

Dear Bethel...

PERSONALIZED HEALTH COACHING



How & What to Eat ??!

Dear Bethel,

I really want to make healthy, balanced meals for my family, but there is so much conflicting information out there that I find it really confusing! Should we be eating vegetarian, gluten-free, Paleo, keto, Mediterranean, or something else altogether? Could you shed some light on the subject so I can feed my family with confidence?

Thanks,
Susan

Dear Susan,

Everyone's needs are slightly different, and the truth is that there is no one-size-fits-all diet! However, there are a few things that hold true across the board. They show up in the scientific literature over and over again, proving that they are important NO MATTER WHAT TYPE OF DIET you subscribe to. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Eat LOTS of vegetables and fruits. A general rule of thumb to help you gauge how you're doing in this area is to aim for filling at least half your plate with vegetables at every meal.
- Include all the colors of the rainbow. The wider the variety of colors, the wider the range of nutrients you will be consuming!
- Get your greens every single day! Greens, especially those from the cruciferous vegetable family, are potent detoxifiers, anti-inflammatory, and contain anti-cancer compounds; while greens with a more bitter flavor profile are extremely valuable for improving digestion.
- Focus on whole, unprocessed foods. The nutrients in whole foods remain intact, and they're full of the fiber that helps you feel full longer and feeds the healthy bacteria in your gut.
- Keep things balanced by including protein, healthy fats, and fiber in every meal. Protein provides the building blocks for growth and repair; healthy fats are a concentrated source of energy that can also tame inflammation, help absorb fat-soluble vitamins, and provide materials for the production of

important hormones; and fiber feeds the good guys in your gut and keeps your digestive system running smoothly!



So, what does a balanced meal actually look like? Here are a few examples:

- A breakfast hash with root veggies, greens, leftover meat or beans, and drizzled with a little olive oil or homemade vinaigrette.
- A green salad with a serving of meat or plant-based protein, sliced avocado, broccoli sprouts, and an olive oil-based dressing.
- A soup or stew with tons of veggies and a little chicken or plant-based protein, served over brown rice and accompanied by a fruit salad.

Each and every person is unique in their physical makeup and dietary needs, but if you apply these principles to start with, you'll be on your way to feeding your family well! I'm out of space for now, but next time, I'll share more on how to fine-tune things and discern which foods work best for your bio-individual needs. ■

Blessings,
Bethel

BETHEL WAGNER received her training from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, where she studied a variety of dietary theories and practical lifestyle coaching methods.

With her knowledge, she co-creates personalized lifestyle programs based on the clients' goals to move them toward their ideal vision of health within each one's unique body, lifestyle, preferences, and resources.

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