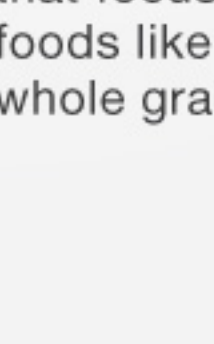


# SPRING "CLEAN" YOUR DIET

What does it mean to "eat clean"? It means to eat fresh, unprocessed foods. The experts from NorthShore University HealthSystem explore its health benefits and share some simple guidelines for giving your diet a yearlong spring clean.



## WHAT IS CLEAN EATING?



RICH DIET

### IT'S A BALANCED DIET

that focuses on natural, nutrient-rich foods like fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins.

## BENEFITS

### It's good for your colon!

A "clean" diet can improve the health of your colon and help reduce your risk of colon cancer.

### It's an easily sustainable lifestyle change that avoids these common diet pitfalls:



#### SLOW METABOLISM

Some weight-loss seekers cut too many calories and skips meals, which can slow one's metabolism and cause weight gain when normal eating habits are resumed.

#### ADDED SALT, SUGAR AND PRESERVATIVES

A microwaveable meal or diet-friendly cookie may be low in fat and calories, but it's probably high in flavor-enhancing ingredients like salt, sugar and artificial flavors and preservatives.

## CLEAN EATING GUIDELINES:

### Choose:

#### UNPROCESSED, NATURAL FOODS

Unprocessed foods are fresh and have few (if any) added artificial ingredients and preservatives.

Examples: fresh fruits and vegetables, unsalted nuts and seeds, unrefined grains like brown rice, lentils, beans and oatmeal.

#### TIP:

If there are ingredients that have long, hard-to-pronounce names, the food is most likely processed.

### Avoid:

#### PROCESSED, PRE-PACKAGED FOODS

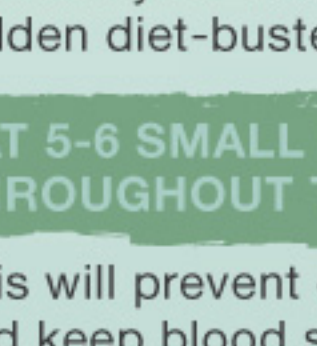
Processed foods—often in low-fat and low-calorie options—have artificial flavors and preservatives added in order to extend shelf-life.

Examples: sweeteners, canned fruits, refined grains like white bread, white rice, pasta, frozen meals and fast foods.

## Eat Healthy: Choose the right source of protein, carbohydrates and unsaturated fats.

#### PROTEINS

Protein helps build muscle and keeps you feeling full longer.



Healthy proteins: turkey breast, salmon, low-fat cheese, yogurt and eggs.

#### COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

Complex carbohydrates take longer for the body to break down into sugar and are a good source of energy.



Healthy complex carbohydrates: whole grain pasta, brown rice and lentils.

#### UNSATURATED FATS

Fats help your body feel satisfied and may help protect your heart.



Healthy fats: avocados, walnuts and olive oil.

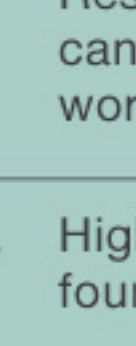
## YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

#### SNACK HEALTHIER

If you are craving a savory snack, pair hummus with carrots rather than chips and crackers that are high in sodium, calories and fat.



If you are craving a sweet treat, opt for a natural nut butter instead of cookies and candy bars. The healthy fats found in nuts are good for your heart and can help lower cholesterol.



Choose olive or coconut oil over margarine or vegetable shortening.

#### PLAN FOR PRODUCE AT EVERY MEAL

Increasing your vegetable intake is extremely beneficial. Make it easier by grabbing bagged leafy green salads and frozen vegetables from the grocery store.

## What are additives and preservatives?

#### Artificial coloring



Processed foods and beverages contain food colors and chemical dyes.

Research has shown that artificial coloring can increase hyperactivity in children and worsen the symptoms of asthma.

#### High fructose corn syrup



High fructose corn syrup is commonly found in soft drinks.

Research has shown that high fructose corn syrup can raise the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes.

#### Aspartame



Aspartame is an artificial sweetener.

Studies have shown that aspartame could be a potential cause of seizures and headaches, and that it can negatively affect mood and mental performance.

## WHEN TO BUY

- SPRING
- SUMMER
- FALL
- WINTER

Asparagus  
Radishes  
Arugula  
Mushrooms  
Strawberries  
Peas  
Oranges  
Melons  
Swiss chard



Peaches  
Apricots  
Nectarines  
Cherries  
Raspberries  
Blueberries  
Beets  
Zucchini  
Summer squash  
String beans

Cucumbers  
Carrots  
Blackberries  
Brussels sprouts  
Eggplants  
Okra  
Melons  
Tomatoes  
Peppers

Apples  
Pears  
Broccoli  
Cauliflower  
Kale

Mustard greens  
Pomegranates  
Cranberries  
Grapes



Turnips  
Winter squashes  
Celery root  
Parsnips  
Sweet potatoes  
Carrots  
Rutabagas  
Leeks

northshore.org  
webmd.com

cookinglight.com  
everydayhealth.com  
eatright.org

health.usnews.com  
medicaldaily.com