



**YOUR TEMPLE
OF HEALTH**

By Eric Falcon

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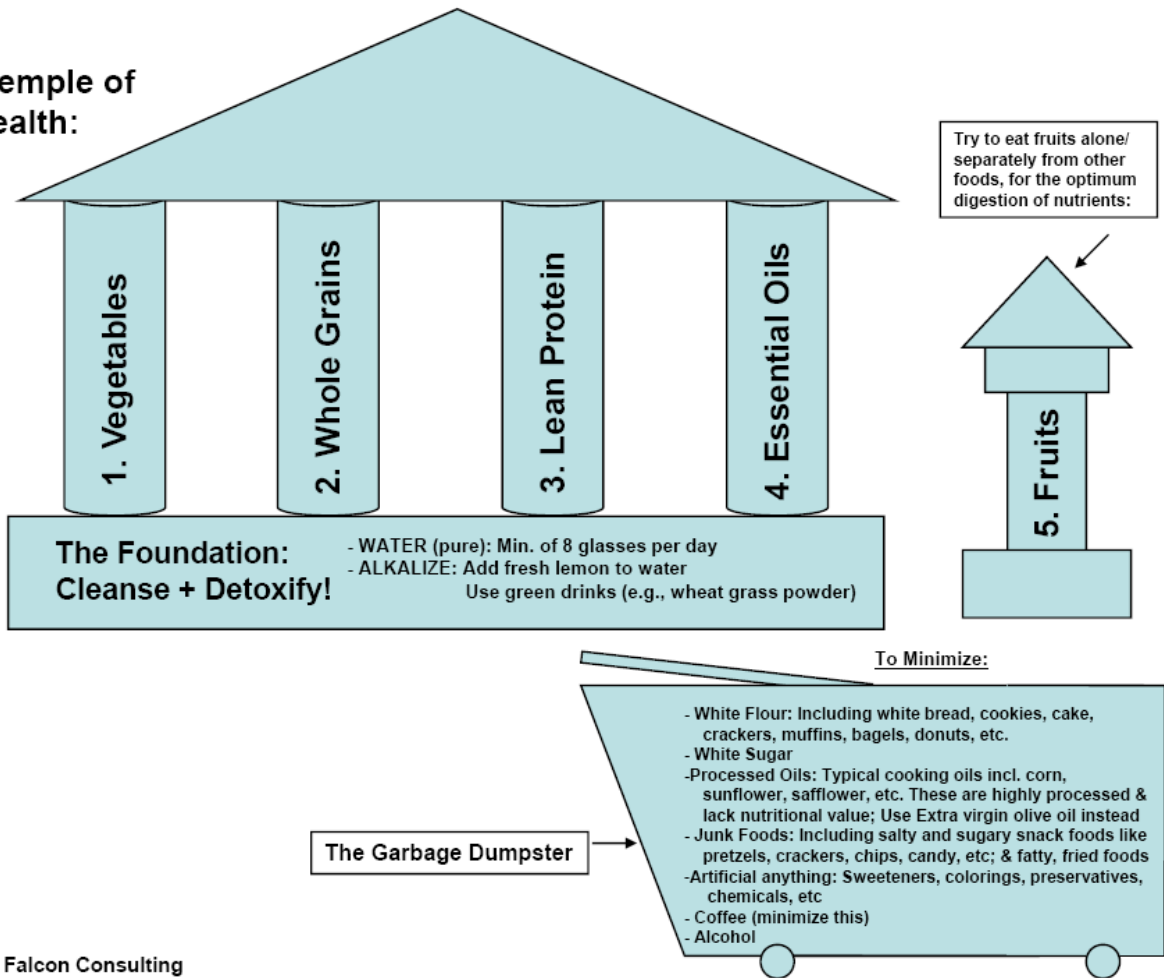
Your Temple of Health E-Book

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YOUR BODY = THE TEMPLE

The Temple of Health:



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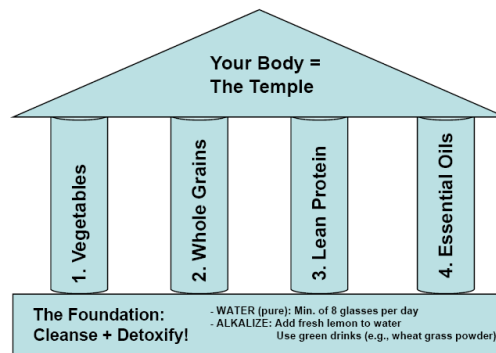
Introduction

Drink plenty of pure water each day and regularly engage in healthy eating habits, aerobic exercise, and mental & spiritual renewal. Doing this will ensure your heart, body, and mind stay healthy, as well as provide you with lots of physical energy and mental clarity...not to mention keep you feeling youthful and agile, regardless of your age!

You may know of the “food pyramid,” which is a visual image used to convey the food groups you’re supposed to choose from and consume daily. Yet, the food pyramid has met with controversy and even disapproval among many nutrition experts. Also, our society’s skyrocketing rates of obesity and adult-onset diabetes, as well as heart attacks and cancer, clearly mean we have to try something different.

Many people are familiar with the phrase “your body is a temple.” I sure hope that you treat YOURS that way! Well, I've found that a "temple" is a GREAT visual aid to serve as a reminder of the important components of a healthy diet...AND as a reminder of how to treat your body (in case you're not doing that now)!

Here’s my “Temple of Health” diagram I came up with:

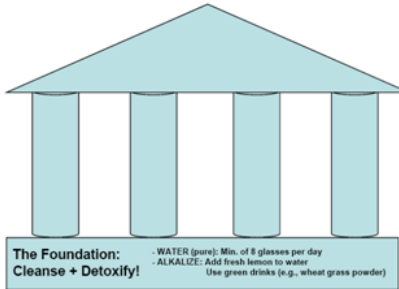


The Foundation of Health: CLEANSE and DETOXIFY

The basis of a healthy life nowadays has to rest upon a firm foundation of regular 'cleansing' and 'detoxifying.'

We live in an increasingly toxic environment and we're regularly exposed now to varying amounts of toxins and pollutants in our air, water, and soil, as well as small levels of harmful chemicals like preservatives and pesticides in many of our foods. It's now necessary to actively cleanse & detoxify our bodies each day, in order to counteract the harmful effects of these toxins...and there's no amount of healthy eating or exercising which can replace the need for this, or make up for it!

Fortunately, there are a few simple steps we can take each day to cleanse and detoxify our bodies!



The first step is to drink plenty of fresh, pure **WATER** throughout each day. And, I'm not talking about tap water! It should be filtered water, whenever possible. The filter I use at home on my faucet is an Aquasana (www.aquasana.com), which is excellent.

Drink a minimum of 6 to 8 glasses of water each day. This will help to cleanse and flush out the toxins you accumulate in your body.

Also, another great way to detoxify is to "**ALKALIZE.**" Many toxins are acidic, and so one way to counteract their harmful effects is to neutralize them through alkalizing. **There are two very simple ways to help with this.**

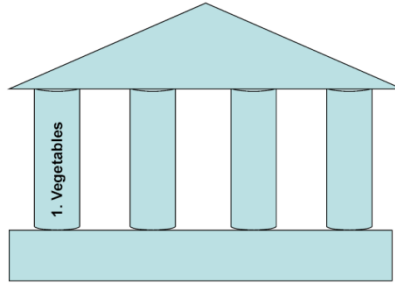
The first easy way to alkalize is to squeeze the juice from a piece of fresh lemon into the water you drink, as often as you can. When you eat out, ask the waiter to bring you a glass of water with a slice of lemon in it. Oh, and request "no ice;" that way you can drink it down right away before you eat, while you're looking at the menu and selecting your order, or waiting for your food to come out.

Also, I recommend that you start out each morning with a very tall cup of water and the juice from a slice of fresh-squeezed lemon in it (organic, if possible). That's what I do every morning and it's a great way to start out the day.

The second excellent way to alkalize is by regularly drinking a "**green drink.**" **Green drinks include the juices from various kinds of grasses like wheat grass and barley grass.** You can get these in a convenient powdered form, which are available in health food stores or via the internet. I'll have a section later in this article regarding green drinks, for more information. Have a green drink every day!

The First Pillar: Vegetables

The **Vegetable** group of foods makes up the first of the important pillars of a healthy diet. All types of vegetables are good for you and you should strive to eat as many as you can each day. Organic is best (see my section on Organics, below), but don't let the possible lack of access to organic vegetables be an excuse to neglect this important food group in your diet.



You should especially try to emphasize the intake of dark green leafy vegetables in your daily diet, and regularly eat lots of **raw kale, spinach, Swiss Chard, mustard greens, collard greens, and dandelion greens**. These dark green leafy veggies are all packed with fiber, antioxidants, and other nutrients, including calcium and iron. They go great with mixed salads, which are easy to make and eat any time. Oh, and at a minimum you should eat one salad a day, and ideally two a day - one with lunch and dinner.

Nature gave us an incredible range of types and tastes of vegetables to choose from, so it's impossible to ever get bored with this food group if you're doing it correctly. Regularly eat a wide variety of different types of vegetables. **Change up your diet with different kinds of squashes, peas, green beans, asparagus, brussels sprouts, carrots, yams, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.** Make sure to add a variety of veggies to your salads whenever you can, like **cucumbers, avocados, tomatoes, sprouts, green peppers, and chick peas.**

The best thing to use as a salad dressing is a few sprinkles of **extra virgin olive oil** and some **fresh ground pepper**. However, if you do use standard salad dressings now and then for variety, then at least try to use them sparingly on your salad. Add just a few drops of dressing, and then mix your salad thoroughly. You'll be surprised to find that you get a nice even touch of dressing throughout your salad this way, which tastes just as good if not better than adding the usual gobs of dressing some people feel they need to use...but without all those extra unneeded calories!

Certain nutrition experts feel it's important to intake a wide variety of vegetables with deep rich colors regularly, in order to get the full complement of nutrients our bodies need. Some examples include **carrots, radishes, and beets**, with their bright orange, red, and purple colors, respectively.

Regarding raw versus cooked vegetables: **raw vegetables are FAR healthier for you** (e.g., salads, raw veggies as snacks, etc). Lightly steamed is the next healthiest form, and is preferable over fully cooked vegetables, since the cooking process destroys the healthy live enzymes found in raw veggies. Canned vegetables are the least healthiest form, and provide very little nutritional value.

Choose Organic When Possible

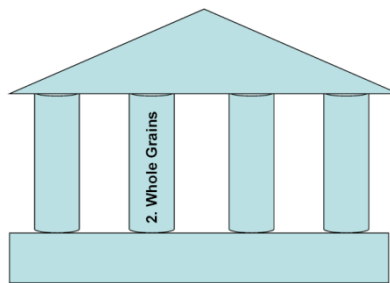
Organic means the food was grown or raised using no pesticides, which are chemicals that are poisonous to the body. Fortunately, it's becoming much less expensive now to buy organic in the States than it used to be. The prices have come down significantly since most major big-chain supermarkets in the US began offering organic foods choices. Additionally, many major urban areas have farmers' markets where you can find low-cost, locally and organically grown produce. Furthermore, by supporting the farmers and growers of your local area you are contributing to a more sustainable community and planet!

The big reason for choosing organic as much as you can whenever you go shopping, is because there are enough toxins in our environment nowadays to deal with (air, water, soil, etc), without adding 'fuel-to-the-fire,' so to speak, by also consuming toxins in the foods we choose to eat.

Examples of other toxins to reduce or avoid, besides pesticide-laden fruits and vegetables, include: preservatives; artificial ingredients & sweeteners; antibiotic- & hormone-laden dairy products and meats; and chemical run-off from plastic containers which are heated in microwaves. (If you're going to heat any food in a microwave, use porcelain, glass, or ceramic containers, and NEVER use plastic ones! Even better, skip the microwave altogether and use a toaster oven instead if possible, when you need to heat up a meal or food item.)

The Second Pillar: Whole Grains

Whole grains include **100% whole wheat bread**, **brown rice**, **wild rice**, **oatmeal**, and **bran cereals**. Strive to eat several servings of these wholesome foods throughout the week, and attempt to replace any "refined grain" products that you usually eat with a healthy "whole grain" alternative instead, as often as possible.



Non-whole wheat flour is perhaps the most notorious "refined grain." It's typically called simply "wheat flour," or "white flour." Unlike the whole grain foods mentioned above, refined grains have been completely stripped of ALL of their healthy components, including their fiber-rich bran layers and their vitamin-rich germ portion. Refined grains are therefore DEVOID of any nutritional value. That's what the term "refined," or "overly processed," means in this context.

Non-whole wheat flour is used to make most common baked goods including white bread, cookies, crackers, cakes, donuts, pancakes, waffles, bagels, muffins, pizza dough, etc. The typical American diet is largely based on these de-fibrated carbohydrates. All of these baked goods are examples of “empty calorie” foods which contribute lots of calories without filling you up. These foods are dense sources of calories, and since they don’t have much bulk, you can end up eating a lot just to get a feeling of being full. And as mentioned, they are devoid of nutritional benefit.

Furthermore, refined grain foods like baked goods made from white flour raise the blood sugar (glucose) levels up too high and too fast, and the frequent intake of these products has contributed hugely to our nation's current epidemic of obesity and adult diabetes. Don't be another victim!

Unfortunately, there's a lot of wide-spread misinformation and confusion in our society regarding the topic of "grains." I cringe whenever I hear someone, such as a health authority, nutrition expert, or newscaster, refer to the "grains" group when discussing dietary advice, without also simultaneously specifying whether they're referring to 'whole grains' or 'refined grains.' There's a WORLD of difference between them!

You often hear non-specific phrases like "be sure to eat 6 servings from the *grains group* [sic] each day, " or, alternatively, you'll hear somebody say "you should cut back on your *grains* [sic] intake because they're high in Carbs...;" these statements are silly and misleading since they make no distinction at all between 'whole' grains and 'refined' grains.

The plain and simple truth is this: All whole grains are HEALTHY for you and you should eat as much of these as you can each day. (An exception to this would be if you have an allergy or gluten intolerance that would prevent you from doing so; please see my note at the end of this section for more on this). Whereas all refined grain products are very UNHEALTHY for you (and for everyone) and we all should minimize our intake of these whenever possible.

This kind of misinformation and confusion also occurs with the term "Carbs," meaning the group of foods made mostly of carbohydrates. Just as with "grains," there's also good (healthy) and bad (unhealthy) kinds of "Carbs." However, most people make no distinctions at all when they're talking about Carbs and they mistakenly lump all carbohydrate-based foods together into one broad category. Again, there's a WORLD of difference between good and bad Carbs.

The simple truth is this: the **Good Carbs** are whole grains, vegetables, and fruits, and you should eat all you can of these kinds of foods. (Accommodate as appropriate for any specific allergies or intolerances, of course.) The **Bad Carbs** are the refined grains, such as anything made with white flour, as well as white sugar and white rice, and we should eat as little of these kinds of foods as possible.

When it comes to breads, buy and eat only **100% whole wheat bread**, or other whole grain breads, such as those made from oat, corn, or brown rice flour. Also, try some **sprouted whole grain breads**, which are excellent for you and can be found in the freezer section of most whole foods health stores. Only 100% whole grain breads and sprouted grain breads contain the important bran and germ components of the grain, so they are naturally high in fiber, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients.

Also, most health food stores carry tasty ready-made cookies, crackers, pastas, and other products made from whole grain flours: like 100% whole wheat flour, as well as oat flour, corn flour, and brown rice flour. You can even find delicious frozen pizzas, which have crusts made from 100% whole wheat flour, at many health food stores nowadays. These are all FAR healthier alternatives to the refined versions.

Brown rice and **wild rice** are both whole grains also and are healthier versions of the overly processed, but very popular, "white rice." White rice is a refined food that's been stripped of its fiber-rich bran layer and nutrient-rich germ component, just like non-whole wheat flour has been. Therefore, white rice is simply another "empty calorie" food, and should be minimized in your diet; and replaced as often as possible by brown rice or wild rice.

"Whole grains" are very HEALTHY for you, and contain the entire grain kernel -- including the healthy bran and germ components. Examples include:

- Whole wheat flour and 100% whole wheat bread
- Oatmeal
- Brown rice

"Refined grains" are very UNHEALTHY for you and have undergone excessive processing that removes the healthy bran and germ components. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life, but it also removes dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins. Some examples of refined grain products are:

- Baked goods made from white flour, such as white bread, cookies, crackers, cake, donuts, muffins, bagels, pastries, pancakes, waffles, etc
- White rice

***Note: Even most so-called "wheat bread" is simply bread that's made from refined white flour, which has just had some brown food coloring or a tiny amount of whole wheat added. It's not truly a whole grain product at all!! Check bread packages closely, and be sure to only select and buy bread that has "100% whole wheat" listed as the very first ingredient on the package.**

Oatmeal is another healthy and wholesome whole grain, which you should **strive to eat regularly**. Eat hot or cold oatmeal for breakfast often; use a touch of honey or maple syrup as a sweetener, if desired.

Whole grain, bran-rich breakfast cereals include Shredded Wheat, as well as several other popular whole grain cereals sold in major supermarkets. These include Wheaties, Bran Chex, Corn Bran, All-Bran, and Fiber-One. However, most of these contain white sugar and other refined ingredients. As healthier alternatives, there are dozens of **delicious whole grain cereals now available at whole foods health stores, which rely on fruit juices as sweeteners**, and are therefore much better for you.

Other excellent whole grains include **quinoa, amaranth, millet, and barley**. These, along with raw wheat berries, oats, brown rice and wild rice, can be purchased in bulk at your local health food store. Each of these raw grains can be boiled and seasoned, and made into lively meals. **A great idea is to boil and season some quinoa or other raw whole grains, using vegetable or chicken bullion in the boiling water for flavoring. Then, serve and eat over a salad or a bed of raw lettuce. This makes a delicious lunch or dinner, and is one of the healthiest meals you can eat!**

You'll find that these wholesome unrefined grains will fill you up and give you a feeling of "fullness" much quicker than refined, processed foods do. So, you'll naturally wind up eating less over time, without the struggle you get when you're on a diet that includes lots of foods made from refined, processed white flour.

The bulkiness of boiled whole grains, which comes from the water they absorb while cooking, are what makes them filling and satisfying. Each seed swells up when it cooks and soaks up water, which is carried in the grain until it is completely broken down in your digestive tract. (The water you drink, on the other hand, is absorbed directly from your stomach almost as soon as it gets there. So just drinking water or other liquids will not necessarily leave you with this same full feeling.)

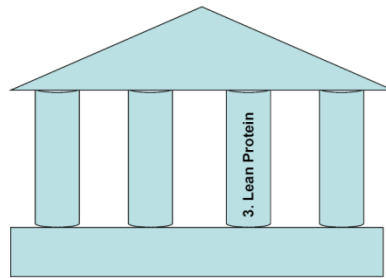
Furthermore, the carbohydrates in whole grains are digested slowly, and the accompanying blood sugar rise is a gradual one. Nowhere in nature do you find foods containing starch or sugar without also containing fiber. The fiber found in whole foods, like vegetables and whole grains, causes the starch which these foods contain to be released slowly and gradually in your digestive tract. This is the opposite of what happens when you eat refined grain foods, like the non-whole wheat baked goods that most people eat (these breakdown quickly and make the blood sugar sky rocket and then quickly drop)!

Note: A subset of the general population has intolerances and allergies to various kinds of things, including various foods. Some people have allergies to such things as wheat gluten, and some people are even intolerant to whole grains, in general. If you experience routine gastric upset, bowel irregularities, or other bothersome symptoms in response to eating certain foods, this is a sign of a possible food intolerance. You may want to discuss this further with your

medical provider, and consider avoiding the foods which you find cause you to experience specific adverse symptoms.

The Third Pillar: Lean Protein

Our bodies thrive when we provide them with the proper building blocks for ideal health. These building blocks include fresh vegetables, fiber from whole grains, plenty of pure fresh water, and the vital Omega 3, 6, and 9 essential oils (which I'll discuss later). Protein is another building block that of course belongs on the list of absolute essentials for good health.



Unfortunately there are some significant adverse health concerns surrounding the **sources of protein** which most Americans choose. **A dangerous problem for meat eaters is the high fat content that often goes hand-in-hand with many animal based food products.** Clogged arteries, heart attacks, strokes, kidney and liver disorders, cancer, and a variety of other medical conditions are directly linked to diets that are high in animal fat.

A way to off-set these risks, in addition to considering part-time or full-time vegetarianism or veganism, is to at least always select low-fat versions of any meat or dairy product which you choose to consume.

By the way, a 'vegan' diet means a solely plant-based diet, which excludes all dairy, eggs, meat, and fish. A 'vegetarian' diet is more inclusive and can include dairy and eggs, as well as even fish for some, but just not meat. Both come down to personal choices and both are healthy alternatives to meat-based diets.

While my body seems to respond positively to a moderate intake of protein from animal-based foods like meat, eggs, and dairy, there are many other people who do far better health-wise when they avoid all animal based foods, and when they obtain their protein from other sources, like **beans, legumes, and nuts**, as well as whole grains. I also enjoy getting much of my protein from these healthy, non meat- based, protein-rich foods, often.

Here are some additional considerations when it comes to consuming meat, eggs, and dairy: The living conditions for animals and the livestock processing and slaughtering methods of

today's so-called-modern "factory farms" are, well, let's just say, typically less-than-sanitary...as well as often inhumane.

As a result, a growing number of health professionals and animal advocates are strongly advising adults to eliminate or markedly reduce animal food consumption, and certainly to avoid any excesses.

Also, it is strongly advised nowadays that you choose meat, egg, and dairy products that are labeled "organic" and "free-range," as well as "cruelty-free" and/or "humanely slaughtered" whenever you're given the choice, and whenever possible (if you consume animal-based products).

Additionally, the eggs you buy should always say "cage-free" on the container. You'll be doing the animals, your health, and this planet a huge favor. (And although the term "free-range" is often used in a misleading manner by advertisers, it's still a significant step in the right direction, I believe.)

If you want further information about this, do a simple web search using the phrase "**modern factory farming**" to learn more about the harmful, toxic, and inhumane effects this relatively new phenomena is having on our planet's animals, the environment, and your health.

By the way, you should know that up to ninety percent of all meat, egg, and dairy products in the United States nowadays are produced by these "modern factory farming" methods, which include cruel "battery cages" (for hens) and "gestation crates" (for pigs). Whenever we purchase non-organic or non-free range animal products, our dollars are directly contributing to this modern-day tragedy for animals. (These inhumane practices are also engaged in by many large livestock corporations in most other parts of the world as well, including the Middle East and Asia. However, such practices are banned by law in many parts of Europe – *thankfully!*)

Fortunately, **most of us can get all of our bodies' daily requirements for protein** by avoiding meat, dairy and eggs, and **just by consuming plenty of beans, legumes, nuts, and whole grains throughout the week.** **These are all healthy foods, and provide innumerable health benefits!**

I'd like to give a word of caution regarding the over-consumption of soybean-based food products, however. These products are commonly used as an alternative source of protein for people who avoid meat and dairy altogether. Things like soy milk, tofu, tempeh, soy cheese, soy protein shakes, and soy meat substitutes (such as soy burgers, links, etc) are all big sellers at health food stores, and are now even appearing in major big chain supermarkets, as well.

Enjoying foods made from soybeans a few times a month is probably fine, but it's best not to make a daily habit of eating these foods. The reason for this is because most soy-based foods have undergone significant processing, and the result is a food product that nature probably never intended humans to eat. Soy is high in compounds known as phyto-estrogens, which

may have the potential to affect our hormonal balance if we consume soy-based foods in large quantities over a long period of time.

Therefore, when looking for alternatives to meat, dairy and eggs....get creative! I enjoy drinking **rice milk and almond milk** with my breakfast cereal and protein shakes. I try to stay with the unsweetened versions of rice and almond milk however, in order to keep my intake of processed sugar low. **Also, a few handfuls of raw almonds make a wonderful mid-morning snack, are a great source of protein, and keep those pre-lunch hunger pangs away!**

Fish can provide a good source of protein in the diet, especially for those who wish to eliminate meat, or eat less of it, and who seek an alternative to plant-based proteins now and then, for variety.

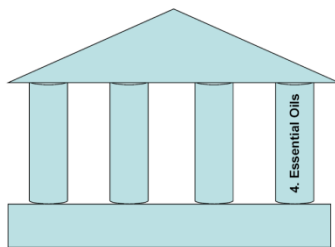
One caution regarding fish: There are a few kinds of fish which you should limit or avoid altogether. Limit your intake of tuna and swordfish to no more than twice a week. These are predator fish and often contain mercury due to their polluted feeding areas. High consumption can lead to a buildup of mercury, a toxic heavy metal, in your body.

Fortunately, there is a wide variety of other kinds of non-predator **fish that are healthy to eat. These include Salmon (Alaska wild), Cod, Halibut, Rainbow Trout, Striped Bass, Pollock, and Tilapia**, among others.

A great resource for more information is the "**Seafood Watch**" on the **Monterey Bay Aquarium's website**, at: <http://www.mbayaq.org>. This site has handy printable pocket-guides you can keep in your wallet or purse, which are based on the various regions of the United States. These guides list the specific types of seafood available to select and avoid, in the area of the US you may live in or plan to visit.

The Fourth Pillar: Essential Oils

Just like there are good and bad "carbs," **there are also good and bad "fats/oils."** Meaning good as in healthy, and bad as in unhealthy/toxic!



The Good Fats/Oils: The "Omega" 3, 6, and 9 oils are essential nutrients that our bodies need, but don't make, and we therefore have to obtain these through the foods we eat. The Omega

oils are contained in many types of seeds of the earth as well as certain kinds of nuts, in addition to fish and krill.

Every cell in your body is composed of a lipid (meaning 'oil') membrane, including the cells of your brain, heart, eyes, and blood vessels, as well as the cells that make your skin, hair, and nails. If you fail to have a regular sufficient intake of Omega oils, which your cells depend upon for replenishment, then each of these body parts that your cells comprise will suffer and become unhealthy.

Extra virgin olive oil is one of the very few oils in most supermarkets which have any health benefits, since "extra virgin" means the oil has gone through very minimal processing or refinement. It therefore has some of the healthy Omega oil components still intact within the oil. Sprinkling this oil lightly on salads is a great thing you can do for your health, in addition to taking an Omega 3, 6, and 9 essential oil supplement each day, which I'll discuss below.

The other common vegetable oils, also known as cooking oils, which are found on typical supermarket shelves (e.g., corn, sunflower, safflower, canola, peanut, etc) have all gone through extensive processing and over-refining, which has stripped away most of their important Omega oil components as a result. Therefore, these oils are just another form of "empty calories." We instead need to turn to a daily supplement in order to get the proper amount of the vital Omega oils we need for our bodies.

It is absolutely critical that you take an Omega 3, 6, and 9 essential oil supplement regularly, preferably each day, to get your proper intake of this all-important nutrient group. These supplements contain essential oils derived from "cold pressed" seeds (e.g., flax, sesame, evening primrose, etc.) and in some cases, derived from the livers of certain fish, including Cod; or from the plankton-like "Krill" which comes from the sea.

Based on my research, the brand-name supplement "**Udo's Oil**" is one of the best and most reliable sources of these highly important antioxidant nutrients. An alternative good choice is "Now Brand Omega 3, 6, 9 Organic Liquid."

"Udo's Oil" can be found in the refrigerated section of Whole Foods and other health food stores.

A serving of one tablespoonful a day can provide tremendous overall benefits, including healthy skin, hair, and nails, along with healthy heart and brain functioning.

Use daily for best effect!

The Bad Fats/Oils: Try to **minimize your intake of animal fats**, whether in the form of dairy, eggs, or meat. An excessive intake of animal fats, which contain the harmful "saturated" fat and cholesterol, is dangerous and is linked to many of the common chronic diseases that plague our society, including heart disease, stroke, autoimmune disorders, and cancer. **Always make**

low-fat food choices when it comes to any meat or dairy product which you purchase and consume.

A warning about 'trans fat': This man-made synthetic food product is made from certain vegetable oils, and has been determined to be **extremely unhealthy** by medical researchers, since long-standing data links it with an increased risk of clogged arteries and heart disease.

'Trans fat' goes under the guises of several different names, likely because some food manufacturers don't want consumers to notice this ingredient in their products, given the growing awareness of its dangerous health risks. Here is a list of the various names that 'trans fat' goes by: "**hydrogenated oil,**" "**partially hydrogenated oil,**" "**hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated corn/soybean/sunflower/ safflower/palm kernel/coconut/etc oil,**" "**artificially saturated oil,**" and "**artificially saturated fat.**" If you see any of these terms in the ingredients list of a food product (and there are many out there), it is unhealthy for you and you should minimize or avoid its use.

'Trans fat' is often found in many common snack foods such as crackers and candy bars, as well as different packaged baked goods found along the supermarket aisles. Also, 'trans fat' is an ingredient in many margarines. Ironically, we used to think that margarine was preferable to butter, since it was lower in calories. Medical science now knows this to be incorrect! Studies have shown that 'trans fat' markedly raises the LDL (bad) form of cholesterol and increases the risk of heart attacks. Therefore, **stay away from hard or spreadable margarines, and instead choose either liquid margarine (in the squeeze bottle form) or butter.**

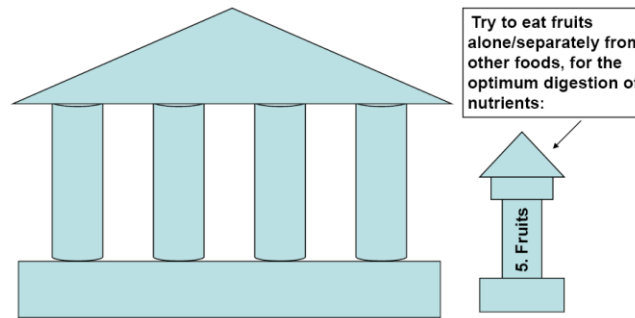
Also, be aware that many *fast food* restaurants notoriously use hydrogenated oil (aka 'trans fat') to fry and prepare their foods, such as French fries, since it has a longer storage shelf life than regular liquid vegetable oil, and therefore is cheaper to use. Whenever possible minimize your intake of fried foods from these places.

And keep an eye on the labels of baked goods from supermarket bakeries - which are notorious for using hydrogenated oil in their products! Finally, if you need more convincing and want more evidence of the toxic effects of 'trans fat'/hydrogenated oil and the harm it can do to your body, go rent and watch the movie "Super Size Me"!

A word on frying: Try to minimize deep fat-frying of foods. It's acceptable if you choose to occasionally pan-fry or stir fry some foods now and then. Of course, **baking, broiling, steaming, or grilling are all FAR healthier cooking choices, compared to frying.** Olive oil is not good to use for frying foods, since all the healthy components of olive oil are destroyed when it's used in frying. And as I pointed out before, the common cooking oils have minimal nutritional value. Certainly don't use lard (which is pig fat) or margarine, which are both very harmful to your health, for the reasons which I explained above. When you do chose to fry any foods therefore, use a small tab of butter, or even better, just use a small amount of water in the pan - you'll get a fine frying effect with absolutely no added calories!

The Fifth Pillar: Fruits

There's actually a fifth pillar of health which is the **Fruits** food group. However, I place it off to the side as a reminder to **eat fruits separately from other foods**.



For example, eat fruits in between meals as a healthy snack. The reason for this is because some researchers have found that fruits are best digested when they are alone in the stomach, without other foods.

Also, our intestinal absorption of important nutrients found in some other foods is apparently less efficient when fruits are eaten together along with these other foods. Many fruits are chock-full of anti-oxidants and other important nutrients; fruits which you should eat regularly include **organic apples, pears, bananas, cantaloupe (melons), blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, lemons, and limes**.

Other Tips on Digestion:

There are several things you can do to improve the digestion of the foods you eat, so that you'll be sure to get all the nutrients contained in the healthy foods you consume.

- a. First of all, it's important that you **chew your food thoroughly**. Each bite of food ideally should be chewed 20 to 30 times.
- b. Chew and **eat your food slowly**. Also, **give each meal your full attention whenever possible**. Minimize the times that you eat while you're in a rush or doing other things.
- c. When possible, **avoid drinking fluids with your meals**, since doing so dilutes the stomach acid and interferes with digestion. Instead, drink water and other fluids **in between your meals – for example before or after meals**. I try to drink a ½ liter of water about a half hour before my meals, in addition to drinking plenty of water at other times throughout the day. If you're accustomed to drinking fluids with your meals, then implementing this advice will take a little bit of time and effort to get used to. However, the health benefits of developing this new habit

will really be well worth the effort. I stopped drinking fluids with my meals several years ago, when I heard this advice, and I don't miss it one bit!

d. Eating **smaller, but more frequent meals** during the day is preferable to eating large meals at infrequent intervals throughout the day. Ideally, we should strive to eat small healthy meals, or a healthy snack, about every 2 or 3 hours. And if you do so, avoid snacking in between these times, since your body needs this time interval to fully digest the food which you last ate.

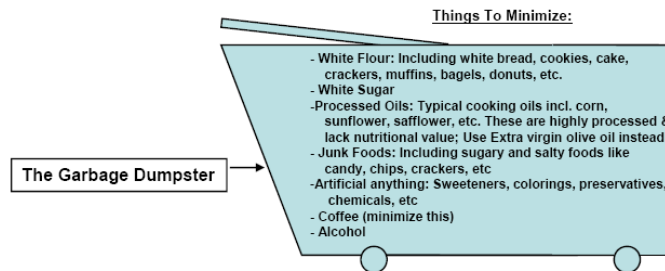
e. Consider taking a daily **probiotics** supplement, such as lactobacillus acidophilus.

f. Consider taking a **digestive enzyme** supplement prior to, or in between meals.

(Note: I'll discuss both probiotics and digestive enzymes further ahead in this article.)

The Garbage Dumpster: Things to Minimize in your Diet

Just as a temple serves as a visual aid for remembering what foods are good to eat, a different image I use to remember what foods to minimize, and avoid, is that of a **garbage dumpster!**



So, what kinds of things go in the mental garbage dumpster, so that we're reminded to minimize them in our diet? Well, one good rule of thumb is to **minimize things that have been taken from nature and refined and processed, and therefore striped of all their fiber and vital nutrients!** As I spoke of earlier, this includes **anything made with white flour**, such as white bread, cookies, cake, crackers, muffins, bagels, donuts, etc. A healthy alternative to white flour products are baked goods that are made with 100% whole wheat flour.

Also, **white sugar**, which is an overly refined version of the sugar cane plant, belongs in our "mental garbage dumpster." Sweeteners which are better alternatives to white sugar, due to their smaller degree of processing, include raw brown sugar, pure maple syrup and fructose, which is a natural sweetener extracted from fruit. Stevia (which comes from an herb) is also a natural sweetener that is a healthier alternative to white sugar. Certainly try to minimize any use of saccharine and aspartame which are artificial non-food creations, whose long-term adverse health effects are unknown, at best.

Other foods that should be **minimized** are the **three main groups of junk foods**. These are: **A. processed flour & corn based snack foods** such as pretzels and crackers (which also commonly contain the dangerous "trans fat" in the form of hydrogenated oils); **B. the sugary junk foods** such as candy, chocolate bars, cookies, donuts, cake, pop tarts, etc.; and **C. the greasy fried junk foods** such as potato chips and corn chips, nachos, French fries, onion rings, fried chicken, fried fish, and all other sorts of fried foods. Some far better alternative choices are **chicken that is baked or rotisserieed (preferably free-range and organic), as well as fish that is baked or broiled. These are far healthier for you than their fried versions!**

Artificial Anything: Other things to minimize in your diet include artificial colorings and artificial sweeteners, as well as preservatives and other chemical additives. **Strive to make natural, whole, unprocessed foods**, which mother nature intended for us, **the main theme of the foods that you eat on a regular basis**, since these are the things that we know are healthy for you. **With this as a goal, you'll find that "artificial" anything begins to lose all of its appeal, fast!**

Furthermore, **alcohol** is a **toxin** and should be used infrequently, if at all. Additionally, **coffee** is **acidic** in nature and should be minimized, when possible. The caffeine content of coffee has not been shown to be necessarily harmful, and it can provide a nice boost of mental and physical stimulation, when needed. However, it's best to strive to reduce your use of coffee when possible, since the processing which coffee beans undergo to make coffee eliminates any significant nutritional value. Besides, there are much healthier alternative drinks you could have instead, like a cup of heart-healthy green tea, or a cup of nice pure water with some fresh-squeezed lemon in it, or even a green drink (e.g., wheat grass).

A Further Word on Green Drinks

One of the healthiest things that you can do for your body is to **add a "green drink" to your daily regime**, which I've mentioned a few times before. Green drinks contain ground-up grasses, such as **wheat grass** and barley grass, and can include sprouted grains, chlorella, and other green vegetables.

Wheat grass and other components of green drinks cleanse, detoxify, and alkalize your body. This is vitally important in the increasingly "toxic" society that most of us live in, which is becoming the case in most industrialized countries.

Green drinks also infuse your body with easily absorbed vitamins, minerals, amino acids, phytonutrients, and antioxidants. Phytonutrients and antioxidants are plant-based compounds that medical studies show reduce your risk of heart disease, neurological disease, and even cancer.

Other benefits of green drinks can include improved skin, hair, and nails, reduced cholesterol, weight loss, elimination of free radicals, sharpened mental acuity, improved vision, increased stamina and energy, and a greater sense of well being.

Of course drinking fresh-ground wheat grass juice is best, but it's not very practical to do on a regular basis for most people, who don't have the time to grow or press their own wheat grass at home.

Fortunately there is a great alternative, in the form of the healthy powdered green drink versions that are widely available now. These contain grass juice which has been dried and turned into a powder that you can easily mix with water. Just mix a scoopful or a teaspoonful in a bottle or cup of water, and drink! I try to have one every day.

There are many good brands of green drinks available, including "SGN Nutrition," "Emerald Greens," "Green Magma," and "Tony Robbins Inner Balance," to name just a few.

Getting accustomed to green drinks takes time, and it is an acquired taste.

If you haven't gotten used to drinking a green drink regularly, I recommend starting out with either one of these two brands of green drinks: "Emerald Greens" or "SGN Nutrition, Emerald Balance, Total Nutrition Drink Mix." (These are both powders that you mix with water).

Both of these two green drinks are sweetened with natural apple pectin and the dried juices of other fruits, which give them a more pleasant taste than some of the other wheat grass powders available.

Both of these brands are usually carried by Whole Foods Markets and many other health food stores in the US. "SGN Nutrition, Emerald Balance, Total Nutrition Drink Mix" is available on-line at www.iherb.com.

Often times people will ask me if "green tea" is considered a "green drink." Actually, not per say. Green tea has no wheat grass in it, but instead, it is made with herbs. **Nonetheless, green tea is very healthy for you**, since it is thought to be high in "anti-oxidants." Anti-oxidants, which are also found in all fruits and vegetables, promote healthy arteries and reduce heart disease, stroke, and cancer risks.

A word on Vitamins

For a variety of reason, taking a **daily vitamin & mineral pill** (either chewable or non-chewable tablet) **is a good idea for most people**, and is recommended by most nutritional experts.

Taking a daily multi-vitamin can help to supplement any important nutrients that we may not be getting enough of in our regular diets.

There are many reputable and reliable brands out there, but of course there are some which are not! Some of the brands that I respect and can give high recommendations for include "NOW," "Nature's Plus," "KAL," "Solgar," "TwinLabs," "Nature's Way," "Country Life," and "Rainbow Life." Many of these brands use outside, independent laboratories to test their products, and provide reports to the public. As a result, you can generally be assured that what is claimed on the list of contents and ingredients on the outside label is truthful and accurate.

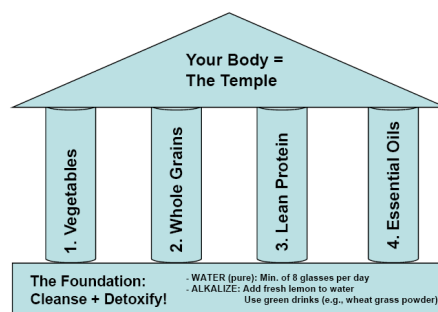
A Note for Vegetarians/Vegans about Vitamin B-12: As you're aware, eating a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, beans, and legumes gives us all the protein, vitamins, minerals, and other phytonutrients which our bodies need to stay healthy.

The only exception, however, is vitamin B-12, which is not found in plant-based foods. Vitamin B-12 is an essential nutrient that our bodies need but don't make, and we therefore have to obtain it through the foods we eat.

People who eat meat get their vitamin B-12 through the consumption of animal food products. Actually, vitamin B-12 is made by a particular type of bacteria that lives in soil. Vitamin B-12 is found in meats because most animals harbor this bacteria in their intestines; they acquire it from the small amounts of soil which usually contaminate the foods they eat. The bacteria produce vitamin B-12 in the guts of animals, and this then ends up in their bodies and muscles, which becomes meat that humans eat.

If you're a vegetarian or vegan, it's important to be aware of this important vitamin, and to not neglect your vitamin B-12 intake. **Fortunately, vitamin B-12 is easily obtained by taking a daily Multi-Vitamin, or by using daily servings of vitamin B-12-fortified rice milk, almond milk, or cereals. Therefore, meat intake is not necessary for this purpose.**

So, are you ready to start implementing what you've just learned? Check out my "Just the Essentials" guide on the next page, for a concise list of the most important elements of what I've discussed above.



"Just the Essentials:" My Daily Diet and Supplement Regime

I created this simple regime for myself following many years of extensive research in the health and nutrition fields. I recommend this to anyone who's serious about healthy living and reducing their risk of chronic disease.

Mornings:

- a. Drink a **tall cup or bottle of pure water**, preferably with the juice of a slice of fresh lemon, right after getting out of bed
- b. Take the following supplements, prior to breakfast:
 - A **multivitamin/mineral tablet** (chewable or non-chewable)
 - A **probiotics** supplement *
 - A **digestive enzymes** supplement*
 - An **Omega 3, 6, 9 essential oil** supplement (e.g., Udo's Oil)

Anytime During the Day:

- **Wheat grass powder** - mixed with a cup of water (at least once per day)
- **Plenty of pure water throughout the day** - Drink at least 8 to 10 cups of pure water each day

Healthy Foods - to Emphasize:

- a. Vegetables (all kinds, preferably organic; esp. salads and other raw veggies)
- b. Whole grains (100% whole wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice, and bran cereals)
- c. Fruits (all kinds; preferably organic; esp. berries, such as blueberries, strawberries, etc)
- d. Lean proteins:
 - Beans and legumes
 - Almonds and other nuts
 - Fish
 - Lean meats and poultry (preferably free-range and organic)
 - Eggs (preferably cage-free and organic)
 - Low-fat milk and dairy (occasional usage; preferably organic; I use lactose-free milk)
(Also, almond milk is a healthy milk/dairy alternative; the unsweetened kind is preferable)
- e. Cold-pressed/Expeller-pressed oils (e.g., extra virgin olive oil; others)

Junk Foods - to Minimize:

- a. Any product made with white flour (white bread, crackers, bagels, muffins, donuts, etc)
- b. Any product made with white sugar (cookies, cake, candy, etc)
- c. Fat-laden meats and dairy
- d. Typical cooking oils
- e. Fried foods

***Probiotics Supplements** = These contain live bacteria (such as Lactobacillus acidophilus and bifidus) or yeast, which serve to maintain the natural balance of healthy organisms (microflora) in our intestines. Many health benefits are attributed to probiotics, including establishing regularity of bowel function, improving digestion, and strengthening our immune system. Take a probiotic supplement once or twice each day.

***Digestive Enzymes Supplements** = Digestive enzymes are necessary for the proper break-down and digestion of the food we eat - without them, our bodies can't absorb the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients found in our food. Digestive enzymes are contained in raw, uncooked foods, and our bodies also manufacture digestive enzymes. However, most of us consume an excess of cooked and processed foods, and so our diets typically lack healthy quantities of the living enzymes which raw foods contain. Also, stress from unhealthy eating and living habits causes a decreased production and availability of the digestive enzymes which our bodies typically make. Therefore, we should take an enzyme supplement to make up for this. Choose one which contains a combination of enzymes, such as Protease to break down protein, Amylase to break down starch, Lipase to break down fats, and Cellulase to break down fiber. Take a digestive enzyme supplement up to one to three times per day, just prior to meals.

For more resources from Eric Falcon, please visit: www.UnleashYourInnerStrength.com