

What is a balanced diet ?

You are constantly being advised to eat a balanced diet, which of course you would if you knew exactly what constituted a balanced diet! Maybe I can offer you a little help in that direction.

The first thing to realise is that there is a vast difference between textbook nutrition and real life experience. I design nutritional programmes for healing, health, energy, figure/physique contests, weight loss/gain, sportspeople etc. There can be a vast difference between a diet to lose 50lbs, and one for someone with arthritis or asthma. Yet despite this wide range of individual requirements we can nevertheless give you a foundation on which to build a balanced diet.

So let's check you out:

A How fat are you? Can you grip a handful of fat on your tummy area? Do you get breathless easily? Is your breathing laboured? If the answers to these questions are 'Yes', then you most likely have too much fat in your diet.

B Now raise your arm to shoulder level, palm facing upwards, then bend your arm and make a muscle like the body-builders do when they are showing their biceps. Then press into your bicep with your fingers. Does it feel lumpy, like little small balls under the skin? If so, this is a sure sign of lack of protein.

C How is your energy, your drive, your determination? How often do you feel euphoric?



If your body is getting the proper mixture of energy fuels, then you will feel as if it is charged up. You will particularly notice this after a properly balanced meal. If you are eating such meals for a considerable time then you will notice this energy effect even when you get up out of bed, before you have eaten any food. Energy fuels? The proper mixture of complex and simple carbohydrates.

STEP 1

Get yourself a simple nutrition manual that lists the amounts of protein, fats and carbohydrates in

jam (best with no added sugar-see further on). Positive results from this: The amount of fat on your body will decrease. (Any of the people I trained for figure contests will vouch for this, and they were mostly winners.....oops! sorry, am I boasting again?). Your energy will go up, breathlessness will vanish, and you will be able to run (safely - I consider it dangerous for overly fat people). You will no longer find yourself yawning or falling asleep after meals (a lack of oxygen caused by too much fat). Of course, your heart will be pretty pleased with all this too.

STEP 3

Start to increase your protein foods, which make the muscles or solid tissue in the body. Think of it like this - you have a bony framework (skeleton), then solid tissue to help you move the body. If you lack protein you will always be flabby and weak. You have heard the saying "An empty sack can't stand", so how can you expect to have stamina, drive, determination? Protein foods are often listed as meat, fish, eggs, cheese and milk. But cheddar cheese may be as high as 50% fat. Try cottage cheese instead. Milk is one-third fat - try skim. Try lean meat such as round steak and white fish which is fat-free.

STEP 2

Cut your fats down to a minimum(vegetable oils as well as animal fats). Aside from the obvious fats such as butter or cream, there are hidden fats such as that in an egg (all in the yolk). Nuts and cheese are mostly very high and so on, so you need that manual! Don't, if possible, fry anything. Try to eat brown bread instead of white - much more flavoured, so you can try to eat as little butter on it as possible. Better still eliminate it altogether. Try bread and banana or health

STEP 4

Increase your complex carbohydrates which supply energy to the body at a slow, steady rate. They are cereals (oats, rye, wheat, rice,) potatoes, bananas and vegetables. In the absence of excess fats potatoes are not fattening. It's the butter and the frying of the poor things that does it! Cut down on simple carbohydrates which are sugars, or in short anything that tastes sweet - honey, golden syrup, sugary jams. Instead take sweet

fruits- any fruits that taste sweet such as pears, grapes, tropical fruits. For reasons that we won't go into here, excess simple carbohydrates will make you feel exhausted. If you suffer from low energy, avoid them like the plague! Positive results from this: A highly charged, firm, energetic body that rarely feels tired. To sum up: increase your protein; drastically decrease your fats; use sweet fruits for instant energy, backed up by the complex carbohydrates for stamina. If the diet is properly balanced, you should be able to eat as much as you want without becoming overweight. There now! At least the foundation's in.

Tony Quinn.

Diet Consultations at our Centres

Since writing this article Tony has continued his research into nutrition and has come up with many new discoveries. The latest improved version of the Balanced Diet is the Alkaline Balanced Diet which you can enquire about in any of our health centres. If you would prefer a

more comprehensive understanding of nutrition or need a programme for weight loss, weight gain, dealing with allergies etc. - why not make an appointment to see one of our resident dieticians? See list of centres and telephone numbers on pages 8 and 9.



Recent research indicates that nutrients from food or supplements may help us prevent heart disease, cancer and other chronic ailments. The bright new stars of the latest research are the so-called anti-oxidants: Vitamin C, Vitamin E and Beta-Carotene (a form of Vitamin A with its own properties.) These anti-oxidants mop up what are called free radicals. Free radicals cause damage by snatching electrons from healthy cells setting off a chain reaction that

Vitamin Revolution

Major research projects throw new light on the role & value of vitamins

wreaks widespread havoc on cells, eating away at their membranes and damaging their genetic material.

Free radical damage is implicated in some 60 age-related conditions including cancer and heart disease. The first hint that anti-oxidants might help in preventing cancer came

from surveys in the 1970s showing that incidence is lowest in populations where people consume the most fruit and vegetables.

VITAMIN E Recently, Dr. Walter Willett, a Harvard epidemiologist, and his colleagues grabbed the world's attention with two new studies suggesting that Vitamin E can help prevent heart disease. The researchers studied more

than 120,000 men and women for up to 8 years and found that those taking daily supplements of at least 100i.u.'s reduced their risk of heart disease by about 40%.

VITAMIN C In a review published last year, Dr. Gladys Block of the University of California, tallied the results of 20 studies that monitored the incidence of mouth, throat

and stomach cancer in relation to Vitamin C intake. In 18 of those 20 studies low intake emerged as a clear risk factor. On average, people consuming the least Vitamin C were stricken at twice the rate of those consuming the most.

BETA-CAROTENE Researchers at Harvard have found preliminary evidence that 50 mg Beta-Carotene supplements taken every other day can halve the risk of heart attack among men with histories of cardi-vascular disease. Such findings are doubly encouraging because the anti-oxidants are so safe. Excessive Vitamin C may cause diarrhoea but the body expels what it cannot use so overdose is not a danger. Vitamin C and

Beta-Carotene can accumulate in our fat stores but neither is known to cause any side-effects more serious than a stomach-ache or a reversible colouring of the skin.

MULTI VITAMIN & MINERAL Having researched many multi-vitamin and mineral formulas from all over the world we eventually found one manufactured in America which is truly a superb product. Containing a total of 55 ingredients including the anti-oxidants vitamin C, vitamin E, and beta-carotene, this multi-vitamin formula is sugar-free, yeast-free and is easily digested.

Brendan Clifford.