

Mary's Reality Based Nutrition

"Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food" Hippocrates

Mary's Nutritional Guidelines

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Hello everyone. I completed the [*Plant Based Nutrition Certificate Course at eCornell*](#) presented by ***Dr. T. Colin Campbell, Center for Nutrition Studies***. It is an amazing course backed entirely by scientific research from all over the world. It not only verified what I already knew about the link between diet & disease, it went even further to show which was the optimal diet for everyone; WFPB (Whole Food Plant-Based). I am updating this page, ***Mary's Nutritional Guidelines***, to conform to what I have learned. If you have questions please contact me.

Healthy WFPB Eating Habits:

These nutrition tips are for everyone; patients, family & friends. They are for those of you diagnosed with cancer during and after treatment whether by surgery, chemotherapy and or radiation therapy. The body has to expend more energy to fight cancer cells and to rebuild damaged cells caused by treatment. To be able to do this effectively the body requires a healthy, balanced diet, which will provide all of the nutrients needed.

There is a growing body of evidence to show that a whole food plant based diet, WFPB, can offer many benefits to the cancer patient at all phases of treatment. This is also true for all chronic diseases.

Mary's Nutritional Guidelines

These are my general guidelines for a healthy, balanced and nutrient rich diet. Remember, these are **what you aspire to**. Don't try to do everything at once. That sets you up for failure. Change one part of your diet at a time; one change a week or a month. This is a process to make healthier choices that you can stick with not a fad diet for a week or two. Think of your present diet at the far left of a straight line. At the far right end of the line will be the WFPB diet. Now, as you make changes in your diet keep moving toward the right end of the line until you are happy with your changes & feel like you can sustain this way of eating. You don't need to embrace the WFPB diet fully, even changing 10% of your present diet will bring lasting health benefits.

Think of the plate as your day or your meal.

- 50% of your plate/day should be vegetables & fruits. Go for a colorful array of choices.
- 25% of your plate/day should be whole grains; whole wheat, barley, wheat berries, quinoa, oats, brown rice to name a few.
- 25% of your plate/day should be mixed plant protein; each kind of protein provides different nutrients. Mix it up during your week.

• Mary's Tips

- Avoid all **added** oils: Extra Virgin Olive oil, Avocado, Grapeseed, canola & coconut oil to name a few. Learn to sauté with a bit of water rather than oil.

- Avoid **added** sugars: Check the labels on packaged foods, under sugars it will state “added sugars. Whole grains, fruits & veggies have natural sugars.
- Eat when you are hungry but don’t skip a meal. Your largest meal should be your breakfast. I like the saying: “*breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dine like a pauper*” This has scientific data to back it up!
- Keep healthy snacks in the house; fruit cut into bite size pieces along with veggies in bite sizes are good choices. Experiment with new vegetables, fruits and grains.
- Drink water! Add a slice of cucumber, lemon, lime or mint leaves to make it more interesting.
- Limit fluids during meals as they fill you up.
- Eat a balanced diet to get the vitamins, minerals and proteins that you need. Eating from ALL the following food groups is important; Water, Whole Grains, Fruits, Vegetables & Plant Based Protein.
- Eat a varied diet of fruits & vegetables; a rainbow of colors. Fruits & vegetables are antioxidant rich. Eating a variety ensures that you receive all antioxidants not just one or two.
- Eat Whole grains. Nothing white; black, brown, wild or red rice as an example.
- Eat Certified Organic fruits, vegetables & whole grains as much as you are able to afford. These will be pesticide free. Look at ewg.org for the current list of the “Dirty Dozen & Clean 15” to make this more affordable. Look for the Non-GMO label if you can’t afford or find organic produce.
- Plant-based protein: Tofu, Tempeh, Edamame beans, beans & nuts of all kinds, legumes such as lentils, peas, chickpeas & peanuts. Limit soy milk as it is highly processed. Soy is a GMO crop, so buy Certified Organic or GMO free. Read the labels. Soy products is no longer a controversial subject for hormone positive cancers.

What to Avoid or limit

- Avoid Genetically Modified Organisms/GMOs. Foods send thousands of bits of information to the body. Changing those pathways by genetically modifying it will change the information sent. There are no GMOs in Certified Organic food. Many companies are using the Non-GMO label on their packages. Watch for this label even on non-organic products.
- Avoid ultra-processed food items. Ultra-processed foods are pre-packaged. They are usually high in added sugars, salt, and saturated fat, and low in fiber, vitamins, and nutritional value. Check the ingredient list on the package; the fewer ingredients the better!
- Avoid all dairy & eggs; dairy is inflammatory & has natural occurring estrogen, even organic or raw dairy. Estrogen is stored in fat.
- Avoid all meat; red, pork, poultry & fish
- No tobacco

- Limit Alcohol consumption to special occasions & then only 1 serving.
- Avoid sugary drinks: **Fruit juices are sugar too!** Your body reacts the same way to juice as it does to colas. Without the fiber to moderate how fast the sugar, fructose, enters the bloodstream, it enters it quickly. Carrot juice does the same thing. It is healthier to eat the whole food.
- Anything with High Fructose corn syrup should be avoided; read the ingredients on the labels. I have read that hidden sugars are in 75% of packaged foods. How can you find the culprits?
- **Huffington Post:** [Food Labels: How to Spot Hidden Sugars by Pooja R. Mottl](#)
- **UCSF:** [Hidden in Plain Sight](#) Look to the right in the article for a list of 61 names for added sugars.

Mary's Nutritional Guidelines: Supplements

Eat your medicine: A whole food plant based diet, even without added oils, has all the vitamins and minerals that you need & it is bio-available to your body. If you are not able to eat a balanced diet then there are key supplements you need. Speak to your Health Care Team & have lab work done to see which you do need. Don't add them on your own.

If you eat a balanced diet you don't need most supplements. What supplements should you take on a WFPB diet?

- Take Vitamin D: Have your levels checked to see if you even need this vitamin. If you do then follow your physicians recommended dose.
- Vitamin B-12. Have your level checked. I get enough from fortified foods such as Nutritional Yeast, some nut milks & even some whole grain cereals.

People on a typical Western diet can also be low on Vitamin D & B-12.

- **Forks Over Knives:** [Vitamin B-12, All Your Questions Answered.](#)
- **Center for Nutrition Studies:** [Shining a Light on Vitamin D, By Thomas Campbell, MD, Updated January 3, 2019](#)

Supplement tips

Supplements are not always bio-available to the body. Typically we are able to use 10 – 30% of the supplement. Whole foods are 100% bio-available.

- **It is important to present a list of all nutritional supplements & over the counter medicines that you are taking to your healthcare team. Supplements can & do interact with medications, chemotherapy & even radiation therapy.**

- Choosing supplements is somewhat like a crap-shoot. What brand of supplements should you use? Not all companies are reliable. They may be adding more or less than what is indicated on the label. Where are they made? Where were the herbs grown; possible heavy metal problem?
- Research the brand name and see if they have certifications by the supplement industry. Have they been tested by a 3rd party and do they offer the research data when asked?
- Check the ingredient list. Sometimes soy is added, fillers and herbs you don't need or ones that may interact with over the counter drugs or prescription medications.
- Why are you spending money on these supplements? Did you hear about it online, friends, relatives, on TV, or in line at the market? You need to make an informed decision about what to believe. Don't fall for marketing targeting cancer patients in general. You are not a statistic, you are unique.
- Supplements & herbs do have side effects and do interact with other herbs, over the counter medications and prescription drugs. Factor in any other health problem you may have. Are you a diabetic, have high blood pressure, have organ involvement etc.?
- You can become Vitamin Toxic. Vitamin toxicity is rare but can happen. Take the recommended daily allowance, not more. Look at the Nutrition Panel on the bottle. Stay under 100% with each listing. Remember you are taking in natural vitamins & minerals in your diet.

Make changes in your diet one at a time over weeks not days. You want to make healthy changes that you and your family can stick to. These are guidelines. Choose what works for you...Mary

Additional Resources:

- **Center for Nutrition Studies: [WFPB Guide](#)**
- **Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine: [Good Nutrition](#)**
- **Forks Over Knives: [The Diet](#)**
- **Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics: [Meeting Calcium Recommendations on a Vegan Diet](#). A pdf you can copy.**
- **Dana Farber Cancer Institute: [Ultraprocessed Foods: Science Facts and Shopping Tips](#), Published: February 1, 2024, Written by: [Beth Dougherty](#),**
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