



# FAMILY WELLNESS FIRST: NUTRITION

## Healthy Dietary Lifestyle Habits

Follow these *Healthy Dietary Lifestyle Habits* regularly to reverse or prevent *dis*-ease, increase energy or find and maintain your natural weight:

1 ~ eat only when hungry *and under optimal conditions.*

Keep your digestive fire burning. Put too many logs on the fire, or food in your stomach as the case may be, and you will stomp out your digestive processes. Good digestion is a key ingredient to optimal health and energy. Allow at least 2-3 hours between meals or snacks and don't eat for at least 2-3 hours before going to bed. It's also wise to eat only under optimal conditions, not when hurried, stressed, or excessively fatigued.

2 ~ don't drink beverages with food...*thereby diluting the digestive juices.*

Drink beverages at least 15-30 minutes before meals or snacks on an empty stomach and not for at least a ½-1 hour after eating. This will ensure that digestive juices such as saliva, enzymes and hydrochloric acid are not diluted, which can impede proper digestion.

3 ~ chew, chew, chew...*to ensure adequate mastication and saliva secretion.*

It's important to remember that the first step of digestion occurs in the mouth through chewing and the secretion and subsequent mixture of saliva with the food. Food should be chewed to a pulp (masticated) in order for it to be of the finest consistency before entering the stomach and also to allow for adequate saliva secretion.

4 ~ follow food-combining principles...*whenever possible to ensure proper digestion.*

Because different foods require different digestive juices and enzymes to digest them, food combining is a way of supporting this natural biological system of processing and assimilating foods. Food combining is a fantastic way to improve your digestion and elimination, lose weight, and increase your energy. There are a few different schools of thought and entire volumes written on this topic. We will keep things simple here by introducing just the basic rudiments of this practice:

- *Eat fruits alone on an empty stomach and wait at least 15 minutes before eating something else.*
- *Vegetables may be eaten with proteins or starches.*



- *Proteins and starches are best eaten at separate meals.*
- *Or, if proteins and starches are eaten at the same meal, layer them by eating the protein first, then vegetables, then the starchy food.*

5 ~ follow the body's natural cycle...*eat your biggest meal at noon and don't eat after 6-7:00 p.m. or at least 2-3 hours before bedtime.*

Eat your biggest meal of the day at noon when your digestive machine is at its peak operation. Eat your evening meal no later than 6-7:00pm. And don't eat for at least 2-3 hours before going to bed so as not to disrupt sleeping patterns. This will also give the body adequate rest and time for the digestion and assimilation process that takes place at night.

6 ~ cleanse regularly...*to clear and strengthen your entire body.*

It's a long held notion among natural health advocates that microbes, toxins and chemicals can all be stored in the tissues and organs of the body wreaking havoc with your health. This is very common, especially in our

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culture with its poor eating and lifestyle habits and the added burden of environmental toxins and consumption of large quantities of chemicals in the form of over-the-counter and pharmaceutical drugs. For this reason, it's a wise practice to cleanse and rejuvenate your body on a regular basis, especially if you want to prevent the onset of, or are already experiencing any ill health.

7 ~ troubleshoot digestion & elimination... *to maintain health and keep things running smooth.*

Gas, bloating and belching are all signs of poor digestion, which leads to poor elimination, which leads to poor health! That's why it's so important to follow the preceding *Healthy Habits* in order to achieve optimal digestive and eliminative function on a regular basis. If you do get constipated, *don't* allow the waste to continue to back up. If things are really backed up, consider taking some herbal cleansing formulas or colon irrigation. You may also go on a *Basic Elimination Diet*, eat minimally, or drink only liquids (clear vegetable broths, etc.) until the colon clears and digestion improves. Definitely make use of temporary measures, but for long-term results, adopt new habits that will eliminate the cause.

8 ~ exercise & de-stress regularly... *to keep all body-mind systems working optimally.*

Get yourself moving, breathing, stretching, and relaxing on a regular basis. These aren't luxuries of life. They are necessities. So, indulge often. If you don't have things that you like to do already, explore what's available by taking advantage of free introductory classes offered at dance, yoga, and martial arts studios. And don't forget about walking, one of the best exercises and de-stressors that's absolutely free. When you find a thing or two you like, stick with it. Enlist a buddy to go with you to increase the fun and likelihood of it actually happening. [FWF](#)



**Kelly Hayford, C.N.C.** is the award-winning author of *If It's Not Food Don't Eat It!* As a former chiropractic assistant and junk-food junkie turned nutrition and health coach, Kelly has helped thousands restore their health, energy and natural weight.

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