your starchy food intake. I'll go into much more detail later about exactly where these foods are on the spectrum of EAT to DON'T EAT, but for this section just try to understand the general theory of DASH.

Foods to Avoid or Limit
Heavy Greasy Foods (Avoid)
Heavy non-Fruit Sugary Foods (Avoid)
Alcohol and Caffeine (Limit)
High Starchy Foods (Limit)

DASH is also trying to lower your blood pressure, and by reducing your sodium intake, your blood pressure will drop automatically, which is great news for those with hypertension. When your blood pressure drops, you instantly benefit from a decrease in the risk of cardiovascular disease and strokes. Because the diet is high in vegetables, fruits and low or non-fat dairy, it is automatically low in cholesterol, sugar and saturated fat. The diet wholly encourages nuts, fish, poultry and grains while discouraging sugary sweets, drinks, high carb foods, processed foods and red meat. It promotes health by including foods that are rich in fiber, calcium, potassium, magnesium and protein. In short, you increase the foods that are good for you and get rid of those that aren't.

The DASH Super Foods

Now that you understand a little of the theory of DASH we can go into a more detail on each of the major food groups and why they're important.

DASH Minerals

One of the key reasons that DASH is able to lower blood pressure is that it contains a high level of minerals, specifically potassium content. DASH also includes minerals such as magnesium and calcium, which are helpful in lowering blood pressure. DASH focuses on obtaining these minerals right from the source, rather than just advocating supplements. Research has found that taking just supplements for mineral intake doesn't have nearly the effect that eating raw fruits and vegetables does, therefore DASH promotes the consumption of minerals through fresh fruits and vegetables. Some studies have even shown that the consumption of supplements on a daily can actually be bad for you.

Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are the core of the DASH diet. Fruits and vegetables are loaded with rich minerals, antioxidants, and a boatload of other healthy nutrients. The DASH diet focuses on consumption of minerals and foods with high fiber, which fruits and vegetables both easily achieve. Fruits are also a great source for water intake, and also can help keep you from having cravings.

When it comes to vegetables, for DASH you want to focus your vegetable consumption on non-starchy vegetables. Starchy vegetables can be good but they contain a lot of sugar when they are processed in the body, which violates our DASH diet rules.

Fiber

It is recommended that we get around 14grams of fiber for every 1000 calories in our diet. Most people aren't able to achieve this since they don't eat enough whole grain foods or fruits and vegetables. Luckily, with DASH it is easy to get a lot of fiber since most of the foods on the diet are fruits, vegetables, or whole grains. The key to eating fiber on the DASH diet is to make sure you are getting both types of fiber (soluble and insoluble) and not loading up on just one type. Insoluble fiber foods are generally found in whole grain products, while soluble fibers are found in fresh fruits and vegetables. Another major tip for eating a lot of fiber is to make sure you drink a lot of water so that you won't become constipated from too much fiber. Insoluble fiber is helpful for your trips to the bathroom, and can help keep you regular, while

soluble fiber can help keep your body healthy by lowering cholesterol and stabilizing your blood sugar. Soluble fiber also assists in keeping you regular and can help intestinal motility. Make sure you check the labels on the foods you purchase, and become well versed with which foods contain which types of fiber, and how much.

Fats and Protein

The DASH diet focuses on minimizing bad fats while promoting good fats. Saturated and trans fats are bad, and should be replaced with a diet consisting of mostly unsaturated fats. One way to try and remember the difference is that saturated and trans fats are mostly solid at cold/room temperatures whereas unsaturated fats are liquid. Butter is a saturated fat and it's solid. Compared to olive oil, which is unsaturated, and liquid at room temperature. Unsaturated fats generally come from lean meats, especially fish, as well as nuts and seeds. Unsaturated fats can actually be beneficial to our health by lowering bad cholesterol and increasing good cholesterol. Make sure you plan on eating several servings of these types of fats. If you don't like eating fish, or can't think of any good foods with good fat content then you may want to consider asking your physician or nutritionist if omega 3 tablets would be a good idea to supplement with your diet.

Make sure you incorporate nuts and beans into your diet, as they are also a great source of these "good fats." Nuts and beans contain heart healthy fats and protein. In a diet where you aren't able to eat fatty meats, it's a good idea to make sure you get a decent amount of protein, and especially if you don't like fish then nuts are a great source. Nuts and beans are also great at keeping you from being hungry, just eating 20 or so can fill you up and keep you occupied until your next meal.

Dairy

Low-Fat and Nonfat dairy are a cornerstone of the DASH diet. One of the reasons why dairy is included is because it has a very significant effect when it comes to reducing blood pressure. Drinking milk alone, not even following the DASH diet can lower your blood pressure by 4-6 points. Dairy is also an extremely important source for calcium and vitamin D, and the DASH diet is a heavy proponent of vitamins and minerals. If you are lactose intolerant it should be easy to find products that are good substitutes. Make sure you find products that also contain the same nutrition as normal milk, or else substituting would be pointless.

Whole Grains

Whole grains are less important than the other components of DASH, but what makes whole grains important is that whole grains are such a good substitution for refined grains. Whole grains also contain a decent amount of fiber, especially insoluble fiber as well as your primary source for magnesium. Whole grains also have some other vitamins too like vitamin B, but to a lesser degree than fruits and

vegetables.

How Does the DASH Diet Work?

The DASH diet is split into 2 phases – the initial weight loss and health phase followed by the maintenance phase. Phase 1 is very similar to many other low carbohydrate diets in that you follow it strictly for 2 weeks. The goal of phase 1 is to help your body transition from normal eating to DASH eating. Phase 1 will help teach your body how to not rely on carbohydrates, since eating high amounts of carbs can cause fluctuating sugar levels, which can often time lead to cravings. Phase 1 helps you to reset your metabolism by dropping wholegrain and fruit from your meals. It is a phase that should see almost instant weight loss results in virtually everyone who does it.

Phase 2 is the maintenance phase and this is where you start to add back in starchy vegetables, fruits and whole grains but slowly so that you can keep an eye on how these reintroduced foods effect your weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. In this phase you learn how to eat for the long term, and how to keep your body healthy. I will go into more detailed information about these phases in the next section.

If you want to break down exactly what you should be eating in the DASH diet, you can see that it's highly based in obtaining multiple nutrients and limiting harmful foods. For a person eating 2100 calories per day, the total amount of fat in those calories must not exceed 27% (look at the labels to see how many calories come from fats) and only 6% of that must come from saturated fat. No more than 150 mg of cholesterol must be eaten but 55% of those calories should be in the form of carbohydrates and 18% from protein. Other nutrient goals on a 2100 calorie a day plan include:

• 1250 mg calcium
• 30 g fiber
• 500 mg magnesium
• 4700 mg potassium
• Less than 2300 mg sodium – 1500 is best

Now, this may all seem very complicated but, in truth, it isn't. The following foods are based on a 2000 calorie a day diet and will need to be tweaked depending on your age, activity level and gender. Also keep in mind this is just a guideline:

- **Whole Grains – 6-8 servings per day** - one serving is equal to one slice of bread, 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice or pasta, etc. Make sure the food has the word Whole in it, not all brown bread or rice is good for you! Check out the fiber content; look for whole-wheat flour or whole grain flour in the ingredients. Look for grain products that have at least 2 g of fiber in each serving.
- **Fruit – 4-5 servings per day** – one serving equates to a small piece of fruit, 10 grapes, 1/2 banana, 1/2 a grapefruit etc. Rather than just eating the fruit as is, add it to your salad or top off your breakfast. Make it your choice for a daily snack as well, rather than a muffin or cookie.
- **Vegetables – 4-5 servings per day** – one serving equals 1/2 cup of cooked or one cup of raw vegetables. If you don't think you can eat that much in one day, try a few new ways of eating vegetables. Add peppers and tomatoes or spinach leaves to your sandwiches; grill your veggies rather than boiling them. Grilling or roasting really bring out the flavor in vegetables and you retain the nutrients where boiling tends to make foods bland and less nutrient dense.
- **Low or Non-fat Dairy – 2-3 servings per day** – Use skim milk or no higher than 1%. Go for low-fat yoghurts and cheeses. Drink two servings of milk (1 cup each) per day; yoghurt servings are 8 oz. and cheese is 1 oz.
- **Lean Fish, Meat and Poultry – 2 or less servings per day** – Try to eat no more than 6-8 oz. of lean protein per day. Eat fresh chicken leg or breast, turkey breast, pork loin, pork tenderloin, lean cuts of sirloin, ground beef, fresh fish and tinned tuna that is low in sodium.
- **Nuts and Seeds – 4-5 servings per week** - Although these are high in

good fat they are also very high in calories. Add a few to your salads or a stir-fry – one serving of nuts is around 1/3 of a cup or 2 tbsp. nut butters. Unsalted seed servings are 2 tbsp.

- **Healthy Fats – 2-3 servings per day** – Use oils that contain monounsaturated fats, like olive oil, peanut oil and canola. Corn and soybean oil contain higher levels of polyunsaturated fats and should also be on your shopping list. Try eating avocado, seeds, olives, natural nut butters, etc., 1 serving of oil or vinaigrette salad dressing is 1 tsp.
- **Sweets and Fats – 2 or less servings per day** – These are foods that you do not need to eat so use this as treats only. Do read the labels to ensure you are eating only one serving, i.e. a 2” brownie square, 1 small donut, 2 small cookies, 8 oz. of sugary soda.

So you can see, there is plenty for you to eat, you will never go hungry and it really isn't all that difficult to follow.

Lose Weight with DASH

The DASH diet will automatically jump start your weight loss goals almost regardless of your weight and gender, but to do this more efficiently it's important to understand how many calories you should be eating a day. DASH forces you to eat foods that are rich in minerals and low in fats. Additionally, all of the foods you will be eating on DASH are designed to have a low calorie count while still making you feel full enough that you don't crave extra calories.

In order to determine the general number of calories that you should be eating a day just follow this simple chart. If you are significantly heavier or thinner than the average weight of your age group you might want to consult the Internet or your nutritionist since this chart is just a general guideline. The amount of calories listed on the chart are the calories it takes your body to maintain equilibrium. If you are looking to lose 1 pound a week you should subtract roughly 500 calories from your equilibrium calorie count.

Gender	Age	Sedentary	Moderately Active	Active
Female	18-30	1800-2000	2000-2200	2400
	31-50	1800	2000	2200
	51+	1600	1800	2000-2200
Males	19-30	2400-2600	2600-2800	3000
	31-50	2200-2400	2400-2600	2800-3000
	51+	2000-2200	2200-2400	2400-2800

Sedentary: Defined as normal lifestyle

Moderately Active: Defined as walking 2-3 miles a day or working out every other day

Active Life: someone who walks more than 3 miles a day or who works out daily

PART TWO:

***Everything you need to know about
THE DASH DIET PHASES***

DASH Diet Phases

I mentioned in the last section that the DASH diet consists of two major phases. This part of the diet is probably the most confusing part since you have to understand how each phase works and follow different foods on each phase. Luckily, the first phase is only 14 days, and the diet never has you shift back to phase one, so once you're finished phase one you only need to adjust to phase two. In this section I'll go over what exactly the purpose of each phase is and what you should eat, as well as what you should avoid.

DASH Diet Phase One

When starting the DASH diet you must spend some time to reset your body so that it can be ready for the diet. Phase one is focused on resetting your metabolism, and helping you become better suited for phase 2. Phase 1 is the more restrictive of the phases, and will help you start your momentum into phase 2. Phase 1 is known to be extremely effective in slimming your waste line since you will be focusing on eating lots of vegetables. People tend to drop the pounds like crazy just by following the first phase of the diet. The key to resetting your metabolism, and purpose of phase 1, is to cut out starchy and sugary foods. Once this occurs your metabolism will operate much better, which will allow you to enter phase 2.

Phase 1 Food Basics

Vegetables

The number one foods for phase 1 (and phase 2) are non-starchy vegetables. Non-Starchy vegetables can be thought of as vegetables that are typically flowering parts of a plant, such as lettuce, broccoli, cucumber, spinach, mushrooms, etc. Starchy vegetables are vegetables such as corn, peas, parsnips, potatoes pumpkins, squash, and zucchini. By avoiding starchy foods you're essentially helping your body to regulate your blood sugar which will diminish your cravings. Starchy vegetables break down into a lot of sugar, which is bad for phase 1 since we are trying to cut down on carbohydrate and sugar dependence. Here is a chart summarizing that

Non-Starchy Vegetables (EAT A LOT)	Starchy Vegetables (AVOID)
Lettuce	Potato
Broccoli	Pumpkin
Cucumber	Corn
Spinach	Green Peas
Mushrooms	Parsnip
Onions	
Peppers	
Tomatoes	
Artichoke	
Asparagus	
Celery	
Daikon	
Eggplant	
Kale	
Leeks	
Salad Greens	
Turnips	
Water Chestnuts	
Radish	
Green Onion	
Snow Peas	

When it comes to non-starchy vegetables you can eat an unlimited amount of these on phase 1. It's actually recommended that you eat at least 5 servings of these vegetables a day, so make sure you're trying your best to find space to eat these during the day. These are your number 1 food for phase 1 so get familiar with them.

Protein and Meat

The next most important food for phase 1 is lean meat. When I say lean meats, I say this because the objective is to get a decent amount of protein intake while limiting fat consumption. For lean meats you should focus on eating things like fish, and poultry. You can also consider things like eggs even though its not meat, but they are a good source of protein.

Lean Meat
Fish
Boneless Skinless Chicken Breast
Eggs
Top Sirloin/Lean Cut Beef
Turkey Cutlets

When it comes to lean meats and protein you should try to eat around 6-8 ounces a day. If you're smaller and eat less, aim for the smaller range of that number, and likewise if you're bigger aim for the larger range.

Everything else

After focusing on the main two food groups of phase one, non-starchy vegetables and lean meat, you can also have some tastes from other food groups, but make sure you limit yourself. In general it's recommended that you have about 2-3 servings of dairy (avoid milk for now), 1-2 servings of legumes, and 2-3 servings of fats.

Foods you can eat but in moderation
Dairy (2-3 Servings)
Nuts and seeds (1-2 servings)
"Good Fats" (2-3 servings)

Unfortunately phase 1 can be a little daunting because of all the foods you have to avoid and limit, but remember its only for 14 days. Here is a chart of foods you should 100% avoid.

Foods to Avoid
Starchy foods (including grains)
Fried Foods
Sugary Foods
Fruit
Alcohol
Milk
Caffeinated beverages
Greasy Foods
Refined Grains and Whole grains

Phase 1 Eating Ideas

Here are some basic ideas for foods during the phase 1 portion of your diet. The first 14 days is pretty tough because you are pretty limited in options, but keep in mind that once you are done it will get easier, also you will lose a ton of weight just from following a strict phase 1 diet for 14 days. It's also recommended that you eat 5 meals a day but keep them small. This will prevent cravings throughout the day because spanning your eating into smaller portions will prevent your body from having huge swings in blood sugar level.

Breakfast Ideas
Hard Boiled Egg
Yogurt
Egg substitute omelets (limit egg consumption to only a few days a week)
Scrambled eggs
1-2 Slices of Canadian Bacon
Tomato juice (Low Sodium)
Cottage cheese
Lunch Ideas
Tuna Salad
Cherry Tomatoes
Small salad with Italian dressing
Sugar free Jell-O
Deli meat rolls (roll up a slice of meat with cheese)
Raw vegetables
Hamburger no bun
Dinner Ideas
Side Salad with balsamic dressing
Broccoli
Roasted turkey
Sautéed vegetables
Grilled Chicken
Raw vegetables
In Between Meal Snacks Ideas
Cheese Wedges
Grape tomatoes
Pepper strips
20 peanuts
Baby carrots
Yogurt
23 Almonds
18 Cashews

Phase 1 Tips

Phase 1 can definitely be tricky, so stay strong and don't lose motivation. The first major tip is to make sure you don't skip any meals. As I mentioned, make sure you are eating around 5 meals a day, breakfast, pre lunch, lunch, pre dinner, and dinner. This will help you reduce cravings that will otherwise push you into eating something spontaneously. Keep your meals light so that each meal is only around 300-400 calories, its better to keep all meals even rather than have breakfast be small and dinner be big. A lot of people believe that skipping meals will make you lose weight faster but in fact it can do the opposite. By skipping meals one of two things can happen 1) your blood sugar level will no longer be steady and you will have cravings and end up eating more 2) your body will slow down its basal metabolism rate, which means fewer calories will keep your body satisfied. In other words, if you ever stop starving yourself you will start to gain weight much faster than before. That's why it's extremely important you do not skip meals.

Some other good tips are to make sure your sleep schedule is steady, go to bed early and make sure you aren't changing your waking and sleep times everyday. In addition to sleeping try and exercise just a little bit but not too much. Go for a 30-minute walk, or use the stairs instead of the elevator at work. You want to make sure your activity level is solid, but you don't want to overdo it during phase 1.

If you decide to dine out during these 14 days there are still several options for you. For breakfast you can order eggs or omelets, as well as some bacon. Remember you cannot have starchy foods so no potatoes or bread. For lunch and dinner a very easy option is to order a salad with oil based dressing. You can add meats and other vegetables to your salads to make them more delicious. You can also order burgers but ask for it without the bun and get it with a side salad instead of fries.

Plan everything during your first week. This will help you to not get demoralized midway through when you don't know what to eat. Bring lunches and extra snacks to work or on long trips and keep this book on hand so you have an easy way to check and see if foods are ok to eat.

Focus on your results during these 14 days. It's very easy to get discouraged when you're starting something new, especially something as life changing as this. Remember that it's only for 14 days and stay positive. Think about the fact that you'll soon lose a good chunk of weight, and that you'll be a step closer to your dieting goals. Never lose hope!

DASH Diet Phase Two

The second phase of the DASH diet puts you into the core food groups of the diet. This phase will add onto what you've learned in phase 1, but will feature more foods that you weren't allowed to eat during the first phase. This phase of the diet should be significantly easier to start than the previous since you are building onto a previously established foundation. There is no time limit to phase 2, so you will be eating from phase 2 foods for the rest of the duration of your diet, which hopefully will be years.

Phase 2 Foods

Good Phase 2 Foods

Just like in phase 1 you'll be able to consume an unlimited quantity of non-starchy vegetables. Turn to these foods whenever you need an idea for a snack, since the more you eat of these the better. Additionally sugar free Jell-O is a great alternative to heavy desserts, and can be eaten almost unlimitedly. Also like in phase 1 you should eat a decent amount of lean meats, as well as foods that are rich in protein and low in fats. Now for phase 2 you will be able to add in fruit, as well as healthy whole grains. These two foods can be eaten moderately, about 2-4 servings a day

The Phase 2 Foods
Non-Starchy Vegetables (Unlimited)
Sugar Free Jell-O (Unlimited)
High Protein Low fat Foods (3-4 servings)
Low Fat/Non Fat Dairy (3-4 Servings)
Fruit (2-4 Servings, limit to 6 servings max)
Nuts (1-2 Servings)
Whole Grains (1-2 Servings)

In phase 2 you are allowed to eat a very limited quantity of refined grains, the recommended amount is a maximum of 3-4 servings each week, but eating 0 is always the best. Save these servings for something you really enjoy to treat yourself, but make sure you don't overdo it because then it will negate the efforts achieved from phase 1. Additionally you want to limit things like heavy sauces (ketchup and BBQ) any foods with trans-fats or high saturated fat content, alcohol, and caffeine.

Phase 2 Foods to AVOID
Starchy Foods
Heavy Sauces, especially high sodium
Foods with Bad Fats (Trans, saturated)
Alcohol
Caffeine
Heavy refined Carbs

Phase 2 Eating Ideas

Here is a brief list of ideas for meals during phase 2. Now you can have fruits, milk, as well as whole-wheat grains, so the choices are better than for phase 1. For more advanced meal ideas check out the menus in the back of the book.

Breakfast
Eggs
Egg substitute
Canadian Bacon
Juice or Tomato Juice
Yogurt
Milk
Whole Grain Cereal
Fresh fruit
Whole grain oatmeal
Lean meat (small amount of bacon)
Boiled Eggs
Whole grain waffle
Whole wheat toast
Cheerios
Lunch
Deli Meat rollups
Baby carrots
Fresh Fruit
Salad
Tuna Salad
Chicken Salad
Jell-O
Peanut butter and Jelly Sandwich on whole wheat
Deli sliced sandwich on whole wheat
Cheeseburger with whole wheat bun or no bun
Vegetarian hotdogs
Raw vegetables
Tomato soup (low sodium)
Dinners
Meatloaf
Mashed potatoes
Fish
Whole wheat pasta with meat sauce
Salad with chicken or other lean meat
Chicken Piccata
Green beans and other vegetables
Fruits
Vegetable Lasagna
Greek Salad
Between Meal Snacks
String Cheese

Cherry Tomatoes
Peanuts
Walnuts
Low fat Yogurt
Cashews
Raw Vegetables
Hummus
Baby Carrots
Almonds
Eggs

Phase 2 Summary

Foods to Eat and How much	
Non-Starchy Vegetables	Unlimited
Lean Meat	5-9 ounces
Whole Grains	2-3 servings
Dairy	1-3 servings
Fruits	2-4 servings
Refined Grains	RARE 2-3 times a week
Fats	2-3 servings

PART THREE:

EVERYTHING ELSE ABOUT DASH

What Are The Benefits of The DASH Diet?

We know that DASH stands for Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension and that it is a complete lifestyle change rather than a diet. It was originally designed to lower blood pressure or prevent it from rising in the first place by encouraging you to cut back on the salt content of your daily meals, so lowering your blood pressure is the first major benefit.

Not only that, the very nature of the diet, the foods that you are allowed to eat mean you are getting a diet rich in potassium, magnesium, calcium, and other vital nutrients. Blood pressure isn't the only benefit of the DASH diet though. It can also help to prevent osteoporosis, heart attack, heart disease, strokes and some cancers. In general the main benefit of this diet is that you will live a much healthier life and feel better doing it.

Weight Loss

On top of that, the diet has now been re-worked as a way of losing weight, because of the healthier nature of what you will be eating. The DASH diet has been awarded a number of accolades, including the Healthiest Diet in the US for 2 years. Now fully endorsed by a number of medical bodies, the DASH diet is a little similar to the Atkins diet in its focus on protein but it also allows you to eat more vegetables (less fruit, because of its sugar content). And, unlike Atkins, after the initial phase, on the DASH diet you can eat grains and starchy foods like potatoes.

The most common approach to phase one of the diet is to concentrate on protein and healthy fat while cutting back as far as possible on carbohydrates, which you can then reintroduce after the initial two-week period. It isn't about drastically changing your diet, although this will be the case for some people; it's about getting our brains and bodies back into a way of eating to stay full and full of energy without having to resort to high carb and sugary foods for a boost.

Hypertension

There are two versions of the DASH diet – the original one that advocates vegetables, fruits and low-fat dairy, and the low-sodium version. Which one you choose depends entirely on your personal circumstances and medical needs but the differences are:

- Original DASH diet – no more than 2,300 mg of sodium in a day
- Low-sodium DASH diet – no more than 1500 mg of sodium in a day

Most people eat at least 3500 mg of sodium a day so both versions of the diet will be beneficial. Those who are older, suffer from diabetes, hypertension or have chronic kidney disease should go for the low-sodium version of the diet but do speak to your doctor first.

Because the DASH diet is all about lowering sodium intake and blood pressure, it goes without saying that it will benefit anyone with diabetes as well as other diseases and medical conditions already mentioned above. The emphasis is on healthy eating and reducing the rubbish out of our diets and that will automatically lead to an improvement in many medical conditions, although you must not presume that this diet is a cure-all – it isn't and you must seek medical advice first.

DASH Diet for Brain Power

Recent studies have also shown that the DASH diet can boost brainpower significantly provided it is followed in conjunction with a regular exercise program. The study found that brainpower was increased by 30% in overweight adults tested against a group that did not exercise or diet. Subjects were able to remember more things, and overall process information faster.

Hypertension affects around 50% of adults in the age group of 60 and above and it can increase the risks of dementia and Alzheimer's as well. Changes to lifestyle, including exercise and diet, can not only lower blood pressure, it can improve brain activity as well. This, however, is the first proper research that considers the effects of both diet and exercise together on the brain in people who are overweight and have high blood pressure.

The research used 124 men and women who were overweight. They were divided into three groups with one group filling the DASH diet and doing an aerobic exercise program for 30 minutes, 3 times a week.

The second group followed the DASH diet without the exercise and the third group did not exercise or diet. The research was carried out over a 4 month period and, at the beginning, each person carried out a series of test designed to test their brainpower and mental skills. This was then repeated at the end of the research.

The results showed that people in the first group showed lower blood pressure and a 30% increase in brainpower, along with improvements to their cardiovascular fitness and an average weight loss of 19 lb. Their blood pressure was lowered by an average of 16 points systolic and 10 points diastolic.

Tips to Lower Sodium

The DASH diet is already a low sodium diet since one of its major purposes is to lower blood pressure, because of this you shouldn't have too hard of a time finding ways to lower your sodium but here are a few extra tips.

Firstly, **Check the label**, you'd be surprised at how many foods contain an excess amount of sodium, so the number one most important way to limit your sodium intake is to simply check the labels of the foods you are purchasing. Get to know what each of the numbers on the nutrition facts means, and try to memorize what kind of numbers are good for sodium vs bad. A lot of foods that you'd even consider good for you, such as tomato juices and canned soup, have a TON of sodium. Luckily many food companies are making low sodium versions of their high sodium foods, so if you can always opt for the lower sodium product. When you are trying to purchase things such as frozen or canned vegetables also make sure you check the label for sodium, and if the sodium content is too high consider buying fresh vegetables and cooking them from scratch instead.

Another tip is to make sure you don't add excess salt to things when you are cooking. Don't sprinkle salt into boiling water or add salt into prepared meals unless the recipe says so. Try to understand how much salt is equal to how many mg of sodium so you have a better idea of how much physical salt you can eat. Often times its easier to understand things when you can visualize them.

Finally, make sure you eat a lot of fruit. Potassium especially is one of the minerals responsible for lowering blood pressure the most. Also drinking milk is supposed to be helpful in keeping your blood pressure down.

DASH Diet Final Thoughts and Tips

Drink a lot of Water

It's always important to drink a lot of fluids and the DASH diet is no exception. The average person is recommended to be drinking around 13 cups (for men) and 9 cups (for women) of water a day. Everyone has heard the traditional 8 glasses per day rule. 8 glasses per day is easy to remember, but it's also a good number because a lot of us get fluids from other sources such as fruits. When on DASH you will be eating a ton of fruits and vegetables so you will probably be getting a lot of water from those foods, because of this it's probably better to remember to drink simply 8 solid cups of water a day and realize that the other few glasses are being filled through your meals. If you have a hard time remembering to drink water throughout the day set an alarm to remind yourself. It's much better to be drinking water constantly throughout the day rather than to drink a ton at one point.

Stay Active

Exercising and staying active is a crucial part of achieving success with the DASH diet. A lot of people hate exercising, but in the long run working out will make you feel better, stronger, younger, and help you lose weight. One of the biggest hurdles to exercising is simply motivation, after working long and hard many people have a hard time finding time or motivation to spend another 30-60 minutes exercising. There are a few ways around this problem. One of the best pieces of advice I got for getting motivation is to simply focus on starting something, rather than focusing on the details. If you tell yourself you're just going to go outside and walk, once you get started walking you will be more likely to walk longer or to be more motivated to exercise since you already overcame the big hurdle of simply getting started. Another way to motivate yourself is to find friends who like to do similar exercises as you. Call some of your friends and arrange a time that you work out everyday. This will keep you more accountable since you now have other people relying on you to show up.

If you simply don't have any time during the day to work out you can instead try to change your routine so you're more active. Park your car further away from your office so you have to walk a little bit on the way to work. Instead of taking the elevator or escalator take the stairs. Perhaps ask your boss for a standing desk instead of a sitting desk. Find simple aspects of your routine that you can modify so that you will have a more active lifestyle. If you're not sure if you're active enough you could always download an app or a program that can track your calorie intake and activity level, so that you know exactly how many calories you're burning while being active.

The best way to exercise is to do a rotation of both cardio and strength exercises. Cardio is anything that makes your heart rate go up. Activities that fall under cardio are things like brisk walking, jogging, jump rope, and team sports. In a perfect world you should be doing cardio every other day and strength training every other day. Cardio is great for helping you lose weight and to make your vascular system and heart stay strong, which can also help lower blood pressure. Strength training will help you tone your muscles, and also can be surprisingly effective at helping you with weight loss. Many women don't like doing weight training because they're afraid of bulking up, and many men neglect cardio because they want to bulk up instead of losing weight. No matter who you are you should be trying to incorporate both types of workouts into your routine. Strength training will tone you if you're a woman, not bulk you up, and cardio will drastically increase your heart health as a man either way, so make sure you include both types if you.

Getting started is easy. If you have the money you can join a gym and pay a monthly fee. If you're on a tighter budget then all you really need are running/walking supplies which are very cheap, and some free weights or a pull up bar in your house for strength training. Worst-case scenario you can just do push ups or find a workout

that doesn't require equipment. Regardless, there is little excuse not to try!

Check Food labels

Checking food labels while on any diet can be a very useful tool to making sure you are following your dietary guidelines. The number one best advice is to firstly try to buy foods that don't contain additional ingredients. What I mean by this is to find foods that don't have extra things in them such as fresh fruits, vegetables and so fourth. Most of these foods wont have labels, but if you're curious of their exact caloric content you can check the Internet

When you are dealing with foods that have labels you want to start from the top and move down. Start first with the serving size. Many labels nowadays can be deceptive and try to split the product into multiple tiny serving sizes just so the nutrition facts can look better. For example, a lot of drink bottles you may find on shelves are normally consumed in one sitting, but a lot of times if you look on the label they are listed as having two servings, so you're actually getting double the calories, double the sugar, and double all the other bad things that the label actually says. A lot of other foods can be difficult to determine the serving size for, such as chips or snack foods. It's essential that you check the labels often and try to use your best judgment before buying products

Next look at total calories and total calories from fat. The total calorie number is important obviously because this is the amount of energy you are taking in from the food source. The more calories you take in the less likely your body will be able to burn them all in a single day and so you will gain weight. Find foods that are low in calories that also contain other vital nutrients. Again these are foods such as fruits, vegetables, and lean meats, all staples of the DASH diet! Next to the number of calories you will also see "calories from fat" the higher this number the worse the food is for you, a general rule is to try to make sure the number of calories from fat is 10% of the total calories, anymore and the food is a fatty food.

Following calories you can see the amount of fats, saturated fats, sodium, and sugar. All of these numbers should be as low as possible. Try to get familiar with the normal daily values for these components so that you can make good decisions while at the market. Saturated fats should be avoided as much as possible, sodium should be between 1500-2000 grams a day, and sugar should be limited to around 40.

Finally check the nutrition to see if your food has high nutrient content. Foods that are high in potassium are especially good for DASH because they lower blood pressure. Look at carbohydrates and fiber content and make sure your fiber content is high while your carbohydrate content is low.

Manage Portions

Portion size management is essential with that DASH diet, especially since optimally you should be eating around 5 meals a day. Because of this you want to make sure you are not eating 5 1000-calorie meals a day, or else you will immediately start to tack on extra weight. The key to portion control is planning. Buy foods at the super market and portion them out when you buy them. If you make dinner and plan to eat it the next day you can even buy Tupperware containers and divide up the exact portions you plan to eat, so you can easily grab and eat your next meal while following your dieting plans. Eating 5 smaller meals a day will help you a lot in controlling your cravings, so hopefully you won't need to try too hard when it comes to portion control but it is still something important that you should keep in mind.

SUMMARY: What You Can and Can't Eat on the DASH Diet

While it isn't a complicated diet to follow, there are very strict rules on what you can and can't eat on the DASH diet. Before I get into that, I've got a few general guidelines for following the diet to get the maximum health and weight loss benefits from it. A lot of this is repeat from before, but it's important for you to intuitively understand all of these concepts so make sure you memorize them.

- First, never skip a meal or a snack. If you are still hungry shortly after eating then your portions are too small and you need to increase your protein intake. The DASH diet is not a diet but a lifestyle change, so you want to make sure you are comfortable with what you are eating because it is a long-term process.
- Fill up on vegetables as well as protein foods
- If you start getting a little dizzy have a snack
- Limit your salts, but don't restrict your salt too much or be too obsessed over it
- Make sure you drink plenty of fluid. You should aim for 8-13 glasses of water per day but other drinks and water from foods will also count towards this.
- Do not fall into the trap of believing that drinking a glass of water before you eat will stop you feeling hungry – it doesn't work. However, eating foods that have a high water content, such as fruit and soup, will help you to feel fuller more quickly.
- Only eat foods that you actually like. Never force yourself to eat something you are not partial to because that is the quickest path to failure. It's easy to find healthy food that is also delicious.

Now, let's take a look at what you can and can't eat on the DASH diet weight loss solution:

Unlimited foods:

Non-starchy Vegetables:

• Beets
• Asparagus
• Broccoli
• Cabbage – green and red
• Brussels sprouts
• Garlic
• Celery
• Cucumber
• Cauliflower
• Greens
• Green beans
• Hot peppers
• Lettuces
• Jicama
• Squash – spaghetti, summer
• Shallots
• Onions
• Peppers
• Peas
• Radishes
• Tomatoes
• Snow peas
• Sugar snap peas
• Zucchini
• Water chestnuts

Restrict or cut out altogether starchy vegetables such as potatoes, corn and winter squash

Eat as many tomatoes and carrots as you want – these are often cut out of low carb diets and are good for bulk

Drinks:

• Water
• Coffee – black or with 1% or lower milk
• Sugar free diet drinks
• Unsweetened tea
• Vegetables juices

Drink when you feel thirsty and try to use non-calorific sweeteners – not sugar

Limited foods (Still Good! But not unlimited)

Dairy:

• Low fat or non-fat cheese
• Light cottage cheese
• Unsweetened yoghurts – 120 calories or less per serving (8 oz.)

Beans, Seeds and Nuts:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unsalted and unroasted nuts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeds
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peanut butter – go for natural
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avocados

Legumes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beans – kidney, black, etc., low sodium
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soy foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lentils

Lean Proteins:

Beef – broiled or roasted

• Round
• Shoulder
• Tip
• Steak
• Loin
• T-Bone
• Strip steak
• 90 or 95% lean ground

Pork – broiled or roasted

• Tenderloin
• Top loin
• Chop
• Center loin
• Sirloin
• Bacon
• Lean ham
• Ground

Poultry – Roasted, skinless

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breast
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thigh
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ground – white meat only

Fish

• Bluefish
• Anchovies
• Cod
• Catfish
• Flounder
• Halibut
• Haddock
• Mackerel
• Herring
• Perch
• Trout
• Salmon
• Rockfish
• Sole
• Oysters
• Roughy
• Pollock
• Swordfish
• Tuna
• Canned tuna in water
• White fish
• Tilapia

Shellfish

• Crab
• Lobster
• Clams
• Shrimp
• Scallops

Eggs are fine in any format and deli meats should be low in fat and sodium

Items to keep in the pantry – not to be treated as unlimited foods

• Guacamole
• Tomato paste
• Vinegar
• Bouillon
• Worcestershire sauce
• Tomato sauce
• Mustard
• Herbs
• Spices
• Salt substitutes
• Lemon juice
• Lime juice

For your mineral requirements, choose whole foods rather than supplements:

Good Sources for Vitamins and Minerals

Calcium:

• Milk
• Yoghurt
• Cheese
• Cottage cheese
• Broccoli
• Kale
• Bok Choy
• Tofu
• Soybeans
• Bony fish such as sardines

Potassium:

• Asparagus
• Artichoke
• Avocado
• Bamboo shoots
• Beans
• Beet
• Broccoli
• Brussels Sprouts
• Carrots
• Cauliflower
• Celery
• Kale
• Mushrooms
• Okra
• Potato*
• Pumpkin*
• Seaweed
• Spinach
• Sweet potato*
• Tomato
• Turnip Greens
• Winter Squash*
• Apple, *
• Apricot*
• Banana*
• Cantaloupe*
• Dates*
• Dried Fruit*
• Grapefruit*
• Honeydew Melon*
• Kiwi*
• Oranges*
• Peach*
• Pear*
• Prune*
• Strawberry*
• Tangerines*
• Almonds*
• Brazil Nuts

• Cashews
• Chestnuts*
• Filberts
• Hazelnuts
• Peanuts
• Pecans
• Pumpkin Seeds
• Sunflower Seeds
• Walnuts
• Bran Cereal*
• Muesli*
• Pumpernickel Bread*
• Pork
• Beef
• Poultry
• Halibut
• Salmon
• Cod
• Clams
• Tuna
• Rockfish
• Rainbow Trout
• Lobster
• Crab
• Milk*
• Yogurt
• Coffee
• Molasses*
• Tea
• Tofu

Magnesium

• Avocado
• Beet Greens
• Cassava*
• Okra
• Potato Skins*
• Seaweed
• Spinach
• Swiss Chard
• Wax Beans
• Banana*
• Figs*
• Raisins*
• Beans
• Black-eyed Peas
• Lentils
• Amaranth*
• Barley*
• Bran*
• Brown Rice*
• Buckwheat*
• Bulgur*
• Granola*
• Millet*
• Oats*
• Rye*
• Triticale*
• Whole Wheat*
• Wild Rice*
• Milk*
• Yogurt
• Almonds
• Brazil Nuts
• Cashews,
• Flax Seeds
• Filberts/hazelnuts
• Macadamia
• Peanuts
• Pecans
• Pistachios

• Pumpkin Seeds
• Sesame Seeds
• Soybeans
• Sunflower Seeds
• Walnuts
• Salmon
• Tuna
• Lobster
• Halibut
• Cod

* Not on Phase 1

Restricted Foods on the DASH Diet Weight Loss Solution

Saturated Fats

• Coconut oil
• Palm Oil
• Flaxseed Oil
• Baked Goods
• Pastries
• Cookies
• Cakes
• Muffins
• Crackers
• Corn Oil**
• Soybean Oil**
• Safflower Oil**
• Butter**
• Sugar
• Honey
• Agave
• Molasses
• Maple Syrup
• Any other sugary syrup
• Sweets/candies
• Energy Bars

** In limited quantities

Getting Started

Now you know what the DASH Diet for Weight Loss is all about, you'll be eager to get started. First of all, take note of these helpful tips:

- Unless you are advised to go at this full tilt by your doctor, just make a few small changes at a time. Give yourself time to get used to a new way of eating
- Up your vegetable intake by replacing something or adding a serving to your dinner plate
- Do the same with fruit – instead of a cookie or brownie, take a piece of fruit as a snack
- Make the switch to whole grain bread and cereals
- Cut back on large portion sizes gradually
- Instead of ice cream, go for low fat frozen yoghurt
- Ditch the sugary drinks and go for water or diet soda with a slice of lemon or lime in it
- Do not be afraid to experiment!

Another reason for introducing yourself slowly is that the DASH diet probably has way more in the way of vegetables, whole grains and fruits than you are used to. Your body will react with bloating and diarrhea if you introduce them all too quickly. You'll also be more likely to make it through phase 1 if you are somewhat used to the eating style already.

Give yourself every chance to adjust to your new lifestyle. Make each change a challenge and a part of your daily routine. And, most importantly, if you do stray off the path, get back on it straightaway and don't beat yourself up over it. Don't fall into the trap of saying to yourself, if you slip and eat one cookie that it's ok to eat the whole packet – it isn't.

Get some support. There are plenty of resources and forums on the internet and there may even be support groups in your area. Don't forget that a new healthy lifestyle also entails exercise. Not only will this increase your metabolism and help you lose weight faster, you will also feel great. Again, if you lead a sedentary lifestyle ease yourself into this gently to avoid strains and injuries.

All that's left to say is good luck and enjoy your new lifestyle. I've drawn up a 7-day plan below, including all the recipes, to give you a head start.

PART FOUR:

DASH diet Recipes



BREAKFAST



Asparagus and Caramelized Onion Frittata

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 20 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 190 calories
- 11 g total fat of which
- 4 g saturated fat
- 14 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 8 g carbohydrates
- 440 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, sliced thinly
- 2 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 cups asparagus, chopped into 1" pieces
- 3 sliced green onions
- ¼ cup fresh basil, sliced thinly
- 6 large eggs
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp. extra grated parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- Fresh ground pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. Put the broiler onto high to preheat
2. Heat a medium sauté pan on a medium heat on the stovetop
3. Add the oil and sauté the onions until they are caramelized and soft, about 5 minutes
4. Add the vinegar and mix well
5. Add the asparagus pieces and about 2 tbsp. water

6. Cover the pan and steam for 4 minutes, stirring once halfway through
7. Whisk the eggs and add ¼ cup of parmesan; stir to mix in
8. Add ¼ tsp kosher salt and a little ground black pepper, stirring to combine
9. Add the onion, the rest of the salt and the basil to the asparagus and onions, stirring
10. Pour the egg mixture into the pan, over the asparagus and onion
11. Use a spatula to gently combine the ingredients, ensuring the cooked eggs are pulled up from the base of the pan
12. Leave to cook for 2 minutes and then place the whole pan under the broiler
13. Cook for 3 minutes until bubbling and starting to brown
14. Remove the pan, sprinkle 1 tbsp. parmesan over the top and leave to rest for 5 minutes
15. Serve hot

Chocolate Smoothie with Avocado and Banana

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Serves 2

Nutrition Information

Each 12 oz. serving contains

- 252 calories
- 12 g total fat of which
- 2 g saturated fat
- 33 g carbohydrate
- 8 g fiber
- 11 g protein
- 102 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 cups soy milk, vanilla flavor
- 1/2 [avocado](#), pitted and peeled
- 1 banana, peeled
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder, unsweetened variety
- 2 packets Splenda

Instructions:

1. Put all the ingredients into your blender
2. Blend until smooth and serve immediately.
3. You can serve this over ice if you want something a little cooler or add ice to the blender

Red Velvet Pancakes with Cream Cheese Topping

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 10 minutes

Serves 5

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 230 calories
- 2.5 g total fat of which
- 1.5 g saturated fat
- 44 g carbohydrate
- 8 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 470 mg sodium

Ingredients:

Cream Cheese Topping

- 2 oz. low fat cream cheese
- 3 tbsp. plain fat free yogurt
- 3 tbsp. honey
- 1 tbsp. fat-free milk

Pancakes

- 1/2 cup white flour, whole-wheat
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour, unbleached
- 2 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup fat-free milk plus an extra 2 tbsp.
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 tsp red food coloring paste

Preparation:

1. Mix all the ingredients for the cream cheese topping and put to one side
2. Mix together the flours, cocoa powder, baking powder, salt and sugar
3. In a separate bowl, mix the food coloring with the milk and stir until it dissolves
4. Whisk in the vanilla and egg
5. Mix the wet ingredients with the dry until fully combined but do not over mix
6. Heat up a large griddle pan and, when hot, spray it with oil
7. Pour ¼ cup of the batter in and allow to set – the edges should begin to bubble
8. Flip the pancake and cook the other side
9. Repeat until all the batter is used – you should have 10 pancakes
10. Place 2 pancakes onto a serving plate and top off with 2 ½ tbsp. of the cream cheese topping

Banana Nut Pancakes

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Cooking time – 5-10 minutes

Serves 6

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 146 calories
- 4 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 222 g carbohydrates
- 7 g protein
- 3 g fiber
- 331 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1 large banana, mashed
- 1 cup milk, 1% or less
- 3 egg whites
- 2 tsp oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsp. chopped walnuts

Preparation:

1. Combine all the dry ingredients together
2. Combine the egg white, milk, vanilla, oil and mashed up banana together in a separate bowl until smooth
3. Mix the wet and dry ingredients together until thoroughly combined and the walnuts are evenly distributed
4. Heat a griddle pan and spray with oil
5. Drop cup of batter in and flip when the mixture begins setting and the edges bubble

6. Repeat for the rest of the batter and serve hot

Baked Oatmeal

Preparation time - 10 minutes

Cooking time – 40-50 minutes

Serves 8

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 190 calories
- 2.5 g total fat of which
- 0.5 g saturated fat
- 8 g protein
- 36 g carbohydrate
- 2 g fiber
- 65 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups Old Fashioned Quaker Oats, uncooked
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 1/3 cups milk, fat free
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1/3 cup brown sugar

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Coat an 8” square glass dish with oil spray
3. Mix the oats with the granulated sugar and the salt
4. In a separate bowl mix the milk with the beaten eggs and the vanilla
5. Add to the oats, stirring to combine. Pour the whole mixture into the baking dish and bake for about 40-45 minutes – the center should jiggle a little
6. Remove the dish from the oven and on to a cooling rack
7. Sprinkle the brown sugar over the top evenly, return to the oven and cook for another 2-3 minutes, or until the sugar starts melting – do not allow to burn and rotate the dish if necessary
8. Serve hot

Applesauce French Toast

Preparation time – 2-3 minutes

Cooking time – 5-10 minutes

Serves 6

Nutrition Information:

Each slice contains

- 150 calories
- 3 g total fat of which
- 0.5 g saturated fat
- 27 g carbohydrates
- 8 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 220 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tbsp. white sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 6 slices whole wheat bread

Preparation:

1. Lightly oil a skillet and put on to heat
2. Mix the eggs, cinnamon, milk, applesauce and sugar together
3. Soak the bread in it, one slice at a time
4. Cook on the griddle until both sides are a golden brown color
5. Serve hot

Turkey Sausage and Mushroom Strata

Preparation time – 5-10 minutes + 8 hours chilling time

Cooking time – 65 minutes

Serves 12

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 180 calories
- 7 g total fat of which
- 3 g saturated fat
- 13 g carbohydrate
- 18 g protein
- 1 g fiber
- 454 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 8 oz. wheat ciabatta bread, cut into cubes of 1”
- 12 oz. turkey sausage
- 2 cups milk, fat free
- 1 ½ cups low-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 3 large eggs
- 12 oz. egg substitute
- ½ cup green onion, chopped
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- ½ tsp paprika
- Fresh ground pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp. grated parmesan cheese

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 400° F
2. Place the cubes of bread onto a baking sheet and bake for 8 minutes
3. Heat a skillet pan and add the sausage. Cook for about 7 minutes, until browned, stirring with a wooden spoon to crumble it
4. Mix the eggs, milk, cheese, parmesan, egg substitute, salt, pepper and paprika together with a whisk
5. Add the sausage, bread, mushrooms and green onions, tossing to coat the

bread

6. Spoon into a greased baking dish, 13 x 9", cover and refrigerate for at least 8 hours – overnight is best
7. Preheat the oven to 350° F and bake the strata for about 50 minutes or until set and lightly brown
8. Cut into 12 and serve hot

LUNCH



Vegetable Quesadillas with Cilantro Yogurt Dip

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 15 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 240 calories
- 2 g total fat of which
- 0 g saturated fat
- 42 g carbohydrates
- 17 g protein
- 433 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 cup black or pinto beans
- 2 tbsp. cilantro, chopped
- 1/2 bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup corn kernels
- 1 cup low-fat shredded cheese
- 6 soft corn tortillas
- 1 medium carrot, shredded
- 1/2 jalapeno pepper, minced

Cilantro Yoghurt Dip

- 1 cup of plain yoghurt, non-fat
- 2 tbsp. cilantro, chopped finely
- Juice from 1/2 lime

Preparation:

1. Preheat large skillet over a low heat.
2. Place 3 tortillas in a line and divide the corn, cheese, cilantro, peppers and carrots between them. Place a second tortilla over the top of each one
3. Place them into the dry skillet and warm through until the cheese has melted, about 3 minutes for each tortilla
4. Flip over and cook for 1 minute on the other side

5. Mix together the yoghurt dip ingredients
6. Cut each quesadilla into 4 to make 12 pieces and serve with the dip

Spinach, Mushroom and Mozzarella Wraps

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 15 minutes

Serves 2

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 240 calories
- 12 g total fat of which
- 3.5 g saturated fat
- 30 g carbohydrate
- 11 g protein
- 5 g fiber
- 330 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 8 oz. fresh mushrooms, sliced (about 2 ½ cups)
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 whole wheat 8" tortillas
- ½ pound fresh spinach or arugula, trimmed and steamed
- 1 plum tomato, diced
- ¼ cup (1 oz.) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. heat up 1 tbsp. olive oil in a sauté pan on a high heat and lay a single layer of mushrooms over the base of the pan with garlic
3. Leave them alone to cook, they will turn a red-brown color, then turn them over and sauté the other side the same
4. Lay out 2 tortillas and layer them with spinach, mozzarella, tomatoes and the mushrooms
5. Roll them up and place them, seam side facing down, into a greased baking dish
6. Bake for about 10 minutes, or until the cheese has melted
7. Cut into quarters, crossways and serve warm

Southwest Style Rice Bowl

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Cooking time – 10 minutes

Serves 2

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 330 calories
- 11 g total fat of which
- 45 g saturated fat
- 30 g carbohydrate
- 27 g protein
- 3 g fiber
- 260 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped vegetables - anything you fancy off the list
- 1 cup cooked meat – your choice
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 4 tbsp. salsa
- 2 tbsp. shredded cheese
- 2 tbsp. low fat sour cream
- 2 tbsp. tofu or beans

Preparation:

1. Heat the oil in a skillet and add the vegetables
2. Cook for about 3-5 minutes or until they are fork tender but still crisp
3. Add the meat, beans or tofu and the rice and heat thoroughly
4. Divide the mixture between 2 serving bowls and top off with the cheese, salsa and sour cream
5. Serve warm

Salmon Salad Pita

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Serves 3

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 180 calories
- 4 g total fat of which
- 0.5 g saturated fat
- 19 g carbohydrate
- 19 g protein
- 3 g fiber
- 420 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup canned Alaskan salmon
- 3 tbsp. plain fat-free yogurt
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. red bell pepper, minced
- 1 tbsp. red onion, minced
- 1 tsp capers, rinsed and chopped
- Pinch of dill, fresh or dried
- Black pepper to taste
- 3 lettuce leaves
- 3 pieces small whole wheat pita bread

Preparation:

1. Mix all the ingredients together except for the pita and lettuce leaves
2. Place 1 lettuce leaf inside a pita and 1/3 cup of the salmon salad
3. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready

Pear, Turkey and Cheese Sandwich

Preparation time -5 minutes

Cooking time – 5 minutes

Serves 2

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 190 calories
- 4 g total fat of which
- 2 g saturated fat
- 28 g carbohydrate
- 13 g protein
- 7 g fiber
- 480 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 slices multi-grain or rye bread
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 slices reduced-sodium cooked or smoked turkey
- 1 pear, cored and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup shredded low fat mozzarella cheese
- Coarsely ground pepper

Preparation:

1. Spread 1 tsp of mustard on each slice of bread
2. Top off with a slice of turkey
3. Arrange the pears on top and sprinkle 2 tbsp. cheese over
4. Season with pepper and broil for about 2-3 minutes, or until the pears and turkey are warm and the cheese has melted
5. Cut in half and serve warm

Tuna Melt

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Cooking time – 10 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 210 calories
- 6 g total fat of which
- 3 g saturated fat
- 20 g carbohydrate
- 19 g protein
- 3 g fiber
- 417 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 6 oz. white tuna packed in water, drained
- 1/3 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup low fat Russian or Thousand Island salad dressing
- 2 whole-wheat English muffins, split in half
- 3 oz. reduced-fat Cheddar cheese, grated
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. Preheat the broiler
2. Mix the tuna, onion, celery and salad dressing together and season with salt and pepper
3. Toast the muffin halved and then place them, split side up on a baking sheet
4. Top off with 1/4 of the tuna mix and broil for 2-3 minutes
5. Top with cheese and broil for about 1 minute, until the cheese has melted

Grilled Vegetable Sandwich

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 10 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 240 calories
- 14 g total fat of which
- 3 g saturated fat
- 24 g carbohydrate
- 7 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 490 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp. light mayonnaise
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1/8 cup olive oil
- 1 cup red bell peppers, sliced
- 1 small zucchini, sliced
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 1 small yellow squash, sliced
- 2 slices focaccia bread
- 1/2 cup crumbled low-fat feta cheese

Preparation:

1. Mix the mayonnaise, garlic, and lemon juice together and set to one side in the refrigerator
2. Preheat the grill
3. Brush olive oil over the vegetables, both sides and place them under the grill. Put the zucchini and peppers closest to the middle with the onion and squash surrounding them
4. Cook for 3 minutes and then turn and cook on the other side for 3 minutes
5. Remove and set aside

6. Spread the mayonnaise mixture on the cut side of the bread and sprinkle feta cheese over the top
7. Grill, cheese side up and covered for 3 minutes, making sure the bottoms doesn't burn
8. Layer the vegetables over the top and serve

DINNER



Pasta with Porcini Mushrooms

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Cooking time – 20-30 minutes

Serves 2

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 425 calories
- 3 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 82 g carbohydrates
- 16 g protein
- 3 g fiber
- 138 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- ¼ oz. dried porcini mushrooms
- 1 tsp unsalted butter
- ½ tsp shallots, minced or substitute with red onion
- 3 tbsp. sun-dried tomatoes, drained and sliced
- ½ cup canned evaporated skim milk
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp white pepper
- ½ lb. fettuccine
- 1 tbsp. grated parmesan cheese
- 1 green onion, trimmed and cut into ¼” slices diagonally

Preparation:

1. Place the mushrooms in a bowl and cover with hot water. Allow them to stand for 10 minutes and then drain, removing any sand remaining. Cut them into ½” chunks
2. Melt the butter and sauté the shallots for 1 minute.
3. Add the tomatoes and mushrooms and cook for a further 3 minutes, stirring constantly
4. Add the milk, pepper and salt, stir in and bring to the boil

5. Turn down the heat, cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes – the mixture should reduce down by $\frac{1}{4}$
6. Cook the pasta as per the package instructions until al dente
7. Drain and place in a large serving bowl
8. Add the mushroom mix, top off with scallions and parmesan
9. Serve hot

Shrimp Pasta Primavera

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 20 minutes

Serves 6

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 360 calories
- 6 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 49 g carbohydrates
- 26 g protein
- 7 g fiber
- 380 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cup fresh asparagus, sliced into 1" lengths
- 12 oz. whole wheat penne pasta
- 1 cup fresh or frozen green peas
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp. garlic, minced
- 1/8 tsp crushed red pepper
- 1 lb. medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ cup green onion, sliced thinly
- 2 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp salt
- Fresh ground black pepper

Preparation:

1. Boil a 6-quart pot of water and cook the asparagus until fork tender, about 4

minutes

2. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the asparagus to a bowl and add the pasta to the water Cook according to package directions
3. Add the peas 2 minutes before the end of cooking time
4. Drain and add to the asparagus
5. Heat the olive oil and cook the garlic and red pepper for about 1 minute
6. Add the shrimp, cook for 2 minutes on each side
7. Add to the pasta and asparagus with the green onion, parsley, lemon juice and parmesan
8. Toss to coat and season with black pepper and salt before serving

Mediterranean Lemon Chicken and Potatoes

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 25-30 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 310 calories
- 3.5 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 32 g carbohydrates
- 43 g protein
- 4 g fiber
- 480 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1” cubes
- 1 lb. potatoes, cut into ¾” cubes
- 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
- ½ cup low-fat Greek or olive oil vinaigrette
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 tsp dry oregano
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- ½ cup chopped tomato

Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 400° F
2. Put all the ingredients except for the tomato into a bowl and mix together well
3. Divide into 4 piles onto 4 squares of heavy foil and fold up the tops and sides to create a tent – make sure you leave room in the tent for air to circulate
4. Bake for about 25-30 minutes or until the chicken is cooked and the potatoes have softened
5. Open the tents carefully and sprinkle tomato over and serve

Cheesy Enchiladas

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 15-20 minutes

Serves 16

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 170 calories
- 5 g total fat of which
- 2 g saturated fat
- 23 g carbohydrate
- 8 g protein
- 4 g fiber
- 500 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 cans black beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup salsa
- 1 ½ cups shredded cheese, reduced fat
- 8 10-inch whole wheat flour tortillas
- 1 can enchilada sauce

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F
2. Spray cooking oil over a 9 x 13 baking dish
3. Mix together the salsa, beans, corn and ½ the cheese
4. Add ½ cup of the mixture to each tortilla, roll and place in the backing dish, seam side down
5. Pour enchilada sauce over the top and the rest of the cheese
6. Bake for 15-20 minutes and serve hot

Spicy Pork Tenderloin with Apples and Sweet Potatoes

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 50-60 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 280 calories
- 5 g total fat of which
- 1.5 g saturated fat
- 40 g carbohydrate
- 20 g protein
- 4 g fiber
- 240 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup apple cider
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp. maple syrup
- ¼ tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp grated fresh ginger OR ¼ tsp dried ginger
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 12 oz. pork tenderloin
- 1 large sweet potato- cut into ¼ to ½-inch cubes
- 1 large apple- cut into ½- inch cubes

Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 375° F
2. Mix the apple cider, vinegar, paprika, maple syrup, black pepper and ginger together and set to one side
3. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan or Dutch oven with a lid on it
4. When the oil begins smoking, turn the heat down and place the pork tenderloins into the pan
5. Cook until all sides are brown, about 8-12 minutes and then remove the pan

form the heat

6. Put the sweet potatoes around the pork and add the apple cider mix
7. Cover, bake for 20 minutes and then turn the potatoes and place quarters of apple around the meat
8. Bake without a lid for 5-10 minutes and then remove from the pan. Let the pork rest for 10 minutes
9. Reduce the apple sauce mixture to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup over the heat
10. Slice the pork into medallions about $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick and serve with the apples and sweet potatoes, pouting the apple sauce over the top

Tuscan White Beans with Spinach, Shrimp and Feta

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Cooking time – 15 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 320 calories
- 11 g total fat of which
- 2.5 g saturated fat
- 22 g carbohydrate
- 32 g protein
- 6 g fiber
- 450 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp chopped fresh sage
- 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- ½ cup low sodium, fat-free chicken broth
- 15 oz. can no-salt added cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 5 cups baby spinach
- 1 ½ oz. crumbled low-fat feta cheese

Preparation:

1. Heat 1 tsp of the oil in a large pan and cook the shrimp until they are opaque, about 2-3 minutes. Transfer onto a plate
2. Heat the rest of the oil and add the garlic, sage and onion. Cook for about 4 minutes, stirring until they are golden
3. Add the vinegar, stir and cook for 30 seconds
4. Add the broth, bring up to the boil and cook for 2 minutes
5. Add the beans and spinach, cook for about 2-3 minutes or until the spinach

has wilted

6. Remove from the heat, add the shrimp and stir in
7. Top off with feta cheese and serve hot

Peppers Stuffed with Turkey & Vegetables

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 50-60 minutes

Serves 6

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 140 calories
- 4 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 16 g carbohydrates
- 11 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 330 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 cup brown rice
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 10 oz. ground turkey
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning (or a mix of basil and oregano leaves)
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1/2 onion
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 chopped zucchini
- 1 can diced tomatoes with liquid

Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F
2. Cook the rice as per the package directions
3. Heat a large skillet over a medium heat and cook the turkey. Stir with a

wooden spoon, crumbling it, until it is not pink anymore

4. During the last couple of minute of coking, add the seasonings, stirring well
5. Add the mushrooms, onion and zucchini and sauté until all the vegetables are tender
6. Add the rice and the tomatoes, stir well and remove from the heat
7. Slice the peppers in half, top to bottom and remove the seeds and the stem
8. Place each half into a baking dish and fill up with the turkey mix
9. Cover the dish with tin foil and bake for about 40-50 minutes – the peppers should be tender when you stick a fork into them
10. Serve hot

DESSERT



Cranberry Apple Dessert Risotto

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 20 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 336 calories
- 3.5 g total fat of which
- 2 g saturated fat
- 71 g carbohydrates
- 9 g protein
- 3 g fiber
- 103 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 3 ½ cups milk – 1% or lower
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 tbsp. butter
- 1 large golden delicious apple, peeled, cored and finely diced
- ½ cup Arborio rice
- 1 ½ cups apple cider
- 2 tbsp. packed light brown sugar

Preparation:

1. Place the cranberries into a small bowl and cover with boiling water
2. Leave to one side for about 20-30 minutes to absorb the water and plump up
3. Heat up the milk, salt and cinnamon stick – it must be steaming hot but not boiling
4. Remove from the heat and set to one side to allow the cinnamon to steep
5. Heat the butter in a heavy sauté pan or a Dutch oven
6. Add the apple and cook for about 1-2 minutes, stirring until the apple is tender
7. Add the rice and cook for 30 seconds, stirring constantly

8. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup off apple cider and cook until nearly all of the liquid has evaporated, stirring constantly – about 1-2 minutes
9. Add the rest of the apple cider and cook until the liquid has almost evaporated and then add the sugar, stirring well
10. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the warm milk to the ice, adding in the cinnamon stick as well
11. Cook for about 2-3 minutes, stirring constantly, until most of the milk has been absorbed into the rice
12. Continue to cook, adding the rest of the milk $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup at a time, until the risotto has a tender creamy consistency. Remove from the heat and remove the cinnamon stick
13. Drain the cranberries and stir them into the risotto with vanilla
14. Leave to cool for 10 minutes before serving

Almond Rice Pudding

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Cooking time – 35 minutes

Serves 6

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 180 calories
- 1.5 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 36 g carbohydrate
- 7 g protein
- 1 g fiber
- 65 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 3 cups milk, 1%
- 1 cup white rice
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ¼ tsp almond extract
- cinnamon to taste
- ¼ cup toasted almonds

Preparation:

1. Mix the milk and the rice together and bring to a boil
2. Reduce the heat, cover the pan and simmer for about 30 minutes until the rice has softened
3. Remove the pan from the heat and add in the sugar, cinnamon, almond extract and vanilla, stirring well to combine
4. Sprinkle the toasted almonds over the top and serve hot

Pear and Strawberry Trifle

Preparation time – 15 minutes

Serves 10

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 161 calories
- 0 g total fat of which
- 0 g saturated fat
- 34 g carbohydrate
- 5 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 182 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 pears
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 cups strawberries
- 1/2 tsp almond extract
- 2 tbsp. orange juice
- 2 tbsp. honey
- 1/2 of a 9” angel food cake
- 3 cups yoghurt, vanilla or lemon flavored
- Pear slices and mint sprigs for garnish

Preparation:

1. Pare and core the pears and slice them thinly
2. Cut the angel food cake into 1” cubes
3. Chop the strawberries
4. Toss the pear slices in the lemon juice
5. Toss the strawberries in the almond extract
6. Combine the honey and the orange juice together
7. Using a deep 2*2 1/2 quart glass bowl, layer it with 1/2 of the cake, followed by 1 tbsp. of the orange and honey, 1 cup of yoghurt, 1 cup of the pear sliced and 1 cup of strawberries

8. Repeat in the same order until all the ingredients are used, and finish off with 1 cup of yoghurt spread over the top
9. Cover and chill for up to 4 hours and add the garnish just before serving

Basmati Rice Pudding with Oranges

Preparation time – 15 minutes

Cooking time – 40-50 minutes

Serves 6

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 286 calories
- 2 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 52 g carbohydrate
- 16 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 210 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup Basmati rice
- 3 large navel oranges
- ½ vanilla bean, split in half lengthwise
- 4 cups fat-free evaporated milk
- ¼ cup low-fat sweetened condensed milk
- 4 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. chopped pistachios
- 2 tbsp. pomegranate seeds

Preparation:

1. Boil up 2 cups of water in a heavy pan and add the rice.
2. Cover and reduce the heat to a simmer, cook the rice for 20 minutes or until most of the water has been absorbed and the rice is tender
3. Using a grater, remove 1 tsp of zest from one washed orange and set this to one side
4. Cut the orange in half and juice it; put the juice to one side
5. Slice the rind off the other two oranges, remove the pith and cut between the membranes to segment the oranges. Set the segments aside
6. Add ½ cup of orange juice to the cooked rice along with the orange zest,

evaporated milk, vanilla bean, sugar and condensed milk

7. Cook on a medium heat for about 20-25 minutes, leaving the lid off and stirring frequently until the rice has a creamy consistency
8. Lift the vanilla bean out and serve the rice garnished with orange sections, pomegranate seeds and pistachios

Yogurt with Fresh Strawberries and Honey

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information

Each serving contains

- 190 calories
- 5 g total fat of which
- 0 g saturated fat
- 26 g carbohydrate
- 11 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 130 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 pint fresh strawberries
- 4 tsp honey
- 3 cups plain low fat yogurt
- 4 tbsp. toasted sliced almonds

Preparation:

1. Clean the strawberries and slice them into quarters. Set to one side
2. Put $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of yoghurt into each of 4 serving bowls
3. Divide the strawberries among the dishes and top each one with 1 tsp of honey followed by 1 tbsp. of toasted almonds
4. Serve straight away

Blackberry Oat Nut Crumble

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 30 minutes

Serves 4

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 240 calories
- 8 g total fat of which
- 2 g saturated fat
- 4 g protein
- 39 g carbohydrate
- 6 g fiber
- 75 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1 tbsp. corn starch
- 2 cups blackberries, fresh or frozen
- 1/2 tsp lemon juice
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp. unsalted butter, diced
- 1/4 cup hazelnuts, chopped

Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F and spray cooking spray over an 8” baking dish
2. Mic the sugar and cornstarch together in a medium bowl until the starch is thoroughly incorporated
3. Add the berries, followed by the lemon juice and stir well to combine
4. Pour the mixture into the baking dish and make sure you scrape out the bowl

well

5. In another bowl, mix the oats with the flour, brown sugar, salt and cinnamon, stirring well to combine
6. Add in the diced butter and cut it into the ingredients using a fork or a pastry blender until the mixture is a crumbly consistency
7. Stir the hazelnuts into the mixture and spread it over the berries
8. Bake for 30 minutes in the middle of the oven and serve warm

Pear-Cranberry Pie with Oatmeal Streusel

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 1 hour

Serves 12

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 220 calories
- 8 g total fat of which
- 2 g saturated fat
- 37 g carbohydrate
- 2 g protein
- 3 g fiber
- 100 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 unbaked deep-dish pie crust, 9"

Streusel:

- ¾ cup regular oats
- 1/3 cup light brown sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tbsp. chilled butter, unsalted, and chopped into small pieces

Filling:

- 3 cups of pears, cut into 1/2" cubes
- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 2/3 cup light brown sugar
- 2 1/2 tbsp. corn starch

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F
2. To make the streusel, mix the oats, sugar, nutmeg and cinnamon together and then cut the butter in until the consistency is like a coarse meal
3. To make the filling. Mix the cranberries, pears, 2/3 cup of sugar and the corn starch together and toss well to ensure the mixture is well combined
4. Spoon it into the pie dish and sprinkle the streusel mixture over the top
5. Bake for 1 hour or until the mixture is bubbling and the streusel topping has browned
6. Cool for at least 1 hour before serving

SNACKS



Blueberry Muffins

Preparation time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – 20 minutes

Serves 12

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 150 calories
- 5 g total fat of which
- 0.5 g saturated fat
- 22 g carbohydrates
- 4 g protein
- 1 g fiber
- 180 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup old-fashioned raw whole oatmeal
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup dry milk
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 egg
- 2/3 cup frozen blueberries

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F and grease a muffin tray with cooking oil spray
2. Mix together the flour, sugar, oatmeal, baking soda, baking powder and the salt in a bowl
3. In a separate bowl mix the milk powder, milk, egg and oil together
4. Add the wet mix to the dry mix and mix together partially
5. Add in the blueberries and stir gently

6. Pour the lumpy batter into the muffin tins and bake for 20 minutes or until the edges of the muffins have turned brown
7. Serve warm or cool

Fresh Summer Melon Cooler

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Serves 3

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 120 calories
- 1 g total fat of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 22 g carbohydrates
- 5 g protein
- 1 g fiber
- 75 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cantaloupe cut into cubes
- 1 cup low-fat lemon yogurt
- 1 cup orange juice

Preparation:

1. Add all the ingredients to a blender
2. Blend until smooth
3. Add ice to the blender if you want a really cool drink or serve over ice in a glass

Zucchini Pizza Bites

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Cooking time – 7-10 minutes

Serves 1

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 69 calories
- 4 g total fat of which
- 1.7 g saturated fat
- 5 g carbohydrates
- 5 g protein
- 1 g fiber
- 136 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 4 slices large zucchini, cut into ¼ inch thick slices
- spray olive oil or cooking spray that is non-stick
- pepper
- 4 tbsp. pizza sauce
- 2 tbsp. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

Preparation:

1. Preheat broiler to 500° F.
2. Spray the oil over both sides of the slices of zucchini and season them with the pepper
3. Put the slices into the broiler and cook for 2 minutes
4. Turn them over and cook for a further 2 minutes
5. Remove the zucchini from the broiler and top each one with 1 tbsp. sauce and ½ tbsp. cheese
6. Cook for 1-2 more minutes until the cheese has melted and serve straight away

Strawberry Frozen Yogurt Squares

Preparation time – 5 minutes + 8 hours chilling time

Serves 9

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 200 calories
- 0 g total fat of which
- 0 g saturated fat
- 42 g carbohydrates
- 2 g fiber
- 150 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 cup crunchy wheat and barley cereal
- 3 cups fat-free strawberry yogurt
- 1 (10-oz.) bag frozen unsweetened strawberries (about 2 ½ cups)
- 1 cup fat-free sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup light or fat-free whipped topping

Preparation:

1. Line a baking dish, 8 x 8" with tin foil
2. Spread the cereal over the base of the dish in an even layer and put to one side
3. Put the strawberries, yoghurt and milk into the blender and puree into a smooth consistency
4. Pour the mixture over the cereal, using a spatula to spread the mixture evenly
5. Cover with foil or plastic wrap and freeze for 8 hours
6. Remove the foil, lifting the dessert out of the pan and leave for 5-10 minutes at room temperature
7. Cut into squares and serve with whipped topping

Peach and Raspberry "Lassi"

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Serves 2

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 120 calories
- 0.5 g total fat of which
- 1.5 g saturated fat
- 5 g protein
- 4 g fiber
- 130 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 1 cup peaches, fresh or frozen
- 1/2 medium ripe banana
- 1/2 cup raspberries, fresh or frozen
- 1 cup low fat buttermilk
- 2-3 ice cubes

Preparation:

1. Place all of the ingredients into the blender
2. Blend until combined and serve immediately

Bean Dip Athenos

Preparation time – 5 minutes

Serves 24

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 54 calories
- 1 g total fat of which
- 0 g saturated fat
- 10 g carbohydrates
- 2 g protein
- 2 g fiber
- 100 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 2 cans, rinsed and drained, garbanzo or navy beans
- 2/3 cup fat-free sour cream
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 4 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes – not the ones in oil
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh or dried parsley
- 2 tbsp. chopped Kalamata or other ripe olives
- Kalamata olives, as garnish
- Choice of vegetables and crackers for serving

Preparation:

1. Combine the beans, garlic, sour cream, and vinegar in a food processor or blender until smooth
2. Add the sundried tomatoes, chopped olives and the parsley and mix
3. Pour into a bowl and garnish with whole olives
4. Serve with the vegetables and crackers

Lemon Pick-Me-Up Smoothie

Preparation time – 10 minutes + 3 hours freezing time

Serves 1

Nutrition Information:

Each serving contains

- 190 calories
- 1 g total fat, of which
- 1 g saturated fat
- 36 g carbohydrates
- 13 g protein
- 0 g fiber
- 167 mg sodium

Ingredients:

- 3 crushed milk ice cubes
- 6 oz. plain fat-free yogurt
- 2 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp fresh or concentrate lemon juice
- ½ tsp finely grated lemon zest using the yellow part of the peel only
- additional lemon zest for garnish

Preparation:

To make the milk ice cubes:

1. Fill up an ice cube tray with milk – 1% or lower variety – and freeze for about 3 hours
2. Release from the tray and place into a large heavy duty bag
3. Use a mallet or heavy rolling pin to crush the cubes unless your blender has an extremely strong motor, in which case you can use them whole
4. Add the 3 cubes to a blender with the rest of the ingredients and blend for a few minutes until smooth
5. Serve with a garnish of lemon zest

7 Day Meal Plan

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Dessert	Snacks
Day 1	<u>Asparagus and Caramelized Onion Frittata</u>	<u>Vegetable Quesadillas with yoghurt dip</u>	<u>Pasta with Porcini Mushrooms</u>	<u>Cranberry and Apple Risotto</u>	<u>Blueberry Muffins</u>
Day 2	<u>Chocolate Smoothie with Avocado & Banana</u>	<u>Spinach, Mushroom and Mozzarella Wraps</u>	<u>Shrimp Pasta Primavera</u>	<u>Almond Rice Pudding</u>	<u>Fresh Melon Cooler</u>
Day 3	<u>Pancakes with Cream Cheese Topping</u>	<u>Southwest Style Rice Bowl</u>	<u>Lemon Chicken with Potatoes</u>	<u>Pear and Strawberry Trifle</u>	<u>Zucchini Pizza Bites</u>
Day 4	<u>Baked Oatmeal</u>	<u>Salmon Salad Pita</u>	<u>Spicy Pork Tenderloin</u>	<u>Basmati Orange Rice Pudding</u>	<u>Strawberry Yoghurt Squares</u>
Day 5	<u>Turkey Sausage and Mushroom Strata</u>	<u>Tuna Melt</u>	<u>Cheesy Enchiladas</u>	<u>Yoghurt with Honey and Strawberries</u>	<u>Peach and Raspberry Lassi</u>
Day 6	<u>Banana Nut Pancakes</u>	<u>Pear, Turkey and Cheese Sandwich</u>	<u>Tuscan Beans with Spinach and Shrimp</u>	<u>Blackberry Oat Nut Crumble</u>	<u>Lemon Pick Me Up Smoothie</u>
Day 7	<u>Applesauce French Toast</u>	<u>Grilled Vegetable Sandwich</u>	<u>Stuffed peppers</u>	<u>Pear and Cranberry Pie</u>	<u>Bean Dip Athenos</u>

Conclusion

Thanks again for downloading. I hope that this book accomplished it's goal and was able to provide you with the steps to begin your DASH Journey. The next step is to take what you've read from this book and to put it into practice. Make sure you commit the first section of this book to memory, and start to understand the foods that you can and cannot eat. With the proper motivation you will be successful, and begin the path to a truly healthy and happy life.

If you enjoyed this book please take the time to review it!

Preview

Paleo Slow Cooker

One of the most popular and effective diets next to the DASH diet is the Paleo diet. Here I share with you the beginning of my introductory Paleo diet book. I convey to you everything you would ever need to know about starting the diet, as well as providing you with a TON of delicious and easy to cook recipes. I've provided the first couple of chapters in this preview, check it out! If you're interested in the book you can read more about it and/or purchase it on amazon here:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/BooP8oX1F8>

Your Ultimate Guide to The Paleo Diet

What is the Paleo Diet?

The Paleo diet is based firmly on the way our ancestors used to eat; eating the way our bodies were designed for and not how society and manufacturers think we should eat. Thousands of years ago, in Palaeolithic times, we were hunter-gatherers. We hunted meat and fish and we gathered nuts, fruits, seeds and vegetables, whatever we could find growing. These days all we hunt out are the latest bargains in the supermarket and gather as many packaged foods off the shelves as we can.

Advances in technology over the years have made much of our food into processed food, grains or dairy and these are not very easy for the human body to digest. The foods in the paleo diet list (which I will talk about in detail later) provide our bodies with the fuel that we need for long-lasting energy as well as help to burn off fat. A good way to think of the Paleo diet is to think of what a caveman would eat.

Many people confuse the Paleo Diet with the Primal Diet but they are not the same thing, although they are similar. The Primal diet is more lenient on some dairy products and doesn't have so many restrictions on the saturated fats. For optimal results, you should undertake the Paleo diet rather than Primal as it is a diet tailored to what our bodies need – high protein, moderate fat and low carbohydrates.

Paleo, also known as Primal, Caveman, and Stone Age diet draws its core principles from our hunter-gatherer, ancestral lifestyle and combines those with modern scientific research and a good dose of common sense. The diet has gained a huge following lately and as a result, it is often scrutinized, misrepresented, and often misunderstood. The thing about Paleo is that it's not really a new diet. The lifestyle – yes it's much more than a diet – has been around for many years. So, what is it all about? How will it help you in your quest for health and weight loss?

These days, we live in a world where we are mostly stuck behind a desk. We eat processed foods, prepackaged foods and we live in a state of constant chronic stress. We don't sleep properly, we don't eat regularly and all of this adds up to being overweight, depressed and sick.

To get ourselves back to optimal health we need to change our lifestyle and one change is in diet. Going on the Paleo diet means going back to our roots, going back to eating foods that are whole and unprocessed. It means sleeping better, moving more and being less stressed. It isn't about becoming a caveman again; it's about recognizing what our bodies are genetically predisposed to live on, to digest. It's about applying what we know, or what we will know, about food, about how some foods affect our bodies differently; about digestion, metabolism, and insensitivity to wheat, gluten and insulin and about an inflamed inner system.

Remember this – although it is called the Caveman diet, not many of those who follow the Paleo lifestyle actually like that name. You see, it conjures up images of running with spears, cooking on campfires and foraging for food. Yes, it's great to go fishing and head off in the early morning and pick fresh berries but, for the Paleo lifestyle, you can easily get what you need from fresh markets, butchers, supermarkets, fish shops and even online. You could even go one step further and grow some of your own salad, vegetables and herbs in the garden.

The Paleo lifestyle is all about eating meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, berries, fruits, seeds and nuts. It doesn't include legumes or grains, sugars or dairy foods although that last one depends on the health of your gut and whether you suffer from any autoimmune responses. So, I will go into more details in a while but, in short, this diet is all about controlling insulin sensitivity, reduce inflammatory effects in the body, increasing nutrient absorption and repairing the health of our guts.

I will say this – even though some people believe it is – it is not all about meat, more meat and nothing but meat. That is not healthy for anyone. Many recipes are vegetarian and most Paleo followers eat as much, if not more vegetables in a day than they do meat. Alongside that, there are healthy dairy foods and fermented dairy foods as well that go great with any Paleo dish.

Although the Paleo diet leans heavily towards omitting carbohydrates, that isn't what it's all about. The biggest problem we face today with our modern diet is the excessively high levels of carbohydrates we consume, especially sugar and this leads to a whole lot of problems, many of them related to insulin, the digestive system and inflammation throughout the body. The paleo diet does still consist of carbohydrates; it's just that they are the right ones from sources such as fruit, vegetables, dairy and nuts.

And let's not forget the fat. We have been told so often, that fat is bad for us but in reality it isn't. In fact, fat is most definitely your friend here. Just think for a minute about some of the low fat foods you might have consumed in the past – low fat butter or margarine that just won't melt, low fat yoghurt that has so much sugar in it, you'd be better off just eating the sugar out of the bowl, and skimmed milk that just tastes like water. Does that sound good to you?

Our bodies need fat to survive, good healthy ones. Good fats are easier to digest than those cardboard carbohydrates we get from things like bread, pasta and processed/packaged foods. For years now, we have been brainwashed into believing that we should eat grains and carbohydrates all day long and to ditch the fat because that's what's bad for you. The truth is, it's the other way around.

It's the carbs and the grains that affect your body and your weight, not the saturated fats. The Paleo diet has plenty of healthy fats for you to enjoy, such as olive oil, avocado, oily fish, coconut oil, macadamia oil, real butter (none of that pretend

stuff), coconut milk, seeds, nuts and organic meats. I guarantee that you will find your food actually tastes so good that you will wonder what you've been eating all these years.

The Basic Principles of the Paleo Diet and What it Means For You

The Paleo diet is all about maintaining a healthy balance of essential fatty acids omega 3 and 6. We do this by cutting out the foods that inflame our bodies, refined, packaged foods, foods that are high in carbs, glucose and those that are high in omega 6 and increasing our intake of omega 3 fatty acids, like those found in oily fish, seafood, oils and meats. The traditional diet is way too low in omega 3 and sky high in 6, which is not good for the body.

What's the Big Deal?

So many people do not understand why a balance is needed for the body. Put simply, millions of years ago, our diets consisted mainly of seafood, meat, fruits and vegetables. People were slimmer and, on the whole, healthier inside. The shift to processed, grain-laden diets is relatively new and since it has been introduced, the average weight has significantly risen and more people are sick, tired and stressed out. There is a direct correlation between feeling ill and groggy and the food we eat with our diets.

Our bodies cannot produce either omega 3 or omega 6 essential fatty acids and, as such, we need to get them from our diets. The reason they are called essential is because we need them, it's as simple as that. These fatty acids don't work the same way as other fats though. Instead of being burned as energy or stored as fat, they are active and play hugely important roles in our bodies, like helping the blood to clot properly and control inflammation.

They are polar opposites – omega 6 causes inflammation while omega 3 reduces it. Too much of the 6 and not enough 3 causes all sorts of problems and, while a certain amount of inflammation is necessary in the body, to help protect us from injury or infection, an excess causes real damage. Think about heart disease, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, arthritis, even some cancers. All of this are either caused or made worse by an excess of inflammation in the body.

The only way to put this right is to cut down on the omega 6 and increase the omega 3 to a healthy balance to keep the inflammation to a safe and acceptable level.

What are The Core Principles of the Paleo Diet?

The Paleo diet is more of a framework than an actual diet. It is designed as a template for you to fit in around your requirements. It certainly isn't an order to return to your roots and take up a real caveman diet although some people do. It is your choice as to whether you cut the carbs to an absolute minimum, whether you want to cut out or increase dairy, how much meat you eat. The Paleo diet is adaptable enough to fit everyone's needs, so long as you stick to the core principles:

- Eat foods that are whole, full of nutrients, unprocessed and nourishing. Put grass-fed and pastured eggs and meat before any other method; go for wild caught fish, not farmed; eat seeds, nuts and fruit in moderation
- Avoid any food that will cause harm to your body by promoting inflammation, damaging your gut beyond help and interrupt your metabolic process. Stay away from toxic foods that cause inflammation like grains, gluten, wheat, sugar, legumes and those processed foods that neither look, nor taste, like food.

The Paleo diet will help you with more than your weight and reducing inflammation. It will help you to reduce stress levels for a start. While the human body is designed to deal with stress, it can only take so much. When you are constantly in a state of stress and anxiety, your body suffers.

When you experience normal stress, your body has a fight or flight response. It will begin to produce cortisol and epinephrine, better known as adrenaline, to help you cope. That's fine in small doses. But, your adrenal glands, responsible for producing these hormones, need to rest and, when you are constantly stressed, they can't. When these organs can't rest they continue to produce cortisol, which, in high doses, will work against your body in an adverse way. Your weight will shoot up, as will your blood pressure and heart rate. Your memory, mood, even fertility levels and sex drive are affected.

One other way to control how much cortisol is produced by your body, and in turn, the effect that has on insulin levels, is to get enough quality sleep. It's no good going to bed and sleeping for 8 hours if you wake up feeling drained. This is one of the reasons you feel so tired during the day. The combination of the Paleo diet along with 8 hours of quality sleep every night will work wonders on your body and you will reap the many benefits.

The Benefits of the Paleo Diet

The Paleo diet almost has no disadvantages. There are those who say that it's a bad diet, simply because it isn't balanced. Why isn't it balanced? Because grains and dairy are out? I've already told you what these so-called healthy grains do to your gut and, if you want to eat some dairy, you can, it's as simple as that. It all depends on what you want to achieve at the end of the day. So even though variety is technically a disadvantage, there are many ways around it.

Now that that's out of the way; let's look at the real benefits of the Paleo lifestyle:

- **Your Cells Will be Healthier**

You probably don't realize how badly off your cells are on a modern diet because you can't see them. Each cell in your body is made from fat, both saturated and unsaturated, and, as such, they rely on a balance of the two to work properly. The paleo diet gives you that balance of fats, thus feeding your cells what they need to function. Normal diets tend to rely too heavily on saturated fats, which are the more unhealthy of the two fats.

- **Your Brain Will be Healthier**

Cold-water fish, especially wild salmon, are an excellent source of fat and proteins and are packed with omega 3 essential fatty acid. This is required, not just for the heart and the eyes but for healthy development and function of the brain. It will stop you from getting brain fog, memory and concentration problems. Other sources of these fatty acids are eggs and meat, preferably grass-fed.

- **You Will Have Less Fat and More Muscle**

Because the diet relies quite heavily on meat and fish, you get a lot of healthy proteins. These proteins are anabolic and are used in the production of new cells, such as muscle mass. Now, although many people argue that muscle is heavier than fat, it is a fact that the more muscle you have, the better your metabolism will be. Why? Because muscles need energy and, the bigger they are, the more proteins they store. This means that energy is being directed into your muscle cells and away from your fat cells.

- **Your Gut Will be Healthier**

All that sugar, processed foods and fabricated fat cause inflammation in your body, specifically within your gut. Add stress to the mix and you can get leaky gut syndrome. This is when your intestinal walls develop holes and undigested food particles can breach the wall and attack your immune system. Your food is meant to stay in the digestive tract until it's ready to be passed on to wherever it is needed, not take the nearest shortcut. Now, you could argue that you are not stressed but I don't necessarily mean external stress here. All that processed food and heavy carbohydrates cause stress on your system and that is all that is needed.

- **Get All The Vitamins and Minerals You Need Naturally**

It's easy to say that you can take a supplement of this vitamin and one for that mineral but some of these supplements are actually doing your more harm than good. The Paleo diet is all about eating the rainbow – in terms of food colors that is! Each different color represents the vitamins and minerals contained in the food, for example, green foods contain chlorophyll, which provides us with vitamin K, potassium, folic acid and Omega-3 fatty acids. Orange and yellow foods contain vitamin C, blue or purple foods are high in antioxidants. You get the picture.

- **Cut Down the Fructose**

Fructose is not digested in the same way as other carbohydrates and high amounts can lead to an insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity. For that reason, the Paleo diet limits how much fructose you eat and what foods contain it. For example, a banana is much higher in fructose content than a kiwi is so, although you don't cut fruit out of your diet, you do need to choose what you eat and limit how much of it.

- **Your Digestive System Will Thank You**

Our bodies are better adapted to digesting a natural food diet than a heavy carb laden one. This is why the Paleo diet encourages eating meat, fish and vegetables, foods that our ancestors managed perfectly well on for millions of years. Your digestive system will not get gummed up or stressed out and the nutrients from the food you eat will be better absorbed into your system.

- **Your Body Will be Less Inflamed**

Inflammation is the leading cause of cardiovascular disease and if there's one thing the Paleo diet does, it's to reduce the amount of inflammatory food you eat and increase that which is inflammatory. The reason is because of the level of omega 3 fatty acids you will be eating, from wild or pasture fed animal sources, along with the healthy vegetables and herbs.

- **Your Energy Levels Will Increase**

Do you ever wonder why you see so many advertisements for energy drinks? Have you ever used them yourself? It's because you have a bad diet. Let me just clarify that for you – your digestive system needs energy to digest your food. If you eat a bad diet, full of hard-to-digest foods, your system needs more energy and it leaves you feeling decidedly lackluster. Eating the right foods means your digestive system needs less energy, leaving you with more

- **You Will Lose Weight**

Because the Paleo diet is lower in carbs and higher in fat and protein, you will feel less hungry. By design, you will be taking in less calories over the course of a day and, as such will lose weight. Add to that the increase in energy and the weight will fall off.

If you are halfway to being convinced but have some concerns about how restrictive the diet is, take a look at the next chapter.