

Smart ways to live well

FEBRUARY 05

Prevention[®]

EAT MORE LOSE MORE

Prevention's Ultimate Diet
is so delicious you'll
never want to cheat

BY JULIE UPTON, RD



Prevention's Eat More, Lose More Diet is a plan you can—and should—stay on for the rest of your life. We've combined cutting-edge nutrition research with the latest findings on successful weight loss to create the smartest, healthiest diet possible. And if you're watching your weight, great—this plan has endless slim-down potential: It painlessly slashes empty calories while supplying all the nutrients you need to look and feel your best. We'll also help you tailor it so you can lose a pound a week, no matter what you weigh now.

The plan is broken down into 10 easy-to-follow **Principles**, followed by a **Promise** for each, so the payoffs will always be top of mind. We've used the 2005 federal Dietary

Guidelines for Americans—but only as a jumping-off point. While the government bases its advice on research along with input from the food industry, *Prevention* reaches into the future for nutrition tips gleaned from emerging science—and scientists who put your health first.

Best of all, this plan serves up a week's worth of decadent-sounding but superhealthy recipes and menus that are sure to make "dieting" a pleasure (see "7-Day Eating Plan," p. 156). And if you fall off the wagon for a day or two, don't worry about it—just get back on track when you can. This isn't a diet in the punitive sense. It's a way of life. Think progress, not perfection, and you will succeed.



PRINCIPLE eat fruits and vegetables every few hours

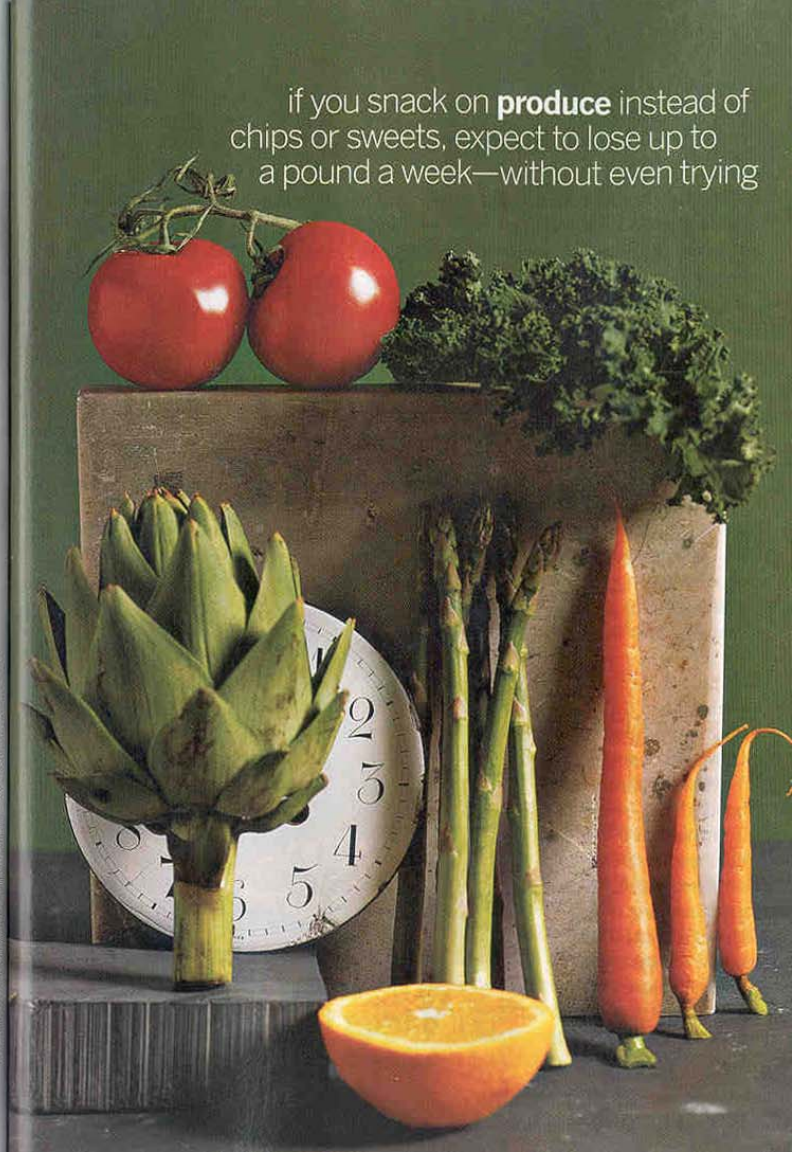
PROMISE If you have a piece of fruit or a serving of vegetables every 2 to 3 hours, you'll maximize your body's disease-fighting ability—and you may even lose a pound a week without noticing. That's because phytonutrients—the health-promoting, disease-preventing substances abundant in plant foods—need to be replenished in your system often

to keep their potency high. "In our studies, we find that blood levels of certain phytonutrients can drop rapidly 2 to 3 hours after consumption of produce," says Susan Bowerman, RD, assistant director of the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition. Strive for 4 servings of vegetables and 3 servings of fruit daily, but remember, more is better. How many more? Well, the new Dietary Guidelines have a surprise—the daily target is now 13 total for the most active people (teen boys) in the population. We're suggesting a more doable range for women: 7 to 10 servings of produce a day to offer you the ultimate in disease protection and help you get the best nutrition bang for your caloric buck. (The servings are small: 1 cup of romaine lettuce counts, as does half a grapefruit.)

If you snack on produce three times each day instead of soda and chips, you can also expect to lose about 1 pound per week. A produce-packed diet also arms your body against heart disease, diabetes, and possibly some cancers, and may keep your bones strong by helping them retain calcium. Include at least one serving a day of "potent" produce, preferably in whole, not juice, form: red (tomatoes), deep green (kale or broccoli), orange (carrots or squash), or citrus (grapefruit or oranges).

HEALTH BENEFITS KEY							
	heart health	cancer prevention	weight loss	diabetes	healthy bones	eye health	healthy skin

if you snack on **produce** instead of chips or sweets, expect to lose up to a pound a week—without even trying



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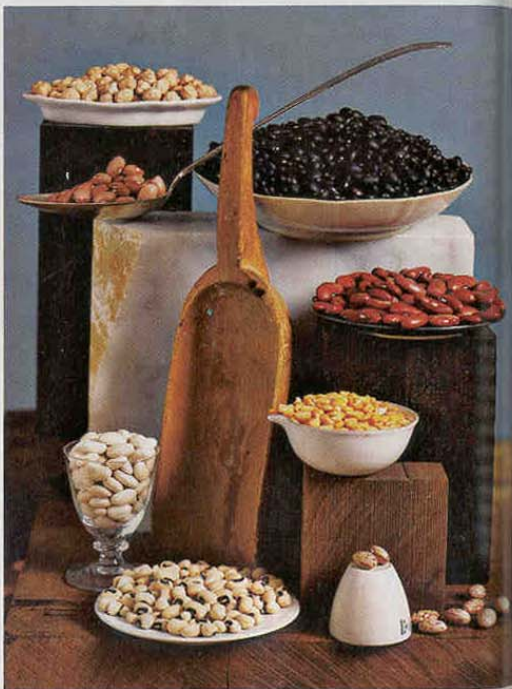
PRINCIPLE eat more fiber-rich whole grains

PROMISE Prevention recommends that you get three to four servings of whole grains a day—up from the American average of

one—to boost your energy and heart health, possibly prevent cancer, and stay full longer so you don't overeat. First, a definition: Whole grain foods include oatmeal, whole wheat bread, brown rice, and wheat germ. Many processed cereals are made with whole grains, but check the package ingredient list to be sure. Best rule of thumb: "Whole grains contain at least 2 g of fiber per serving, and you can find that on the label," says Joanne Slavin, PhD, a professor of nutrition at the University of Minnesota.

Whole grains may also be slimming—especially if you up your intake of fiber to at least the recommended 25 to 35 g a day. According to Tufts University researchers, weight loss potential is higher in people who eat whole rather than refined grains, probably because high-fiber foods keep you

feeling full longer. There are other benefits as well: "Dietary fiber accounts for 80% of the heart protection you get from whole grains," says James Anderson, MD, a professor of medicine and clinical nutrition at the University of Kentucky, adding that fiber is



all beans do your body good, but darker beans pack the most antioxidant power

emerging as both a preventive and a treatment for diseases such as diabetes and obesity.



PRINCIPLE eat two servings of protein a day

PROMISE The news on protein is that an amino acid—namely leucine, found in meat, poultry, dairy, and fish—is essential for developing lean muscle mass and regulating hormones that control your appetite and help you burn calories. And the amount you get matters. The old thinking on protein was that if you were getting enough calories, you were getting enough protein, period. The new thinking is much more specific: While most Americans get double the protein they need, others get too little. You should be getting a 2- or 3-ounce serving (the size of a deck of cards) twice a day.

Studies support protein's slimming benefits: Researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign found that women who ate more protein—but the same number of calories—lost more weight and retained more lean body mass compared with those on a lower-protein diet. Here's the catch: Eating larger amounts of protein backfires, big time. Too much won't allow your body to use protein's amino acids efficiently, and if that big steak dinner (some restaurant cuts are 32 ounces!) pushes you over your calorie count for the day, that excess protein is more likely to be stored as extra fat than as muscle. Take-home

message: **More than about 6 ounces of protein a day is protein without purpose.**

Beans are another healthy way to add protein to your diet, as well as potassium, folate, and iron. But which ones should you stuff in your burrito? The darker the beans, the better, conclude researchers at the University of Guelph in Ontario. Their study found that beans are loaded with the same heart-healthy, cancer-preventing compounds found in red wine, berries, and tea. But black beans had the most, followed by red, brown, yellow, and white. For comparison's sake, 1/2 cup of black beans had the same anthocyanin content as two glasses of red wine. But don't discount good-for-you yellow legumes such as soybeans. "In addition to preventing heart disease, soy foods and soy protein appear to protect against breast, prostate, and colon cancer," says Anderson.



PRINCIPLE eat sweets with or after meals

PROMISE You don't have to give up your favorite treats—just eat them at the right time to keep pounds off. That also means cutting down on sugar, eliminating high fructose corn syrup (see "Are These Foods Really Healthy?" on p. 174), and enjoying sweet treats only with or just after a meal—not as a snack. The reason: New research at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons found that subjects given a sugar-only drink got hungrier sooner than others given

a sugar-protein drink. This suggests that **eating sugary treats alone rather than with or after a meal may cause weight gain.** And how much sugar should you be eating? The 2005 Dietary Guidelines suggest “moderation,” but *Prevention* prefers the World Health Organization’s more specific recommendation: 10% of total calories. That means if you’re eating a 1,600-calorie-a-day diet, you can enjoy 10 teaspoons of sugar a day (if you’re on a 2,000-calorie diet, you can increase that to 12 1/2 teaspoons). That translates into a few teaspoons of sugar in iced tea or coffee, a dollop of honey on a piece of toast, a few sips of soda—and you’re pretty much at your daily limit. According to the Economic Research Service, Americans eat an average of 31 teaspoons of sugar daily. Bottom line: Don’t be average when it comes to sugar.



PRINCIPLE keep salt in balance

PROMISE Staying in balance means you’ll have a healthier heart and stronger bones—without feeling deprived. Yes, most Americans consume twice the 2,300 mg of sodium recommended by the Dietary Guidelines. But these same people probably skimp on potassium-rich fruits and vegetables and don’t get enough calcium. Here’s why that matters: The new thinking on sodium is that it’s all about balance. **You don’t have to slash your salt intake to unpalatable levels if you boost your consumption of certain foods** that contain the other min-

erals needed for optimal health (potassium in produce will help lower blood pressure and blunt the effects of sodium in your diet). So strive to keep potassium, calcium, magnesium, and sodium all in balance in your body and you’ll have a healthier heart and stronger bones. If you follow our plan—which is abundant in produce, dairy, and whole grains (and thus potassium and other key minerals) and low in processed foods—2,300 mg of sodium is a smart ballpark figure that will help you maintain a healthy balance of sodium in your system.



PRINCIPLE eat small-size fish twice a week

PROMISE You should eat at least two servings of fish a week because it’s one of the best sources of omega-3 fatty acids, fats that help reduce the risk of heart disease. “The potential health benefits of fish can outweigh the risks of mercury toxicity if you eat a variety,” explains Barbara Olendzki, RD, nutrition program director at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Yet many women fear mercury and PCB contamination in some species, which may lead to birth defects in children (therefore, pregnant and child-bearing-age women need to be especially vigilant). The good news is that if you stick to smaller “prey” fish—loosely defined as fish that are more likely to be eaten by other fish than to hunt them—

you’ll avoid unhealthy exposure. The reason? Long-lived fish tend to grow bigger, so toxins have more time and tissue in which to accumulate. Here’s a list of fish—in order of lower to higher contamination—that health experts say you can eat: scallops, clams, crab, oysters, shrimp, sardines, sole, tilapia, cod, haddock, mahi mahi, canned light tuna (limit albacore, which has higher mercury levels), salmon, pollock, and catfish. “There is preliminary evidence suggesting that diets rich in tropical fruits and vegetables may help prevent the uptake of mercury in the body,” Olendzki adds. Alcohol and wheat bran in your diet may also reduce mercury absorption.

Olendzki also recommends trimming away the skin and fat where much of the contaminants are stored. “When I eat fish, I enjoy it grilled or broiled without added fat,” she adds. Alas, fish-and-chips lovers, fried fish doesn’t count. University of Washington researchers reported that fried-fish eaters had none of the heart-health benefits of people who ate grilled, baked, or broiled fish—in fact, their risk for heart attack increased. Frying fish is

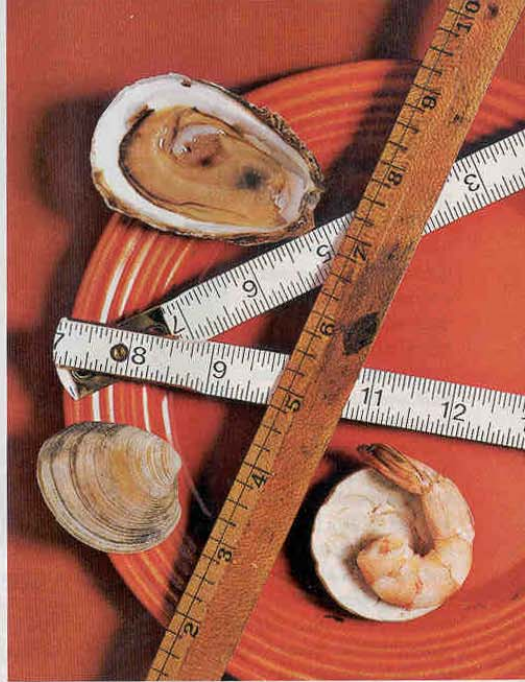
small seafood tends to be the safest—and may also be the tastiest

tantamount to drowning veggies in butter—the unhealthy fats negate the protective ones.

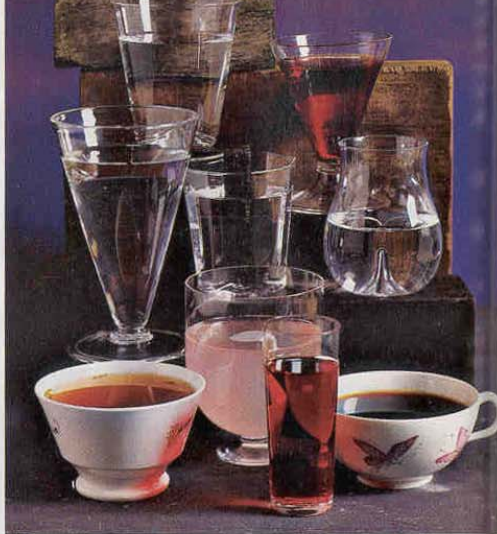


PRINCIPLE eat mixed nuts daily

PROMISE Each type of nut offers a different nutritional benefit, from better sight to a slimmer waistline. Of course,



you already know that walnuts are a great source of omega-3 fatty acids, that peanuts help curb your appetite, and that almonds are rich in vitamin E and folic acid. "As a nutritionist, I always say 'eat a variety of foods,' and that's really important when it comes to nuts," says Penny Kris-Etherton, PhD, a professor of nutrition at Pennsylvania State University. For example, Brazil nuts are one of the best sources of selenium; walnuts contain those heart-healthy omega-3s; and pistachios have lutein and zeaxanthin, two carotenoids that help protect the eyes from harmful UV light. In addition, recent research shows that most varieties of nuts—including walnuts, almonds, peanuts, hazelnuts, and macadamia nuts—contain beta sitosterol and campesterol, two plant chemicals that have the ability to lower harmful blood cholesterol levels. Your best bet for overall health is to **choose unsalted nut varieties—it doesn't matter if they're dry- or oil-roasted or ground up as butter**, because the benefits and calories are the same. Speaking of calories, nuts pack plenty of those, too—about 180 calories an ounce—so keep those portion sizes small.



drink up! **water** can raise your metabolic rate by up to 30%, and wine may be good for your heart



PRINCIPLE eat the right fats

PROMISE For optimal heart function and overall good health, get rid of trans fats and keep saturated fats, found in meat and dairy, to a minimum. The majority of your daily fats should come from polyunsaturated and monounsaturated sources, although most of us get enough polys through processed foods made with corn, soybean, or safflower oils. Make an effort to consume more monounsaturated fats such as flaxseed and

olive oils, which pack more heart-healthy lignans than other oils. This will help reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes, and eye disorders; enhance bone health; and even make your skin more supple. But we're not talking about drowning your bruschetta in olive oil. Limit yourself to about 1½ tablespoons of these healthy fats out of a total of 4½ tablespoons per day.



PRINCIPLE go for dairy daily

PROMISE Eating three servings of fat-free or low-fat dairy products is one of the best things you can do for your bones and belly, and it protects against heart disease and colon cancer, too. University of Tennessee researchers suggest that calcium in dairy foods increases the breakdown of fat—especially harmful belly fat—while suppressing fat storage. And if you like yogurt, emerging research suggests that healthy bacteria in fermented dairy products may act as protective, anti-infection agents. **Increased yogurt consumption might even help raise your resistance to immune-related diseases.** "There is good evidence for the beneficial effect of yogurt in maintaining certain aspects of gastrointestinal health, and there is some evidence for colon cancer," concludes Simin Meydani, PhD, a professor of nutrition at Tufts University. Choose brands that have the National Yogurt Association's "Live & Active Cultures" seal to ensure that you're getting all the benefits of healthy bacteria.



PRINCIPLE quench your thirst

PROMISE Fluids can do wonders for your waistline: A recent study found that after men and women drank 17 ounces of H₂O, their metabolic rates increased by 30% within 10 minutes and peaked about 40 minutes later. But you don't need to drown in the stuff. A recent National Academy of Sciences report found that most women need 11 8-ounce cups of fluid a day—but it doesn't all have to be water. A cup of tea counts, as does juice or the occasional cola (just watch that sugar—studies show liquid calories don't register on our hunger radar and can sneak up on your waistline).

Surprisingly, booze counts toward your daily fluid quota, meaning you can consume alcoholic beverages in moderation if you are not at risk for certain types of hormonal cancers (check with your doctor). "I do not encourage nondrinkers to drink, but I also do not encourage women who enjoy a glass of alcohol a day to stop, because it may actually be good for your heart," explains cardiologist Holly S. Andersen, MD, an assistant professor of medicine at Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York City. She enjoys a glass of wine with dinner, but sternly reminds her patients that there's no benefit to more than one a day: "And you can't have all seven drinks on a Saturday night."

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