

# Plant Based EATING

A green apple is the central focus, with a yellow measuring tape wrapped around its middle. The tape shows measurements in inches, with 146, 147, and 148 visible. In the background, there is a white bowl filled with a colorful salad of tomatoes, corn, and leafy greens. To the right, a clear glass is partially filled with water. The entire scene is set on a rustic wooden surface.

A Beginners Guide To Optimal  
Health, Sustainable Weight Loss  
and Increased Energy

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## Introduction

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As our society evolves, we are constantly facing the need to change our behaviors and habits to increase our health and quality of life. We are now facing climate change, food insecurity and over 40% of our population is suffering from chronic disease.

One of the recent ideas put forward to improve our world and health is the plant-based nutrition.

Even though food regiments are not something our doctor prescribes (yet), research is showing that food has a lot to contribute to our health. It is also a less costly option to our society than prescribing medication.

Whether you want to save the animals, become healthier or simply feel better, the plant-based nutrition is a great option for those of us who want to be a better and healthier person.

Choosing a plant-based nutrition doesn't have to be a complex commitment. With the help of this guide, you will be ready to step into the world of plant-based eating in no time and set yourself up for success.

In this book, you will learn about plant-based nutrition, the research about it and how you can successfully transition into a plant-based nutrition. You will also find some recipes to kick-start your journey and find answers to questions that might be limiting you in your transition to a plant-based nutrition.

First, let's define what plant-based eating is all about.

## Chapter 1: What is plant-based eating?

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We are hearing the word plant-based nutrition more and more in our society. With the launch of documentaries like *Game Changers*, books like *Forks over knives* and the emergence of athletes changing their nutrition to be plant-based, one has to wonder what this is all about.

Our understanding of plant-based eating may differ from one individual to another. In the world of nutrition, plant-based eating is having a large portion of one's nutrition coming from vegetables, fruits, herbs, nuts, whole grains and also include legumes or other plants.

## PLANT BASED EATING

A spectrum of plant-based nutrition options is available to you. Some are very strict (vegan diet), others are still adding animal products like dairy (vegetarian) and at the other end of the spectrum are those that still eat meat, poultry and fish on an occasional basis.

We once believed that early humans consumed a large proportion of animal protein in their diet. It is from that belief that, in the 2000s, the Paleo diet (mainly comprised of animal protein) became really popular in the world of nutrition and diet.

Although, we now know that the nutrition of bipedal primates and Homo sapiens was primarily composed of nuts, fruits, leaves, roots, seeds and water. In that case, the “original” Paleo Diet was in reality plant-based eating. It is also linked to the fact that some of the strongest animals on Earth are not carnivores. The strongest mammal is the gorilla (most are herbivores). It has the ability to lift around 4409 lbs., that is 10 times its body weight.

It would be like a 200 lb. individual lifting 2000 lb. If other mammals can live a healthy and strong life on a plant-based nutrition, we probably can too.

## Why choose a plant-based nutrition?

Many reasons exist for choosing a plant-based nutrition, we will discuss in more details some of those reasons but here's our top 5:

- 1) **Improve your health:** Most Americans consume double the recommended daily intake of protein which can also cause issues with digestion. By reducing your intake of animal food, you will most likely reach the recommended daily intake of protein without surpassing it.

In addition, an increased consumption of vegetables, grains and beans will bring more fiber into your nutrition. Most Americans don't consume enough fiber and that can lead to inflammation of the digestive tract, constipation and hemorrhoids.

- 2) **Succeed in weight loss and weight management:** In general, individuals who are on a plant-based nutrition tend to consume fewer calories than individuals who consume animal protein. That is because most of their calories are coming from healthier options and fewer calories per weight. Plant-based eaters tend to eat less process food and avoid meat focused restaurants like fast-food chain that provide unhealthy meal options.

- 3) **Prevent or manage a chronic disease:** As you will see in the next section, research demonstrates that individuals on a plant-based nutrition can prevent chronic disease, reduce obesity and mostly encourage a healthy lifestyle and increase their quality of life.
- 4) **Stop spending on supplements:** Did you know that our nation's population spends more than \$30 billion a year on supplements? What if you didn't need to waste that money? With a plant-based nutrition, you are more likely to receive all the nutrients you need from natural sources like legumes, vegetables, and fruits. Not only does this save you money, it also saves you from trying to remember to purchase and consume supplements.
- 5) **Save our planet:** Agriculture uses approximately 70% of our fresh water (globally on average). That said, the production of meat requires around 1000% more water (1 kg requires from 5000 to 20,000 liters of water) than some grains like wheat (1 kg of wheat requires between 500 and 4000 liters of water).

In addition, a lot of the grain is cultivated to feed the animals we eat and if we started eating that grain and reduce our consumption of meat, less water and fewer resources would be used to produce animal food.

## Chapter 2: The Science Behind Plant-Based Eating

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Research shows that we need more fruits and vegetables in our plates to prevent chronic disease and help with our weight management. In the next section, you will learn about what we need more in our nutrition intake (vegetables, fruits, fiber) and what we need less (sodium, sugar, protein) in order to live a healthier life.

### **Fruits and Vegetables**

Plant-based eating means that you have a large proportion of your meal that comes from plant-based food. That said, fruits and

vegetables are often the number one thing that comes to mind when we think of a plant-based nutrition.

According to some studies, only 15% of our population is able to meet the minimum requirement of daily recommendation for fruits and even less (10%) for vegetables. Experts in nutrition all across the world agree that the insufficient consumption of fruits and vegetables contribute to the obesity epidemic and chronic disease related to poor nutrition, especially in our country.

A report published by the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended that a daily intake of 400 g of fruits and vegetable would contribute to preventing chronic diseases which include diabetes, heart disease, cancer and obesity. To put this in perspective, 1 tomato is approximately 75 g while a medium size potato is about 150 grams. For fruits, a medium apple is about 150 g and a small kiwi is around 75 g.

### **Fiber**

As mentioned earlier, fiber is lacking in the nutrition of Americans. It is recommended to consume from 25 g (women) to 38 g (men) of fiber on a daily basis. Unfortunately, we consume an average of 15 g daily. That is not enough for most of us and can have a negative impact on the bowels and cause constipation or hemorrhoids.

## PLANT BASED EATING

According to research, an increase intake in fiber can help prevent and reduce heart diseases, diabetes, and colon cancer.

You can find two types of fiber, water-soluble and water-insoluble. Water-soluble fiber can be found in fruits, vegetables, legumes, oat and bran. Since water-soluble fiber absorbs water during digestion, it can help decrease or prevent constipation. Fiber is also known to decrease the blood cholesterol levels.

As for water-insoluble fibers, they can be found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and many cereals, including brown rice. The insoluble fiber wears that name because they remain. Unchanged during the digestion and help with digestion, encouraging a regular movement in the intestine.

Here's the approximate amount of fiber found in various plant-based foods:

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| - ½ cup of black beans,<br>7 g     | - ½ cup Bran cereal (no<br>sugar), 14 g |
| - ½ cup of cooked<br>broccoli, 5 g | - 1 cup cooked brown rice,<br>3.5 g     |
| - 1 Apple, 4 g                     | - 1 cup of oatmeal, 4 g                 |

## **Sodium**

Sodium might be considered a plant-based food but there is a strong warning to decrease our consumption so that we don't exceed the requirements of 2300 mg of sodium consumption daily. The salt shaker in your kitchen is rarely the culprit. The sodium usually comes from highly processed foods (frozen aisle in the grocery store) and restaurant meals.

For example, a fast-food burger can have twice the sodium a homemade one has. According to some research, individuals who regularly consume a meal at fast-food restaurants were approximately 296 mg above the recommended daily intake.

Other studies indicate that individuals who had a plant-based nutrition with reduce sodium consumption (2300-1500 mg a day) showed a reduction in blood pressure and increased weight loss. That said, it is important to understand that plant-based food doesn't always mean healthy food. Sugar is the other plant-based food to beware of.

## ***Sugar***

Did you know that we are among the largest sugar producers in the world? And we are also high consumers of sugar (3<sup>rd</sup> country in the world after India and China). The average American will

consume 152 pounds (six 25 lb. bags of sugar cane) of sugar a year.

Some people will try to convince you that some sugars are better than others. It is true that different types of sugars will have a different impact on your metabolism. But sugar remains something that you should not consume in a large quantity no matter if it is coming from fruit juices, honey, or a muffin.

It is recommended to stick to less than 50 g of sugar a day. A packet of sugar is about 4 g, one glass of cow milk is around 14 g of sugar, a popular brand of store-bought muffin is approximately 32 g of sugar added.

We challenge you to start looking at the labels of the food you eat on a daily basis and identify the amount of sugar intake you get from those foods. You will be quickly surprised to see that sugar is added to so many products we purchase. Even canned vegetables can have added sugar.

By reducing your sugar intake, you increase your chance of losing weights and staying healthy while preventing chronic disease. Reading labels can be difficult, look for the word sugar on the nutrition label, you will see how many grams of sugar there is in the product. Many companies hide the ingredient by using multiple names to describe the sugar added, they use at least 60 names for sugar on labels.

Companies do it that way because they can “divide and conquer” if they only used the name sugar, it would often be one of the first ingredients on the list (which is in order of quantity) and that would tell us that it’s not a healthy option. In order to confuse you (even more) into submission, they categorize the type of sugar by its scientific name so that they can have 10 small amounts of sugar instead of one large amount of sugar.

Here’s an example, the order of ingredients on a popular can of pumpkin pie filling reads like this: pumpkin, water, sugar, salt, spices, dextrose, natural flavors.

Dextrose is a type of sugar, and some companies chose to use that term instead of sugar because it would’ve placed sugar before pumpkin in the ingredient list. Same with a popular bottle of our ketchup that has the following ingredient label: tomato concentrate from ripe red tomatoes, distilled vinegar, high-fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, salt, spice, onion powder, natural flavoring.

This one uses the term high-fructose corn syrup and corn syrup to describe sugar. One packet of ketchup weighs 9 g and 2 g is sugar.

I know, choosing healthy seems like a lot of work, but once you know which products are good for you, it makes your grocery

shopping quicker. Some labels now say low sodium or no sugar added, this can help you pick the right item faster.

## Protein

It is a myth that animal protein is a better protein than plant protein. Since 2007, the World Health Organization has indicated that the difference between animal or plant-based protein is not significant.

Here's examples of approximate amount of protein found in plant-based protein versus animal protein:

<b>Plant-based Protein</b>	<b>Animal Protein</b>
1 cup of dry roasted soy, 37 g	1 Ribeye steak (291 g), 69 g
1 cup of tofu, 20 g	1 fillet of cooked salmon, 35 g
1 cup of boiled chickpeas, 15 g	1 cup of cottage cheese, 23 g
1 cup of quinoa, 8 g	1 cup of whole milk, 8 g
1 avocado, 4 g	1 egg, 6 g

For most Americans, the average daily intake of protein is recommended at 46 g (women) and 56 g (men). One cup of shredded cheese is about 26 g of protein and a 1 cup of diced chicken is 38 g of protein.

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