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Family Medicine

Back to Basics

A healthy approach to adding more plant foods to
your diet without compromising taste

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Introduction

Health is wealth...prevention is better than cure...these are adages we have heard all our lives and yet most of us do not live by it. Why? It is a bit of a complex topic and maybe outside the scope of the intent of this e-cookbook. However, I will say that third party stakeholders and the business of medicine as it is today have financially benefited from what is probably the sickest population in the history of the world when you look at all of the advances we have made. Nearly 70-80% of all diseases we currently treat are lifestyle related. We have been led to believe that our genetics and bad luck are the reasons for our condition. Let me just start by saying that genetics have a role and YES sometimes we have no control over what life dishes out (no pun intended). But if we were to take a closer look at what we eat and how we live we may have a rethink.

As a trained family medicine physician, my job is to gather information, order tests, diagnose, treat, and/or refer patients to other specialized doctors. The truth is, I spent the majority of my time caring for patients with lifestyle related conditions, which we call "chronic diseases". Due to our poor lifestyle choices, lack of proper health education, stress, lack of access etc. we have developed these conditions. And for the most part, the only solution we give as healthcare providers is a prescription for drugs. What if I told you that these "chronic conditions" can be reversed or mitigated with minimal or no use of drugs. What is the catch? Eating more plant foods, getting adequate sleep, stress management, regular exercise, and community support. This e-book will focus on providing you with some easy, tasty recipes to help you get started on your journey to better health!

Why eat more Fruits and Veggies?

It's simple! Because they provide our bodies with the building blocks needed to stay healthy. Whole foods in its natural state is nature's gift to us. The body has an inherent capacity for recovery provided we give it what it needs. Processed or man-made foods are toxic to the human system. They are depleted of pre-biotic fiber, micronutrients including phytonutrients, antioxidants, and gut-healing properties. They overtime cause a break down of the body's immune system causing inflammation ultimately resulting in a chronic disease state. The reverse is true when you consume a diet largely of fruits, vegetables, some nuts/seeds, sprouts, legumes, and whole grains. These foods are naturally cancer and heart protective, decrease inflammation, improve bone health, assist with weight loss, and so much more. The Western/SAD diet (Sad American Diet) now consumed not just by the West but globally has led to an increase in heart attacks, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes, autoimmune disease, just to name a few. In case you didn't know, the food industry is not concerned about your health more than their bottom line. And unfortunately as a society, we have gotten really good and clever about how we market food. Gluten-free, organic, natural, sugar-free- are some of the labels many companies have placed on their products. Yet these foods are made to be able to sit on the shelf for years, often times with ingredients impossible to pronounce and laden with additives and preservatives. Your health is your business! Take control of your destiny. The choice is yours to make- **START TODAY!!**

How to Get Started

POINT #1- Know your **WHYs**? Do you want to stop relying on drugs? Do you want to loose weight for good and avoid dieting? Do you want to have more energy? Do you want to stop living in fear of getting yet another diagnosis? Are you hoping to get pregnant? Write them down and put it where you can see. Visualize yourself achieving your goals and start celebrating them now as you forge ahead.

POINT #2- What are your **BARRIERS**? I want you to be brutally honest with yourself. What is holding you back from achieving good health? Is it for fear that you may not be accepted or laughed at? Or that you may be viewed as weird or odd? Could it be you habitually stop over at your favorite fast food restaurant on your way home for a medium fry or the gas station for a snicker bar? Are you too busy and don't have time to cook? Do you eat for comfort or to fill a void? Let your why's help you overcome those barriers.

How to Get Started

POINT #3- Find an ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER?

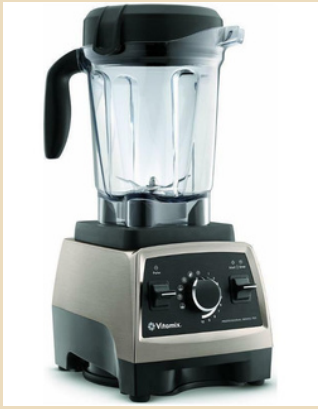
Invite a loved one, a close friend, or a colleague to join you. Change can happen but is much easier if you have support. Another great accountability partner is a doctor who shares a common mission and vision of treating your total needs. Having a strong doctor-patient relationship preferably without interferences from insurance or government payer demands is one way you can ensure your needs are top-most priority.

POINT #4- PLAN ahead, be PREPARED? Plan to stick with this newfound way of living for life! And be prepared at all times. Take a dish if you are invited to potluck, eat before you leave, plan events around other activities instead of around food, have fruits on hand at all times. Spend a few hours cleaning out your pantry and fridge and replace unhealthy foods with healthier ones.

Tips for Success

- Be patient with the process
- Focus on simplicity of meals, don't make it complicated. You can get more fancy when you get a better hang of things
- Let your doctor be in the know
- Monitor your blood pressure and/or blood sugar if you are taking medication
- Aim to eat 2 meals a day (unless very physically active), no snacking in between
- Drink plenty of water
- Sleep 7-9 hours
- Exercise 5-7 days a week, at least 30 minutes a day
- Don't eat late
- Engage in activities you enjoy daily
- Practice optimism
- Find a well-informed, nutrition-driven physician if you need help

Kitchen Items Needed



- Blender: preferably a high speed to get the best results. A blender can be used to make smoothies, salad dressings, plant-based milk. I recommend purchasing a Vitamix blender. They can be purchased refurbished at a reduced cost.



- Food processor: make sure to get a good quality food processor. They will be used to make banana ice-cream, raw desserts, sorbet. I recommend purchasing any Cuisinart brand with options for "on" and "off/pulse" for hassle-free use.



- Juicer (optional): any juicer that you can afford will do. As time goes on you can invest in a masticating or cold-press juicer. I recommend Breville juicers starting out. Nama J2 cold press juicer for those looking for a high quality juicer.



- Mason Jars: this is great to take smoothies or puddings on the go. It is also great as a water bottle, for sprouting, soaking, or storing food. Make sure to purchase a variety of sizes. They can be purchased on Amazon.



- Medium-size pot: anyone will do but try to get stainless steel and nonstick.



- Nut milk bag: purchasing a high quality nut milk bag is an absolute must if you plan on making your own plant-based milk. They can be purchased for under \$15.

- Others: parchment paper, large spoons, foil, steam basket.

Chia Seed Pudding



Chia Seed Pudding

This is an easy, fast, and filling meal that can be eaten for breakfast or as a meal replacement for lunch/dinner. It is high in fiber and ALA omega-3 fatty acid. The sky is the limit with what you can top it with. It can be made the night before for a grab-n-go meal option!

Ingredients

1/4 tbsp. black or white chia seeds
1 C unsweetened plant-based milk
1 medium size ripe banana mashed*
1/4 tsp vanilla extract
Pinch of salt (pink Himalayan or Celtic)
Top with additional sliced bananas, fresh strawberries and blueberries
Additional toppings- hempseeds, maca root powder, carob powder, golden kiwi, other berries, granola

*Bananas are added for a touch of sweetness. If you prefer a sweeter pudding, you can substitute with dates, maple syrup or honey.

Notes

For a smoother texture, add all ingredients (except toppings) to a Vitamix and blend until well-combined. Transfer to a jar or bowl and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight to thicken up.

Feel free to add other spices i.e. cinnamon, pumpkin spice for a holiday rendition.

You can double or triple the recipe and divide mixture into 2 or 3 jars or glass container to be eaten over the course of the week. This is an easy dish to prep ahead of time.



Directions

In a mason jar or medium size glass bowl, mix together chia seeds, salt, and other toppings that are in powder form. Then add plant-based milk, banana, vanilla extract and continue to mix until everything is combined. Let sit on counter for 5 minutes and give it another good stir. Refrigerate mixture for at least 2 hours or overnight to thicken up. When ready to eat, add toppings of your choice and enjoy!

*Cherry Berri
Green Smoothie*



Cherry Berri Green Smoothie



Generally speaking, eating fruits and vegetables separately is advised for better absorption. However, when consumed together in a blended form there is less burden on the digestive system and digestion is not impaired. This is also a great way to incorporate the addition of "super foods" to your diet such as flaxseed, turmeric, and spirulina.

Ingredients

1 C spinach
1/2 C frozen mangoes
1/2 C frozen cherries
1/8 C wild or regular blueberries
1 medium size banana
2 TBSP golden flaxseed*
1 C apple juice **
Top with dried mango or pineapple, fresh fruits
i.e. kiwi, banana
Additional toppings- granola, shredded coconut
flakes

*Make sure to use the whole seed and not ground flaxseed

**Can substitute with coconut water, plant-based milk, or plain water. Make sure to add more or less liquid to achieve a consistency similar to pancake batter or to your preference.

Directions

Add all ingredients to a high speed blender and blend for 1 minute or until very smooth. Pour into dish and add toppings for a delectable, hydrating, and satisfying smoothie. I enjoy mine in a bowl or tall glass like the one pictured with dried pineapple and fresh kiwi for a chewy texture and a bit of natural sweetness.

*Golden Fruit
Salad*



Golden Fruit Salad

My husband first introduced me to this and for a graduate student on a limited budget this very quickly became a staple. I no longer eat this due to some food sensitivities however, my husband continues to enjoy this for breakfast or for a light dinner. In fact, the entire family enjoys having this as a quick go-to meal.



Ingredients

2 C fresh strawberries, trimmed and cut in half
1 bunch seedless green grapes, halved
1/4 C pint fresh blueberries
2 Tbsp golden raisins
2 Tbsp raw, unsalted cashews*
1 C of plain yogurt**

*Can substitute with nut of your choice or omit for a low-fat version

**Make sure to use non-dairy yogurt

Directions

Add all fruits to a large bowl. Add yogurt, raisins, and nuts. Mix well, cover and let chill in the refrigerator until ready to eat.

Notes

Feel free to add other fruits including mandarin oranges, sliced apples, sliced bananas, peaches etc.

Unless you have a food allergy, sensitivity, or trying to avoid soy, I suggest using an organic soy-based vanilla yogurt for best results. Also keep in mind that the fat content can be high especially if using a nut or coconut based yogurt along with the addition of nuts.

*Mighty Millet
"Oatmeal"*



Mighty Millet "Oatmeal"

Millet is the most common whole grain consumed in Africa and largely consumed in places like India because it is accessible, inexpensive, and highly nutritious. It is high in protein, fiber, and antioxidants. Considered a "super food" it is becoming more common in North America because it is gluten-free. Millet can be eaten as a substitute for rice or in the morning for a heart-healthy meal. It has a slightly nutty taste and is surprisingly comforting.

Ingredients

1 C raw foxtail millet, soaked overnight
2 C unsweetened plant-based milk (canned coconut milk works excellently here)
3 C water
4-5 Medjool dates, pitted and chopped*
1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1 small stick of cinnamon (optional)
1/4 tsp of salt (adjust to taste)
Honey or maple syrup to taste**
Top with sliced peaches and coconut flakes
Additional toppings- cinnamon, bananas, berries, or nuts

*Can substitute with raisins or leave out

**This is optional and can be omitted or you can increase amount of dates

Notes

Feel free to add more plant-based milk if you desire a thinner consistency.

If porridge is too runny, cook for an additional 5-10 minutes until it thickens.



Directions

In a small saucepan, combine millet, milk, water, and vanilla extract and bring to a boil. Add in the dates, cinnamon, and salt, reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook for 30-45 minutes until liquid is absorbed and is the consistency of cream of wheat. Remove from heat and add sweetener and topping of choice.

*Herb Infused
Kale Salad*



Herb Infused Kale Salad

Eating a wide array of fruits and veggies have been shown to lower the risk of most chronic diseases including cancer. I recommend eating a large salad or vegetable medley with a tasty dressing/dip can really help transform your meal. You can also incorporate more green leafy vegetables by consuming a green smoothie or juicing. Just make sure you are eating a variety and rotating your greens.



Ingredients

1 bunch curly kale
1 head of romaine heart
Red cabbage (to equal 1 C after chopped)
Brussels sprouts (to equal 1 C after chopped)
1 large carrots, grated
1/4 red and yellow bell peppers (cut into strips)
Fresh cilantro (to equal 1/2 C after chopped)
Other vegetables- broccoli, radishes, asparagus

Directions

Roughly chop kale, cabbage, and cilantro. Shred brussel sprouts and grate carrots. Combine finely chopped, shredded, and grated vegetables in a large bowl and using the juice of 1/2 lemon massage until leaves become more tender, kale becomes more glossy, and vegetables reduce in volume. Add lettuce, bell peppers, and other vegetables of choice. Top with desired amount of Cashew "Ranch" Dressing.

Cashew "Ranch" Dressing

Ingredients

1/2 C raw unsalted cashews, soaked
1/4 C raw unsalted pumpkin seeds, soaked
1/4 C raw unsalted sunflower seeds, soaked
3 cloves of garlic
1/2-1 inch ginger, peeled
1/2 medium size red onion
1/4 lemon, peeled
1 tsp pink himalayan salt or more to taste
1 C water

Directions

Place all ingredients in a blender, blend until creamy. Use more or less water to achieve desired consistency. Can store in the fridge for up to 5 days. Keeps well in the freezer.

Loaded Lentils



Loaded Lentils

Ingredients

1 C chopped portobello mushrooms
1/2 C white or yellow onion
3-4 cloves of garlic
1/2 C carrots, sliced
1 C chopped broccoli florets
1 large twig of fresh rosemary
2 C spinach (or any green leafy vegetable)
1/2 C dry lentils, soaked overnight, rinsed and drained
2.5 C filtered water (add more if needed)
Salt to taste



I believe in simplicity. It makes it easier to transition when changing from a western diet to a plant-predominant diet. Sustainability and consistency is the name of the game. And making soups of all kind can make this lifestyle change a breeze. Have fun using other beans or legumes, adding potatoes, vegetables, mushrooms whatever you like. You can pack a lot of nutrition in one bowl of soup. Enjoy!!

Directions

In a blender add water, garlic, and onion and blend until smooth. Transfer to a medium pot and add lentils and fresh rosemary bringing it to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 20-25 minutes or until soft. Add mushrooms, carrots, broccoli and cook 10 minutes longer with lid on. Turn heat off, add spinach, and cover. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving.

Notes

This recipe works well with any bean or legume. There are a wide variety of lentils and I enjoy switching things up from time to time. Lentils digest easily so if you suffer from gas and bloating eating beans, start with a small amount of lentils and increase amount once you better tolerate it. Have fun with it!

Sunflower Seed Pate



Sunflower Seed Pate

This is by far my favorite meal to make because it keeps well, tastes better the longer it stays in the fridge, and can be eaten in a variety of ways. I just love it and hope you do to!

Sunflower seeds are an excellent source of vitamins especially vitamin E, minerals, and essential fatty acids. It is often well tolerated by those with tree nut and peanut allergies.

Ingredients

- 1 C raw, unsalted sunflower seeds, soak overnight or at least 2 hours
- 1/4 C onion
- 3-4 cloves of garlic
- 1 large carrot, peeled and grated
- 1 stalks of large celery
- Handful of fresh cilantro **
- Handful of fresh parsley
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tsp salt (adjust to taste, may need more salt)

*Can substitute with other fresh herbs i.e. rosemary, basil



Directions

Soak, rinse, and drain sunflower seeds. Add to food processor and blend until finely grounded (maintaining some texture, unless you like it smooth). Transfer to a large glass bowl and set aside. Add to food processor coarsely chopped onion, peeled whole garlic cloves, and celery and grind until finely chopped. Transfer to bowl with sunflower seeds. Add to the bowl shredded carrots, finely chopped cilantro, parsley, lemon juice, and salt and mix thoroughly with a large spoon. Taste and add more lemon juice or salt to suit your taste. Serve on wholegrain toast with sliced avocado. Can also be eaten as a wrap using lettuce or collard greens. I enjoy eating it on top of a large kale salad for the added texture it provides. It is great to serve up as an appetizer alongside wholegrain crackers or to make zucchini or cucumber roll with.

Basic Banana Nice-Cream



Basic Banana Nice-Cream

This is such a wonderful treat for a light dessert although I must confess, I eat a version of this for breakfast or dinner when lazy to prepare something. It is so easy, delicious, and most importantly super healthy! Feel free to play around with it. Add pineapple or mangoes for a tropical treat, cherries or strawberries if you like- be creative and have fun! Make sure to use all fruits frozen for the best results.

Ingredients

3 medium sized overripe bananas, frozen
2 Tbsp plant-based milk (substitute with 1 Tbsp of coconut milk powder + 1/8 C water)
3-4 medjool dates, pitted and chopped

** Pictured: Basic banana nice-cream, maca powder, carob powder, chia seeds, and blue spirulina. Black strap molasses drizzled on top for special effect.

Directions

To make nice-cream, place in a food processor (my preference) or Vitamix blender frozen bananas, milk, dates, and blend until you achieve a smooth, soft-serve texture. Add more water or plant-based milk if needed. You can serve immediately or place in a container and freeze for 30-60 minutes, then scoop out with an ice-cream scooper.

Notes

- You can add chia seeds for an extra boost of nutrition. I prefer to grind whole seeds with a coffee grinder before adding to rest of ingredients prior to blending.
- I enjoy mine with just frozen banana, homemade coconut milk, raw carob powder, maca root powder, and dates. I place it in a bowl and top it with sliced banana and dried mulberries- soooo good!!
- You can also add blue spirulina with just frozen bananas, milk, and dates. Just blend. It give it a beautiful blue color and is a fun way for the kids to get involved and eat their healthy "ice-cream."

** For those with an autoimmune disorder, avoid using spirulina or any other immune stimulants (unless you tolerate it). Adaptogens like maca root powder are a great substitute.

Cashew Carob Brownies



Cashew Carob Brownies

This is another great recipe that is raw and easily adaptable. It pairs very nicely with the banana nice-cream. It is very rich, chewy, and decadent without the guilt or sugar high other unhealthy desserts give you. It can also be rolled into 8-12 "bliss balls" which you can store in the freezer. Take out and let sit on the counter for 10 minutes before eating. I like mine right out of the freezer but make sure you have strong teeth.

Ingredients

1/2 C cashews, raw (untoasted, unsalted)
1/2 C shelled hemp seeds
1C pitted medjool dates
2 Tbsp toasted carob powder
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/8 tsp pink Himalayan salt

Notes

Feel free to use any nut of your choice. I have enjoyed using brazil nut (high in selenium) and walnut (for omega-3 fatty acid). Would also go well with pistachio, pecan or almonds.

Toasted carob gives it that rich decadent flavor, but it would also work well with raw untoasted carob powder. Although I avoid the use of cocoa powder, it can be used in place of carob powder.

Directions

Place cashews in a food processor and pulse until very fine. Add the rest of the ingredients and blend until well combined. Add a splash of water if needed. Final product will be dough-like and malleable but shouldn't stick to your hand. Line a 8 inch x 4 inch loaf pan with parchment paper and spread the brownie evenly about 1 inch thick. You can add crushed cashews or hemp seeds on top for the crunch. Place in the freezer for at least 2 hours before serving. You can allow it to rest on the countertop for 10 minutes before cutting into pieces. This is such a wonderful treat!

** Pictured: Cashew carob brownie rolled into balls.

Grocery List

- apple juice
- black/white chia seeds
- blueberries (wild or regular)
- kale
- carrots
- cashews (raw, unsalted)
- romaine heart, lettuce
- cabbage
- brussels sprouts
- cilantro
- celery
- cinnamon *
- coconut milk
- coconut water *
- red and yellow bell peppers
- dried mangoes
- dry brown lentils
- garlic
- ginger
- golden flaxseed (whole seed)
- golden raisins
- grapes (seedless)
- honey or maple syrup
- lemon
- mangoes (frozen)
- medjool dates
- onion (red, white, or yellow)
- parsley
- pink Himalayan salt / Celtic
- portobello mushrooms
- pumpkin seed (raw, unsalted)
- raw foxtail millet
- ripe bananas
- rosemary *
- shelled hemp seeds
- snap
- spinach
- strawberries
- sunflower seeds (raw, unsalted)
- toasted carob powder
- unsweetened plant-based milk
- vanilla extract
- non-dairy yogurt

*substitutue/optional

7 Day Plant-Based Meal Plan

MONDAY

Chia seed pudding, fresh fruits, whole grain toast

Large salad, japanese sweet potatoes

TUESDAY

Green fruit smoothie bowl topped with fruits, granola

Large salad, zucchini/kelp noodles w/ avocado basil sauce

WEDNESDAY

Large golden fruit salad bowl with non-dairy yogurt

Large salad, baked french fries

THURSDAY

Millet porridge topped with coconut milk, assortment of fruit

Large salad, vegetable soup with lentils (or any bean of choice)

FRIDAY

Low-fat refined sugar free granola with plant-based milk and fruits

Large salad, rice/vegetable sushi roll with avocado

SATURDAY

baked white potatoes, whole grain toast, fresh fruits

Large salad, sunflower seed pate lettuce wrap

SUNDAY

Oatmeal or any whole grain cereal +/- avocado toast, fruits

Large salad, bean burger

BREAKFAST

LUNCH / DINNER

DESSERT

BONUS MEAL

- Banana Ice-cream with raw carob powder, maca powder, and blue spirulina with banana slices or fruit of choice
- Cashew Carob Brownie
 - **can substitute with any nut and/or seed of choice
 - ** pairs well with banana ice-cream

Boiled or baked yellow plantain OR yucca (cassava) with spinach and mushroom sauce

[The key is to eat enough until full at each meal]

Food Journal

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SLEEP	EXERCISE
MON					
TUE					
WED					
THUR					
FRI					
SAT					
SUN					

Thank You! Call to Action

I hope this e-book has helped you start your journey to better health!

70% of Americans are overweight or obese with 83 million people currently receiving treatment for diabetes. 1 in 4 has high blood pressure and many people are taking statin drugs to lower their cholesterol. These conditions increase the risk of heart disease with heart attack being the #1 cause of death today. You don't have to succumb to these diseases. But you have to be committed to making real changes. You will be glad you did!

Itura Health was birthed out of a need to educate individuals on the positive effect plant-based nutrition has on chronic disease prevention and reversal. We offer several services one of which is 1-on-1 coaching to help transition and adopt a plant-based diet particularly for those wanting to loose weight and heal from type 2 diabetes. In the future we hope to provide a wellness retreat in a relaxing environment while focusing on health education and wellness!

Call our office at 713-322-4470

Email us at info@iturahealth.com or doctor-teju@hushmail.com

Visit our website at iturahealth.com

Visit us on Instagram at [Iturahealth](https://www.instagram.com/Iturahealth)

