

### Nutrition 101: Keeping It Simple

By Dr. Robert DeVincentis

**M**ore Americans than ever before are starting new innovative "diets" that claim to shed the pounds. Yet more Americans than ever before are obese. Childhood obesity is near epidemic proportions. Children now even 10 years old are being diagnosed with adult onset diabetes. Obviously something is not working. Americans are getting busier and busier than ever before. More and more families need two incomes to survive and the typical workweek is no longer 40 hours. Because of this, we have been forced to become time efficient in everything that we do, including the preparation of good old-fashioned home cooked meals. We have been forced to the world of take out dinners and drive through windows, which consist of anything but wholesome, nutritious meals. Proportion sizes have grown tremendously, have you ever checked the size of the dinner plates and silverware that is currently used at the Outback Steakhouse? Main courses that are now being served are enough to feed three rather than one. So how do we stay healthy and lean with all these temptations?

The first thing you have to do is stay motivated and determined to eat healthy and be healthy. You have to take the time to prepare your meals and you have to learn how to eat to live rather than live to eat!!! In other words, if you do go out to eat know when to put the fork down and ask the waiter to box the rest. If you can accomplish these three things everything else can be a piece of cake, or should I say easy.

When I give nutritional advice I try to keep it as simple as possible. I used to compete in bodybuilding and in 1997 won Mr. Atlanta and Mr. Natural Georgia. The bodybuilders diet is definitely not for everyone and I do not teach this to my patients. Instead, I teach a very simple and logical way of eating that won't necessarily put you to three percent body fat, but while keep you lean and healthy. I have put this nutritional advice in nine simple rules to follow with explanations why after each so it is even easier to understand:

1. *Eat small frequent meals* (at least every four hours)-- Your body can only assimilate and absorb so much food at one time, the rest is stored as fat. This will also keep your metabolism high.

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2. *Eat lean protein with every meal*-- Protein is needed to preserve lean body mass. Protein with each meal will slow the absorption of other foods such as starches into your body. A slower absorption of food will prevent fat storage.
3. *Eliminate all processed foods from the diet*-- This includes sugars, white flour products (white rice, white bread, all pastas, most cereals), and high fructose corn syrup. This also includes anything that does not come from the ground, off of a plant or animal (sorry to all vegetarians).
4. *Eat starches early in the day and less as the day goes on*-- Starches are for energy only, and if eaten early, they will be burned off. All starches should be omitted after 6:00. A list of acceptable starches to follow.
5. *Be aware of and stay away from sugar filled condiments and sauces*-- Read ingredient labels for all sauces, if it has sugar, corn syrup or any other form of sugar, don't eat it.
6. *Keep proportion sizes reasonable*-- Rule of thumb is with each meal have one and a half handfuls of a carbohydrate and one handful of a lean protein (list to follow).
7. *Stay away from all saturated fats*-- Saturated fats are not needed in the body and enough will be consumed even in the lean meats. Saturated fats are just loads of calories that are quickly converted to fat tissue in the body. This includes all hydrogenated oils, deep-frying, butters, lard, animal fat, etc.
8. *Drink plenty of water*-- In order to metabolize adipose tissue, there has to be enough water in the body, or it won't happen. Plus about another hundred reasons to drink plenty of water.
9. *Include some good fats in your diet*-- Unsaturated fats are necessary for the production of hormones, hair, skin and many other processes. They also can suppress your appetite so you don't feel hungry all the time. Nuts, seeds, olive oil and flax seed oil are some excellent sources. Also found in many cold-water fishes.

## ***LISTS OF FOODS***

### **PROTEIN SOURCES:** (Eat one handful at each meal)

- \*Chicken Breast
- \*Turkey Breast
- \*Egg Whites (Egg Substitutes)
- \*All Fishes
- \*Lean Red Meats (Top Rounds and Maverick Brand Meats)
- \*Whey Protein Powders
- \*Most nuts and beans (In moderation)

### **STARCHES:** (Eat one and a half handful early in day and nothing after 6:00 p.m.)

- \*Potatoes (with skin)
- \*Brown Rice
- \*Old-fashioned oatmeal
- \*Carrots
- \*Whole Wheat Breads (If you have to)
- \*Beans

### **FIBROUS CARBS:** (Eat as much as you want, good for meals after 3:00)

- \*Broccoli
- \*Cauliflower
- \*Squash
- \*Cabbage
- \*Lettuce

The last piece of advice I can give is to try to stay away from eating out as much as possible. Packing your lunches and snacks for you and your children is the best way to go. It may take a little bit more time and preparation, but it will be well worth it. However do treat yourself once a week in moderation as a reward for doing well the whole week.

**And Remember- Eat to live NOT live to eat!**

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