



Elite Nutrition

Nutritional consulting coaching
Work Manual
By: Vanessa De Ascencao
Masters of Science in Nutrition
Contact info@vdanutrition.com

Embark on the greatest journey – I am going to show you how!

*"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." **Michael Jordan***

"A Journey into You", the intelligent **METHOD** for healthy weight loss, increased energy, decreased stress, reduced signs of aging, and a mind/body connection that will empower you **FEEL** amazing on the **INSIDE** and **LOOK** amazing on the **OUTSIDE**!

Remember if you can go there in the mind you can go there in the body!

It is my aim to empower you to improve your life through information, food, and lifestyle. Information is one of the key elements which we will be concentrating on to enable you to make informed decisions about your health, and to help you achieve any goal you set your mind too

People often think that advances in medicine have to be a new drug, a new laser, or a surgical intervention to be powerful —something really high-tech and expensive. They often have a hard time believing that the simple choices that we make in our lives each day—what we eat, how we respond to stress, whether or not we smoke, how much we exercise and the quality of our relationships—can make such a powerful difference in our health, our well-being, and our survival, but they often do.

Awareness is the first step in getting in touch with your body and its very own intelligent system. When we become more aware of how powerfully our choices in diet and lifestyle affect us—for better and for worse—then we can make different ones. It's like connecting the dots between what we do and how we feel.

Part of the value of science is to raise our awareness by helping us to understand the powerful effects of the diet and lifestyle choices we make each day—and how changing these may significantly, sometimes dramatically, improve our health and well being. In many cases, these improvements may occur much more quickly than people had once believed possible.

People have different needs, goals and preferences. What matters most is your overall way of eating and living. If you indulge yourself one day, you can eat more healthfully the next. If you're a couch potato one day, exercise a little more the next. If you don't have time to meditate for 20 minutes, do it for one minute—the consistency is more important than the duration. Then, you're less likely to feel restricted. Studies have shown that those who eat the healthiest overall are the ones who allow themselves some indulgences.

What Is Nutrition?

Nutrition is the science of foods and nutrients and their actions within the body (including ingestion, digestion, absorption, transportation, utilization and excretion)

Human Dietary Needs

The human diet must provide the following:

- Calories; enough to meet our daily energy needs.
- Amino acids. There are nine, or so, "essential" amino acids that we need for protein synthesis and that we cannot synthesize from other precursors.
- Fatty acids. There are three "essential" fatty acids that we cannot synthesize from other precursors.
- Minerals. Inorganic ions. We probably need 18 different ones: a few like calcium in relatively large amounts; most, like zinc, in "trace" amounts.
- Vitamins. A dozen, or so, small organic molecules that we cannot synthesize from other precursors in our diet.

Water

Dihydrogen oxide (H₂O) or water is a colourless, tasteless liquid under normal circumstances. Liquid water is essential to life and therefore is the most important and essential nutrient. Water is obtained by drinking and by eating food. It is mainly lost through perspiration, respiration and urination. Water contains no calories.

Water is the basis for the fluids of the body. Water makes up more than two-thirds of the weight of the human body.

Without water, humans would die in a few days. All the cells and organs need water to function.

Water is the basis of blood, saliva and the fluids surrounding the joints. Water regulates the body temperature through perspiration. It also helps prevent constipation by moving food through the intestinal tract and eliminates waste from the body through filtering by the kidneys. The human brain is around 80% water by weight and is very sensitive to dehydration. For a bodybuilder, adequate hydration is just as important as adequate nutrition. In a survival situation, hydration is much more important than nutrition.

Protein:

Protein is one of the basic components of food and makes all life possible. Amino acids are the building blocks of proteins. All of the antibodies and enzymes, and many of the hormones in the body are proteins. They provide for the transport of nutrients, oxygen and waste throughout the body. They provide the structure and contracting capability of muscles. They also provide collagen to connective tissues of the body and to the tissues of the skin, hair and nails.

Proteins contain 4 calories per gram.

MEATS - Meat cuts should be lean, trimmed & skinless.

- Poultry: Chicken, Turkey, Goose, Game Birds, etc. (Be sure to remove skin. If buying ground meat ensures it is lean.)
- Red Meat: Any quality lean meat from Cows, Elk, Buffalo, Kangaroo, Game. (If buying ground meat ensure it is lean.)
- Other Meats: Pork, Lamb, Lean Ham, etc. (Ensure you buy the leaner cuts as these meats can be quite fatty.)
- Fish: Fresh Cod, Snapper, Salmon, Swordfish, Canned Fish. (Most fish are lean but the fattier fish are high in healthy fats)
- Shellfish: Includes: Mussels, Oysters, Scallops, Prawns, Lobsters, etc.

DAIRY - Choose mostly low fat dairy products

- Milk, Powdered Milk (Choose mostly skim milk. Can be Cow/goat/sheep, etc)
- Low Fat Cottage Cheese & Natural Yoghurt. (These foods include the benefits of bacterial cultures to improve gut health)
- Cheeses & Other Dairy Products. (Cheeses are very high in fat, choose softer cheeses where possible)
- Eggs, Powdered Egg (Egg whites are pure protein, egg yolks contain fat and protein)

VEGETABLE PROTEINS - Vegetable proteins are often "incomplete" so it is wise to vary them or add dairy/meat

- Raw Nuts & Seeds: (These are also high in healthy fats and contain carbohydrate)
- Grain Protein: (Many grains e.g.: wheat's, rice, etc contain significant amounts of proteins)
- Bean/Vegetable Protein: (Soybeans are the main protein source here, although other beans and vegetables contain protein)

PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS These are available in powders/bars/drinks/etc.

- Whey Protein: (A fast digesting milk protein. Available in various forms/fractions)
- Casein Protein: (A slow digesting milk protein.)
- Soy Protein: (Derived from soybeans.)
- Egg Protein: (Primarily the protein albumin, this is a slow digesting protein)
- Vegetable Proteins: (Can be found in the form of Wheat, Pea, Spirulina Protein, etc)
- Amino Acids: (These are the building blocks of proteins. They are present in protein containing foods or available as free form powders or capsules. The essential amino acids * are amino acids that cannot be synthesized by the body from other available resources, and therefore must be supplied as part of the diet. "Complete" proteins contain all of these, whilst "incomplete" proteins do not. The amino acids are: Alanine, Arginine, Asparagine, Aspartic Acid, Cysteine, Glutamic Acid, Glutamine, Glycine, Histidine, Isoleucine*, Leucine*, Lysine, Methionine*, Phenylalanine*, Proline, Serine, Threonine*, Tryptophan*, Tyrosine, Valine*

Carbohydrates: Complex carbohydrates also contain fibre.

Carbohydrates are the chief source of energy for all bodily functions and muscular exertion. They are necessary for the digestion and assimilation of other foods. They help regulate protein and fat metabolism, and fats require carbohydrates to be broken down in the liver. They also provide some of the structural components necessary for the growth and repair of tissues. All carbohydrates contain 4 calories per gram.

SIMPLE CARBOHYDRATES - These are the small molecule carbohydrates or sugars

- Sugar Cane & Sugar Beets (The main commercial sources of sugar)
- Fresh Fruit & Berries (These contain mainly fructose, a low GI sugar)
- Honey (Honey contains a mix of glucose and fructose)
- Milk (Milk and milk products contain the sugar lactose)
- Prepared Sugars (Glucose/Fructose/Lactose/Maltose, etc. Found in drinks or free form)

COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES - These are long chains of simple carbohydrates, that breakdown to release sugars

- Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Pumpkin & Squash
- Yams, Parsnips & Other Root Vegetables
- Corn, Oats Wheat & Other Grains.
- Wholegrain Flours, Breads & Pastas.
- Brans, Weet Bix & Shredded Wheat Cereals.
- Ancient Grains (Amaranth, Millet, quinoa etc).
- Basmati, Brown & Wild Rice.
- Raw Nuts, Seeds, Beans, Lentils, Couscous & Other Pulses, etc.
- Vegetables such as Carrots and Peas.

Fats / Oils: All oils ideally should be cold pressed, extra virgin and of high quality.

Fatty acids are individual isomers of what we more commonly call "fats". There are potentially hundreds of different fatty acids, but just a few dozen that are commonly found in the foods we eat. Nutritionists commonly classify dietary fat as either saturated, monounsaturated, or polyunsaturated, based on the number of double bonds that exist in the fat's molecular structure. For each of these three classes, there exists a large number of different chemical variations or "isomers". These include the EFA's or Essential Fatty Acids. Fats are required to produce and build new cells. They are a source of energy and are critical in the transmission of nerve impulses and brain function and development. They are also involved in the synthesis of other essential molecules such as hormones. Fats contain 9 calories per gram.

VEGETABLE FAT SOURCES - These are mostly high in mono and polyunsaturated fats and contain EFA's

- Flaxseed, Hempseed, Evening Primrose, Almond, Canola, Olive and Most Other Plant Oils.
- Whole Raw Nuts & Seeds (Some whole seeds need to be cracked or ground to be digested)
- MCT Oils (These are medium chain saturated fats derived from coconut oil, available as a supplement)

ANIMAL FAT SOURCES - These can be high in mono and polyunsaturated and saturated fats and contain EFA's

- Salmon, Cod, Halibut, Shellfish & Other Fatty Fish/Fish Oils (Fish are high in unsaturated fats and EFA's)
- Dairy Products (Can vary in fat content wildly and can contain high levels of saturated fat)
- Lean Meat & Poultry (Even when trimmed and skinless, these provide fat. Can be high in saturated fat)
- Eggs

Fibre - Fibre has no caloric value but is still classed as a macronutrient

Dietary fibres are large carbohydrate molecules containing many different sorts of monosaccharide. The key difference between fibre and other carbohydrates is that they are not broken down by the human digestive system.

There Are Two Types of Fibre: Soluble & Insoluble

These are often found together in the same source.

Soluble fibres can be dissolved in water (hence the name). These fibres are beneficial in that they can slow the speed of digestion due to their thickness. They are also helpful in maintaining artery health.

Insoluble fibres are such things as cellulose which do not dissolve in water. Insoluble fibres do not affect the speed of digestion. They are beneficial to gut health.

- Broccoli / Cauliflower / Cabbage
- Celery / Lettuce / Spinach / Watercress
- Mushrooms / Onions / Carrots
- Green Beans / Peas / Asparagus / Kale
- Bean & Vegetable Sprouts / Beetroot / Leeks
- Cucumber / Zucchini / Aubergine
- Tomato / Capsicum / Silver beet
- Frozen Mixed Vegetables
- Any Other Non-starchy Vegetable (or similar) of Any Colour
- Any Grain or Grain Product
- Fruits & Berries
- Legumes

Eat the right foods and you can eat as much as you want. Eating the 'Abundance Foods' listed below on a regular basis will help make you feel stronger and more energised, without getting fat or piling on the pounds.

Guidelines -- "all you really need to know"

You can eat the following foods whenever you feel hungry until you are full (but not until you are stuffed):

- Beans and legumes (lentils, kidney beans, peas, black beans, red Mexican beans, split peas, soybeans, black-eyed peas, garbanzos, navy beans, and so on)
- Fruits (apples, apricots, bananas, strawberries, cherries, blueberries, oranges, peaches, raspberries, cantaloupes, watermelons, pears, honeydew melons, pineapples, tomatoes, and so on)
- Grains (brown rice, oats, quinoa, millet, barley, buckwheat, and so on)
- Vegetables (potatoes, zucchini, broccoli, carrots, lettuce, mushrooms, eggplant, celery, asparagus, onions, sweet potatoes, spinach, and so on)
- Protein (**White fish, Tuna, Salmon, and all other fresh fish, no smoked or fried fish**)

You can eat the following foods in moderation:

- Non-fat dairy products, including skim milk, non-fat yogurt, non-fat cheeses, non-fat sour cream, and egg whites
- Non-fat or very low-fat commercially available products, Read labels. Some of the non-fat or very low-fat commercially available products are high in sugar, so avoid these when possible. Ingredients are listed on food labels in order of the amount contained in that food. In other words, if the first ingredient is sugar, then there's more sugar than anything else in that food. Also, on most packages you'll find the number of grams of fat, the number of calories, and the amount of cholesterol. i.e. the foods to avoid as much as possible:
 - Red Meat
 - Oils (all kinds) and oil-containing products, including margarines and most salad dressings
 - Roasted Nuts and seeds
 - High-fat or "low-fat" dairy, including whole milk, yogurt, butter, cheese, egg yolks, cream, and so on
 - Sugar and simple sugar derivatives (honey, molasses, corn syrup, high fructose syrup, and the like)
 - Alcohol
 - Any commercially available product with more than two grams of fat per serving

My top tips – your guidelines:

1. **Balance your blood sugar levels** – stay away from stimulants and sugar
2. **Eat food in its natural and whole state** – avoid over processed food. Your body doesn't know what to do with it – keep it clean and lean all the way.
3. **After 3pm make veggies your carbohydrates** – have oatmeal, rye bread, brown rice, sweet potatoes, fruit, and quinoa early in the day and salads and steamed vegetables later in the day
4. **Eat good fat**, especially Omega-3 rich foods
5. **Keep your dinner lean** – protein and greens
6. **Always eat balanced snacks and meals** – eating wholesome carbohydrates, protein and fat in every meal keeps your blood sugar levels from spiking and crashing. This controls energy levels and keeps cravings at bay.
7. **Eat & drink food for the soul** – in moderation
8. **Drink water** – stay away from chemically artificial drinks
9. **Don't forget to sleep** – 7-8 hours at least!
10. **Focus on resistance training** 3-4 times a week and don't forget walking is one of the best forms of cardio you can do!

And some more Top Tips...

- Never mix a protein and starch, so if you eat fish or chicken then avoid rice, potatoes or bread. Starch with vegetables and fish with vegetables.
- Leave at least 4 hours between meals
- One type of fruit at a time, avoid fruit salads this causes bloating.
- All food must be prepared fresh, nothing pre-packaged.
- If it doesn't have a mother or doesn't grow you can't eat it
- Always use cold pressed olive oil
- Keep your evening meal light
- Have a treat 1x a week, but a meal and not a DAY.
- Reduce your salt intake and focus on fresh herbs to season your food.
- Buy organic or free range milk and any other animal products
- Use parsley a lot, it's a blood purifier and helps eliminate water.
- Vegetable juices are amazing, try have at least 1 a day
- Snack on raw unsalted nuts or seeds with fruit.

Your meal plan options:

Option 1:

Upon waking: Hot water and lemon. You can add some ginger to really add a boost, but this is optional.

7:00am: Papaya and some lemon with raw almonds (a handful)

10am: a bowl of oats with grated apple and cinnamon

1:00pm: Five Spirulina tablets, big raw salad with rocket, romaine or butter lettuce, avocado, tomato, carrots, with either grilled chicken breast or some grilled fish or tuna, add some olive oil if you wish and balsamic vinegar.

3:00pm: fresh fruit (1 type only) with some raw almonds. *Frozen blueberries and strawberries are amazing with almonds, or some apple and natural, unsalted no sugar peanut butter.

6:30-7:00pm: Lots of steamed or baked veggies (green beans, beetroot, pumpkin, butternut, broccoli, mushrooms or any of the green veg). Again, either add another protein source (fish, or chicken or a starch like quinoa or sweet potato).

9:00pm Chamomile tea or peppermint tea to aid in sleep and digestion.

Option 2:

Upon Waking:

Hot water and the juice of ½ a lemon with **five Spirulina tablets**.

Breakfast:

½ cup rolled oats with some berries or grated apple with cinnamon and a little honey

Or:

One chopped apple or pear 15 Almonds (raw with skins), 100g Fat free, plain yogurt or cottage cheese, add some cinnamon.

Lunch:

Five Spirulina tablets - grilled or baked/fish or tinned tuna. Have a large mixed salad of your choice which included vegetables. One tablespoon of cold pressed olive oil.

Or:

Quinoa or sweet potato with a large raw salad and some vegetables.

Snack:

Hummus and veggies.

Or

An apple with 15 raw almonds or a tablespoon of sugar free natural peanut butter.

Dinner:

Large raw salad and cooked vegetables with 120g of a lean protein of your choice (ostrich, fish, chicken, or a healthy egg white omelette with vegetables) add one tablespoon of cold pressed olive oil.

More options:

Breakfast:

- Green Apple, plain fat free yogurt and ½ cup non instant oats OR
- 2 x Rye toast with two boiled eggs
- Water with lemon and ginger
- Cup of green tea

Snack AM: Handful raw unsalted, almonds and walnuts to nibble on for morning tea

Lunch:

- Fresh tuna salad with two slices rye bread, OR lean turkey/ chicken breasts on rye with Avocado or Hummus and tomato.
- Water with lemon
- A fresh plum or other fruit

Snack PM: Piece of fruit or nuts for afternoon tea

Dinner:

Either a salmon steak or other fish or Lamb Loin chops or a piece of steak with vegetables and salad, Quinoa is also a

great easy versatile food that can be added for lunch or dinner.

Cup of Green tea with ginger or peppermint tea and 70-85% dark chocolate (two pieces maximum)

Option 3: (this is when you need to get into shape quickly, do it for 10 days maximum)

Breakfast: Oats with cinnamon and berries (blueberries)

Mid-morning snack: 10 almonds

Lunch: Veggie and protein green salad: Precooked vegetables, including eggplant, peppers, onions, green beans, asparagus and zucchini; 120g grilled chicken or fish; and ½ of an avocado.

Dinner: Grilled fish or chicken with loads of green vegetables with olive oil

Supplement regime**Supplements: (my recommendations to you, more info to follow below)**

Marcus Rohrer Spirulina (x 10 a day)

Magnesium (before bed x 4)

Solgar B-Complex (x2 a day after breakfast)

Omega 3 (Metagenics or Solgar)

Power meals going forward**Super Power Foods Menu ideas and Foods that You Should Always Have in Your House!****Examples for Breakfast:**

30g(1/2 cup) raw rolled oats with cinnamon and apple grated, can be made over night and eaten in the morning, add some

pumpkin seeds and almonds.

Egg white omelette with veggies with a side of Rye Toast

Fat free plain yogurt and fresh strawberries and blueberries

Salmon, low-fat cream cheese on a small whole wheat bagel or 100 rye toast)

Body Rewarding Snacks:

One slice of rye bread with avocado

Banana and some almonds

Lunch:

Grilled chicken salad with a sweet potato or quinoa, or some rye bread

Fresh or tinned salmon with a side of steamed vegetables

Tuna fish salad made with a touch of olive oil or avocado, on a bed of fresh crisp greens, side of cooked veggies

Afternoon Snack (4:00 or so):

Handful of almonds (about 12 pieces) and a piece of fruit

Low-fat cottage cheese with some rye bread

Dinner:

Baked fish with veggies and salad

Seared Asian seasoned tuna with a large salad and vegetables
Ostrich mince with fresh herbs and tomatoes with onion and loads of veggies

What to Avoid:

- Fried foods
- Foods loaded with gravies or heavy sauces
- Sugary treats disguised as healthy foods (granola bars, "snack mix," breakfast bars, etc.)
- Cokes, colas, drinks that pack a whopping 200 calories per serving
- White bread sandwiches
- Mayonnaise, oil, butter, margarine

What to Look for:

- Baked or grilled meats
- Whole wheat bread or brown rice as a side
- Fresh vegetables and fruits
- Low-fat snack-size servings that are low in sugar (Read the labels! You can't assume it is healthy even if the word "healthy" appears on the label)
- Low-sodium alternatives
- Olive oil and flax seed oil

Your Essential Supplements:

1. **Spirulina:** Spirulina is considered the healthiest food on Earth. It contains the most beneficial combination of powerful nutrients and has amazing healing properties.

Spirulina provides you with:

- a. Polysaccharides
- b. chlorophyll blood purifier
- c. phycocyanin (blue pigment - inhibits cancer)
- d. irons (easier absorbed than iron supplements)
- e. magnesium
- f. selenium
- g. potassium
- h. calcium
- i. chromium
- j. copper
- k. manganese
- l. phosphorus
- m. sodium
- n. zinc
- o. vegetable protein
- p. provitamin A
- q. B complex vitamins (the highest source of B12)
- r. beta carotene (10 times more concentrated than in carrots)
- s. vitamin C
- t. vitamin D
- u. vitamin E
- v. carotenoids
- w. rare essential fatty acids (GLA, omega-3 EFA, DHA)
- x. carbohydrates
- y. enzymes
- z. sulfolipids
- aa. glycolipids

Spirulina can protect cardiovascular health by lowering blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels. It also contains a number of antioxidant vitamins and minerals, including vitamins C and E, beta carotene, manganese, copper, zinc, chromium, iron and selenium. These antioxidants boost immune function and can help prevent some types of cancer.

Spirulina contains a lot of vegetable protein. A single dose of spirulina is made up of more than 60% protein; that makes it higher in protein than chicken, fish or beef. Spirulina's vegetable protein is easier to digest than animal protein, and since it's a water soluble protein, it doesn't contribute to weight gain.

2. **Calcium & Magnesium**

Magnesium is usually paired with calcium in supplements because they are both important in bone health and help prevent chronic fatigue, muscle cramps, heart palpitations, and many PMS symptoms including nausea and irritability. Avoiding these issues are important for athletes because things like fatigue and muscle cramps can severely impact performance and lead to injuries.

3. **Fish Oil**

The **benefits of fish oil** are countless and are important for athletes, and non-athletes, alike. Whether you're looking to improve concentration, decrease soreness and inflammation, build and repair muscle, improve joint health, or get rid of stubborn body fat, a few **fish oil capsules** a couple of times a day can make a world of difference.

Food combining chart

"Love life & live it to its fullest, in Happiness & health" – Dr Myron Wentz

Recipes:

Breakfast:

Always eat a good breakfast!

Pancakes – and you thought you couldn't eat pancakes! The perfect winter breakfast that will keep you full for hours and balance your blood sugar levels though the day!

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 egg whites
- 1/3 cup dry oatmeal
- 1/2 banana sliced
- Sweeten with xylitol or sucralose (2 teaspoons xylitol or 1 teaspoon sucralose) add loads of cinnamon!

DIRECTIONS:

Put all ingredients in a bowl and mix together. Spray frying pan with cooking spray and cook mixture as you do regular pancakes. Serve with a sprinkle of cinnamon, sweetener, or sugar-free syrup. Variation: Substitute other fruits in the mixture, such as sliced strawberries, or have none at all.

Perfect bowl of organic oats

A perfect way to start a day of healthy eating! And who would have thought that a bowl of oatmeal could provide over half of the daily value for those hard-to-find omega-3 fatty acids as well as 109% of the daily value for manganese. Enjoy!

Prep and Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2-1/4 cups water
- dash salt
- 1 cup regular rolled oats
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 TBS flaxseeds
- 1 TBS blackstrap molasses
- 1 cup milk or dairy-free milk alternative

DIRECTIONS:

- Combine the water and salt in a small saucepan and turn the heat to high.
- When the water boils, turn the heat to low, add oatmeal, and cook, stirring, until the water is just absorbed, about 5 minutes. Add cinnamon, cranberries, walnuts, and flaxseeds. Stir, cover the pan, and turn off heat. Let set for 5 minutes. Serve with milk and molasses.

Serves 2

Great topped on cereals and yogurt, this clean version of a classic breakfast favourite won't disappoint.

Cinnamon spiced granola

Ready in 1 hour • Makes 28 servings

- 3 1/2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds or nuts of choice
- 1/2 cup oat bran
- 1/2 cup wheat germ
- 1 cup wheat bran
- 1–2 tsp cinnamon

- 1 tsp ground ginger
- Pinch of cardamom
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 3/4 cup all-natural unsweetened applesauce
- 1/4 cup 100% pure apple juice
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1–2 cups dried fruit of choice (try raisins, cranberries or blueberries)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together dry ingredients (first 9 listed) and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, mix together remaining wet ingredients except for dried fruit.
4. Stir wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until evenly coated.
5. Spread mixture over a large baking sheet covered with parchment paper.
6. Bake for 30 minutes, then stir. Bake for an additional 15 minutes until crisp and golden. If the centre is still wet, bake for an additional 10 minutes.
7. Remove baking sheet to a wire rack to cool completely and stir in dried fruit. Store granola in an airtight container.

Lunch:

Easy and delicious! You can always make these for dinner and pack a lunchbox and have it for lunch the next day! They are quick and easy!

Curried Pumpkin Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp cayenne
- 3 apples, peeled, cored, chopped
- 15-oz can pumpkin puree
- 2 2/3 C low-sodium chicken broth
- 2/3 C water
- 1 tsp brown sugar

INSTRUCTIONS:

Pour oil into a large saucepan and place over medium heat. Add onions, garlic, garlic, curry, cumin, and cayenne. Sauté stirring often, until onions are soft. Stir apples, pumpkin, broth, water and sugar. Bring to a boil, then let simmer covered with heat reduced to low. Simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Puree food in a food processor or blender. Just before serving, return to pot on low heat.

Makes 6 servings

The best Vegetable Salad – doesn't get easier than this

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 large potatoes
- 1/2 small cabbage, sliced
- 1 lb green string beans, trimmed
- 180g fresh bean sprouts
- 1 cucumber
- 3 eggs, hard-boiled
- olive oil and lemon juice to taste

INSTRUCTIONS:

Boil potatoes, peel and cut in slices. Separately boil the cabbage, string beans and bean sprouts. Then drain. Peel cucumber and slice thin. Slice hard-boiled eggs. Put all the veggies on a large platter, each type of vegetable in its own section. Chill. Serve cold accompanied with extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice. Each person chooses and arranged veggies on his or her plate, then pours peanut sauce over it.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Dinner:

Warm winter wonders – comfort without the layers!

Mushroom and Spinach Pizza

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup fresh tomato sauce
- 1 cup (packed) fresh spinach, chopped
- 1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup fat-free mozzarella, grated
- Pizza dough (see recipe below)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Spread the sauce evenly around the dough. Next, add the spinach, followed by the mushrooms and the cheese.
2. Bake at 450 degrees Fahrenheit for 15 to 20 minutes - the cheese should be slightly brown. Makes 8 servings.

Pizza Dough

INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup warm water, heated in microwave on high for one minute
- 1 1/2 teaspoon active dry yeast
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 3/4 cups flour
- Olive oil cooking spray

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Put the water into a bowl and sprinkle the yeast over it. Then, add the salt and sugar and mix briefly. Add in the flour and mix again.
2. Lightly oil a medium bowl. Put the dough into the bowl and with greased hands, kneed it gently for 30 to 45 seconds. Rotate the dough to coat the entire surface with the oil.
3. Cover the dough with kitchen towel and set it aside in a warm spot so it can rise until its bulk has doubled (1 to 1 1/2 hours).
4. Spray a large pizza pan (approximately 14-inches) with oil. Spread the dough onto the pan using the fingertips to push it toward the edges.
5. Proceed as directed in the individual recipes.

Fish Pockets- doesn't get more healthy and easy!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 small tomato, sliced
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 12 oz white fish
- 1 small zucchini cut into cubes
- 1/4 cup white cooking wine
- 1 lemon

INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375. Fold two sheets of foil into pockets, turning up the sides so it doesn't leak (or use a parchment pouch). Divide all ingredients in half and layer tomato slices, onion slices, fish and zucchini cubes, in that order. Pour the white wine over layers, then sprinkle with some black lemon pepper. Squeeze lemon juice over top. Close foil, place pockets on a shallow baking pan and bake for 20 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork and zucchini is tender.

Makes 2 Servings

Vegetarian chilli

Ready in 1 hour • Makes 6 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can stewed tomatoes
- 1 can (14 oz) white or red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- Some chilli and fresh tomatoes
- 125g button mushrooms

INSTRUCTIONS:

Combine all ingredients in a large pot, bring to a boil, then let simmer for 30 to 60 minutes. Alternatively, you can put all ingredients into a slow cooker and leave on low for 6 to 8 hours.

Snack or dessert

Berry Parfait This is the perfect energizing snack paired with plain non-fat yogurt!
Ready in 15 minutes • Makes 8 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- Fat free vanilla yogurt
- Rolled oats
- A punnet of strawberries or and blueberries

INSTRUCTIONS:

In a medium-sized clear bowl, layer the ingredients in the following order: rolled oats, yogurt and berries (alternating between the three types), repeating until the bowl is filled.

Fat-Free Banana Loaf

INGREDIENTS:

Wet:

- 3 egg whites
- 3 ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/2 cup applesauce or a little apple juice
- 3/4 cup Sucralose or Xylitol (available at health shops, dischem or wellness warehouse)

Dry:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup almonds, chopped or slivered (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit. In a medium bowl, beat the egg whites, and add the remaining wet ingredients – mix thoroughly. In another bowl, mix the dry ingredients. Then lightly blend all of the ingredients together, and pour the mixture into a loaf pan. Bake for 50 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out dry. Let the loaf stand in the pan for 10 minutes, then slice and serve.

Healthy Lamb recipe

Enjoy these lean lamb chops with seasonal vegetables, such as new potatoes, asparagus and baby carrots.

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 lamb loin chops
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Preparation:

Trim chops of all visible fat. Place in a glass baking dish with the lemon, oregano, thyme and black pepper. Turn to coat and marinate for 15 minutes.

Coat a heavy nonstick skillet with olive oil cooking spray. On a medium-high heat, cook chops 4-5 minutes each side depending on thickness and desired doneness.

Serve with minted new potatoes, baby carrots and asparagus.

Serves 4.

10-Minute Rosemary Lamb Chops

Nothing complements the flavour of lamb better than rosemary. And our Quick Broil method makes this dish very fast and easy to prepare. With this dish you not only enjoy great taste but add an excellent source of protein, vitamin B12, selenium, zinc, and vitamin B3 to your Healthiest Way of Eating. Enjoy!

Prep and Cook Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 12 lamb chops
- 6 TBS fresh lemon juice
- 3 TBS chopped fresh rosemary
- 3 medium cloves garlic, pressed
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

Directions:

1. Press garlic and let sit for at least 5 minutes to bring out its hidden health benefits.
2. Mix together lemon juice, rosemary, pressed garlic, salt, and pepper. Rub lamb chops with mixture. Set aside on plate.
3. Preheat broiler on high heat, and place a stainless steel or cast iron skillet large enough to hold the lamb chops under the heat for about 10 minutes to get very hot (about 5-7 inches from the heat source). Be sure that the handle is also metal.
4. Once pan is hot, place lamb chops in pan, and return to broiler for about 4-5 minutes, depending on thickness of lamb. Lamb is cooked quickly as it is cooking on both sides at the same time.

Healthy Mashed Sweet Potatoes

The spice mixture and orange juice in this recipe adds a wonderful complement to the flavour of the sweet potatoes for a great new addition to your Healthiest Way of Eating. It also contains only 98 calories but 249% of your daily value (DV) for health-promoting vitamin A! Enjoy!

Prep and Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium-sized sweet potatoes for quick cooking
- 2 TBS fresh orange juice
- ½ tsp macula
- 1 TBS extra virgin olive oil
- salt and white pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

- Bring lightly salted water to a boil in a steamer with a tight fitting lid.
- Steam peeled and sliced sweet potatoes in steamer basket, covered, for about 10 minutes, or until tender
- When tender, mash with potato masher, adding rest of ingredients. **Serves 4**

Roast Leg of Lamb

Prep and Cook Time: Prep time: 15 minutes cooking time: 45 minutes

Ingredients:

- butt half of boneless leg of lamb, about 3 to 4 lbs
- 8 cloves of garlic, pressed
- 3 TBS chopped rosemary
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp salt

- 1 tsp fresh ground pepper
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 onions, quartered
- 1½ cups chopped celery

Directions:

1. Cut off excess fat from leg of lamb. Lay leg of lamb out flat in glass baking dish. Press garlic and chop rosemary.
2. Rub leg with both making sure you get it into the crevices. Pour fresh lemon juice over lamb and sprinkle with salt. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
3. Preheat the oven to 425 F (218 C). Cut vegetables and place around lamb in baking dish. Sprinkle with pepper.
4. Roast lamb and vegetables for about 15 minutes, then turn the heat down to 350 F (177 C).
5. After about 20 minutes, check the internal temperature of the lamb with an instant reading meat thermometer. Continue to check in thickest part of leg every 5 minutes until internal temperature reaches 130 F (55 C) for medium rare. Let it rest for a few minutes before carving. Serve with vegetables and pan juices.
6. If vegetables are not yet tender, pour them into a pan with juice and simmer, covered over medium heat while lamb rests.

Healthy Pot Roast

Cook Time: 4 hr 0 min

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 blade cut chuck roast
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- Vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 5 to 6 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 cup tomato juice
- 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup cocktail olives, drained and broken
- 1/2 cup dark raisins

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 190-200 degrees F. Place a wide, heavy skillet or fry pan over high heat for 2 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, rub both sides of meat with the salt and cumin. When the pan is hot (really hot) brown meat on both sides and remove from pan. Add just enough vegetable oil to cover the bottom of the pan then add the onion and garlic. Stir constantly until onion is softened. Add the tomato juice, vinegar, olives, and raisins. Bring to a boil and reduce the liquid by half. Create a pouch with wide, heavy duty aluminium foil.
3. Place half the reduced liquid/chunk mixture on the foil; add the roast, and then top with the remaining mixture. Close the pouch, and wrap tightly in another complete layer of foil. Cook for 3 to 3 1/2 hours or until a fork pushes easily into the meat. Remove from oven and rest (still wrapped) for at least 1/2 hour.
4. Snip off 1 corner of the foil pouch and drain the liquid into a bowl or measuring cup. Add some of the "chunkiest" and puree with and a blender. Slice meat thinly, or pull apart with a fork.

Here are a few tips to assist you on your journey:

Structure: Removing all temptation from your home and stocking your cupboards and fridge with the correct foods. Structure where you eat, make sure you eat at the kitchen table, not in front of the TV, not standing, and not in a rush. Clean up after you finished eating and make sure the area is clean. Brush your teeth and have some peppermint tea so that your desire for something sweet or more food is weakened.

Eat consciously: Be aware of how you feel when you eat certain foods, how do they make you feel? Do you feel bloated? Are you chewing your food? Did you take the time to prepare your food?

Plan: Plan your meals ahead, pack them, so that you are not left in a situation whereby you will reach for the wrong foods. Carry fruit and nuts with you, this is nature's take away and easy and convenient to carry around, The rest of the time, make sure you stick to your meal plan by preparing your food the night before or in the morning. Structure makes you stick to things and also provides the action plan to help you reach your goal.

Keep it simple: Keep your food choices simple, and eat for health. Don't make food the centre of your life; keep active with interests that keep you from thinking about eating. Learn something new, be creative, and read, the list is endless.

Keep your eye on the goal: Obstacles are the things you see when you take your eye off the goal. Don't let a weak moment in time get the best of you. Imagine how you will feel when you wake up in the morning knowing that you can tick off another day of healthy eating, and looking after yourself. A sense of accomplishment, your clothes feel better, you have energy and feel full of vitality.

Sleep: Sleep is essential; we need sufficient sleep and rest to best deal with the stress in our lives. We need to recover and allow our body to rest. Studies have shown that people who get ample sleep better control their weight and hunger. If you are not sleeping well, you can become overwhelmed more easily by stressful situations.

Self awareness:

Accept that you are human and that there will be times that you will fall off the wagon. Don't be so hard on yourself, and don't allow one small or big slip up determine the outcome of your success. Surround yourself with people that support you and are there for you during your quest to optimum health and wellness. Goal setting is an excellent way to stay on track, as are food diaries as they make you aware and accountable of what you doing, as well as factors that highlight either positively or negatively your food choices and behaviours.

Set specific goals, but also be realistic and enjoy the experience. Appreciate everything about yourself, and know that everything is possible.

We can't buy good health, we must work towards it and attain it, and it is an ongoing journey. We are only given one body in this lifetime and I encourage you to take care of it, love and respect it.

I am 100% committed to your success and well being. In order to ensure success there must be a willingness to make a commitment to achieve wellness, once that commitment is made, and one is consistent there need not be any failures, everyone is a success!

VDA
Vanessa De Ascencao
WELLNESS | LIFESTYLE
CONSULTANT

