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"Clean Eating" What is it all about?

Clean Eating

The term "Clean Eating" is being used more frequently in the media by chefs, doctors, exercise specialists, and nutritionists. What does it really mean?

Are you:

- Constipated all the time?
- Having problems sleeping?
- Overweight?
- Having undiagnosed allergies?
- Lacking energy?
- Constantly having food cravings?
- Having ongoing headaches and back pain?

"Clean Eating" might help you with not only immediate benefits with the issues identified above, but may also help you long-term with high cholesterol, high blood pressure, controlling blood sugars, and weight loss.

The basis of "Clean Eating" is to clean up your daily dietary intake by eating food in its most natural state. It means focusing on fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and complex carbohydrates. It is less a new diet craze as it is a lifestyle decision to look at food and your food decisions, based on the food, and its preparation technique.

Besides eating three meals a day and having healthy snacks in between, "Clean Eating" can be explained as follows:

1) Whenever possible eat fresh food (not processed, refined or canned products).

- Processing often adds salt, fat, sugar and other chemicals. It can reduce the nutritional value and fiber content depending on the product.

- Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Canned fruit can be loaded with sugary syrup. Bottled juices may contain many artificial ingredients that can be high in sugar and sodium.
- If fresh is not available, try frozen rather than canned. It is usually picked when ripe and the freezing process locks in many nutrients.
- When buying canned or processed foods, buy foods that have a short ingredient list. The longer the ingredient list, the less "clean" the food because it is more man-made than natural.

2) Eliminate refined sugar from your diet.

- Drink plenty of water and eliminate sugary caffeinated drinks from your diet.
- Juice your own fresh fruit rather than buying processed fruit juice to quench your thirst.
- Eliminate eating "junk food" snacks between meals, and sugar-packed desserts.

3) Choose organic foods (produce and meat) whenever possible. Organic foods are usually "clean" of hidden pesticides, hormones, and additives.

4) Eliminate dairy products. Many "clean eaters" choose to substitute soy, coconut and almond milk into their daily diet. Others cut back or cut out specific dairy like cheese and yogurt.

5) Eliminate saturated fat from your diet. This includes animal fats such as cream, cheese, butter, and fatty meats and many prepared foods.

6) Eat unsalted nuts and fish to get the good fats into your diet.

7) Include complex carbohydrates in your diet such as beans, lentils, dried, peas, starchy vegetables, whole-grain breads and cereals. Some clean eaters do choose to stay away from breads and cereals as part of their daily intake.

8) Avoid eating fried and deep-fried foods.

Shop the Grocery Store Perimeter

Usually shopping the perimeter of your local grocery store provides a good visualization of where to find fresh foods. The produce department is often on one side of the entrance. Along the back of the store is usually the fresh meat and seafood, and dairy, and then the frozen food sections are on the other end of the

store where you can get those fruits and vegetables you are unable to get in the produce department.

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