



Nutrition
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THE POWER OF WHOLE FOODS

THINK AS A WHOLE

The benefits of a whole food diet are endless. Minimally processed and close to nature, whole foods are nutrient powerhouses. They support your body's functions by supplying a number of nutrients: antioxidants for optimum health and disease prevention, omega 3 fats for your heart and brain and probiotics for a healthy gut and immune system, just to name a few.

EAT AND BE SATISFIED

Poor-quality food always leaves you wanting more. Think of the times you've plowed through a fast food meal and still felt hungry. Processed foods often lack fibre and leave you feeling empty. The refined carbohydrates typically found in processed foods spike your blood sugar and cause you to crash, which leaves you searching for a snack an hour post meal. High in fibre, whole foods help you to feel full and also keep your bowels healthy and help stabilize blood sugar release. Remember, your body needs nutrition, not just calories. Eating good-quality food such as fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, whole intact grains, lean meats and dairy, beans and legumes, nuts, spices and oils will satisfy you beyond a full belly and every cell in your body will thank you with increased energy.

LOOK BEYOND THE PACKAGE

Whole foods usually lack fancy packaging, which leaves these unsung heroes out of the spotlight. Processed foods generally come with eye-catching packaging that is littered with health claims. When it comes to healthy eating the general rule of thumb is fewer health claims equal a healthier choice. Instead of choosing yogurt fortified with omega 3 fatty acids add walnuts to your breakfast. Eat raw almonds and dried cranberries for a snack instead of purchasing roasted and sweetened trail mixes. Eating this way is better for you and your wallet. Processed foods, especially gourmet ones, often cost more than the raw ingredients.



This handout is meant for educational purposes only. The information contained is not meant to replace consultation with a Registered Dietitian or qualified health professional.

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Have a nutrition question?

Ask Desiree, the Choices Dietitian at nutrition@choicesmarket.com

GET THE WHOLE PICTURE ON SUPPLEMENTS

We can fly to the moon but we still don't fully understand the contents of a stalk of broccoli; nutritional science is still playing catch-up with nature's wisdom. When we isolate a nutrient from food and turn it into a supplement, it may or may not function in the same way. Whole foods are still your best source of disease-fighting antioxidants and phytochemicals. For instance, eating whole fruits and vegetables will reduce your risk for a legion of ailments: cancer, diabetes, heart disease, Alzheimer's and even cataracts. Although whole foods guarantee nutrition, supplements are helpful for filling in nutritional gaps: calcium for bone health, vitamin D for immunity and fish oils for those who don't like seafood. Let Choices' Health Care Consultants help you determine what supplements might complement your lifestyle or speak with the Choices Dietitian.

BUY INTO THE WHOLE TRUTH

Be sure to eat a variety of whole foods to reap their benefits—variety really is the spice of life! Whole foods are loaded with nutrients that play a number of roles: antioxidants such as flavonoids and carotenoids promote optimum health; vitamin B12 and folate support a healthy nervous system; magnesium for strong bones; potent substances like indole 3 carbinol (I3C) in broccoli and epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) in green tea fight cancer; lutein in spinach protects your vision and vitamin D supports your immune system and bone health.

Below is sample of the nutritional power of whole foods; think of it as a health claim for whole food living. This is by no means an exhaustive list, so if you don't see your favourite below, don't worry. Eat with confidence knowing that each bite is getting you one step closer to vital health.

Apples with their skin	Flavonoids
Avocados	Monounsaturated fats, folate, vitamin E, plant sterols
Berries and cherries	Multiple antioxidants, fibre
Broccoli	Indole 3 carbinol (I3C), Sulphoraphane
Cocoa and Dark Chocolate	Magnesium, iron, polyphenols, flavonoids
Green Tea	Epigallocatechingallate (EGCG)
Lean Chicken and Turkey	Protein, zinc, vitamin B12
Legumes: black, kidney and pinto beans, chick peas, lentils	Protein, folate, magnesium, potassium, flavonoids, fibre,
Nuts	Omega 3 and monounsaturated fats, vitamin E, folate, selenium, magnesium, sterols
Oats	Beta glucan (a soluble fibre)
Pumpkin	Carotenoids, lutein, magnesium
Quinoa	Protein, fibre, iron, potassium
Salmon, Herring and Mackerel	Omega 3 fats, vitamin D and B12, protein
Seeds	Omega 3 and monounsaturated fats, lignans
Spinach and Kale	Beta carotene, folate, lutein, vitamin K
Sprouted Grain Bread	Low Glycemic Index, fibre, protein
Tofu	Isoflavones, calcium, protein
Tomatoes, Red Bell Peppers	Lycopene, beta carotene
Yogurt	Probiotics

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Kitsilano

2627 W. 16th Ave.
Vancouver
604.736.0009

Cambie

3493 Cambie St.
Vancouver
604.875.0099

Kerrisdale

1888 W. 57th Ave.
Vancouver
604.263.4600

Yaletown

1202 Richards St.
Vancouver
604.633.2392

Choices in the Park

6855 Station Hill Dr.
Burnaby
604.522.6441

Rice Bakery

2595 W. 16th Ave.
Vancouver
604.736.0301

South Surrey

3248 King George Hwy.
South Surrey
604.541.3902

Choices at the Crest

8683 10th Ave.,
Burnaby
604.522.0936

Kelowna

1937 Harvey Ave.
Kelowna
250.862.4864