

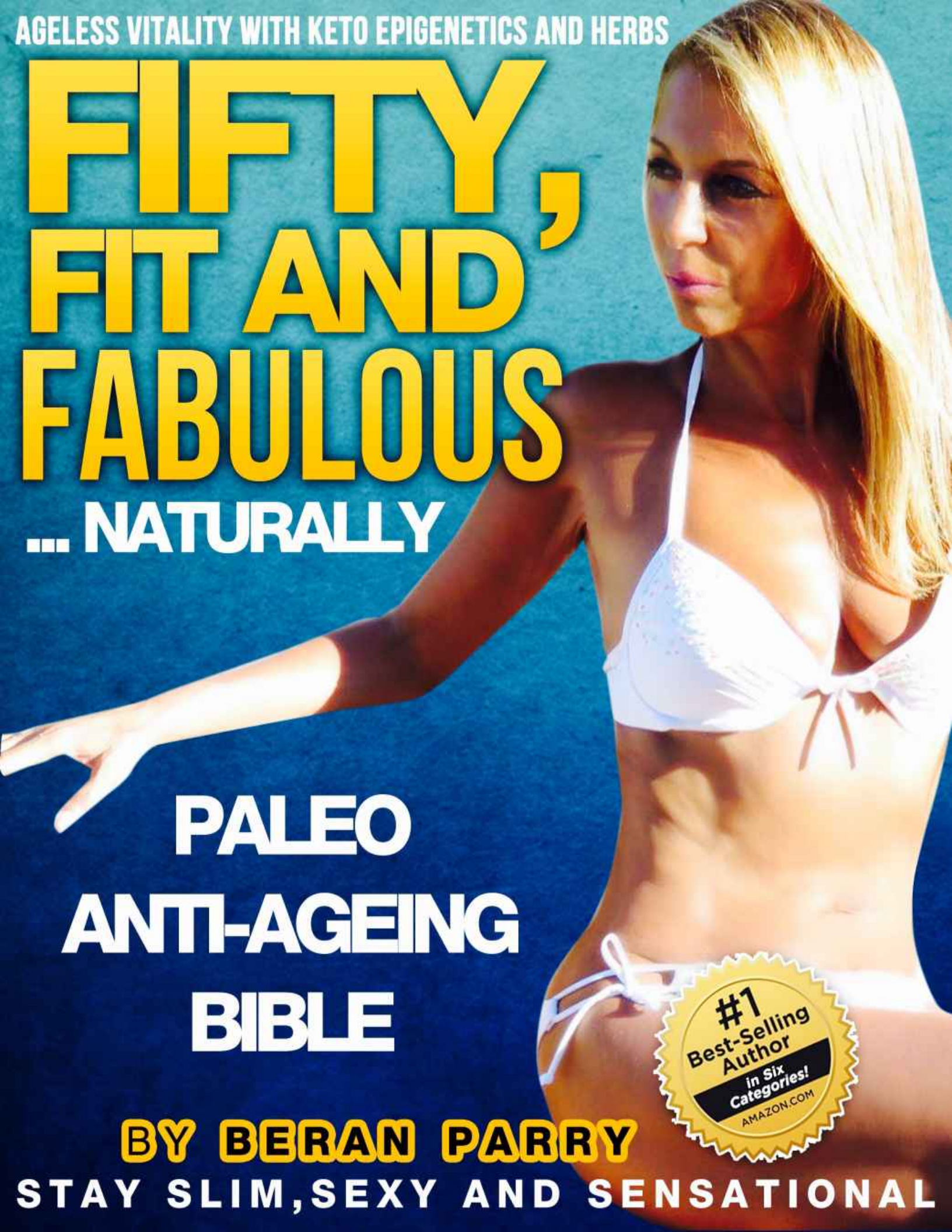
AGELESS VITALITY WITH KETO EPIGENETICS AND HERBS

FIFTY, FIT AND FABULOUS ... NATURALLY

PALEO ANTI-AGEING BIBLE

BY BERAN PARRY

STAY SLIM, SEXY AND SENSATIONAL



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information provided in this book is designed to provide helpful information on the subjects discussed. This book is not meant to be used, nor should it be used, to diagnose or treat any medical condition. For diagnosis or treatment of any medical problem, consult your own physician. The publisher and author are not responsible for any specific health or allergy needs that may require medical supervision and are not liable for any damages or negative consequences from any treatment, action, application or preparation, to any person reading or following the information in this book. References are provided for informational purposes only and do not constitute endorsement of any websites or other sources. Readers should be aware that the websites listed in this book may change.

WHAT THIS BOOK IS NOT!

Whilst I have referred where appropriate to important medically based studies, books and medical papers, this book has not been written as a medical research paper, designed to cover dozens of scientific subjects.

I have deliberately avoided the current trend in many diet books to constantly cherry pick medical and scientific studies to support the book's conclusions. This book is not intended as a reference item to satisfy those readers that might be looking for useful research material.

This book is about a real life journey and the real life testing processes that have identified the most effective ways to develop great eating behaviours and incorporating those behaviours into our daily food choices.

There will be a detailed bibliography attached to this book. This is a truly exciting and rapidly evolving science and there is a vast amount of material to read and study about Epigenetics and Functional Medicine in general, especially in the way that these insights apply to intelligent weight management. If you require further information, I suggest you contact me for specific recommendations at beranparry@gmail.com

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(olw131015)

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FIFTY, FIT AND FABULOUS

*...YOUR Pathway to Ageless Vitality
from
age 40...50...60....and beyond...*

BY BERAN PARRY

Gain incredible strength, shape and emotional wellbeing.... NATURALLY
Use PALEOLITHIC LIFESTYLE, EPIGENETIC KNOW-HOW and NATURE'S OWN
WISDOM
to improve your Weight, Outlook, Face, Body, Emotions and Energy!

Acknowledgements for THIS BOOK.

The inspiration to write this book began more than thirty years ago when I embarked on my first nutritional science courses under the tutelage of Dr Boris Chaitow in South Africa. During the past three decades, I have been most fortunate to receive the guidance, teachings and encouragement of some immensely talented and dedicated doctors and professors. It has been a fascinating journey of exploration, the pathway lit by the giants of natural medicine and naturopathic nutrition. More recently, my studies in the field of Functional Medicine have proved immensely helpful and I would like to pay tribute to the genius, courage and dedication of the following specialists who have assisted me enormously in my quest to share the life-changing knowledge contained in this book.

Among them are Dr Boris Chaitow, Debra Waterhouse, Dr Andreas Buchinger, Dr Christiane Northrup, Dr Carolyn Dean, Dr Vasant Lad, Dr Mona Lisa Shulz, Dr Loren Cordain, Dr Patrick Vercammen and Dr Ron Grisanti.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the shining inspiration of a truly remarkable doctor who has been a constant source of knowledge, encouragement and inspiration. Dr Ann Lannoye, a Functional Medicine Specialist and member of the Institute of Functional Medicine, has been a most generous and tireless source of knowledge and enthusiasm for the benefits of Functional Medicine. She provided the inspiration to link my nutritional and eating behaviour work with the Functional Diagnostic Medicine and the analysis of Epigenetic Expression. Dr Lannoye's extensive knowledge and scientific rigour have been one of the major cornerstones of our next book about Functional Medicine in which I hope to have Dr Lannoye join me as a contributor and authority.

My functional medicine research and its conclusions have been so fundamental to my understanding of intelligent nutrition, that I undertook studies at the Functional Medicine University in South Carolina. Dr Ron Grisanti has been a most generous provider of case study information in these vitally important subjects.

I am also delighted to announce a series of further projects with Dr Ann Lannoye and Greg Parry PhD, also based in the field of Functional Medicine. We are scheduling a series of international seminars, professional training

courses and wellbeing conventions. If you would like to know more go to...
www.beranparry.com

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Preface

I really enjoyed writing this book for you. Fifty, Fit and Fabulous did not appear magically overnight or out of thin air. It's the result of decades of research, trial, tribulation and intensive investigation. Despite studying nutrition intensively for over 30 years, I found that when I reached my late thirties my overall health and wellbeing started to become more challenging.

That has got to be one of the greatest frustrations you can experience when you're trying so hard to improve how you look and feel and nothing seems to work. There was usually some initial success but then there'd be some unexpected relapse and this made me realise that there had to be a lot more to real, sustainable, ageless, wellbeing than just following the latest fad or fashion trend in diets, exercise and HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy).

But I never gave up.

If permanent weight control and becoming a healthier, fitter, more energetic version of myself was really possible, I was going to find out how to do it. Safely, scientifically and effectively. And that meant more studying, more learning, more experiments, more trials, more creativity, inventing and developing. I approached the problem from every possible angle.

I researched countless scientific studies, the psychological aspects of food choice, the psychology of midlife health disorders, genetic analysis, functional medicine, naturopathic principles and Ayurvedic medicine until a clear picture finally emerged of how to really manage wellbeing and weight issues.

I slowly refined and toned and developed the entire system that has become the Feel Fit, Fab and Ageless Approach. It's what you're holding in your hands right now. It's been a long journey but the effort was totally worthwhile. Finally, we've identified the smart way for your body to function and flourish the way that Nature always intended.

My final personal, ageless, transformation began seven years ago. After three decades of never quite getting there from a health and weight loss point of view, I decided that enough was enough! It was now or never in terms of reaching my perfect health and weight loss goals. I knew there was a leaner, more energised, healthier version of me just waiting to get out! With my family's history of health and weight problems as well as issues with eating behaviour, plus my own experience of yo-yo dieting and a penchant for delicious food, this was the moment to put my thirty years of knowledge to the toughest test.

The guinea pig for this extraordinary experiment? You guessed it. Me! I decided it was time to get really serious about my mid-life, ultimate wellbeing programme and finally unleash the incredible new me. I used everything I'd learned, applied the methods I'd been investigating and each and every wellbeing issue that I'd struggled with for so long slipped away.

And they stayed away. Forever.

I'd finally made all the connections between the different functions of the body and discovered how to eliminate the garbage and toxins from our cells. I'd identified the worst toxins that poison our daily diet. I knew how to create a natural, healthy environment in the gut. I'd discovered how to feed the body with the essential nutrients that would promote natural weight loss and all-round health. In the final phase of my experiment, I learned about the Epigenetics revolution from an incredible Doctor of Functional Medicine, the inspirational Dr Ann Lannoye.

Then I devised a program to capitalise on this scientific feedback. During this process of creating a completely effective formula for sustainable wellbeing, and effective weight control, a happier, leaner new me emerged. Finally!

It was a long journey but I learned so much in every moment of it and now I am going to share it with YOU.

The Feeling Fit, Fab and Ageless methods have already helped countless numbers of people just like you who were looking for a real alternative to all the crazy ideas about weight management.

The Fit, Fab and Ageless process enables me to look you in the eye and say I KNOW this WORKS. And now you can enjoy the benefits yourself.

Whatever your age, your weight, your gender, the state of your hormones, your current adopted eating behaviour, we're going to work together to convert your potential for wellbeing and your eating habits into smart, permanent, wellbeing and eating behaviours so that you can become the best possible you – and that means physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. And keep that way forever!

So, if you're ready, let's get started!



BEFORE

AFTER

Chapter 1: My Story

Welcome to the start of the best days of your life! Are you ready to embark on an amazing adventure with me? Amazing because the tired, conventional and old fashioned belief is that once we hit midlife (these days it could be anywhere from age 35 to age 60!), everything starts to fall apart. Our health, our wellbeing, our weight and our fitness all seem destined to head in precisely the wrong direction. Just because we happen to cross that invisible age barrier that marks our descent into midlife. But not anymore!

I am the living, breathing proof that your life and your body absolutely do not have to resemble this outmoded nightmare vision. And my mission in life is to help you and guide you on your new pathway to the health, weight and wellbeing of your dreams. My name is Beran Parry and for the past thirty-five years I've been studying, practising and advising about truly effective nutrition, full spectrum well being and permanent weight control.

A lot of this passion comes from my family background. Growing up in a family with major health and weight problems, I realised at a very early age that body shape, weight and health are all deeply connected.

By the time I was twenty-two, more than thirty years ago, I began studying nutrition, integrative medicine and holistic health. I was immensely fortunate to find myself studying at one of the early pioneering centres of Integrative Alternative Medicine. This was the world renowned High Rustenberg Hydro, set in the beautiful countryside around Stellenbosch University, not far from my birthplace, Cape Town, in South Africa.

I studied very intensively for four years under the guidance of various medical and homeopathic doctors whilst also studying banking and finance. My studies continued right up until 1986 when I moved from South Africa to Europe.

At age 40 I was diagnosed with a serious health problem. It was my thyroid gland. This incredibly important little gland had produced a 6cm tumour that was growing and gradually blocking my windpipe. Not a happy discovery!

This became the moment when everything changed for me forever. It was a turning point in my life and I realised in my heart that whatever time was left to me, I had to apply all my energies to the issues of health, weight control and wellbeing. During this period of intensive study, I focused on the trials

and tribulations of the post-natal, peri-menopause and post-menopause challenges that affect so many women's lives. This became my focal point.

And so began my own journey into peri-menopause and then menopause, and finally, post menopause, a period of my life which would last more than 10 years, right up to age 50 and beyond. But, against all the conventional expectations, during that time I have also been able to enjoy even better health, amazing wellbeing, the visible rejuvenation of my body and sustained, controlled weight loss! Incredible?

Well, even against the background of thyroid issues, peri-menopause, menopause and post-menopause challenges, it really is possible to look and feel better than you did in your 20's and/or 30's and/or 40's.

The reality is that I'm fitter and healthier today than at any other time in my life. Despite all the negative expectations surrounding the subjects of aging and weight control, I can show you how to tame your body-fat problems and turn back the clock, helping you to find a younger, fitter, skinnier, stronger, healthier you. If that sounds like the kind of adventure that you've been waiting for, join me now and let's get this show on the road.



Chapter 2: The Definition of Mid-Life Wellbeing Challenges

Why do women resign themselves to the negative effects and potential pitfalls of aging? Is it simply because we prefer to hand over the responsibility for our health to a person in a white coat? Or is it because we don't believe we are capable of making our own mid-life wellbeing decisions for our own bodies. Experiencing the symptoms of aging can be scary, but why not place some trust in our own ability to recognise what we need to do? Of course we need to educate ourselves to be able to make informed decisions and that's exactly what I want to help you to do.

I want to help you to learn about what is happening to your body and about what natural choices are available to assist you through this process of change. A change that can really be for the better if you allow yourself this experience.

It's so tempting to hand over responsibility for how you want to feel to a medical professional who does not necessarily know what it feels like to be you. How on earth can they?

In my holistic wellness practise, I have met up with thousands of woman going through aging challenges, women from age 35 all the way up to 90, and it's been a startling revelation to learn about the attitude of resignation that exists about the negative effects of aging and its associated health challenges

Through a lack of awareness of the many safe choices that exist for us, woman have tended to disregard that nature itself has its own wisdom about these matters and working with nature using natural alternatives can produce and recreate radiant good health throughout the entire midlife period and way beyond.

Growing older is an opportunity for you to increase your value and competence as the neural connections throughout your brain increase, weaving into your brain and body the wisdom of a life well lived, which allows you to stop living out of fear of disappointing others and being imperfect.

Feeling Fit, Fab and Ageless means courageous living. It means establishing a new relationship to time, where you stop fearing it or trying to outrun it because, when you're living agelessly, you don't pay attention to your age, whatever it is.

In a sense, there is an epigenetic aspect to biological aging. Structures on the tips of our chromosomes called telomeres grow shorter when cell divide. When the wick gets small enough, cells no longer receive the instruction to replicate and their death follows. However, telomeres do not have to shorten as quickly as they do. Research shows that an enzyme called telomerase repairs them and extends the slightly, which offers promise that we have the power to actually reverse aging by improving our ability to repair and lengthen our telomeres.

If you aren't thinking about how old you are at the moment, then a milestone birthday or a lifestyle-related illness of someone close might make you reflect on how you could change your lifestyle and get older without deteriorating. Many women suddenly develop an auto-immune disorder, a pre-cancerous or cancerous condition, or allergies. If it's not a health crisis that's thrown them off course, it's the loss of a partner, a career choice or a dependable person or situation.

So here you are, at an intersection, where you have to make a decision about what your lifestyle and your life will be like in the years to come. The fact that you are reading this right now is absolute proof that you are really ready for absolute improvement in some or all areas of your life! If you weren't seriously thinking about changing your approach to your life, you wouldn't be here with me right now.

So are you going to grow older with guts or degenerate with age? Will you stick with battling the body to get it to behave itself? Will you continue putting other people's requirements ahead of your own and will you keep fuelling yourself with processed foods, sugar, caffeine, anxiety, and stress? Or will you get off the path that leads to illness, frailty, and reduced quality of life and start living with courage and vitality, as if you really mean it?

Getting older is not something to fear. You can make growing older a different experience. Then you won't be old and you won't be young. You'll be fit, flourishing and ageless.

Although most people don't realize it, the body is constantly in a state of reinvention. Cells replenish themselves regularly. Your skin replaces itself the most quickly, but each organ regenerates too. You do not have the same physical body you had just a few years ago. Every cell has been replaced.

Mindful meditation, regular exercise, and thinking differently all show potential for slowing the aging process. Studies by researchers such as Richard Davidson of the University of Wisconsin confirm that mindfulness

practices rewire the brain, resulting in greater immunity and improved ability to manage stress and emotions. And a recent longitudinal study lasting eight years and following people over 50 showed that as little as an hour a week of moderate exercise can cut your risk of developing chronic disease sevenfold. So if you want to revitalise the cells in your body, nourish them by making positive lifestyle choices that include maintaining a positive attitude about yourself, your well-being, and your worth.

It's the cellular breakdown and physical deterioration that occurs in large part because of the accumulation of toxins, which results in cellular damage along with tissue and organ breakdown. The toxic effect on the body is exacerbated by spending too much time sitting and lying down which speeds up the aging process. That's why you need to move your body and experience the earth's gravitational pull through walking, pushing, pulling, and moving. One reason mobility is vitally important is that your fluids can more easily move toxins to organs that process them if you aren't sitting all day long. If the body's toxins aren't processed, cellular breakdown occurs.

There are toxins in our food and environment that contribute to the aging process as well as toxins produced in our own bodies. Stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline are meant to be used by the body in the case of an immediate threat to physical safety. When these hormones are chronically elevated in the system due to unremitting emotional and physical stress, they cause cellular inflammation, and that is the primary cause of all chronic, degenerative diseases, including cancer.

Over time, emotional and physical stressors such as permanent emotional stress and poor-quality sleep can be powerful enough to cause us to gain and retain weight, slowing our metabolism. In a sense, many women are empathically taking on the emotional stress of those around them, as Colette Baron-Reid pointed out in her book *Weight Loss for People Who Feel Too Much* (Harmony, 2013).

Oxidative stress is another process that wreaks havoc on our bodies over time. Free radicals, leave our cells damaged, and the damaged cells in turn go off in search of the electrons that would return them to stability. If your body doesn't have enough antioxidants to regularly counteract free radical damage, eventually it will not be able to repair and regenerate itself.

You also increase inflammation when you reach for sugary foods that offer temporary relief from anxiety, anger, sadness, pain, and displeasure. The sugars we consume under stress tend to be highly refined. They're the sugars

in foods that lack the protein or fiber that would slow the biochemical effects of the sugar on the body. The quick energy from sugar may make you feel good in the moment, but the candy bar, cupcake, or glass of wine can spike your insulin, and that causes damage to LDL (low-density lipoprotein) cholesterol. The sticky, damaged LDL travels through your blood vessels and incites further inflammation until it ends up glued to the walls, forming plaques that create restrictions and, eventually, increased risk for Alzheimer's, diabetes, arthritis, heart attack, and stroke. In addition, glycemic stress from even slightly high levels of blood sugar results in the release of inflammatory chemicals like cytokines from immune cells, which damage blood vessel walls.

Excess visceral fat (belly fat) also causes inflammation, which leads to all sorts of aches and pains and that unsightly and unnecessary pot belly isn't due to age but to sugar consumption and the resulting inflammation catching up with you. It's a sign that you need to give birth to a new you: a fit, fabulous, feisty and ageless dynamo that experiences so much pleasure that you don't succumb to the temptation of lesser, temporary pleasures from sugars and alcohols.

And while the aging effects of regular alcohol consumption start to become obvious to the eye, much of the damage is happening deeper within the body. The brain's pathways for processing dopamine, a natural pain reliever and pleasure creator, cease to function properly. Over time, you start to feel worse sober than you did before the drinking habit took hold. Mindless overindulgence as a way to ease pain you don't want to feel is a whole different story. Do you self-medicate and suppress your "inconvenient," uneasy feelings? It's far better to detoxify from them and release them so that you can experience a life of fulfillment and joy!

Detoxification is great. It fosters good health and reminds us of how good it feels to get the junk out of our system and return to our natural state of wellness. You can simply choose to begin the process of returning to clean eating and pleasurable living, knowing that you might feel uncomfortable for a few days as all those toxins make their way out of your body. During that mild discomfort, you can look forward to the transition from feeling bloated, achy, and low on energy to feeling vibrant again. Let go of the concept of detoxification as a penance and focus on the pleasures of taking care of yourself, tuning in to your needs and eating fresh, healthy foods.

All the junk you eat and all the health-eroding messages and behaviors you keep repeating will take their toll if you don't admit it's time to really care

for and love yourself enough to put your adrenaline-fuelled ways behind you. Then you will find that you have much more control over your health than you previously thought. Gerontologist Michael F. Roizen, M.D., has done research showing that you can extend your quality and quantity of life by adopting a positive attitude and even just flossing your teeth! Some of the changes may seem difficult as you try to develop new habits and fit new activities into your busy schedule, but the payoffs can be extraordinary.

Do YOU want your Quality of Health to Match your Quality of Life?

Everyone wants their health span to match their lifespan. Many women don't just fear losing their health, their energy, or their looks. They also fear losing mental faculties, which is always some form of physical degeneration of the brain. It seems every day there's another frightening report on how many older people who are otherwise in good physical health are in cognitive decline. What isn't so clear is that we can make many lifestyle changes to protect our brain health. There's quite a lot of ongoing research into dementia and other mental health challenges, but rather than wait for a treatment, why not live a lifestyle now that prevents it in the first place?

Any kind of stress actually creates inflammatory chemicals in the brain and body that lead to physical, emotional and mental deterioration. Whether that stress comes from too much sugar in the diet, chronic worry, or lack of sleep, stress leads to cellular degeneration. Fortunately, you have the ability to turn that around. Reading about how to manage stress isn't going to do anything. You need daily health practices that boost immunity, lower cortisol levels and inflammation, support brain health, and encourage you to embrace wellness and a joyful approach to life. These practices can include regular exercise, moving regularly throughout the day, enjoying healthy food in a relaxed environment, dancing, breathing fully, stretching through yoga or other practices, calming your emotions and the activity of your mind through meditation, taking antioxidant supplements, and just practising awareness and activities that enhance your wellbeing.

Words are powerful. Don't talk yourself into believing your brain is degenerating just because you are over 40! Adopt an ageless and healthy mind-set so you can program your cells to be ageless and healthy too.

A Permanently Rejuvenated Mindset!

Mental habits play a huge role in our health and longevity. The famous Ohio Longitudinal Study of Aging and Retirement (OLSAR) by gerontologist and epidemiologist Becca Levy, Ph.D., found that people with positive perceptions about aging live, on average, seven and a half years longer than people who don't hold that belief. In fact, people's perceptions of aging had more of an effect, positive or negative, on healthy longevity than did having good genetically inherited health. Perceptions even had more of an effect than not smoking.

In other words, the belief in the positive aspects of aging strongly affects your biology and thus your survival.

What You Believe and Its Biological Effect!

The most important thing you need to know about your health is that the health of your body and its organs does not exist separately from your emotional well-being, your thoughts, your cultural programming, and your spiritual outlook. *Your thoughts and beliefs are the single most important indicator of your state of health.* That is amazingly good news because your thoughts and beliefs can be brought under your conscious control and, this is the part of health that Western medicine always leaves out, but it's where your real power resides, with no exceptions. Your beliefs and thoughts are wired into your biology. They become your cells, tissues, and organs. There's no supplement, no diet, no medicine, and no exercise regimen that can compare with the power of your thoughts and beliefs. That's the very first place you need to look when anything goes wrong with your body.

If something has shown up in your body as a health concern, you most likely aren't consciously aware of why it is there. Have the courage to go deep within and ask yourself the following: "what is going on in my life, and my thoughts and beliefs, that I can learn from through this situation? What is the lesson for me here? How can I grow from this?"

Ayurvedic and Eastern medicine practitioners are well aware of the energetic connections between various systems in the body, but Western medical practitioners tend to look at each component of the system in isolation. In fact, this mind/body split is built right into the fabric of our society.

Being and Staying Optimistic

Negative thinking or self-talk can be a bad habit. And these habits of thought can be broken. You may have grown up in a family that had a propensity toward depression and choose to identify with it, saying, “That’s just how we are in this family.” I don’t care what your family’s culture is or whether your brain is currently wired for negativity. You have the power to change that. Research shows that adopting habits of gratitude leads to greater optimism. You can make a conscious choice to establish habits that support optimism by creating a simple awareness and expression of gratitude.

Use positive language when describing your life. If you feel you have a “hectic” schedule or are “extremely busy,” that’s going to weigh you down, mentally stress you and make it harder for you to slow down, relax, and feel the lightness of happiness. Use your language to reinforce the joy of being busy. Say, “My schedule this week is really exciting and fun!”

Do you have objects that remind you of your accomplishments, your brilliance, or your success in any area of your life? Display them in your home or office rather than putting them in a drawer because someone might think you’re “bragging”. Be “proud of yourself” and enjoy it.

Abe Lincoln is said to have declared, “Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be”. It’s much easier to be negative than happy. Don’t allow yourself the negative self-indulgence of seeing the glass as perpetually half empty. In fact the glass can always be filled up again and again!

When you commit to the discipline of staying optimistic and positive, you’ll also be less likely to slip back into the Western model of negative expectation...What’s going wrong next? Our medical system is centred on finding and identifying problems, and health setbacks and bad test results are just messages from your body that you’re not taking the best care of it. Listen to the message and change your habits to help your body heal itself. Remember, your body is constantly regenerating at a cellular level. You have a new stomach lining every three days! The body regenerates in an environment created by your thoughts, emotions, and expectations, so make sure they’re positive.

Some thoughts about Depression

(Always consult a medical professional as soon as you feel this)

Depression involves brain chemistry and neurotransmitters, which can be affected in many ways, such as through regular exercise.

Depression can be a symptom of blood sugar instability; a sign of feeling disconnected, or even an indication that your vitamin D levels are low, so make sure you get your vitamin D levels up. It can also be a sign that you're avoiding a difficult decision, such as leaving a bad marriage or work situation. Staying in that situation will only make it harder to keep your mood positive and to live a permanently rejuvenated life.

That said, if your symptoms of depression and lethargy are severe, you need to get very serious about addressing the issue. Don't delay in getting help from a medical professional. Please know that medication for psychiatric problems can be a lifesaver. If you need it, do not hesitate to take it.

And most importantly, do something – anything – to begin the process of recovery. Sadness is meant to alert you to the need to grieve a loss and also take better care of yourself - it is not supposed to be a chronic condition. Your natural state of being is joyfulness! Recovery from depression is possible if you're simply willing to get moving in some way.

Real Devotion to Your Healthy Self

You may start to wonder if you're selfish or self-centered for wanting to have more joy in your life and indulge your desires. Fear of being selfish is embedded in our culture!

You have to overcome the habit of chronic over-giving in order to bring balance into your life and the lives of those around you. Self-sacrifice is the shadow of self-centeredness. The desire to draw attention to yourself by gaining social approval in this way is flawed. And we all know how difficult it is to be around martyrs who try to make us feel guilty and who get angry if we don't constantly notice how much they are doing for the benefit of others. When you give too much, you enter a state of imbalance. Then the pleasure gets sucked out of your life and you experience chronic resentment that too often leads to disease. Work out what makes you feel joy and then let go of the guilt.

Consider a discipline of joy to be an investment in your health. A joyful heart and a body that experiences pleasure and nurturing are your most reliable health insurance. Five minutes spent dancing in your kitchen to a song you love, or petting your dog or cat who offers you unconditional love, can make a difference if you do it often enough.

“Our Body’s Heal Themselves – If we allow this”

As children, we're fascinated by our bodies' ability to heal a scraped knee or broken bone. But as adults, we often forget about the body's remarkable capacity for self-repair. The key to this repair is understanding there is a balance between immunity and pathogens. None of us is completely free of threats to our health. Everyone's body has cancerous cells in it along with microorganisms that could cause illness if not kept in check. Everyone's body has manmade toxins in the bloodstream and organs. There's no way to live a perfectly clean life, free of all pathogens. We are programmed to think of our bodies and our environments as war zones requiring an army of pills and surgery to wage war on germs and on the body itself. We have largely overlooked the power of our immune systems and our innate ability to boost our immunity. It's time to reclaim the wisdom and power of the healer within.

There's no doubt that Western medicine can be very useful in addressing certain conditions that are acute. When you fall off a ladder and break your arm or get a concussion, of course you want to go to an emergency room for assistance. I'm a huge advocate of emergency Western medicine and its

remarkable ability to save lives. When an illness is life threatening, you want to be able to access the best medical tests and treatments available. However, most medical problems are not acute: they develop over time after a long process that we can intervene with at any point. As Myron Wentz, Ph.D., a world-renowned microbiologist, puts it, “We die too long and live too short.” Most ailments aren’t simply caused by a virus or single physical agent. They always have mental, emotional, and spiritual or energetic aspects to them. The best approach to health conditions is to acknowledge and address them through a holistic mind-body-spirit approach to wellness, not just a physical intervention.

We have been taught to be perfectionist, constantly on the go, doing for others without stopping to rest until it’s absolutely necessary. Too often, we treat food as something to grab on the run. And we spend many hours sitting as we drive, work on computers, and so on. Exercise can seem like just another item to fit onto an overcrowded To Do list. We exhaust our bodies and our spirits trying to pack in all that we think we’re supposed to do.

But our bodies were never meant to sit for prolonged periods. Nor were we designed for nutrient-poor fast food purchased at a drive-through window and eaten in quick bites at red lights. Sleep and rest are essential, as Arianna Huffington so powerfully demonstrates in her book *Thrive* (Harmony, 2014). A life devoid of movement, sleep, and nourishing food is draining and will age you quickly as it overtaxes your immune, endocrine, and central nervous systems.

Your immune system will naturally have highs and lows.

The incredible inner healer in each of us is empowered by this incredible immunity force, and if it is in good shape, it allows our natural energy to fuel our lives, and THIS is the key to healing ourselves.

The next time you feel anger or resentment, just sit with the feeling – do *not* blame yourself or anyone else for it. Don’t kill the “messenger.” Just stay with what you are feeling so you can discover its message for you. Then ask yourself, “What is it that I need right now that I don’t have?” Then name the need. Here’s an example: You’re in a hurry and someone pulls ahead of you into a parking spot you were waiting for. In that moment, you feel anger or frustration. You take a moment and simply allow the feeling of that to wash over you. You feel the emotion fully, without trying to change it. Then you say to yourself, “What do I need?” The answer might be one of the following: *More leisure time so I’m not always in a hurry. Respect from the*

other driver. More sleep – so I don't feel so frazzled all the time. Simply acknowledging the need is the first step toward getting that need met.

Affirm that you have the power to get that need met. By listening to the messages your emotions bring you, and honouring them, you can experience ageless living rather than be weighed down by old resentments and grief that will affect you at a cellular level. You can bring in joy, and tap the wisdom of your inner healer to repair your body, mind, and spirit.

HOW OUR INNER HEALING SYSTEM WORKS

Diseases don't just appear out of nowhere. They're the final result of a process that takes time to develop. They are, quite literally, an imbalance in the system that is usually the result of years of neglecting to engage in the causes of health, and unfortunately most of us share a culturally supported belief that disease and infirmity are inevitable. They are normal in our culture, yes. But if you look at the so-called Blue Zones around the globe, such as Okinawa, Japan, – you find that ill health doesn't need to be the norm.

The most common chronic degenerative diseases today – heart disease, arthritis, cancer, dementia, and diabetes – start with chronically high levels of the stress hormone cortisol. High cortisol levels, combined with a diet high in sugar that causes uneven blood sugar levels, create insulin resistance, chronic inflammation, and oxidation, which are the root causes of all chronic degenerative disease. If inflammation isn't checked, it causes tissue damage in the lining of the blood vessels. Those damaged blood vessels then attract platelets that stick together and adhere to the walls of the vessels as plaques. The result is hardening of the arteries – and this happens in the brain too. Oxidation causes cellular damage, particularly to the mitochondria, which are the power center of the cells.

LISTEN TO YOUR INNER INSTINCTS

To awaken your inner healer, you have to listen to your intuition and instincts about your own body. If a medical practitioner gives you advice that doesn't ring true for you in your unique situation, listen to your resistance and explore it. Get two, three or more medical opinions from highly regarded medical specialists and work towards truly understanding what is happening to your body or mind! Sometimes you just know something isn't right for you, even if you can't explain why. Other times, when you do a little research, you realize that research and logic back up your instincts.

We've had it drilled into us that we shouldn't trust ourselves, only our doctors, but our bodies and our spirits don't lie to us. You might fight yourself having a symbolic dream that gives you insight into your situation, or you might feel a heaviness or emotional resistance that isn't coming from fear but from an inner knowing. When that happens, don't ignore it.

THE SECRETS OF HORMONES

Hormones have received a lot of press, but the truth the number-one hormone to be concerned about is not estrogen or progesterone, or even testosterone, but cortisol. A stress hormone, cortisol was designed to be used by the body in situations of acute stress to help you deal with physical danger quickly. Imagine yourself as a cavewoman throwing a big rock at a hissing poisonous snake that's about to strike, or running away at top speed. Cortisol also temporarily activates the immune system in case the danger isn't a snake but a bacteria or virus that has entered your system. It sets off an inflammatory response in which white blood cells gather around the pathogen to isolate it before attacking it. This sympathetic nervous system reaction happens very quickly. The problem is that if the cortisol and its partner, epinephrine (adrenaline), are not cleared from your system quickly and instead linger for days or even weeks or months, they have the opposite effect of lowering your immunity and energy. Chronic fear, anger, sadness, and resentment keep stress hormones in your system for too long, breaking down your immunity, thinning your skin and bones, causing weight gain, and setting the stage for poor health – including depression, cancer, and heart disease. If you've ever seen someone blow up like a balloon on high-dose steroids such as prednisone, you've seen the effect of excess stress hormones.

Being Your Own Better Half

Another perspective that needs updating is the idea that you need a mate to be happy. That's nonsense! Not having a partner doesn't mean that you're any less sexy, any less desirable, or may less able to create exquisite joy and pleasure in your life (and in the lives of others). While having a partner can be an extremely fulfilling experience, and one you may very well want, it isn't the case that you *need* a partner in order to be a whole person.

When you look to another to make yourself whole, you'll inevitably be disappointed. No one can stoke your life force but *you*. You make it happen. Only you can know your own truth, and only you can dialogue with your very soul.

I suggest you begin this part of your journey by defining yourself as a *pleasure subject* rather than a *pleasure object* – meaning that you see yourself not primarily as a vehicle for providing pleasure to others, but as a person who is fully able to bring pleasure and joy, all on their own. This paradigm shift is not only revolutionary, it's downright evolutionary! To accomplish it, you must be willing to take control of your own life, becoming the commander of your own destiny. Forget about waiting around for someone else to arrive and

make your dreams come true. *You* must make your own happiness and pleasure a priority.

At first, that might sound a bit crazy and even selfish. It certainly bucks convention, doesn't it? But when you realize beyond a shadow of a doubt that you're not only *able* to create your own pleasure, but that you're also *responsible* for it, you'll stop being disappointed in (and angry with) other people who either can't or won't do it for you. This doesn't mean that no one else can bring you joy and pleasure. They certainly can! But when you take responsibility for giving yourself what you want and need (as well as making requests of others, when appropriate), you'll feel more in control of your life and less like a victim at the mercy of the whims of others. Taking this step is deliciously empowering!



Chapter 3: The Pre, Peri and Post MENOPAUSAL Challenges

“The Change,” as menopause used to be called, is a natural transformation point in a woman’s life. We are meant to begin life anew around the biological marker of our last menstrual period. Our bodies know it, even when our minds don’t.

Menopause is a good example of Western medicine’s focus on disease, rather than on better health and incredible wellbeing. In this case, a natural state-the end of menstruation-is defined by many conventional doctors as a disease that must be treated with medication. Women who don’t take their estrogen pills, Western medicine implies, will lose their femininity and their value to society. Luckily, many women instinctively know better, and studies have proven that there are extreme health risks with synthetic hormone replacement. To these wise women, menopause is a time of freedom from the menstrual cycle and the onset of wisdom and power. And it’s no coincidence that these women, who refuse to view themselves as “diseased,” experience far fewer (and sometimes none) of the problems usually associated with this change of life.

Since attitude plays a significant role in the physical response to all midlife wellbeing challenges including menopause, it helps to understand the changes that are taking place. These changes can start as early as age 35 and can continue for 10-20 years before menopause proper actually sets in, with many annoying symptoms like erratic periods or unusually heavy or light bleeding

During pre - menopause, the ovaries no longer ovulate on a regular basis. This is the basis for the cycle changes and the beginning of systems such as hot flashes. Menopause itself usually begins in the mid-forties to early fifties. When the ovaries stop producing significant amounts of estrogen and progesterone, the menstrual cycle ceases; a woman who has had no periods for a year is said to be menopausal.

Women’s reactions to menopause vary widely. Some enjoy the change, while others suffer from problems like hot flashes, vaginal dryness, heart palpitations, and mood swings, often for years. But if a woman is healthy, active, and well nourished, her adrenal glands will usually respond to menopause by creating precursor hormones such as pregnenolone and DHEA, which are then converted into estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. And if

she takes natural steps to encourage this process, it is likely that she can avoid harsh and possibly dangerous medications altogether.

The days of routinely prescribing synthetic estrogen, synthetic progesterone, or both, should be over. Several studies, including the well-publicized Women's Health Initiative Study, which involved more than 16,000 women, concluded that the "benefits did not outweigh the risks" of using the combination of synthetic estrogen (Premarin) and synthetic progesterone (Provera). A significant increased incidence of breast cancer and cardiovascular disease stopped this study short of its completion.

When menopause is brought about by a hysterectomy or removal of the ovaries, natural hormonal replacement therapy may be necessary to counter the sudden depletion of estrogen and progesterone and the resulting bone loss.

We believe that every woman must be addressed individually. Optimally, it is best to get a hormone test done to find out which hormone imbalances you may have. Saliva testing is a good option. For women with mild to moderate symptoms of menopause, it is generally recommended in functional medicine to use diet, exercise, and nutritional supplements, especially herbal and homeopathic remedies to alleviate these symptoms. The beauty of this approach is that these natural supplements balance the hormones without the use of risky pharmaceuticals. In addition, the use of natural progesterone appears to be very safe and effective when a stronger approach is needed.

For women with extreme symptoms that are unresponsive to nutritional supplements, the use of natural hormone replacement may be required. This is particularly true of women who had their ovaries removed at an early age or for others with moderate to severe osteoporosis. This is, of course, best done with a doctor who is knowledgeable in natural hormones.

SYMPTOMS of Menopause that may be mild or extreme

- Cessation of periods
- Hot flashes
- Vaginal dryness and thinning
- Night sweats
- Insomnia
- Dizziness
- Heart palpitations
- Headaches
- Memory problems and difficulty concentrating
- Cold hands and feet
- Reduced libido
- Bladder problems, including incontinence
- Mood swings
- Depression and anxiety
- Fatigue
- Joint pain
- Skin changes (acne, facial hair, scalp hair loss)

Estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone get much more press than cortisol and adrenaline do even though they're far less likely to adversely affect your health. It's true that the amounts of these hormones in the body change during the transitional period of perimenopause, and sometimes that shift causes uncomfortable symptoms.

Fatigue, insomnia, low libido, mental sluggishness, irritability, and hot flashes – particularly when they interfere with sleep – do not have to be a part of the perimenopausal or menopausal experience. You can reduce these symptoms naturally with a minimal amount of outside hormonal help when necessary.

Let's look at how things can get out of balance. With your ovaries now decreasing their hormonal output, your adrenal glands take over some of the work of generating progesterone, estrogen, and testosterone – as well as DHEA, which serves as a building block for the other hormones. But if your adrenal glands, which are walnut-sized organs that sit on top of your kidneys, are overproducing cortisol and adrenaline, they will start to become tired out and overwhelmed by their task of generating the stress hormones. Your

multitasking adrenals have to set priorities. They will favor your need for stress hormones, which can then throw off the production and metabolism of your other hormones.

When your hormones are out of the balance due to overproduction of cortisol, you feel the effects. You get cravings for sugar – particularly around 4:00 P.M.

This phase is called peri-menopause or pre-menopause and provides an opportunity to learn so much more about your own body and prepare emotionally and physically for the larger transition to come. During pre-menopause, the ovaries no longer ovulate regularly and this is the basis for the cycle changes and the beginning of systems such as hot flashes (or hot flushes as they're called in Europe). Menopause itself usually begins in the mid-forties to early fifties. A woman who has had no periods for a year is said to be menopausal.

Our reactions to menopause can be very varied and wide reaching! Some enjoy the change, while many suffer from physical, mental and emotional problems like anxiety, hot flashes, vaginal dryness, heart palpitations, and mood swings and many more symptoms described below.... often for years.

But if a woman is healthy, active, and well nourished, her adrenal glands will usually respond to menopause by creating precursor hormones which will normally convert into a wide range of low level hormones. And if she takes natural steps to encourage this process, it is likely that she can avoid synthetic menopause medications forever!

What you're doing is actually seeing yourself with *new* eyes. And the more you enjoy your body and yourself, the sexier you'll feel. As Sophia Loren once said, "Nothing makes a woman more beautiful than the belief that she is beautiful." After all, feeling sexy starts as an *inside* job.

Even if the mirror exercise seems awkward at first, stick with it. It will get easier in time, especially when you see how positive the results of this are. Granted, society doesn't make it easy for women to love their bodies. Most of us compare ourselves to the stick-thin models and celebrities who are carefully crafted and airbrushed images are plastered all over the media every day. But chances are your body's normal, healthy size is larger than the bodies you view on television and in magazines. After all, most fashion models are thinner than 98 percent of American women. That's got to tell you something! So instead of scrutinizing your figure with a critical eye, learn to look at it with a loving and appreciative eye.

Here's another important point: Don't motivate yourself by thinking that you're doing this exercise to feel sexy for your partner. Although your partner will undoubtedly benefit from you loving and appreciating your body and feeling sexier, you're doing this for *yourself*. You're learning a new way to see and speak to yourself. You're learning a new way to *love* yourself. And by the way, most men are far more accepting of women's bodies than we women ourselves.

Pampering Makes Perfect

Pamper yourself during this transition time, too – especially if you're not used to doing so. Take more bubble baths. Get manicures and pedicures and admire how lovely your hands and feet look afterward, appreciating how good it feels to be pampered a little. Don't wait for a special occasion either!

I'm a good example. I led a full and wonderful life before I hit menopause. But since my transition to midlife has been complete, my life has far exceeded all my expectations in every way! Physically, I've not only lost weight, but I've also become more flexible and healthier than ever. And I've *never* felt sexier! If it can happen for me, it can happen for you, too.

Remember that the only person who can stand in the way of you seeing yourself as an incredibly sexy woman is *you*!

The Menopause Explained

What is the menopause?

Apart from a period of suffering and misery for many, the menopause is a term used to describe the time in a women's life when fertility declines and eventually ceases, so ending her menstruation cycle and possibility of bearing children.

Menopausal symptoms occur as the body's hormone levels change. Hormones, in simple terms, are the body's messengers – produced in one place (typically secreted by a certain gland in the body) to carry chemical messages which in turn affect another part of the body. The erratically fluctuating and gradually declining levels of the hormone estrogen are thought to be the most significant factor responsible for unpleasant menopause symptoms.

Some women do sail through their menopause with little more than the cessation of their periods to mark the event. However, it is estimated that around 70% of women will experience some kind of menopausal symptoms of varying intensity. Some women are unlucky enough to get the full whammy – every symptom at its most intense.

The average onset of the menopause occurs in western women around 50 years of age but can be much earlier or later.

What are the main symptoms of the menopause?

These vary considerably from person to person but include physical, sexual and psychological symptoms. The list below itemizes the most commonly occurring but you may have some of your own to add.

Irregular menstruation

As fertility declines the ovaries will no longer regularly produce an egg every month. Abrupt cessation of periods doesn't typically occur (unless a hysterectomy has been involved) but rather the occurrence of irregular periods. These may become more widely spaced apart, become lighter or adversely may be marked by heavy and excessive bleeding. The onset of irregular menstruation to the final cessation may take many years.

Mood swings

It is estimated that 33% of women will experience this symptom to some degree which for many is *the* most distressing and difficult of the menopause

symptoms to manage. Many women report that they have never in all their lives felt such intense emotions which can include:

- irritability
- euphoria
- anxiety
- sadness
- rage
- hopelessness

Though all of these are typically part of the human emotional range and will no doubt have been experienced before, the reason they prove so problematic during the menopause is because –

1. They are super intense and enhanced
2. They yo-yo alarmingly between one emotion and its total opposite making the sufferer appear irrational
3. They are unpredictable
4. They seem to be triggered by minor causes or even occur for no apparent reason at all

Hence a previously very mild mannered woman might find herself prone to screaming outbursts and the all-capable woman who has handled everything life has thrown at her will find herself crying because she breaks a plate. Such out of character behavior, besides being horrific for the sufferer, can be bewildering for friends and family and in some cases can cause relationship difficulties and crises. No wonder this is such a distressing part of the menopause.

Medical experts have identified that women who have a history of depression or severe PMS may be at greater risk of intense mood swings during menopause.

Hot flashes (or flushes)

It really doesn't help that the medical world is still unclear exactly why this physical symptom manifests during menopause.

Women who suffer from hot flashes will suddenly become extremely hot and experience excessive sweating which may have no connection to the warmth of the environment they are in at the time. The sudden internal temperature rise might be accompanied with feelings of sickness or nausea and dizziness. The occurrence of these hot flashes, which can be extremely embarrassing for the person concerned, varies from individual to individual – spaced weeks apart or occurring several times in an hour.

Vaginal dryness and suppleness

This occurs due to lowered levels of estrogen in the bloodstream. The result can mean sex is either painful and in extreme cases impossible which can have an obvious negative impact on relationships as well as affecting self-image and sexual confidence.

Loss of libido

A decreased or even completely eradicated sex drive is commonly reported by menopausal women and as with the vaginal dryness symptom above can have negative implications for intimate relationships with inevitable knock-on effects which may affect all aspects of daily life and which just adds to the problems.

Although this symptom isn't completely understood in medical fields it has always been thought it has some link to the hormonal changes and fluctuations which are occurring. However, more recent studies suggest something else too. The menopause marks the period when a woman is no longer able to have children and now it is believed that this, the most basic of animal instincts, may have a far reaching psychological effect.

Sleep disturbances

It is little wonder that a disturbed night's sleep will result when the menopausal woman finds herself and the bedclothes drenched with sweat maybe several times in one night and a personal temperature gauge set to boiling.

Hot flashes, sometimes called night flashes are an obvious cause of disturbed sleep but it appears unsatisfying and disrupted sleep can also occur even where hot flashes are not experienced. Problems may be marked by having trouble getting to sleep in the first place or having trouble staying asleep.

Weight gain

The same hormones which are fluctuating during the menopause are the same ones which also regulate appetite, deal with the body's fat storing processes and dictate metabolic rates (how your body uses energy to keep the vital organs functioning healthily and other internal processes).

As a result it is estimated that as many as 9 out of 10 women will experience weight gain during the menopause which is typified by a slow but steady increase. The weight gain is often concentrated around the abdominal

area and can be accompanied by feeling bloated which comes from water retention (thanks to falling levels of the hormone progesterone).

Because the weight gain is being triggered by basic body processors, reduced calorie diets typically have little or no effect and an exercise routine which may have kept you in trim for years may seemingly inexplicably cease to do so. All highly frustrating as you watch your weight and shape change with a high likelihood of it impacting negatively on confidence levels and body image as well as lightening your bank account as you have to consider a whole new wardrobe.

Palpitations

A sensation which appears to be a thumping or wildly beating heart is known as a palpitation and frequently occurs during the menopause. It is usually attributed to fluctuating hormones.

Joint Aches

Some women report discomfort and pain from aching joints during menopause most common in the neck, wrists and shoulders.

Headaches

The hormone imbalances and fluctuations associated with the menopause cause some women to suffer from more frequently occurring or higher intensity headaches. Migraine, tension and sinus headaches can all occur ranging from mild to causing prolonged debilitation and can be accompanied by neck pain, vomiting and nausea.

Extreme tiredness and lethargy

The number of women who report low energy levels, high fatigue and lethargy during menopause is high. The tiredness is typified by low stamina levels even when no exertion of any kind has been involved and is often not relieved by sleep or bed rest. It is thought that this fatigue is a result of estrogen deficiencies and can also, but less commonly, be psychological, triggered in part by suffering from other menopause symptoms.

Osteoporosis (or bone thinning)

Although not usually one of the more obvious symptoms to the woman in question, mid and post-menopausal women are at greater risk of this bone disease which results in a higher likelihood of injury or fracture.

If you have found yourself saying ‘yes, yes’ at times as you worked your way through the list above (or even to every one – poor you!) then don’t

despair. For each and every one of the symptoms listed above natural help and relief is at hand and in the following pages we will explain these to you.

Natural Menopause Relief

Diet and Nutrition

We are what we eat is hardly a new idea but many, if not all, of the menopause symptoms can be addressed, reduced and even eradicated by altering our dietary habits.

There are foods which seem to trigger or intensify certain menopausal symptoms and transversely there are foods which, when added to our regular diet, help to relieve symptoms.

NATURAL DIETARY TREATMENT of MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS

Diet

If you begin to incorporate these suggestions into your diet at the onset of perimenopause, you will likely experience far fewer problems when menopause begins in earnest.

Recommended Food

Eat a diet loaded with plant foods, especially fresh vegetables and sprouting seeds, normal seeds and all nuts except peanuts. These contain phytosterols, naturally occurring nutrients that have a hormone-balancing effect. You'll also get the fiber you need to keep your heart healthy and the nutrients that will encourage a strong, vibrant response to menopause. Flaxseeds have excellent sources of phytoestrogens. Add these to your diet, every day.

Essential fatty acids protect the heart and promote smooth, radiant skin. Good sources are cold-water fish like salmon, cod, and tuna (beware of mercury pollution), as well as flaxseeds.

Vitamin E regulates estrogen production. Make sure to include cold-pressed nut and seed oils in your diet, perhaps as a dressing for a green salad.

Consume 1 to 2 tablespoons of ground flaxseeds daily. They contain lignans, which are phytonutrients that have estrogen-balancing properties and that lower cholesterol. Take each serving with 10 ounces of water.

Drink a glass of clean quality water every two waking hours. You'll flush out toxins and replace fluid you may have lost during hot flashes.

Foods which help

A balanced healthy diet is conducive to optimum health at any time of life but it is especially important for women going through the menopause.

Eating healthily will help control the weight gain and contribute positively to your well-being but what's more, there are specific foods which seem to alleviate many of the symptoms of menopause.

Phytoestrogens explained

Okay, I promised not to bombard you with scientific terms but this one is important. Phytoestrogen is just a very big word to describe an estrogen-like

source which is found in some plants (estrogen is the female hormone whose fluctuating levels can cause such havoc for menopausal women).

Many women have found that changing their diet to incorporate high levels of phytoestrogens, which help balance hormone levels, has helped relieve menopausal symptoms, most markedly hot flashes and vaginal dryness. Additionally, phytoestrogens are believed to be beneficial in protection against osteoporosis (bone thinning) from which menopausal and post-menopausal women are at risk.

There have been many studies and much research done with regard to the benefits of this chemical compound and the medical world seems to be in some disagreement as to the efficacy or otherwise of phytoestrogens with regard to menopause relief.

These chemicals *mimic* the action of estrogen in the body. The problem with this is that their imitation of estrogen only goes far enough to trick your body into thinking that's what they are. They don't actually perform any of the vital functions that real estrogen does.

I do NOT recommend relying upon foods rich in phytoestrogens as a sole fix to menopausal discomfort. However, it might be worth noting here an interesting fact – among many Asian cultures, where plant based, phytoestrogen rich diets are the norm, and hot flashes for menopausal women are almost unheard of. In Japan there isn't even a word for hot flashes and only 7% of women report experiencing them during menopause. Food for thought.

Sources of highest level phytoestrogens:

- Flax seed (which can be used to make breads and cakes)
- Flax seed oil

Sources of high level phytoestrogens include:

- Sesame seeds and sesame oil
- Red clover tea

The following foods also contain levels of phytoestrogens:

- Alfalfa sprouts (not on the Paleo diet)
- Garlic
- Mung bean sprouts (not on the Paleo diet)
- Pistachios

Foods containing low levels of phytoestrogens:

- Almonds

- Blueberry
- Cashews
- Onion
- Sunflower seeds

Omega-3 fatty acids

Something described as a fatty acid really doesn't sound like it would be very beneficial to our health but quite the opposite is true. Not all fats are created equal and there are definitely good guys and bad guys – omega-3 fatty acids are super good guys. You will also hear the term 'essential fatty acids' used to describe omega-3 which means the body is unable to manufacture them without some dietary source making their inclusion in our diet even more important...

These fatty acids have far reaching positive health implications which include significantly reduced risk of strokes, heart disease, osteoporosis and certain cancers and that's just the tip of the ice-berg.

With regard to menopause relief, a diet which includes omega-3 fatty acids can be helpful for relieving hot flashes and regulating moods.

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in their most concentrated levels in cold water oily fish.

Sources include:

- Herring
- Mackerel
- Oysters
- Mussels
- Wild salmon
- Sardines
- Anchovies
- Flaxseed
- Walnuts
- Pumpkin seeds

Foods that fight stress, promote mental well-being and aid good sleep

Serotonin is another of the body's hormones – often referred to as the feel good hormone because it helps to promote positive mood, get good quality sleep and keep us mentally sharp. So important is this hormone to our feelings of positive mental well-being that many modern anti-depressants work on the principle of boosting a body's serotonin levels.

There are certain foods containing a substance known as tryptophan which allow the body to manufacture and maintain good serotonin levels.

The best sources of tryptophan are:

- Eggs – particularly egg white
- Seeds and nuts – particularly pumpkin, sesame and sunflower seeds and walnuts
- Meat – turkey and chicken
- Oily fish

Foods to avoid

The menopause can be a challenging time and abstaining completely from all that you enjoy can be counterproductive from both an emotional well-being and psychological point of view. The message from nutritionists and medical professionals seems to be *restricting* your intake of such food and drink to see if it helps (and don't expect the results to be instantaneous) – you don't have to avoid them completely unless you choose to do so. Initially it might help to experiment with one thing at a time to see if eradicating or reducing just that one product from your diet helps. This way you can continue to treat yourself or carry on as before with such food and drink which apparently have no bearing on your symptoms. A bit of trial and error might be necessary here. It is up to you how you approach it.

Hot flashes – potential food and drink culprits are:

- tea
- coffee
- alcohol
- chocolate
- spicy food
- dairy products (although high-quality fermented dairy like organic hard cheese and yogurts are a better choice)
- red meat

Tiredness and lethargy – potential food and drink culprits are:

- sugary foods (simple carbohydrates) – these can cause a sharp rise in your blood sugar levels from which a resulting sudden dip may be the result, leaving you feeling drained
- Complex carbohydrates such as white bread, pasta, rice and potatoes BUT see the notes included under the 'weight gain' entry below.
- Alcohol (try and limit to less than 2 drinks per day)

Irritability and mood swings – potential food and drink culprits are:

- Alcohol (tries and limit to less than 2 drinks per day).
- Caffeine i.e. tea/coffee/chocolate drinks.
- Complex carbohydrates such as white bread, pasta, rice and potatoes BUT see the notes included under the ‘weight gain’ entry below.
- Fatty foods and sugars – these promote higher levels of cortisol in the body (cortisol is the hormone responsible for our fight or flight instincts and is closely related to increased stress levels)

Sleep disturbance – potential food and drink culprits are:

- tea
- coffee
- alcohol
- chocolate

This is almost the same list as for hot flashes and as sleep disturbance and hot flashes often go hand in hand it is obvious why. All of these items listed above are stimulants and if you decide to keep them in your diet then try and avoid them at night.

Thinning bones/osteoporosis – potential food and drink culprits are:

- Fizzy or carbonated sugary drinks which prevent the body from absorbing calcium properly. Calcium is an essential mineral in the fight against osteoporosis.

Weight gain – potential food and drink culprits are:

- sugary foods (simple carbohydrates)
- complex carbohydrates such as white bread, pasta, rice and potatoes BUT ironically complex carbohydrates can actually *help* with other menopause symptoms so swap the items listed here for coconut and almond breads, sweet potatoes, yams, spaghetti squash, and winter squash instead of trying to eliminate them.

If you find yourself looking at all these suggestions and feeling a little bewildered then don't be. Take it a step at a time. Pick which of the menopausal symptoms is causing the most disruption to your life and address that first. You may find that by doing this it has a knock on effect with other symptoms anyway. For example – if you manage to reduce the number and intensity of your hot flashes then you may find you sleep better which will then help you regulate your moods and any irritability issues.

Lifestyle

If you smoke, drink and have got by until now without any sort of exercise regimen you may have to make a few lifestyle to help reduce menopause symptoms.

Smoking can bring on *earlier* menopause and is linked to higher incidence of hot flashes, sleep disturbance and increased risk of osteoporosis so the benefits of quitting are obvious.

Drinking alcohol has already been covered under the food and drink section. Medical advice regarding this suggests that complete abstention isn't necessary but rather a controlled intake not exceeding 2 measures per day.

Exercise is of course beneficial at any life stage but is particularly important during the menopause years. It helps to keep bones strong and contributes towards keeping osteoporosis at bay. Additionally it can help reduce hot flashes, boost your mood, keep weight gain under control and help with enhanced memory and concentration.

Some research has shown that activities such as yoga, tai-chi and meditation can also help to regulate mood disturbances, aid restful sleep and reduce the incidence and intensity of hot flashes.

Herbal Relief for Menopause Symptoms

One of the easiest ways to relieve and take control of the unpleasant symptoms of the menopause is through utilization of certain herbs and plants. 'Herbal remedies' is a term used to denote any herb or plant which is known for its medicinal properties and can include leaves, roots, seeds, flowers and bark.

The use of herbs as both prevention and cure for a range of human ailments, illnesses and negative health issues is far from being a modern idea. Herbs have been used for medicinal purposes for thousands of years and every major ancient civilization shows some evidence of have known the properties of and utilizing herbs and plants to some degree or another. In 1991, the body of an ancient human was unearthed on the Austrian/Italian border, where his body had been preserved in ice for 5,300 years. His personal effects included a supply of medicinal herbs.

The following pages will take you through all the best known herbs for addressing menopause symptoms, explaining the properties of each and how and why they can help. The herbs have been entered in alphabetical order rather than any categorization order of importance or efficacy. This latter consideration is a tricky one. Some women react positively and instantly to certain herbal remedies while others find an alternative provides better relief.

Some of the most commonly used and highly recommended herbal remedies for menopause symptom relief include the plants which are classed as phytoestrogenic – a subject which has been covered elsewhere in this book. However, as a quick reminder of why these plants are especially beneficial for menopause symptoms, phytoestrogenic plants contain estrogen-like compounds. These help to regulate and rebalance what can be wildly fluctuating estrogen levels in menopausal women.

Alphabetical list of useful herbs – their properties and uses

Black Cohosh (Cimicifuga racemosa)

General – as one of the phytoestrogenic plants discussed earlier in this book, black cohosh is considered one of the most important and effective herbs for combating menopause symptoms with particular emphasis on hot flashes. This plant has an ancient tradition as a medicine useful for women's health issues and was used historically and extensively by Native Americans.

How it works – by balancing fluctuating estrogen levels which are thought to be responsible for the occurrence of hot flashes and other menopausal symptoms.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – As well as helping with the reduction of hot flashes it can also help with vaginal dryness, moodiness and irritability and depression.

Parts of the plant used – fresh and dried roots of this plant are used as well as the rhizome (the bulbous underground part of the plant from which roots grow).

Particular precautions – as there are a few side effects associated with black cohosh it is recommended that it is taken under professional guidance and not for prolonged period of time.

Blessed Thistle (Cnicus benedictus)

General – used extensively in medieval times this plant has so many uses and beneficial properties that it is almost like a self-contained medicine cabinet.

How it works – known as cure-all it address a wide range of problems especially those associated with women's health.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Headaches, irregular menstruation and excessive heavy bleeding

Parts of the plant used – leaves, flowering tops

Particular precautions – excess use causes vomiting.

Chaste Tree (Vitex angus castus)

General – known to and used by ancient Greek physicians for its medicinal properties, chaste tree is another important herb because it addresses not just one but several of the symptoms of menopause.

How it works – chaste tree is a hormone balancer.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Depression, sexual vitality problems, hot flashes.

Parts of the plant used – fruit/berries

Damiana (Turnera diffusa)

General – this pungent and bitter herb has traditionally been used by Mexican women for a range of female health issues (particularly sexual appetite regulation) including the menopause.

How it works – regulates hormone function and acts as an aphrodisiac.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Depression, sex drive and loss of libido issues, hot flashes.

Parts of the plant used – leaves

Particular precautions – may irritate the urinary tract.

Dong Quai

General – this aromatic herb is well known in traditional Chinese, Korean and Japanese medicine where it has been in use for more than 1000 years. When being used for menopausal problems it is often combined with black cohosh for extra effectiveness.

How it works – as a particularly powerful phytoestrogenic plant source which helps address estrogen fluctuations in menopausal women, dong quai is considered one of the most important herbs for alleviating menopause symptoms.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – particularly effective for reducing hot flashes but may also be effective for other symptoms due to its hormone balancing properties.

Parts of the plant used – roots

Particular precautions – avoid using this herb if you are suffering from excessive menstrual bleeding. Can cause photosensitivity.

Evening primrose (Oenothera)

General – a very well-known menopause symptom reliever which typically comes in the form of oil capsules.

How it works – Evening primrose contains a high concentration of a fatty acid to which its healing properties are attributed.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Hot flashes, headaches.

Parts of the plant used – seeds (to manufacture oil).

False Unicorn Root (Chamaelirium luteum)

General – another phytoestrogenic plant known as a ‘women’s herb’ in Native American medicine for this reason.

How it works – stabilizes and balances estrogen levels and so reduces menopause symptoms associated.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Helps regulate menstruation and the incidence and intensity of hot flashes. May also help to increase sex drive.

Parts of the plant used – roots and rhizomes

Gingko Biloba

General – As a traditional Chinese medicine staple, gingko has been used for centuries to alleviate a host of problems especially with regard to mental impairment, mental fog and memory agility.

How it works – research has shown that using gingko has a positive impact on improved brain function through boosting blood flow to the brain. This in turn helps to raise energy levels and mental alertness – both of which can cause difficulties during the menopause.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Depression, mental fog, fatigue

Parts of the plant used – leaves

Particular precautions – has been linked with raised blood pressure

Ginseng (Panax quinquefolius)

General – this plant, whose botanical name Panax is derived from the Greek for ‘all heal’, is indeed hailed by many menopausal women as a cure all, addressing as it does so many of the symptoms.

There are several plants in this family which are marketed as American ginseng, Asian ginseng and red ginseng. (There is also Siberian ginseng which comes from a different plant and is not a true ginseng.)

Although all the ginsengs have beneficial properties, it is American ginseng which is considered the most suited for menopause issues.

How it works – a compound called ginsenosides found present in ginseng is what gives it so many medicinal properties. Ginsengs contain adaptogens – a term used by herbalists to classify plants which can combat stress and anxiety while enabling the user to resist fatigue through a natural rebalancing

of the body. Additionally, ginseng is a phytoestrogenic plant – the benefits of which have been described for several other of the herbs listed here.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Hot flashes, fatigue, mood swings, guards against osteoporosis, re-stimulates flagging libido.

Parts of the plant used – roots

Particular precautions – can elevate blood pressure.

Licorice (Glycyrrhiza glabra)

General – known to and used by the ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Chinese, this very common, pleasant tasting herb is used extensively to alleviate menopausal symptoms.

How it works – its estrogenic properties address estrogen deficiencies and fluctuations in women passing through the menopause.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Effective for hot flashes but may also help with other symptoms.

Parts of the plant used – roots and rhizomes

Particular precautions – can deplete potassium sources in the body (a vital mineral needed for a range of healthy bodily functions). Also known to elevate blood pressure.

Liferoot (Senecio bursas)

General – Has been used as a uterine tonic, known to be especially useful for menopause. Its toxicology is debated and further research is encouraged especially regarding its pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

How it works – derived from a phytoestrogenic plant and therefore acts as other plants of this nature to balance estrogen fluctuations and deficiencies thought to be responsible for many of the menopause symptoms.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Helps promote emotional stability so it is effective for controlling mood swings and irritability. Also helps with hot flashes and lessens heavy bleeding.

Parts of the plant used – whole plant, dried.

Maca (Lepidium meyenii)

General – this potato-like looking root vegetable has been used by Peruvians for centuries for its range of powerful medicinal properties but also as a source of food. It has no known side-effects whatsoever.

How it works – unlike phytoestrogenic plants which introduce estrogen-like substances into the body, maca contains compounds which instead stimulate and encourage the body to regulate its own hormone levels more effectively and so balances out any deficiencies or fluctuations.

Additionally, maca has adaptogenic properties meaning it aids the body to ‘adapt’ in a positive way where it is placed under internal stresses or suffering from imbalances.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Hot flashes, increases energy levels, aids memory and mental sharpness and is especially effective as a libido enhancer (sometimes known as nature’s Viagra).

Parts of the plant used – tuber/roots

Nettle (Urtica dioica)

General – an extremely familiar plant which grows in profusion where it is found, with a diverse range of medicinal properties for treating many health issues.

How it works – a host of medicinal benefits are contained in this somewhat humble plant.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Night sweats vaginal dryness and flagging energy levels.

Parts of the plant used – leaves and roots

Particular precautions – to be avoided by those with high blood pressure.

Raspberry Leaves (Rubus idaeus)

General – a centuries old herbal remedy for strengthening the uterus.

How it works – derived from a phytoestrogenic plant.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – Hot flashes, night sweats, excessive perspiration during hot flashes and helps control heavy periods.

Parts of the plant used – leaves

Red Clover (Trifolium pretense)

General – a plant which grows in abundance in the wild and will be familiar to many people.

How it works – yet another of the phytoestrogenic plants which help regulate fluctuating levels of estrogen. Phytoestrogens are found in especially high levels in red clover which additionally acts as a stimulator of the ovaries.

Which menopause symptoms does it treat? – effective relief from hot flashes.

Testing Techniques - normally recommended for all woman approaching and post menopause.

The following tests help assess hormone balance and other issues related to menopause:

Hormone testing (thyroid, DHEA, cortisol, testosterone, IGF-1, estrogen, progesterone, FSH) – saliva, blood, or urine

Complete blood count and chemistry profile – blood

Thyroid panel – blood or saliva or urine

Cardiovascular profile – blood (see Cardiovascular Disease section for more detail)

Bone resorption assessment – urine

Bone density – DEXA scan (X-ray)

A study involving 131 doctors and 629 female patients revealed that black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*) alleviated several menopausal symptoms in 80 percent of women within six to eight weeks. Symptoms that were improved included hot flashes, headaches, vertigo, heart palpitations, nervousness, ringing in the ears, anxiety, insomnia, and depression. Another study of 80 women going through menopause found that black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*) had the best results in alleviating symptoms, as compared to Premarin or a placebo.

Super Prescriptions – Menopause

– it is imperative that you check all this general advice out with a certified functional medicine doctor!

Super Prescription #1 Black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*)

Take 80 mg one or two times daily. This herb has shown in numerous studies to alleviate a multitude of menopausal symptoms, including hot flashes.

Super Prescription #2 Natural Progesterone cream

Perimenopausal women should apply ¼ teaspoon (20 mg) to the skin on the inside of their wrists and forearms one or two times daily, from days 14 to 25 of the menstrual cycle or as directed by their health-care practitioner.

Menopausal women should apply ¼ teaspoon (20 mg) to the skin on the inside of their wrists once or twice a week unless otherwise recommended by your medical specialist

Postmenopausal women should apply 1/8 teaspoon (10 mg) to the skin on the inside of their wrists and forearms once or twice weekly during three weeks of the month.

Natural progesterone alleviates a multitude of menopausal symptoms and may help bone density.

Super Prescription #3 Vitex (*Chasteberry*)

Take 160 to 240 mg of an 0.6 percent aucubin extract daily. Vitex relieves many symptoms of menopause and perimenopause. Do not use it if you are taking the birth control pill.

Super Prescription #4 Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)

Take 600 to 1,200 mg daily. This herb supports adrenal function, improves energy, relaxes the nervous system, and has a cooling effect.

General Recommendations

For memory and concentration problems, take Ginkgo biloba. It increases blood flow to the brain. Take 120 to 240 mg daily of an extract standardized to 24 percent flavones glycosides.

Hormone-replacement therapy puts a great stress on the liver. If you choose to take this medication, detoxify with milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*). Find a formula that's standardized to 70 to 80 percent silymarin content, and take 250 mg twice a day.

Sint-John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) has been shown to fight depression that comes on with menopause. Take 900 mg daily of a 0.3 percent hypericin extract.

Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) helps control the sweating associated with hot flashes. Take a daily dose of 4 to 6 grams.

Red clover (*Trifolium pretense*) has been shown in some studies to reduce the symptoms of menopause. Take 40 mg one or two times daily.

If you need to unwind and destress, find a quiet moment to drink a cup of tea made from chamomile, peppermint, or passion flower. Each of these herbs is relaxing and calming.

Vitamin E-complex (containing tocopherols and tocotrienols) may help reduce the symptoms of menopause. Take 800 to 1,200 IU daily. Do not use this high a dosage and get medical advice if you're on blood-thinning medications.

For mild vaginal dryness, use a lubricant from your health food store or pharmacy. For severe vaginal dryness, have your doctor prescribe vaginal estriol cream. Insert 1 gram two or three times weekly, containing 0.5 mg, for two weeks and then as needed.

A high-potency multivitamin provides a base of vitamins and minerals for overall health.

Take a daily total of 500 mg of calcium and 500 mg of magnesium, or a bone formula for bone health.

For a more powerful relaxing effect, especially if you need to sleep, drink valerian tea.

For every synthetic hormone prescription, there exists a natural version that is identical to what is found in your body. If you need hormone-replacement therapy, consult a doctor or functional medicine menopause specialist who is knowledgeable in natural hormone replacement. These hormones are available from a compounding pharmacy in your area.
Note: Most hormones require a prescription.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms in this section. Take a 6x, 12x, 6C, 12C, or 30C potency twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive results. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is strictly advised if any symptoms persist!

Belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*) is a remedy for sudden hot flashes that cause a flushing of the face. Throbbing symptoms may occur in the head or other areas of the body, accompanied by heat. Heart palpitations, restlessness, and right-sided headaches are common symptoms.

Calcarea Carbonica will help menopausal symptoms such as night sweats, heavy flow, and hot flashes even though the woman is chilly. There is often a sense of anxiety, fatigue, and a feeling of being overwhelmed. Women may also experience leg cramps and crave both eggs and sweets. There is weight gain with the menopausal transition.

Lachesis will ease a variety of menopausal complaints, including hot flashes, anxiety, headaches, insomnia, memory problems, and lack of concentration. It is a specific remedy for heart palpitations that are worse from lying on the left side. The woman is often very talkative and may have strong emotions such as jealousy, suspiciousness, or anger. Tight clothing around the neck is avoided. The libido often increases with menopause.

Natrum Muriaticum is for women who experience backaches and migraines, along with a craving for salt and cold drinks. It is also used for hot flashes and vaginal dryness. Symptoms are worse in the sun. Depression and aversion to people may be present. The woman cries easily.

Oophorinum is a specific remedy for hot flashes in women who have had their ovaries removed.

A double-blind trial found that transdermal natural progesterone cream reduced hot flashes in 83 percent of women, compared with improvement in only 19 percent of those given a placebo. Transdermal natural progesterone has also been shown to prevent the build-up of the endometrium (lining of uterus) among postmenopausal women who take synthetic estrogen (Premarin).

Pulsatilla (*Pulsatilla pratensis*) is for women who feel much worse in a warm room and who strongly desire fresh air. Mood swings and weepiness are characteristic symptoms. They may have a strong craving for sweets, pastries, and chocolate.

Sepia is for menopausal women who experience pain or anxiety during intercourse, usually because of vaginal dryness. If periods still occur, there

may be heavy bleeding. This remedy may help uterine prolapsed and incontinence. Women who benefit from this remedy usually feel irritable and exhausted. They have a strong craving for chocolate, sweets, or sour foods and have an aversion to sex.

Sulphur is a good remedy for hot flashes and night sweats. The woman perspires easily and throws the covers off at night. She has a strong thirst for ice-cold drinks.

Body Work

Massage

Massage therapy is a terrific stress reliever. If you don't already receive regular massage treatments, this is a good time in your life to start.

Reflexology

Seek out a specialist reflexologist and go once a month for a rebalancing treatment to assist with many aspects of menopause.

Hydrotherapy

A warm sitz bath will increase circulation to the pelvic area and will improve vaginal dryness and decreased libido.

Aromatherapy

Geranium and rose oils have a gentle balancing effect on hormone levels. They have the additional benefit of reducing stress. Add these oils to a bath or use them in a massage.

If you want to lift your spirits, you can try several oils. Bergamot, rose, juniper and jasmine are some of the best; use them in any preparation you like.

Patchouli and ylang-ylang instill a sense of calm. Try a few drops in the bath or a room diffuser, or use in a massage.

Add chamomile to a lotion, and apply to dry skin for a softening, smoothing effect.

Stress Reduction

Get Moving!

To a lot of women, exercise is a scary word. So if you don't enjoy going to the gym, don't go. If you hate sit-ups, never do another one again. But I *do* want you to move your body in some form that you enjoy on a regular basis. Find something that's fun, whether it's jogging, tennis, Pilates, yoga, biking, hula hooping, spinning, gardening, or just dancing yourself silly around the

house. Exercise can be empowering – it doesn't have to be intimidating. What matters most is that you find something that you love enough to do regularly. You'll soon get hooked – especially when you see how good (and sexy) it makes you feel and how great your body looks as a result.

Here's why it's so important: As you age, if you don't get enough exercise, your muscle mass is often replaced by fat. Once you start an exercise program, no matter what your age, you can reverse that trend. Even more important, women who exercise regularly have an average of 20 more years of productive living than those who don't. That's because regular exercise helps regulate weight and decreases insulin resistance, boosting nitric oxide. It also keeps all your joints mobile and lubricated.

Actually, all you really need is just 20 to 30 minutes of aerobic exercise (like brisk walking – enough to get you huffing and puffing) at least five days a week. More is even better! Also do some form of strength training (with weights, resistance bands, or Pilate's equipment) three times a week. Strength training is vital because it's the only hope of exercise that can slow the muscle and bone losses many women start to experience in midlife. You don't have to go to the gym for this – you can use hand-held weights (or resistance bands) at home. If you're new to weights, however, it's a good idea to hire a trainer at least in the beginning so that you can get advice on what routine to follow and how to do it safely.

Respect your limits and rest (or stop) when you need to. If you feel depleted afterward (not just tired but *worn out*), you've gone too far and have done too much. It's best to start out slowly and build on your routine. One way to stay motivated (and interested) is to set regular and reasonable goals, like walking around the block or to a particular destination in less and less time, or adding five to ten minutes to your routine each week or so. Pedometers are especially motivating. Try working up to 10,000 steps per day.

Catch Enough Sleep

Getting sufficient sleep is also important for keeping nitric oxide levels high. Many women (including me!) require eight to ten hours of sleep for optimal functioning, but you many need slightly more or slightly less. The test is simple: If you're groggy and tired throughout the day, you need more sleep! Recent studies indicate that sleep deprivation contributes greatly to high blood pressure and even weight gain.

If you can, get to bed by 10p.m. Falling asleep before midnight is healthier for your body than sleep that begins later in the night – even if you sleep in later the next morning. And believe it or not, getting the right amount of sleep can also help you lose weight!

Kick the Habit

If you smoke, quit. End of story. Smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in America, and it substantially lowers your nitric oxide levels. Find some support (either with a stop-smoking program, hypnosis, or by using a nicotine patch), but stop for good. Believe me, it's well worth it, and after a while, you'll wonder what took you so long!

Supplements

We can't always get the nutrients we need from food, so to be sure you're getting what you need, take supplements. Pick a high-quality supplement from a reputable manufacturer. Look for the NSF (The Public Health and Safety Company) or the USP (United States Pharmacopeia) logo on the label. Check the dosage carefully, because you can't get optimal supplementation from merely one pill per day. You'll usually have to take at least four daily, and possibly more. Shoot for a supplement with the following daily levels per dose:

- Beta-carotene: 2,500-15,000 IU
- Thiamin (B1): 20-40 mg
- Riboflavin (B2): 20-40 mg
- Niacin (B3): 20-40 mg
- Pantothenic Acid (B5): 20-100 mg
- Pyridoxine (B6): 20-35 mg
- Vitamin B12: 100-600 mcg
- Folic Acid: 400-1,000 mcg
- Vitamin C: 1,000-2,000 mg
- Vitamin D3: 600-2,000 IU
- Vitamin E: 200-400 IU
- Calcium: 650-1,200 mg
- Selenium: 200 mcg
- Magnesium: 400-1,000 mg
- Zinc: 20-40 mg
- Chromium: 100-300 mcg
- Biotin: 30-300 mcg
- Boron: 3-5 mg

- CoQ10: 10-200 mg
- Fish Oil/Omega-3: 200-1,500 mg of DHA and 400-1,850 mg of EPA
- Lutein: 500-1,000 mcg
- Lycopene: 500-1,000 mcg

Optional:

- Glutathione: 2-10 mg
- Alpha Lipoic Acid: 10-100 mg
- Inositol: 10-500 mg
- Choline: 10-100 mg
- Manganese: 1-15 mg
- Copper: 1-2 mg
- Molybdenum: 10-25 mcg
- Vanadium: 20-40 mcg

Remember, your body doesn't naturally manufacture most of the vitamins and minerals that you require. *Note:* The RDA (recommended daily allowance) that was set up by the USDA was designed as a guideline to prevent gross deficiency diseases; optimal nutrition requires higher nutrient levels.

Take Pride in Yourself!

Remember that peri-menopause is a turning point in your life, a huge biologically supported opportunity to reinvent yourself and experience more joy and pleasure than you've ever dreamed possible. At this time when you're re-evaluating your life and deciding what works and what doesn't, you get a chance to start with a clean slate. The best way to do so is to have fun with the process. Make yourself over anyway you want. Let your imagination (and your desire) go wild!

If you've always wanted to try a different hair color, for example, now is your time to go for it. Maybe try a different hairstyle (or three – why stop with just one?). Or perhaps you want to change the way you dress, trying colors and styles that you've never worn before. Experiment with what clothes and accessories feel and look good. How about outrageously entertaining earrings? Here's a particularly fun idea: Buy all new underwear, and don't let any of it be "sensible"! Nobody has to know but you – and maybe your partner! The main thing to remember is that the person you must turn on first is *you*. This is the key not only to great sex, but also to vibrant health.

If you're at all intimidated by these ideas (most of us are at the beginning), start small – just start somewhere.

Other Recommendations

- Remember that one year without a single period must pass before menopause can officially be declared. If a full year has not passed since your last cycle, it's possible that you could still get pregnant. Take appropriate precautions.
- Don't smoke. Smoking is linked to premature menopause, as well as to heart disease.
- Regular exercise improves general health, as well as many symptoms of menopause. Nonimpact workouts like swimming and cycling are good for your cardiovascular system, but to prevent bone loss you'll need to include weight-bearing exercise as well. Walking is one of the best all-over conditioners, and weight lifting has been shown to increase bone density and vitality even for people in their nineties.
- Acupuncture can be helpful for alleviating a variety of menopausal symptoms, as can Chinese herbal therapy. See a qualified practitioner.

Testing Techniques

The following tests help assess hormone balance and other issues related to menopause:

- Hormone testing (thyroid, DHEA, cortisol, testosterone, IGF-1, estrogen, progesterone, FSH) – saliva, blood, or urine
- Complete blood count and chemistry profile – blood
- Thyroid panel – blood or saliva or urine
- Cardiovascular profile – blood (see Cardiovascular Disease section for more detail)
- Bone resorption assessment – urine
- Bone density – DEXA scan (X-ray)

The Power of Midlife Passion

Passion is another emotion we often unleash with renewed intensity at this time of life. Many midlife women feel a growing enthusiasm for activities they previously put on the back burner and report that their lives change for the better when they start engaging in pursuits that excite them. Such activities can include things like reading books, going to the movies with friends, travelling, horseback riding, creating artwork, being out in nature, writing poetry, and even redecorating (in other words, anything enjoyable that they never took the time to do). This can also include volunteering for a cause that's greater than themselves. There's something life-giving and life-enhancing about lending our effort toward the greater good. And believe it or not, the good feelings that come from giving back can also spill over into our sex lives!

Indulging in our passions is an important part of our midlife passage because it helps us connect at a deep emotional and spiritual level with our newly emerging selves. These activities aren't a luxury. Doing what we love and what brings us pleasure keeps our life force well stoked. This is definitely a time to, as the saying goes, follow our bliss.

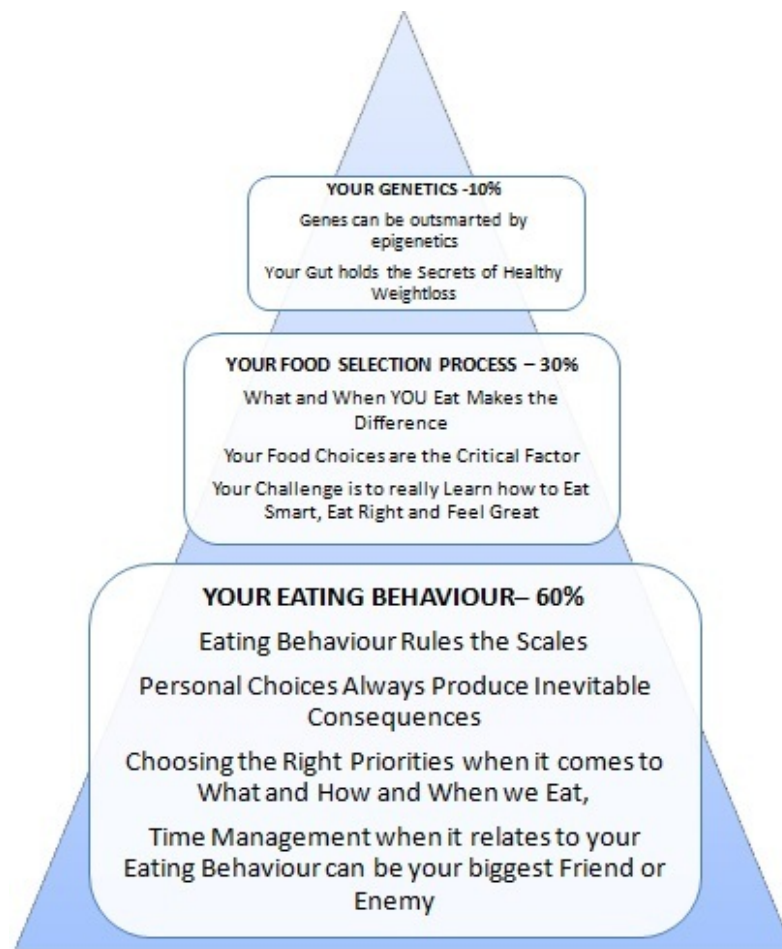
There's something vitally important that you should know about what happens when you do this: Women who make a point of maintaining a strong, passionate life force become magnetically attractive to uplifting people and circumstances.



Chapter 4: So Why Can't I Lose Weight? And why can't I keep the weight off?

These are good questions because even champion weight losers often put the weight back on, suffering the seemingly inevitable see-saw effect of cyclical weight loss followed by weight gain. Can we do something to correct this problem? Of course we can! That's exactly what this book is for.

Epigenetic PARADIGM PYRAMID 1 – YOUR BIGGEST WEIGHT INFLUENCER



As you might recall from my life story, over the years of battling with weight issues, I tried many, many different methods and diets to lose weight and keep the pounds off. In those early years, with very little useful help or advice, I experienced most of the recurring problems that I bet you're familiar with. Every “weight loss program” was slow and the weight certainly didn't

come off very quickly. This was always frustrating and de-motivating. With the SPS weight loss protocol this problem is solved. I lost a total of fifty pounds over the course of eighteen months. When you are losing weight gradually but consistently every day, this keeps your motivation at a very high level. The next problem with every other weight loss system I tried is that I was always hungry and that made me feel pretty miserable most of the time. Does that sound familiar to you? Clearly a better way is needed!

Create Good Habits

Willpower - the mantra of the naturally thin. Why willpower alone is overrated

Let's just accept that we're going to need more than willpower to get the job done. When you rely on willpower alone you set yourself up for failure and disappointment. Routine and old habits are strongly embedded in our behaviour so they will win out over willpower 99% of the time and this is another reason why diets simply don't work. They rely on short-term changes that no normal person can ever hope to maintain.

A good habit doesn't require willpower or discipline. By definition, a habit is something you don't even think about. It's something that you do or feel automatically. Bad habits don't usually take up too much of your attention either until you begin to suffer the consequences. Because bad habits inevitably have a down side. If there's a habit you're trying to change, you need to be motivated to do something about it. Most of us respond positively to a suitable reward (not food!) to make the change worthwhile and repeatable.

You need a simple structure to help you modify your behaviour in the simplest way possible. And you need a starting point. This can be anything from a personal coach, a good friend or colleague who will keep reminding you or even family members to encourage you. It only takes 3 weeks to internalise your new behaviour and make it a permanent and positive habit that can last a lifetime. And the absolute perfect time to start is right now. In the next few chapters we are going to show you how.

Managing your Environment

Before we take a closer look at the mechanics of smart weight loss, we need to think about how we can boost our chances of success by monitoring our environment. You don't have to be a certified Boy or Girl Scout but *Being Prepared* can help you anticipate potential problems when temptation is likely to roll across your path. If you know you're going to be in a situation where the wrong food is likely to be available, you can avoid the problems by preparing yourself in advance. This is something I do automatically these days. I'll take my own food along when I go out with friends or ask for a meal that fits my dietary requirements. It's that easy. You are psychologically so much better prepared to resist all the garbage that passes for typical hotel or restaurant catering that you won't even notice all the usual no-go areas. And you will feel so much better because you've respected your body's natural nutrition needs. Keep the garbage food out of your home, away from the work place and out of your life. Don't torture yourself by stocking up on things that are killing you and then struggling to resist them. Make everything so much easier by keeping all the bad stuff out of sight. The longer you stay on the right track, the more your body will detox and the easier it will feel for you to do the right thing effortlessly all the time.

Cravings

Intense hunger. Thin people can never understand this. It's a hard but inescapable fact. An overweight person is physically hungry more often than a naturally thin person. And the hunger is much more intense. Thin people frequently accuse overweight people of lacking the self-control to stop eating. It's a great story and it makes thin people feel better. But it is absolutely not true. Not. True. The thin person cannot possibly comprehend the intense physiological and almost constant hunger that overweight people have to deal with. It has nothing to do with self-control. This is a real, gnawing, overwhelming and intense physical hunger. That's a good reason why those very fortunate, naturally thin people and exercise gurus should not write books on how to lose weight. They have no concept of the scale and depth of the challenges that overweight people have to deal with on a daily basis. You have to know what those hunger drives really feel like before you start giving advice! One of the startling revelations that we're going to explore together is the fact that many overweight people are starving. Their bodies are starved of essential nutrients so they're constantly hungry and their bodies are crying out for something nutritiously worthwhile to satisfy those basic needs. It's so ironic that obese individuals feel so hungry but it's a reality that we're going to deal with by fixing the problem right at its source.

Eating when your body doesn't need the fuel.

Overweight people are also prone to problems with “emotional eating” or cravings. Certain food cravings fall into the above hunger category as they are certainly physiological in nature. Other food cravings or emotional eating occur when you are physically not hungry, but your hunger becomes a displacement activity to satisfy unfulfilled emotional needs. This hunger might be emotional in origin but it feels exactly like real physical hunger when you experience it.

Addictions. Are you a food junkie?

During the 1980s when the arrival of highly processed, cheap cocaine in the form of crack produced an epidemic in drug addiction, researchers were convinced that of all the substances that could cause addiction in humans, food simply could not be classed as addictive. Scientists absolutely refused to consider the possibility that an individual could become addicted to any kind of food. It just wasn't possible.

Over-eating was considered to be a behavioural problem that could be fixed with a little self-discipline, a treadmill and some much needed self-control. But during the 1990s, as obesity rates soared, researchers began to apply brain-scanning technology to investigate what really happened in the brains of obese people. The results were astonishing. Overweight people displayed the same chemical reactions to food that had been detected in drug addicts. Obese people were showing signs of real, measurable, chemical addiction to food. And the addiction usually applied to the unhealthiest food possible.

In fact, as weight management specialists began to record their patients' attitudes and behaviour in thousands of detailed reports, it became clear that vast numbers of overweight people were struggling with a powerful, irresistible addiction to the worst kinds of foodstuffs. The problem is linked to the brain's reward system and the powerful chemical, dopamine. As individuals receive overwhelming bursts of pleasure and satisfaction from their food intake, the brain switches off dopamine receptors to reduce the effect of the pleasure rush. So the body needs more raw fuel in the form of the pleasure-inducing, comforting foods to achieve the same levels of satisfaction. It's a vicious circle and then it gets worse.

The change in brain chemistry erodes the link with the Pre-Frontal Cortex, the adult part of the brain that can exercise control over excessive behaviour. So we lose contact with the part of the brain that can regulate our addiction and the situation gets out of hand. The result is obesity and all the health problems that go along with it.

So it really is important to recognise the addictive nature of food and understand that we will need to train our behaviour to find other, healthier ways to get our dopamine rush. For most people, a wake-up call is usually the moment of realisation that something really has to change. A wake-up call that can sometimes be scary but motivates us to make changes in our behaviour and tackle the addiction.

Your Internal Digestion Clock

Eating too late in the evening is a disaster for good digestion and for good sleep. Food and alcohol can disrupt the body's natural digestive cycles and encourage the body to store the food as fat. There's a great deal of interesting modern research on this fascinating topic but the concept is hardly new.

When we consider the health issues of eating too late in the day, one of the unfortunate side effects of bingeing close to bedtime is an increase in blood sugar levels for a full 24 hours. This conclusion was published in a study in *Obesity Research & Clinical Practice*.

Meanwhile, research in the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine* confirms that eating high-calorie, high-fat snacks at night results in restless sleep. This can result in overeating the next day in an attempt to boost flagging energy levels.

As a general rule of thumb, experts now suggest eating 90 percent of your total calories during the day, focusing on lunch as the main meal of the day. That still leaves you a healthy 150 to 200 calories to consume in a 'smart snack' before you go to bed.

Genetics.

There are thousands of diet books, countless weight-loss articles and hundreds of weight loss organisations but we all know about the real problem of losing weight; the fat begins to slip away, we post the good news on Facebook, celebrating the success - and then we see all the good work undone as we put the pounds back on in a very short period of time. Now that is just too frustrating!

Relax. Help is finally at hand. We'll show how to re-set your metabolism and take control of your weight issues for the rest of your life.

If you still suspect that your inherited DNA is responsible for making you overweight, I'd like to repeat that it's being proved time and time again that genetics simply do not play the only role in causing obesity. Genetics can be thanked for your general body shape but are not the main cause for a low metabolism, intense and constant physical hunger, or emotional eating. The answer lies in our behaviour and in our environment. In other words, our weight is entirely a product of what we do.

Do things differently and the weight ceases to be problem.

Excited? Stay with me. Read on! We're just getting started!

SUMMARY

Metabolism is the key

Recognising intense hunger and cravings

Creating good habits

Managing your environment

Building support from friends, family and colleagues

Eliminating the villains from the weight loss narrative



Chapter 5: How You React to Stress

The subject of stress can be quite confusing. It's such a pervasive facet of our lives that it's easy to mistake it for a natural phenomenon. But it isn't. It's time to add a measure of much-needed clarity to the subject. It is essential that we do not mistake the events around us as being the source of our stress. They are simply events. Nothing more and nothing less.

It's our conditioned reflex to our external and internal landscapes that determines whether or not we trigger the stress response. Most of us are heavily conditioned from early childhood to feel stressed under a wide variety of circumstances. Just because virtually everyone is blighted by the effects of stress and living in a world of unrelenting tension doesn't mean that the condition is in any way normal, inevitable or untreatable.

On the contrary, the good news is that our conditioned responses can be transformed so completely that life can rapidly become a much more profoundly enjoyable experience. Mastery of the stress response will be one of our most important objectives.

If you've ever had the good fortune to spend time in the presence of a great Yoga master and experienced the extraordinary calm that surrounds their every thought and action, you'll have witnessed an unforgettable demonstration of how powerful the natural state of calm can be. We're so deeply conditioned to be permanently stressed that we consider this natural expression of human potential to be an anomaly! Being overstressed – that's the anomaly.

Sources of Stress

Stress reveals itself in many different guises but most of us are typically conditioned to experience stress in response to four basic sources:

1. Environmental challenges: The list is huge and includes everything around you – such as weather, pollution, noise, traffic, crowds, the daily news on TV, family, pets and colleagues.
2. Social stressors: These are the usual, unremitting demands for your time, your energy and your attention. Family, work, social interactions and all the uncertainties and unpredictable factors of human relationships.
3. Physiological factors: Poor diet, lack of exercise, adolescence, menopause, ageing, illness, injuries and the drain of poor sleep – it's an encyclopaedic list of potential problem areas.
4. The Mental Maze: Your conditioned mental reflexes interpret the world around you according to pre-set patterns of expectation. The limbic system has been driving our survival responses since our distant ancestors first stepped down from the trees. Very handy for dealing with a hungry sabre-toothed tiger but not very helpful in developing creative, logical alternatives to life's challenges. That's precisely what the more recently evolved pre-frontal cortex is for and learning to engage its massive capabilities is a powerful mechanism for turning down the limbic system's primitive fight or flight drives.



Fight-or-Flight Response

Better understanding of brain function has provided further, essential keys to explaining our behaviour and in greater depth than ever before. As you can imagine from our two million years of humanoid evolution, brain function has a long and complex history of development.

As our distant ancestors climbed down from the trees and learned to walk on two legs, they had to adapt to living on the challenging, inhospitable,

grassy Savannahs of the African plains. Survival in those remote times depended very much on a part of the brain called the limbic system.

The physical and emotional responses that are driven by the limbic system are very powerful indeed and produce rapid reactions that were certainly very helpful for our early survival as a species.

We can trace reactions such as fear and anger, hunger and the sex drive to the limbic system and one part of the structure in particular exerts a powerful influence in encouraging rapid responses: we're referring to a small, almond-shaped portion of the limbic system known as the amygdala. It prompts instant reactions, particularly in the areas of fear, sexual response and hunger behaviour.

The system is primed to function from birth, prompting babies to cry when hungry and it continues to function throughout our lives, delivering emotionally-charged messages to satisfy instantly the need for pleasure and security, whilst avoiding pain and dealing with danger.

The amygdala seeks immediate reaction. It does not encourage thought, contemplation or analysis. It demands action. In a dangerous environment, it can be a life saver. In the face of a stressful situation, real or imaginary, it can be our undoing. But there's so much more to our brains than just the ancient limbic system!

If we were to identify the part of the brain that is most closely associated with the attributes of being human, it would surely be the pre-frontal cortex. This is the most highly evolved part of the brain and it's the reason that you're able to read this book.

This is the source of our creativity and imagination and provides control mechanisms for our thoughts, our feelings and our actions. This is where human flexibility is rooted. Unlike the limbic system, it develops slowly, not reaching its full capacity until our early twenties.

The pre-frontal cortex allows us to plan, to analyse, to be rational and to exercise control. Why is any of this relevant? Well, the two systems are closely linked. If the limbic system is the accelerator, putting the pedal to the metal for instant reactions, the pre-frontal cortex is the braking system, slowing things down to maintain control and seek a more logical, reasoned approach. Limbic says 'Go, go, go!' Pre-frontal cortex says 'Slow down! Stop!' The Stop-Go systems work in tandem. They react together all the time in a seamless, inter-connected relationship.

As one area becomes more active, the other becomes less influential. The overwhelming need for instant action is powered by the limbic 'Go' system and this is where the stress response can move into overdrive, prompting exaggerated responses in the face of real or, most often, imagined threats and dangers.

The more we function from the limbic system, the less help we get from the highly developed pre-frontal cortex. And one of the major triggers for powering up the primordial limbic system is - stress! The more stressed you feel, the more active the limbic system becomes. And the less help you receive from the pre-frontal cortex.

So we're beginning to build a simple picture of two opposite and, in some ways, contradictory elements in the human brain. One drives us towards fear, anxiety and self-preservation.

The other enables us to delay or postpone the fear response and choose actions and behaviours that are more in tune with our long term needs and wellbeing. We know the systems are linked to each other.

We know that as one system becomes dominant, the other system powers down and reduces its capacity to influence our behaviour. And there's more. Cognitive behaviourists have another favourite term to describe the human ability for self-control and it's another potent element of the pre-frontal cortex. It's referred to as Executive Function.

EF provides us with the essential cognitive skills that give us control over our thoughts, our feelings and our actions. And the great news is that we can learn to develop Executive Function at pretty much any time in our life. Executive Function enables us to look ahead, to imagine and design plans for the future, to calculate the details and help us achieve our goals.

What a fabulous asset to have in your brain. One of our intentions is to encourage the EF to play a more dominant role in your life and take over from the limbic system's short term impulses that thrive on fear, stress and anxiety.

The stress response has been successfully measured, analysed and studied in great detail since Hans Selye (1978), the first major researcher on stress, was first able to describe what happens in the body during the fight-or-flight response. He found that any problem, imaginary or real, can cause distinct and measurable changes to the body.

As you'll probably recognise from your own direct experience of stress, these changes directly affect your heart rate, breathing rate, muscle tension, metabolism, and blood pressure. Not surprisingly, they all increase. The hands

and feet become colder as blood is directed away from the extremities and from the digestive system and into the larger muscles that could be useful in assisting us to fight or run away. Some people experience butterflies in their stomachs. The pupils dilate to sharpen vision and the hearing becomes more acute.

Unfortunately, during times of repeated or chronic stress, when the fight-or-flight responses function fairly constantly without an appropriate break, other changes can be detected in the body that can produce long-term, detrimental effects on the health of the individual. The adrenal glands secrete *corticoids* (adrenaline or epinephrine, and norepinephrine), which inhibit digestion, reproduction, growth, tissue repair, and the responses of the immune and inflammatory systems. To express the problem more simply, a range of essential functions that maintain physical health begin to shut down. And that's scary.

Fortunately, the same mechanism that turns the stress response on can turn it off. This is the extremely important *relaxation response*. As soon as you realise that a situation is no longer threatening and you breathe a sigh of relief, your brain stops sending emergency signals to your brain stem, which in turn ceases to send panic messages to your nervous system. Three minutes after you shut off the danger signals, the fight-or-flight response switches to neutral. Your metabolism, heart rate, breathing rate, muscle tension, and blood pressure all return to their normal, optimal levels of functioning.

How Females deal with Mid Life Challenges

The Mid Life generation today grew up with choices. This is the generation who grew up with birth control, kitchen technology, contact lenses, plastic surgery, women's lib, one-calorie soda, liposuction, E-mail, and cell phones. This is the generation of women who rewrote the rules:

So if everyone is calling you "Ma'am" and the police are looking younger and younger, welcome to those middle years. Today, the average forty-year-old American woman can expect to live to be at least eighty years old.

Unfortunately, it is during these middle years that many women experience more anxiety and depression than at any other time in their life. Think of the many stresses produced by changing self-concepts, marriage dissatisfaction, redefinition of parenting roles, and the double standard of aging.

How Does Our Aging Experience Compare?

In an article written more than twenty years ago, Susan Sontag described some interesting observations but some of them are changing!

- As they grow older, women often keep their age a secret. Most men do not.
- Since women are often judged on their beauty and youthfulness, their value as partners may decrease as they mature. Since men are often judged on their competence and experience, their value as partners may increase as they mature.
- An older woman is considered less sexually attractive and desirable than a younger woman. An older man, particularly if he is financially or politically successful, does not lose his sexual eligibility. In fact, it often increases as his power increases, and the male/female mortality rates make him a scarce sexual commodity!
- Older men can be expected to take younger lovers; older women are not. But now they are starting to!
- Women are expected to try to maintain facial beauty through cosmetics, moisturizers, and even surgery. Men are expected to have their faces become more rugged, scarred and marked by the passing years.

Men and women do not approach the aging "starting line" neck and neck. Many of the stresses that affect women as they age have begun to form before they are forty.

It is still more often the woman than the man who has postponed or interrupted a career for the convenience of marriage or the necessities of parenting. It is still more often the woman than the man who has assumed a more flexible position when family decisions had to be made in the midst of pros and cons.

Many women who have spent years of their adult lives at home see themselves as “just housewives,” though this is an inaccurate and demeaning view. They feel that their job qualifications, social skills, sexual experience and personal style are rusty and dusty! By the time they are approaching forty, they would like to re-enter the world beyond their homes, but are stressed by what they consider their inadequacies.

These generalizations have not changed very much and help to explain why a woman with years of homemaking experience often feels that she has little of value to offer in her later years. The reverse is true: A homemaker typically has experience in accounting, nutrition, paramedical activities, counselling, decorating, catering, social planning, and sometime hiring, firing and even public relations. If she has particularly enjoyed one of these areas, she can begin to focus on her job or career ambitions.

In fact, the older woman is more desirable than her male counterpart, both in the job market and as a mate. Research indicates that women have greater resistance to haemorrhages, many cancers, heart disease, and brain disease. In fact, according to research cited by the Society for Women’s Health Research in Washington, D. C., women also lose less brain tissue and cerebrospinal fluid as they age, making them less vulnerable to age-related changes in mental ability.

AND THEN THERE IS – Fifty!

At about age fifty, many women have the chance to make a wonderful shift: They can shake off the negative messages society has been sending them about aging and focus on the very large benefits the decade ahead has to offer.

Menopause, for example, frees us of the worry that we will become pregnant again, ends PMS, and initiates new possibilities. Now we are free to write the book, open the store, resurrect the career, or create the masterpiece of our choice.

Husbands may start to be bothered by major health problems about this time and sense the end of their working lives, especially if he is older. We, on the other hand, are often feeling just the opposite: energetic and adventuresome!

Wild horses could not hold us back – but a few other things can slow us down. Like our fiftieth birthday.

There is something unique and symbolic about the number fifty. Fifty percent marks the middle. Fifty is halfway to a hundred, and many of us do not expect to live much beyond that. Fifty is a turning point: We may begin to think more about what has passed than what lies ahead. We may ask ourselves whether our lives have been meaningful. If we have not solved the midlife problems of our forties, they come back with renewed intensity in our fifties.

It can help simply to recognize that the turmoil is normal. Midlife crisis is a phase to pass through, like adolescence. Talking with other women can be reassuring. However, much you may be tempted to avoid the reunion this time, if you gather your courage and go, you'll probably see that you are far from alone.

The Elderly Parent Generation

Besides the demands of their children, some women in their fifties are overwhelmed with the demands of their aging parents. These women are catering to the young and old. Parents who are ill, financially unprepared or depressed about aging can drain a middle-years family of even more time, money, and emotional energy than the children who have unexpectedly returned home, because older people are sometimes truly helpless. It is hard to say whether it is better to have ailing parents nearby or at a distance. If they are close, the constant pressure of doing little things can be exhausting. If they are far away, the constant worry about who is doing the little thing you would be doing if you lived closer is exhausting too!

On the brighter side, since most of the time parents prefer staying in their own home or finding a home-type situation where they have some independence, their daughter can become a manager instead of a servant. It is she who makes sure the nurse is giving good care, the accountant is paying the taxes, and the teenager is keeping up the yard as agreed. If you are tempted to do it all yourself, go ahead and try it – but know that unless you are a professional nurse or unless you have a lot of extra time and energy, it will be a trying experience. By finding other options, you will be able to make more of these years.

Stunningly Sixty

Now here's a little-known fact: The older woman is often more desirable than the older man is sexually. Although men have traditionally talked more about their sexuality, most women maintain their sexual interest and capacities far longer as they mature.

Excluding individual differences, medical problems, and situational factors, women in general experience fewer sexual problems caused by the aging process than men. The older woman is in an interestingly different position. Menopause frees her from any pregnancy fears she might have had, and coincides with freedom from caring for small children and from her or her husband's career struggles. Menopause can replace premenstrual tension with hot flashes and other body changes, but hot flashes pass, and other changes, such as diminished vaginal lubrication, can be treated medically or compensated for. The majority of women seem to adjust well physically to menopausal changes. Why, then, do we see female stress?

One major source of sexual stress among older women is older men.

Husbands may withdraw sexually after blood pressure medication, diabetes, or aging interferes with their erections. Most men do not know that they can have an orgasm with no erection at all. Furthermore, since women can enjoy all types of pleasuring and can have an orgasm from clitoral stimulation without intercourse, even total impotence does not have to mean an end to a couple's sexuality.

Husbands, finally, are often older than their wives. This is financially advantageous when a couple is young but sexually disadvantageous when a couple matures. Add to that, years of familiarity, routine, and daily problems. Add anxiety about appearance and performance. Add social taboos against "dirty old men." The result? Wives experiencing the Female Stress Syndrome!

Older women who are not married, or who never married, run the risk of additional problems in this area. Sexuality may be an inner quality, but sexiness, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. Without appreciative eyes around to behold you, it is all too easy to become lax about your exercise, diet, or appearance. Women over forty who are finding sexual partners less available should know that this is not so much a reaction against them personally, but rather the result of the double standard of aging as well as the unfortunate imbalance in the male/female populations in this age group.

The life expectancy for women in our society is still greater than for men – six to eight years greater, on the average. By the time a woman is fifty, there will be approximately eighty men for every hundred women of the same age. By the time she is sixty, the number drops to seventy-two men per one hundred women; and after seventy-five, there are only about sixty-three men per one hundred women. Now consider that two thirds of these men over sixty-five are still married; that leaves approximately one single man for every four single women over sixty!

Furthermore, as Susan Sontag noted years ago, it is expected that men will date women their own age and younger. It is not expected that older women will do the same, even if they could. When an older woman is seen with a young lover, even today, most people assume that she is rich. These and other societal factors still result in far fewer dating opportunities for older women than for older men.

Stress and Death of your partner

Another source of stress in the older woman is the experience of widowhood. When it comes to remarrying after the death of a spouse, the odds are not in a woman's favor. Only one quarter of all widows remarry within five years, compared to half of all widowers and three quarters of divorced women.

Sheer loneliness is one of the biggest burdens of widowhood, whether it happens at a young or older age. Here are some kinds of Loneliness

- Missing the particular person
- Missing feeling loved
- Missing being able to love the other
- Missing an in-depth relationship
- Missing having someone else around the house
- Missing the married lifestyle
- Difficulties meeting new friends

Managing midlife stress

Menopause

Women going through menopause should learn all they can about the changes they are experiencing. Learn that they are normal; learn that some have a limited duration; learn that they are not all mysteries; learn what changes will come next.

Although the menopause symptoms themselves may not be under your control, other areas of functioning essential to stress syndrome survival are:

- Maintain control of your weight, following a nutritionally sound diet, and you will continue to enjoy your body.....SEE CHAPTER 10
- Set up and follow an exercise program. This will maintain your muscle strength and stimulate your energy supply....SEE CHAPTER 12
- Schedule your time. Decide on your own priorities and handle time as if it were a very valuable commodity. Your time will truly be yours.....SEE CHAPTER 8
- Be good to yourself. This can help to reduce that feeling of being controlled by physical changes rather than your own feelings as you are of others'SEE CHAPTER 5

If stress symptoms seem excessive, find natural solutions before thinking about a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Managing the stress of grief

If you or a friend has lost a husband/partner, try these following ideas:

- Formulate your own alternatives without taking outside advice
- Do not deny sorrow and loss.
- Don't stay locked away.
- Participate in social and work activities without pressure

LIVING ALONE

If a long term relationship has just ended for whatever reason, accept the fact that you have gone through a transition and that any change, particularly one over which you have little or no control, will aggravate the symptoms of the Female Stress Syndrome. You may be more prone to depression or illness, depending on your "weak links." You may feel social stresses more, be more sensitive to insults and injuries from others.

Also, especially at first, take as much time as you can to make big decisions (such as whether or not to sell the house, where you should live if you do.) If possible, don't let yourself be pressured into something before you're ready; in the midst of grief and coming to terms with a major life change, it is difficult to think clearly, and you may make decisions you will later regret.

Develop a network of people who share the same problems and feelings; you'll feel less alone. Fight some of the injustices of age prejudice, if that is your style. It will make you feel more potent. Keep in mind that as your sense of control increases, your stress decreases, so anything you can do to put yourself more in control of your life will go a long way toward easing stress.

HELPING YOURSELF: SHORT-TERM STRESS MANAGEMENT USING EXERCISE...SEE MORE IN CHAPTER 12

- Walking—The most common exercise for both men and women of all ages.
- Aerobics and dance classes—Health-club workouts (and tapes for home use) are hugely popular. And of course, aerobic exercise makes your heart healthy and curbs stress-related spikes in blood pressure, say Duke University researchers.
- Swimming—This low-impact sport is easy on the joints as well as being very relaxing.
- Jogging—A popular stress antidote whether you enjoy being alone, exercising with a friend or competing.
- Tennis
- Team sports
- Marathons
- Pilates
- Yoga

And there are many others: biking, belly dancing, tap dancing, scrubbing, buffing, waxing, hoeing, or mowing. Or just put on the radio to music faster than your heartbeat (seventy-two beats per minute) and dance around your bedroom for twenty minutes. Remember, any sustained, rhythmic, self-regulated physical exercise not only uses up the extra adrenaline that stress stimulates, but it also increases your sense of control, distracts you from your stressors, gives you a sense of accomplishment, and leaves your muscles relaxed. And, of course, aerobic exercise also helps to keep your heart healthy

and curbs stress-related spikes in blood pressure, according to Duke University researchers. The trick is to pick one—and do it!

Other Anti Stress Ideas

Competitive games like cards, backgammon, or word games; team games and activities; or individual games like jigsaw and crossword puzzles.

If you enjoy it, and it is engrossing, it will counteract bad stress. And if you compete openly, if you give yourself the victory sign if you win and a pat on the back if you lose, if you stop pretending that nice girls don't try, you'll give yourself the added satisfaction of counteracting any non assertiveness training you may have picked up in the past.

And did you know that reorganizing part of your world can also be short-term, fast stress therapy? Clean out your wallet, arrange your closet, rearrange your kitchen drawer and throw out the junk in it—bookstore browsing, listening to music slower than our heartbeat, plant pruning, carpentry, and needlepoint for mini vacations from stress.

Stanley Fisher, in his book *Discovering the Power of Self-Hypnosis*, recommends that you use autohypnosis to let your body know that this is its time to relax. The simple steps for entering and exiting from autohypnosis are as follows:

1. Sit comfortably in a chair facing a wall about eight feet away. Pick a spot or an object on the wall that is about one foot above your sitting eye level. This is your focal point.
2. Look at your focal point, and begin counting backward from 100, one number for each breath you exhale.
3. As you count and continue to concentrate on your focal point, imagine yourself floating, floating down, down through the chair, very relaxed.
4. As you stare at your focal point you will find that your eyelids feel heavier and begin to blink. When this happens, just let your eyes slowly close.
5. While your eyes are closed continue to count backward, one number for each time you exhale. As you count, imagine how it would feel to be as limp as a rag doll, totally relaxed and floating in a safe, comfortable space. This is your space.
6. As that safe, comfortable feeling flows over you, you can stop counting and just float.

7. If any disturbing thought enters your space, just let it flow out again; continue to feel safe and relaxed.
8. When you're ready to come out of autohypnosis, either let yourself drift off to sleep, or count from one to three and exit using the following steps. At one, let yourself get ready; at two, take a deep breath and hold it for a few seconds; and at three exhale and open your eyes slowly. As you open your eyes, continue to hold on to that relaxed, comfortable feeling.

You can also counteract tension with progressive relaxation. Some of my patients listen to a guided meditation or relaxation audio.

1. Starting with your toes, relax them.
2. Then the feet and ankles: relax.
3. Then the calves: relax.
4. The knees: relax.
5. The thighs: relax.
6. The buttocks: relax.
7. The abdomen and stomach: relax.
8. The back and shoulders: relax.
9. The hands: relax.
 10. The forearms: relax.
 11. The upper arms: relax.
 12. The neck: relax.
 13. The face: relax.
 14. Drift off.

Reading to reduce stress

Bibliotherapy is self-paced, not expensive, unambiguous, educational, and often the first step toward therapy. In fact, 60 percent of psychotherapists who belong to the American Psychological Association have said they tell their patients to read self-help books for guidance in personal growth, relationships, assertiveness, and of course, stress reduction.

Prioritizing is Priority

You've heard this before. Now think about it again. You can't expect to carry on at all costs—the cost is too steep. You can't expect to add new roles to old roles without becoming overwhelmed. You can't make all your commitments priorities, so make fewer commitments. A recent study at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City found that women with heart disease feel more chest pains during mental stress than men do! So make your

own physical and mental health a priority starting today. Underwhelm yourself.

Don't Allow

When we are young, most of our guilt follows behavior that we learned was bad. When we are adults, however, we have little time or impulse to be "bad." More often, our guilt follows behavior that falls short of what we learned was good. Women say to themselves "I should have ... " all day long.

"I should have said yes ..."

"I should have said no ..."

"I should have called ..."

"I should have offered ..."

This type of guilt serves no purpose except to increase stress. It is after the fact and therefore cannot be helpful. Replace self-recrimination with self-observation.

"It seems I did not want to say yes ..."

"I wonder why I did that ..."

"Would I prefer, next time, to ..."

LEARN TO SAY NO

Learn to say no without feeling guilt (as to a child).

Learn to say no without justifying yourself (as to your spouse).

Learn to say no without defending yourself (as to a parent).

Learn to say no graciously, not tentatively (as to your lover).

Learn to give explanations, not excuses (as to the boss).

LISTEN TO YOUR INSTINCT - CHANGE YOUR MIND

Don't persecute yourself every time you change your mind about something or someone. Reassessing is a mark of flexibility, not instability.

POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS

Expect the best. Even if things do not work out the way you might have wanted them to, at least you have not stressed yourself before the problem or disappointment.

Your Stress Symptoms Checklist

Chronic Stress, Physiological Imbalance and the Disease Connection

We've just examined the effects of having a surfeit of stress in our lives and there can be many causes of this unpleasant condition. Chronic or persistent stress can occur when life stressors are unrelenting. We can easily imagine the stress that flares up during a major reorganization or downsizing at work, while undergoing a messy divorce, or coping with chronic pain or disease or a life-threatening illness.

Chronic stress also takes its toll when small stressors accumulate and you are unable to recuperate from any one of them. As long as the mind perceives a threat, the body remains aroused and stressed. If your stress response remains turned on, your chances of getting a stress-related disease may be increasing dramatically.

Before you embark on your personal programme of mindful relaxation, it is helpful to consider how you're currently dealing with your stress.

Instructions: Listed below are some common ways of coping with stressful events. Mark those that most closely represent your behaviour or that you feel you use on a regular basis.

- _____ 1. I ignore my own needs and just work more.
- _____ 2. I seek out friends or therapists for support.
- _____ 3. I eat much more than usual.
- _____ 4. I engage in some type of physical exercise.
- _____ 5. I get irritable and take it out on those around me.
- _____ 6. I take a little time to relax, breathe, and unwind.
- _____ 7. I smoke a cigarette or drink a caffeinated beverage.
- _____ 8. I confront my source of stress and work to change it.
- _____ 9. I withdraw emotionally
- _____ 10. I change my outlook on the problem and put it in a better perspective.
- _____ 11. I sleep more than I really need to.
- _____ 12. I take some time off and get away from my work or the situation
- _____ 13. I go out shopping and buy something to feel good.
- _____ 14. I joke with my friends and use humor to feel better

- _____ 15. I drink more alcohol than usual.
- _____ 16. I get involved in a hobby or interest that helps me unwind
- _____ 17. I take medicine to help me relax or sleep better.
- _____ 18. I maintain a healthy diet.
- _____ 19. I just ignore the problem and hope it will go away.
- _____ 20. I pray, meditate, or enhance my spiritual life.
- _____ 21. I worry about the problem but do nothing
- _____ 22. I try to focus on the things I can control and accept the things I can't.

Evaluate your results: The even-numbered items tend to be the more constructive tactics and the odd-numbered items tend to be less constructive tactics for coping with stress. Congratulate yourself for all of the even-numbered items you checked. Think about whether you need to make some changes in your thinking or behaviour if you checked any of the odd-numbered items. Consider experimenting with some even-numbered items you haven't tried before. This workbook will assist you in making these changes.

Researchers have been looking at the relationship between stress and disease for over a hundred years. They have observed and concluded that people suffering from stress-related disorders tend to show hyperactivity in a particular "preferred system," or "stress-prone system," such as the skeletomuscular, cardiovascular, or gastrointestinal system. For example, chronic stress can result in muscle tension and fatigue for some people. For others, it can contribute to high blood pressure, migraine headaches, ulcers, or chronic diarrhoea.

Almost every system in the body can be damaged by stress. When an increase in corticoids suppresses the reproduction system, this can cause amenorrhea and failure to ovulate in women, impotency in men, and loss of libido in both.

Stress-triggered changes in the lungs increase the symptoms of asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory conditions. Loss in insulin during the stress response may be a factor in the onset of adult diabetes. Stress suspends the body's tissue repair mechanism which, in turn, causes decalcification of the bones, osteoporosis, and susceptibility to fractures.

The inhibition of immune and inflammatory systems makes you more susceptible to colds and flu and can exacerbate some specific diseases such as

cancer and AIDS. In addition, a prolonged stress response can worsen conditions such as arthritis, chronic pain, and diabetes. There are also some indications that the continued release and depletion of norepinephrine during a state of chronic stress can contribute to depression and anxiety.

The relationship between chronic stress, disease, and ageing is another fascinating area of research. Experts in ageing are examining changing patterns of disease and the increased appearance of degenerative disorders.

Over just a few generations, the threat of infectious diseases such as typhoid, pneumonia, and polio has been replaced with such “modern plagues” as cardiovascular disease, cancer, arthritis, respiratory disorders like asthma and emphysema, and a pervasive incidence of depression. As you age normally, you expect a natural slowing down of your body’s functioning. But many of these mid- to late-life disorders are stress-sensitive diseases.

Currently, researchers and clinicians are asking how stress accelerates the ageing process and what can be done to counteract these pernicious and debilitating products of an over-stressed lifetime of worry and prolonged anxiety.

Check out these events and create your own schedule of recent stress experiences!

Event	Number 1-5	x	1 for once a month 2 for once a week 3 for once a day	=	Your Score
1. A lot more or a lot less trouble with the boss.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
2. A major change in sleeping habits (sleeping a lot more or a lot less or a change in time of day when you sleep).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
3. A major change in eating habits (eating a lot more or a lot less or very different meal hours or surroundings).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
4. A revision of personal habits (dress, manners, associations, and so on).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
5. A major change in your usual type or amount of recreation.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
6. A major change in your social activities (e.g., clubs, dancing, movies, visiting, and so on).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
7. A major change in church activities (attending a lot more or a lot less than usual).	_____	x	_____	=	_____

9. A major change in your financial state (a lot worse off or a lot better off).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
10. Trouble with in-laws.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
11. A major change in the number of arguments with spouse (a lot more or a lot fewer than usual regarding child rearing, personal habits, and so on).	_____	x	_____	=	_____

12. Sexual difficulties.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
13. Major personal injury or illness	_____	x	_____	=	_____
14. Death of a close family member (other than spouse).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
15. Death of spouse.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
16. Death of a close friend.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
17. Gaining a new family member (through birth, adoption, oldster moving in, and so on).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
18. Major change in the health or behavior of a family.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
19. Change in residence.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
20. Detention in jail or other institution.	_____	x	_____	=	_____

21. Minor violations of the law (traffic tickets, jaywalking, disturbing the peace, and so on).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
22. Major business readjustment (merger, reorganization, bankruptcy, and so on).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
23. Marriage.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
24. Divorce.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
25. Marital separation from spouse.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
26. Outstanding personal achievement.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
27. Son or daughter leaving home (marriage, attending college, and so on).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
28. Retirement from work.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
29. Major change in working hours or conditions.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
30. Major change in responsibilities at work (promotion, demotion, lateral transfer).	_____	x	_____	=	_____
31. Being fired from work.	_____	x	_____	=	_____
32. Major change in living conditions (building a new home or remodeling, deterioration of home or neighborhood).	_____	x	_____	=	_____

33. Spouse beginning or ceasing to work outside the home.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
34. Taking out a mortgage or loan for a major purchase (purchasing a home or business and so on).	_____	X	_____	=	_____
35. Taking out a loan for a lesser purchase (a car, TV, freezer, and so on).	_____	X	_____	=	_____
36. Foreclosure on a mortgage or loan.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
37. Vacation.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
38. Changing to a new school.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
39. Changing to a different line of work.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
40. Beginning or ceasing formal schooling.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
41. Marital reconciliation with mate.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
42. Pregnancy.	_____	X	_____	=	_____
Your total score	_____	X	_____	=	_____

Scoring:

The higher your total score, the greater your risk of developing stress-related symptoms or illnesses. Of those with a score of over 100 for the past year, almost 80 percent will get sick in the near future; of those with a score of 50-100, about 50 percent will get sick in the near future; and of those with a score of 15-50, only about 30 percent will get sick in the near future. A score

of less than 15 indicates that you have a low chance of becoming ill. So, the higher your score, the harder you should work to stay well.

Because individuals vary in their perception of a given life event as well as in their ability to adapt to change, we recommend that you use this standardized test only as a rough predictor of your increased risk.

Stress can be cumulative. Events from two years ago may still be affecting you now. If you think that past events may be a factor for you, repeat this test for the events of the preceding year and compare your scores.



Tactics for coping with stress

Here are some ways you can use the Schedule of Recent Experience to maintain your health and prevent illness. You can the list to:

1. Remind yourself of the amount of change that has happened to you by posting the Schedule of Recent Experience where you and your family can see it easily.
2. Think about the personal meaning of each change that's taken place for you and try to identify some of the feelings you experienced.
3. Think about ways that you can best adjust to each change.
4. Take your time when making decisions.
5. Try to anticipate life changes and plan for them well.
6. Pace yourself. Don't rush. It will get done.
7. Take time to appreciate your successes, and relax.
8. Be compassionate and patient with yourself. It is not uncommon for people to become overwhelmed by all the stresses in their lives. It takes a while to put into effect coping strategies to deal with stress.
9. Acknowledge what you can control and what you cannot control and, when possible, choose which changes you take on.
10. Try out the stress-management and relaxation techniques presented in this book and incorporate the ones that work best for you into your personalized stress-management program.

The major objective of this workbook is to help you to reduce the causes and symptoms of stress by focusing on tried and tested relaxation and stress reduction techniques. To help you to identify more accurately which symptoms you want to work on, please complete the following checklist.

After you've used this workbook to master the stress reduction techniques that work best for your symptoms, you can return to this checklist and use it to measure your symptom relief.

Instructions: Rate your stress-related symptoms below for the degree of discomfort that they cause you, using this 10-point scale:



Chapter 6: Epigenetics + Long Term Eating Behaviours = Your Present Weight Level

How the eating habits we acquired in the past profoundly affect our food choices today.

How Genetics are no longer the prime influence on our health and wellbeing Epigenetics provides us with the insights, analysis, tools and strategies for permanent healthy weight loss.

We really believe that knowledge is power and we want you to understand as much about this important subject as possible. Being armed with the best information will strengthen your understanding of how to master your weight issues, take away all that ridiculous and unnecessary guilt about being overweight and prepare you for a newer, happier, skinnier you.

Perhaps you haven't heard all the excitement in medical and scientific circles about the latest revelations in the field of Epigenetics. Epi-what? OK. Before we go any further, you're probably wondering what on earth Epigenetics really means. Is it contagious? Can we get it at the grocery store? Does it come in my size? So let's start by answering an important question: "What exactly is Epigenetics?"

The formal description of Epigenetics from the text books refers to the study of changes in organisms caused by modification of gene expression rather than by an alteration of the genetic code itself. That might not tell us very much but it really is an important statement! It's no longer simply a case of identifying which particular genes you have.

We now know that it's the way your genes are influenced and made to work that makes the difference. Gene expression accounts for so many of our characteristics. And changes in gene expression have been related to a very wide range of environmental influences and that includes – are you ready for this? – What we eat!

Yes, that's absolutely right. The kind of food we consume every single day, the quality of the food we eat, the eating choices we make all contribute far more to our total health and wellbeing than was ever appreciated before. It's not a question of being pre-programmed by our DNA. We've been bombarded by articles and news items for decades telling us every day that everything in our lives is caused by our genes.

But what if it isn't just the genetic luck of the draw? What if our health is connected far more to how we live, to what we eat and a whole range of external factors that we can influence? What if we're not programmed to be fat? What if it's about the choices we make? It's becoming increasingly clear that the choices we make really are incredibly important to our health and wellbeing. This means we really can influence our health right now right down to the cellular level and that obviously includes our weight as well. This is the breakthrough in our understanding that is revolutionising our entire approach to health and weight control. Our genes do not determine our weight. The answer is not in your genetic code. It's on the end of your fork!

So when we consult the latest reference works in this exciting new area of scientific research, we find that Epigenetics demonstrates the importance of influences which are firmly outside the traditional genetic system. This is the conclusion of Lyle Armstrong, whose research programme is widely respected at the Institute of Genetic Medicine at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom.

Modern biology is rewriting our understanding of genetics, disease and inherited characteristics. This is the view of Nessa Carey in her fascinating book "The Epigenetics Revolution".

The (FFF) Fifty, Fit and Fab Three Golden Food Rules!

1. Weight loss is all about insulin

Moderate your insulin production levels by eliminating sugar and grains (yes, even whole grains) and you will lose the excess body fat without dieting - plus you will improve your energy levels, reduce inflammation throughout the body and eliminate disease risk. Maybe this should be printed in a very large font size in the brightest colour your printer can produce!

2. Eating lean protein but plenty good quality fat

Vegetable and some correctly sourced animal protein with high good fat content are not only healthy but are the keys to effortless weight loss, a healthy immune system and boundless energy.

3. Eat Clean

When we examine the role that food plays in avoiding or encouraging weight gain, you might be shocked to discover that one of the biggest influences is concealed in the way that our food is processed. Hold onto your hat, my friend. This can get scary! The most significant components of food that play the largest role in weight gain and obesity are food additives, chemicals, and food processing techniques.

These principles are sacred and mark the beginning of your transformation. They are so important that they need to be practised and respected every single day. They are the foundation for much of the change we are creating. You could finish the book first but the only time you have to begin the revolution is right now. So let's make the commitment right this instant to use these golden principles and kick start the new life we've been waiting for. And I mean right now!

Epigenetic research has been at the forefront of these discoveries and that's why the methods in this book respect the need to resolve all of the issues surrounding intelligent, effective, permanent weight control.

Some Excellent eating Programs that positively contribute to Correct Epigenetic eating

We live in a world of fascinating research and fast-paced developments, instant communication, masses of information and an explosion in obesity rates. Somewhere along the line in our very recent history something has gone

dramatically wrong. Part of the response to this weighty problem has been an explosion in the number of diet books and diet plans and weight loss organisations. But the problem is still as large as it ever was. And so many people find that even when they've managed to lose some weight, it goes back on in a flash. We did not evolve to be chronically overweight. Nature equipped us with incredibly efficient bodies. Clearly we need a better approach to this problem. We need an approach that works. We need a method that will give us sustainable results. So let's take a look at some of the more recent innovations in weight control technology.

The Paleo Diet

The theory is that many of our current health problems are a result of our modern eating habits. There's been a great deal of publicity surrounding the growing view that we simply haven't evolved to the point where we can safely consume a grain-rich diet. Our distant ancestors in the Old Stone Age or Paleolithic Era consumed a very different diet compared to modern humans because they simply didn't have access to agriculture. That's because agriculture didn't exist. It hadn't been invented. The typical caveman's food was natural, unprocessed, varied, seasonal and a result of labour-intensive, hunter-gathering activities.

The Paleo approach to nutrition recognises that we've only been consuming grains for the last ten thousand years or so. That's a long wait at the bus stop but it really is not long enough in evolutionary terms for humans to have adapted to this radical shift in eating behaviour. The modern diet is heavily reliant on grains and dairy products and suffers from a toxic surfeit of sugar. Grains were the mechanism that allowed for a more predictable food supply and those ancient crop surpluses provided the essential catalyst from which the seeds of civilisation sprang. The problem, as you now know only too well, is that grains damage the gut, weaken the immune system and degrade our health.

The Paleo alternative recognises how our digestive system works and focuses on providing the best quality fuel for our bodies. That includes fresh fruits, vegetables, lean meat, eggs and nuts. No grains. No processed sugars. No milk products. Paleo has scored very highly as a weight control mechanism because this kind of diet suits our evolutionary history so well. When we adapt our eating habits to this more natural way of getting our daily calories, our metabolisms shift from carb-burning to fat-burning. No surprise

then that the Paleo diet has become a favourite tool for encouraging serious weight loss and for enhancing better levels of health.

The focus is on natural, unprocessed food and it is this emphasis on eating as naturally as possible that is the key to the method's success. As you might expect in a new way of approaching our food needs, the Paleo diet has spawned a number of variations and alternatives. Some enthusiasts avoid all forms of dairy produce whilst others are convinced that some specific dairy products are essential. The wisdom of avoiding grains though is widely accepted by most Paleo devotees.

The FFF Take on the Paleo Diet

You might recognise some aspects of the Paleo Diet in our advice in this book. It certainly has some interesting and relevant merits in terms of getting the body into great shape and the emphasis on pure protein and natural, unprocessed vegetables is a key to restoring the intestinal flora to its healthiest and most effective condition.

The Vegan Option

In a world of unhealthy and even toxic food choices, we shouldn't be surprised that the Vegan diet is associated with lots of positive health benefits. Vegans typically experience lower cholesterol levels, lower blood pressure and less body fat than their meat-eating counterparts. And this might be an important clue about the Vegan success story. If we've been consuming garbage consistently for years and our bodies are suffering from toxic overload, the Vegan diet is a great way to cleanse, heal and restore the digestive system to its natural condition and give our bodies a welcome break from the daily diet of tasty toxins.

But is it enough to sustain long-term, normal health?

Vegans don't eat meat or dairy products. The typical consumer in the developed world eats vast amounts of processed food, especially meat and dairy. Is it simply a question of removing all meat and dairy products from our daily diet or is it more effective to reduce our total intake and only eat lean, unprocessed meat with limited quantities of specific dairy products?

The answer might be found in our evolutionary history. Vegans miss out on a wide range of nutrients because humans evolved to eat a broad range of foodstuffs. As a species, we certainly thrive on fresh fruit and vegetables but we also benefit from the occasional meal of animal protein. If we miss out on the essential fats in our diet, our bodies can't metabolise protein effectively.

Vegans might be missing out on several key nutrients and perhaps the simplest answer to these deficiencies can be found in taking lots of supplements. Iron deficiency, lack of Vitamin D, insufficient iodine, low Vitamin B levels, low Vitamin A and low zinc levels are all associated with the Vegan diet. But let's be clear - many Vegans lead a very healthy, energy-filled life and have adapted perfectly to this form of diet.

It's also true that many people experience long-term issues with this diet due to the limited range of their food choices. As always, the answer will depend on the individual and on whether the diet is sustainable over the long term. And let's also bear in mind that many Vegans commit to their diet choice on moral grounds and refuse to eat anything that involves the exploitation of animals in any form. Their lifestyle is not just a diet. It's a philosophy and a way of life and we need to respect the motivation, passion and commitment that fuels their decision to live as a Vegan, even when that choice results in possible negative consequences for their health.

The FFF Take on the Vegan system

You might have recognised some aspects of the Vegan Diet in our advice in this manual. It certainly has some interesting and relevant merits in terms of getting the body into great shape. The emphasis on natural, unprocessed vegetables is a key to restoring the intestinal flora to its healthiest and most effective condition. Read more about this in our Skinny Delicious Eating Selection Pyramid later on.

Intermittent Fasting

There is a long-established tradition in many cultures that we can live longer and certainly experience better health by fasting on a regular basis. Fasting however takes many forms. At one extreme, it can involve total abstinence from food for an extended period of time and this technique has been used to treat a range of severe illnesses including many forms of cancer.

Conducted under strict medical supervision, this form of extreme fasting with close monitoring in a controlled, clinical environment has produced extraordinary results in severely ill patients. There are several theories explaining why the technique is so effective but it is sufficient to know that certain elements of the medical fraternity have been using the method successfully for several decades.

It seems that the body possesses latent powers of healing and regeneration that are triggered during this form of controlled starvation. But it should only

ever be attempted under the advice and supervision of experienced, medical professionals.

The FFF Take on Intermittent Fasting

On a lighter scale, fasting can involve abstaining from solid food for twelve to twenty-four hours whilst drinking lots of liquids, soups and juices.

Obviously energy levels can suffer during fasting and some people experience initial unpleasant side effects as the body flushes out the old toxins and restores a more natural balance to the digestive system. The results are usually extremely worthwhile and most people feel a surge of new energy as well as visible changes in their skin and overall condition.

Intermittent fasting is a safe and effective method for re-setting the body's metabolic system and for re-balancing those critical insulin levels. All from simple fasting. The best approach is to try it for one meal three or four times a week

Our Skinny Delicious Detox Program introduces a gentle, easy but effective way to employ Intermittent Fasting to help you lose weight effectively and safely!

The fact is that we are surrounded by toxins at every level and a simple regime of regular fasting is one of the best ways to flush the garbage out of your system. It's got to be one your strongest methods for experiencing total wellbeing and supercharging your weight loss program at the same time!.

In our 21 day detox plan you will learn exactly how to apply these excellent eating regimes to benefit you according to your individual epigenetic needs. Here are some general ideas which we incorporate into your Skinny Delicious Planning.

**INTERMITTANT
FASTING TIPS**

Use the concept to eat a
high protein soup 3-4 times
a week for dinner

VEGAN -TIPS

Avoid all gluten and grains

Avoid processed vegan food and minimise or
avoid legumes

Do eat abundant vegetables

PALEO TIPS

Watch out for too much saturated fat and
avoid any processed meat

Sweet fruits are not necessarily
suitable for you

Nuts don't suit everybody...seeds can be
easier...see for yourself

Use nut and seed flours sparingly

Summary - Epigenetics

Your genetic profile is not the full story

Your genes can be switched on and off

The food you eat is the key to influencing your genetic responses

Methylation and diet change the rules of the genetic game

Managing insulin levels by eliminating all grains

Eat Lean, Clean and Good fats

Take practical steps to address food addiction



Chapter 7: The (FFF) Fifty, Fit and Fab Myth-Buster Chart

The Epigenetic Myth-Buster Chart - your 5 point blueprint and lifelong passport to the happy realm of total weight control and permanent residence in the Land of Fitter and Skinnier.

CMR Conventional Medical Recommendation.

DEFINITION: The old view of what is supposed to be good for you.

SPS Skinny Paradigm Shift.

DEFINITION: The revolutionary new advances in medical and scientific research that will transform your health

Let's get serious. Fact: If the old ways worked, we wouldn't be having an explosion of obesity in the developed world and we wouldn't be having this conversation, would we? Clearly something is missing. Our mission is to show you what the problem really is, how to fix the problem and fix it forever.

Steps	CMR	SPS
1. Grains	<p>Insists that grains are actually good for you. Wheat, rice, corn, cereal, bread, pasta etc. Most governments recommend 8-10 servings per day as the principle daily source of energy, nutrition and fibre. Entire industries are devoted to promoting this idea as the healthiest way to live. Ask pretty much anyone and they'll tell you how good it is to eat grains.</p>	<p>UCLA lecturer and world famous evolutionary biologist Jared Diamond stipulates "Grains are the worst mistake of the human race." In nutritional terms, grains are simply inferior to plants. Grains trigger insulin production and fat storage.</p> <p>They produce allergic reactions, suppress the immune response and trigger a wide range of intolerances as well as imbalances in the intestinal flora.</p>
2. Fats	<p>Fat makes you fat therefore if you reduce fat you'll lose fat. The world is awash with countless 'fat free' and 'low fat' products and we have a ballooning obesity problem.</p>	<p>Good quality fat drives efficient fat and protein metabolism, encouraging weight loss and boosting energy levels.</p>
3. Meal Habits	<p>Three square meals a day plus snacks are best to stave off hunger pangs and stabilise metabolism</p>	<p>Any steps to normalise your insulin production encourages your skinny genes to take over. Occasional fasting using protein soup meals can help you to reprogram your fat burning potential</p>
4. Cardio exercise	<p>30-60 minutes cardio per day. Lift weights regularly using isolated parts of the body and aim for maximum resistance, even going for the point of failure to increase strength.</p>	<p>Weight resistance using the whole body in short bursts plus slower more regular cardio exercise for shorter periods per day with sporadic intense bursts of intensity. This system really does work!</p>

Steps	CMR	SPS
5. sun exposure	Wear sunscreen every day, in all weather and in every season. It should have a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 and say "broad-spectrum" on the label, which means it protects against the sun's UVA and UVB rays. Put it on at least 15 minutes before going outside. Use 1 ounce, which would fill a shot glass	<p>Sunshine can be a tricky thing. We need it, but it can also be harmful.</p> <p>Striking the right balance between getting enough sunshine to produce optimal levels of Vitamin D, and protecting ourselves from the harm the sun can do, can be a challenge. Most experts recommend 15-20 minutes of sun exposure several times a week for the average fair-skinned person, as this is enough to produce optimal levels of Vitamin D while not being so much to damage skin. Darker skin tones with more melanin need to stay in the sun longer to synthesize vitamin D effectively...see more info below</p> <p>Vitamin D, which our body produces when we are exposed to sunlight, does wonders for us - from improving mood to boosting our immune systems, reducing inflammation and much more, it's key to our health.</p> <p>According to some new research, it seems there is yet another reason to get the right amount of sunlight. Researchers found that older women (65+) with low Vitamin D levels are more likely to gain weight.</p>

Time Bomb Triggers

It's very controversial but it looks increasingly likely that humans made a massive and deeply influential error around seven thousand years ago. It wasn't intended as an error. It happened because it looked exactly like a brilliant strategy for survival. In fact the idea was so good that it rapidly spread and became the foundation for human civilisation. The brilliant idea was agriculture.

Brilliant because it helped to solve the constant challenge of ensuring a regular food supply. A profound error because it encouraged our ancestors to become completely dependent on grains. Seven thousand years ago is

effectively yesterday in evolutionary terms. Our bodies did not evolve to exist on a grain-rich diet. But that is what has happened over the last seven thousand years.

The human genome hasn't changed very much during this time span but our diet and lifestyle have diverged dramatically from the way our ancestors lived before the introduction of agriculture. It is believed that many of our contemporary diseases have arisen as a result of this revolution in our dietary habits.

We'll take a closer look at these important issues as we explore the great behaviours you can use to transform your weight and your life. For now let's concentrate on the more obvious consequences of the way we eat.

You've probably already guessed the most obvious outcome of these changes in our diet; an astonishing increase in disease at a time of unprecedented medical advances. Scientists are beginning to suspect a common cause to this tendency towards disease: it's all in our diet. Seven thousand years might not have been long enough for humans to have adapted successfully to a grain-oriented diet. And then, of course, we have the strange phenomenon of obesity. The problem, like many waistlines, is getting bigger.

In 1980 there were approximately 875 million overweight and obese people in the world. In 2013, the number had grown to 2.1 billion. That's an increase of 28% in adult obesity and, more alarmingly, a 47% increase in the number of overweight children in just the past thirty-three years. What could be causing such a radical shift in the average size and weight of humans in such a dramatically short period of time? The answer might lie within us. Or, to be more precise, within our gut.

Recent discoveries about the trillions of microorganisms that live in and on the human body are now changing the traditional perspective on human health and disease. In terms of obesity, we're learning that it's not just heredity and gene expression related to our human genome that play a role, but also the trillions of microorganisms that make up the vastly larger (in terms of unique genetic material) second genome in our body, the human microbiome. Studies have begun to describe each human gut as a highly complex eco-system, populated by communities of bacteria as well by viruses, fungi and moulds. The contents of our gut seem to exert an extraordinary influence on our digestive system, but these micro flora also affect our health in general, our wellbeing and even our mental and emotional balance. Imbalances in the micro flora of the gut have now been identified as an important cause of

obesity. The gut's microbiome, that miniature universe within our digestive system, is where many of our health and weight issues are focused.

The obese gut microcosm

One of the disorders that we now know is associated with an altered gut microflora is obesity. There is a wealth of fascinating evidence from initial studies that reveal a distinct connection between the microbes in our gut and the way our bodies regulate fat storage. These results have been widely replicated and numerous other reports have confirmed this relationship. By now it's well established that obesity is characterised by an obese-oriented microbiota and that gut microbes really can influence fat storage through a variety of mechanisms.

Adding depth to our understanding of the obesity problem, we know that obesity is virtually unheard of in hunter-gatherer populations and the same observation holds true for many non-westernised societies. So we can conclude that obesity is predominantly a disease of civilised, grain-consuming societies. There's a major clue here about some of the causes of unhealthy weight gain that dominate developed societies.

We can look a little deeper into this question about the influence of our gut flora. Obese or overweight people have different gut flora compared to lean individuals. Yes they do. Hunter gatherers also have a very different microbiome compared to the intestinal flora of westernised peoples. And we know that hunter gatherers don't do fat! It also seems clear that flora in the gut can influence metabolic hormones such as leptin and insulin, key influencers in the body's inflammatory response. Research is identifying the extraordinary role of prebiotics, probiotics and other microbiome stabilisers in encouraging fat loss in humans and animals. Surprised? Utterly amazed that changing and re-balancing your gut flora can be so beneficial for your health and weight loss issues? Stay with me, my friend. We're just getting started!

More on the importance of correct sun exposure.

Vitamin D, which our body produces when we are exposed to sunlight, does wonders for us – from improving mood to boosting our immune systems, reducing inflammation and much more, it's key to our health. According to some new research, it seems there is yet another reason to get the right amount of sunlight. Researchers found that older women (65+) with low Vitamin D levels are more likely to gain weight

Folks, without question, the best way to get the right amount of vitamin D is to spend some time in the sun.

You always want to avoid getting burned, but generally speaking you can safely spend anywhere from 20 minutes to two hours in the sun every day with beneficial effects. If you have dark-colored skin or live far from the equator, you will need to spend more time in the sun than someone who is light-skinned living close to the equator.

There are many available books and studies on the benefits and risks of too sunlight and vitamin d depletion. Contact me for a recommend reading list at beranparry@gmail.com

It's becoming clear now that the pathway to sustainable health and wellbeing, to a leaner, fitter, stronger and happier body is not in the outdated Conventional Medical Recommendations. The future is in the Epigenetics Revolution and the Skinny Paradigm Shift.

Summary – Myth buster

The folly of grains in the human diet

Welcome to the inner universe of your microbiome

Being overweight is closely connected to the state of your gut flora

CMR versus SPS

SPS - The smarter way to live long, lose weight and live better



Chapter 8: Getting Organised!

5 Steps to Re Organising Your Permanent Weight Reduction and Skinnier Pathway!

Time to re-programme your food choices and eating behaviour

We are going to learn how to:

Exorcise the past and be free of old habits

Why we prioritise our activities in the wrong order

I've heard it so often, it's almost become the mantra of the unwilling, the permanent excuse for letting things slide. "There just isn't enough time to eat healthily and plan special meals, let alone shop or cook them or take them with me when I'm out of the house."

Sound familiar? Here are more excuses:

I feel so awful when I've eaten badly.

I feel such a failure.

My life is a mess.

Why is it such a struggle to lose weight?"

The result is a fairly miserable outlook and a lack of confidence, an unwillingness to recognise what is possible. The mind-set of the victim. But we're here to address these issues. We want you to feel the confidence that comes from daily, planned success. And getting organised takes all the pain and doubt from the process.

The irony is that the people who claim there's no time to incorporate these important changes in their lives have often been completely successful in other areas of their lives. Their success shows up in an infinite number of ways: they were incredibly accomplished managers or employees, highly creative artistic individuals, massively good parents or even someone who was good at something else. Every time you make a decision to do something, you're engaging your creative power. All we have to do is harness that potential.

Unhappiness can undoubtedly play its part in the way we treat our bodies. If you have doubts about your self-worth - I know, welcome to the human condition! - It often shows up in unhealthy eating habits and poor choices. It's a huge area and so important that it will be the subject of a future book.

That's why I'd like to encourage you to do something incredibly powerful right now. I want you to look in the mirror for a few moments. And smile. That's right. Smile. Look at yourself and smile. Your conscious mind might feel that the act is a little silly but your subconscious - and your body - will begin to get the message that you're giving them your personal stamp of approval. Have you ever noticed how a small child lights up when you really smile at them? Your body needs exactly that same recognition, that same high wattage smile of approval. Do it every time you step into the bathroom. Look into the mirror and smile. The results will amaze you.

We want your body and your subconscious to work with you. Give them that dazzling smile and you will find your body begins to co-operate in the most extraordinary ways. Try it. It's a very powerful technique for removing behavioural obstacles and we want to make this entire process as easy and comfortable as possible.

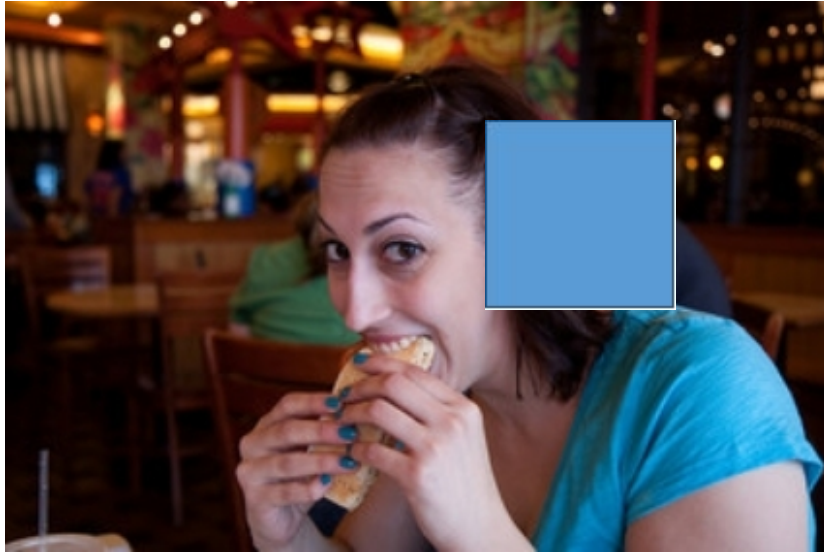
This entire book is designed to help you take control of your health, your weight and ultimately your happiness. Being kind to yourself, respecting the miracle of your body, learning to enjoy living in such an extraordinary structure, optimising its potential and being at peace with yourself. These are powerful keys to a very fulfilling way of experiencing the gift of life.

So the underlying theme to these methods is to be kind to yourself. To do things that benefit rather than harm your health. To respect your body's needs and live life to the full.

An abiding love and acceptance of yourself, despite all the imperfections, really helps you to overcome any harmful habits and behaviours and puts an end to the self-criticism and self-loathing that lowers self esteem and sabotages our efforts. It really is extraordinary how quickly we can change our lives simply by learning to accept ourselves and focus not on what might be amiss but on how we truly want to be.

1. Identify your behaviours and habits.

Take a moment. Listen to that inner voice, the way you speak to yourself; check the way you feed yourself; think about your hygiene and sleeping habits.



Which of these areas makes you feel uncomfortable in any way?

Allowing yourself to eat unhealthy food because there just wasn't the time or opportunity to make the effort

Believing that the needs of others are more important than taking care of your body and your weight

Eating food that isn't good for you at any time

Eating late at night or just eating too much

Eating while standing up, out of the package, staring at a computer screen or watching TV

If you catch yourself in the cycle of doing something that you really know you shouldn't, it's an important indicator that there are unresolved issues at work in the subconscious that continue to influence your behaviour.

2. Think about the real consequences of your behaviour.

You might discover that these behaviours and habits are very effective at preventing you from having the things you really want, particularly in terms of having a fit and healthy body that you can really appreciate.

In every moment we are thinking, feeling and doing things that either bring us closer to the person we want to be and the life we want to have or our behaviours take us away from those precious possibilities.

Behaviours ultimately reflect how we really feel about ourselves. Learn to accept yourself right now and the process of transformation will flow so much

more smoothly. Learn to smile at yourself and your deeper resources will turn their power towards your new, healthier goals and desires.

3. Learn to understand where your habits came from.

So much of our behaviour was laid down during our early childhoods that we completely forget how we came to be the way we are. Much of our conditioning is no more than a series of programmed reflexes that were given to us at a very impressionable age and those behaviours have survived in our attitudes, thoughts, feelings and beliefs ever since.

Whether they are entirely appropriate can only be measured in terms of whether you're really experiencing all the health, self expression and happiness that is available to you. Most people are not. Sad. But true. Take a look around you. Not too many happy smiling faces, are there? I rest my case. If you're feeling unhappy, comfort is something that is obviously missing and food is one of the easiest sources of a temporary quick fix.

Yes. We're talking chocolate here! So many people reach for the chocolate for an instant rush of pleasure, a way to escape the reality of a stressed and unfulfilled life. Pure comfort food. And I like chocolate too. The intention always seems positive. You give yourself a measure of much needed comfort and an ounce of joy. Unfortunately, it isn't the healthiest way to give yourself those things and it comes with the undesired effects of insulin spikes, sugar crashes and inevitable weight gain followed by a bout of guilt and quiet despair! There has to be a better way. (There is a better way to eat chocolate too...I promise!)

As adults, we're expected to understand the consequences of engaging in a particular thought or behaviour but we often do it anyway. The motivation is always moving away from pain or increasing pleasure. And so many of these actions are a product of that early (and now unconscious) conditioning. It's as if the adult has to be driven so often by a rebellious four year old! No wonder much of our behaviour doesn't make sense. No wonder we don't always behave like truly responsible grown ups.

Comfort food can be very satisfying. We know that many unhealthy behaviours feel good in the short-term (the sugar rush, the comfort, the satisfaction) but we have to recognise that they have long-term detrimental effects. There can also be that familiar hint of the rebel, the thrill of ignoring good advice and breaking the rules. What is it about ourselves that prompts us to do really things to our bodies?

Awareness is very helpful in these circumstances. Spotting the moment when you get a kick from doing the wrong thing helps you to question what's really happening. The adult gets a chance to intervene and make a better choice. That moment when you pause for an instant and wonder why you're doing something, even wondering who is really making the decision. Consciously and deliberately making a wiser, healthier choice. Feeling really good because you've done the right thing. A positive feedback loop that reinforces good behaviour, good choices, adult decisions.

4. Create “house meal planning and eating rules.”

Parents make rules because they understand that their children might not have the right perspective for good judgement. Parents can see the consequences that are usually beyond the child's range of experience.

If you have a particularly hard habit to break and you know it's not good for your well-being, consider making it a “house rule” never to have that habit in the home. When something is non-negotiable it removes the inner dialogue where we bargain with ourselves and the simple rule reinforces the right decisions.

5. Develop your powers of awareness.

Be kind to yourself. Most people don't respond well to punishment. Treat yourself gently and with consideration. You've embarked on an important journey and that requires courage and a large measure of recognition.

Be infinitely patient with yourself, as you would be with a child. If you slip up once, instead of throwing everything out the window, learn to accept the failure and resolve to do better.

Understand why you did what you did. What did you need in that moment? Use your new set of rules to support your new behaviour. The rules are your friends. They are there to help you.

What are your new “house eating rules”? How can you maintain your new habits in a way that is supportive, effective and nurturing?

Here are some examples:

1. I always make sure that I have the healthy foods I love at home by doing the shopping myself or by having someone do the shopping for me
2. I always make sure that I have a healthy snack available to me in my refrigerator at all times

3. I always call restaurants ahead of time to order my personal food requirements so that I won't feel uncomfortable when I get there
4. I always take healthy snacks with me to avoid temptation
5. I never allow myself to get too hungry and then I won't have an excuse to eat unhealthy food

These tried and tested methods allow you to exercise control over your feelings and your environment, removing many of the challenging decisions about food choices by making one powerful, healthy choice for all future situations. As you become more aware of how you feel, catching yourself thinking, feeling and about to do things that are no longer in line with your new commitment to total health, you can let go of the old behaviour and make really great choices that will support your vision of a newer, healthier, happier, skinnier you!

To give you some ideas about typical eating behaviour choices, we've prepared a list of situations to see if any of them partly or completely describe your own personal reactions. Remember, you're the only person who'll see the answers so be honest with yourself. It isn't a test. It's just a lens to help us focus more clearly on the issues.

Please tick those statements that apply to you – even a tiny bit!

1. When you eat out at restaurants that have buffets you often overeat. You find it hard to eat in moderation at these restaurants. You find yourself getting seconds and thirds in this situation.
2. You are feeling really hungry and start to panic that you really need to eat something...so you grab the first available snack because you are REALLY hungry....
3. This is a very busy time in your life. You are always rushed. You don't have time to cook the right types of food let alone plan them. It seems as if everything that you have time to cook is not allowed on your meal plan. You feel as if you are locked into a never ending cycle. When you don't eat right, you feel bad, and when you feel bad, you don't like to eat right.
4. During the week you have a very structured routine but sometimes on the weekends your routine is less structured making meal planning difficult. Often you eat the wrong types of food because you do not plan your meals.
5. You have evening activities that prevent you eating a healthy dinner. So you just grab whatever is available and convince yourself "it's just the once".

6. You are visiting friends for a meal or your vacation. These friends cook with butter and fat and have a cake or pie for dessert every night. You feel that you must eat what is served or not eat at all. You do not feel comfortable asking for foods that fit into your meal plan.
7. You are on your way to an important meeting and are running late. If you do not get stopped by any more lights, you will just make the meetings. You look down and see that bag of unhealthy snacks that you picked up this morning. Sometimes you get stressed out; eating something seems to make you feel better. You are tempted to eat the snacks
8. You have had an awful day. You were in line for a promotion or a new contract and your best friend or a competitor got it instead of you. When you went to pick up the laundry at the dry cleaners they had lost it. Then, you got a flat tire only three blocks from home. You feel like “pigging out”. You don’t care what you’re supposed to eat. You are really depressed and you think that you deserve something special.
9. You are planning on going to the movies tonight with your friends. Your favourite treat is buttered popcorn and the movie theatre is running a special on large popcorn and free refills on large drinks. What would you do at a sports event in this situation? Would you just wade in and join the feeding frenzy?

Even if there was just one tick, there is room for improvement, because just that one item of behavioural change can make a huge difference to your permanent weight loss outcome!

NOW

Take the Skinny Delicious Eating Behaviour Test and see if your score is over 100 or less or is it over 150 or even 200. Check out your final score results at the end

If you prefer to have your results automatically calculated, click this website link now and you will also be able to print out the test for easier reference.

<http://www.skinnydeliciouslife.com>

Read each item and think if you agree or disagree that the item describes you and your eating habits.

Mark the box that best describes your level of agreement with each statement. If a statement does not apply to you (for example a question asks

about what you do at work and you do not have a job), then mark 3 (neutral or N/A) box.

If you prefer to print out this questionnaire follow this link

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neutral or N/A

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – neutral or N/A; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree

1. I stop for a fast food breakfast on the way to work.

1 2 3 4 5

2. My emotions affect what and how much I eat.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I use low-fat food products

1 2 3 4 5

4. I don't watch the portion sizes of my foods.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I buy snacks from vending machines.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I don't choose foods to prevent heart disease.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I never eat meatless meals

1 2 3 4 5

8. I never take time to plan meals for the coming week.

1 2 3 4 5

9. When I buy snack foods, I eat until I have finished the whole package.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I eat for comfort.

1 2 3 4 5

11. I am a snacker.

1 2 3 4 5

12. I never count fat grams

1 2 3 4 5

13. I eat cookies, candy bars, or ice cream in place of dinner.

1 2 3 4 5

14. When I don't plan meals, I eat fast food.

1 2 3 4 5

15. I eat when I am upset.

1 2 3 4 5

16. I buy meat every time I go to the grocery store.

1 2 3 4 5

17. I snack more at night.

1 2 3 4 5

18. I rarely eat breakfast.

1 2 3 4 5

19. I never try to limit the intake of red meat (beef).

1 2 3 4 5

20. When I am in a bad mood, I eat whatever I feel like eating.

1 2 3 4 5

21. I never know what I am going to eat for supper when I get up in the morning.

1 2 3 4 5

22. I snack two to three times a day.

1 2 3 4 5

23. Fish and poultry are the only meats I eat.

1 2 3 4 5

24. When I am upset, I tend to stop eating.

1 2 3 4 5

25. I like to eat vegetables seasoned with fatty meat.

1 2 3 4 5

26. If I eat a larger than usual lunch, I will skip supper.

1 2 3 4 5

27. I never take a shopping list to the grocery store.
1 2 3 4 5
28. If I am bored, I will snack more
1 2 3 4 5
29. I eat what I like at social events.
1 2 3 4 5
30. I am not very conscious of how much fat is in the food I eat.
1 2 3 4 5
31. I usually keep cookies in the house.
1 2 3 4 5
32. I have a serving of meat at every meal.
1 2 3 4 5
33. I associate success with food.
1 2 3 4 5
34. A complete meal includes a meat, a starch, a vegetable and bread.
1 2 3 4 5
35. On Sunday, I eat a large meal with my family.
1 2 3 4 5
36. Instead of planning meals, I will replace supper with a snack.
1 2 3 4 5
37. If I eat a larger than usual lunch, I will not replace supper with a snack
1 2 3 4 5
38. If I am busy, I will eat a snack instead of lunch.
1 2 3 4 5
39. Sometimes I eat dessert more than once a day.
1 2 3 4 5
40. I don't reduce fat in recipes by substituting ingredients and cutting portions.
1 2 3 4 5
41. I have a sweet tooth.
1 2 3 4 5
42. I sometimes snack even when I am not hungry.

1 2 3 4 5

43. I eat out because it is more convenient than eating at home.

1 2 3 4 5

44. I hate to cook.

1 2 3 4 5

45. I would rather buy take-out food and bring it home than cook.

1 2 3 4 5

46. I never have at least three to four servings of vegetables per day.

1 2 3 4 5

47. To me, cookies are an ideal snack food.

1 2 3 4 5

48. My eating habits are very routine.

1 2 3 4 5

49. If I do not feel hungry, I will skip a meal even if it is time to eat.

1 2 3 4 5

50. When choosing fast food, I will not pick a place that offers healthy foods.

1 2 3 4 5

51. I eat at a restaurant at least three times a week.

1 2 3 4 5

Scoring Questionnaire. Go through the questionnaire you just completed. Write down the score of 1-5 that you chose with the associated number. For example, if you chose 4-agree for #3, write down 4 next to the number 3 under Low-fat Eating. Total the scores of each section and divide it by the total number of questions included in that section. If your average is 4 or 5 you have characteristics of that eating behaviour.

Low-fat Eating (11 total questions)

3. _____

4. _____

6. _____

7. _____

12. _____

19. _____

23. _____

30._____

40._____

46._____

50._____

TOTAL: _____ AVERAGE: _____

Snacking and Convenience (10 total questions)

11._____

13._____

14._____

22._____

31._____

41._____

42._____

43._____

44._____

45._____

47._____

TOTAL: _____

Emotional Eating (8 total questions)

2._____

9._____

10._____

15._____

17._____

20._____

28._____

33._____

TOTAL: _____ AVERAGE: _____

Planning Ahead (6 total questions)

8._____

21._____

27._____

45. _____

48. _____

50. _____

TOTAL: _____

Meal Skipping (7 total questions)

18. _____

24. _____

26. _____

36. _____

37. _____

38. _____

49. _____

TOTAL: _____

Cultural/Lifestyle Behaviours (9 total questions)

1. _____

5. _____

16. _____

25. _____

29. _____

32. _____

34. _____

35. _____

39. _____

TOTAL: _____

A total score of under 100 is good. Your eating habits are under control however there is always room for improvement

A total score of 100-150 shows a need to address some aspects of your eating behaviour

A total score of 150-200 means that you need to consider a significant change to your eating habits and a score over 200 means that you may be having serious health problems because of your eating habits

Check which areas give you the highest score because these are the main areas to work on first

The next 42 tips are ways in which you can modify your eating behaviour to ensure that your plans for great health and superb weight control get the best chance for success.

1. I stop for a fast food breakfast on the way to work.

There's no substitute for a good, healthy breakfast. Probably the most important meal of the day.

2. My emotions affect what and how much I eat

Learn to breathe more deeply. I'm serious. Slow down and deepen your breathing and you'll relax more, reducing the need to snack on sugary killer foods.

3. I use low-fat food products

This is not the right choice because low fat normally means high sugar

4. I am not careful about the portion sizes of my foods.

Slow down and take your time when you're eating. Stop. Think about how much food you really need. Be aware of your choices.

5. I buy snacks from vending machines.

Arm yourself with healthy snacks at the start of the day so you won't be tempted to purchase poison from a vending machine.

6. I choose foods without a thought about heart disease.

Knowledge is power, my friend. This workbook has prepared you with the knowledge to spot those killer foods that attack your heart. Now you can successfully avoid them and become healthier.

7. I never eat meatless meals because I think that is healthier for me.

The old argument about processed food applies here too. It isn't meat per se that's the problem. It's the hormones, antibiotics and chemicals that are pumped into the animals to fatten them up for slaughter that cause the problem. Frankly, we never evolved to be massive meat eaters. It was an occasional addition to the diet rather than the mainstay.

8. I never take time to plan meals for the coming week

You plan not to plan. Make a great decision to get ahead of the game by planning just once for the whole week. It only takes a few minutes and puts you firmly back in control of the entire food consumption process.

9. When I buy snack foods, I eat until I have finished the whole package.

Stop buying sugary snack foods. Eliminate the temptation. Ban them from your home, your work and from your life. Forever.

10. I eat for comfort.

But it never works, does it? Because we eat garbage for comfort. Break out the healthy snacks and chew on something that will enhance your wellbeing rather than destroy you from within.

11. I am a Snacker.

No problem. There are countless healthy snacks for you to enjoy. As your body celebrates your better diet, you won't mind snacking on healthy food because it's helping you achieve your best possible shape and health.

12. I don't count fat grams

Me neither. I just avoid processed fats and sugars so the arithmetic is never a challenge.

13. I eat cookies, candy bars, or ice cream in place of dinner.

You're in trouble. These foods are slowly poisoning you. You're going to have to go cold turkey, dump the bad food and start eating normally. I don't think half measures are the answer. Swear an oath of allegiance to your poor body and start supporting it with good nutrition before it quits on you. Now is an excellent moment to begin.

14. When I don't plan meals, I eat fast food.

Planning is the key. Take a few minutes at the weekend to sketch out a meal plan for every day. One decision for the entire week. If it works for you, you can use it again and again. Tweak the plan. Add some variety. Enjoy being in control of your life and your health.

15. I eat when I am upset.

The long term answer is to learn not to be so easily upset but, in the meantime, choosing a healthy food that will fill you up without costing years of ill health makes a lot more sense than stuffing yourself with toxic waste.

16. I buy meat every time I go to the grocery store.

Lean, organic meat is the only alternative for the dedicated carnivore. It is vital to avoid the mass produced flesh that is full of antibiotics, hormones and fat.

17. I snack more at night.

It's another of those important house rules. Nothing to eat after eight in the evening except raw vegetables. Period.

18. I rarely eat breakfast.

Skipping breakfast ruins your day and sets you up for those nasty, unhealthy snacks that you use to keep you going. A healthy breakfast is the only way to start the day, kick start the metabolism and give your body the power to tackle everything that needs to be done. Sometimes it's just a question of making a simple plan for breakfast and being organised enough to make time for it.

19. I don't try to limit the intake of red meat (beef).

You can have too much of a good thing, even pure, organic beef. We simply didn't evolve to consume vast quantities of red meat every day. Hunting didn't allow for such a rich diet. Choose a couple of days per week when you can really enjoy your beef and remember that even the leanest beef is forty percent fat.

20. When I am in a bad mood, I eat whatever I feel like eating.

Sometimes a bad mood makes us feel guilty and that's when we choose self destructive behaviour. If you choose food that's harmful for you, you're going to feel worse. It won't just be your mood that's causing you pain. Your body will feel awful too. That's what happens when you abuse it.

21. I never know what I am going to eat for supper when I get up in the morning.

When you take a few minutes to set up a fool proof eating plan for the entire week, you'll know exactly what you're going to eat. Because you already planned it. So tick that item off your To Do list. It's taken care of.

22. I never snack two to three times a day.

Much depends on how active you are during the day and what kind of work you're doing. If you're burning the calories, especially if you add exercise workouts to your routine, healthy snacks are a perfect supplement to your eating requirements. Healthy snacks are the perfect antidote to sugary toxic snacks.

23. Fish and poultry are the only meats I don't eat.

In my experience, the problem here is usually related to how the food is prepared. A good recipe and a little creativity can transform most fish and poultry into a feast. It's a great excuse to experiment!

24. When I am upset, I tend to eat more

And then you feel worse. We encourage absolutely everyone to learn to breathe more deeply, practise a little gentle meditation and distance yourself

from the old habits of being upset. Food is often used as a drug. You use it as an escape mechanism. You use it as a displacement activity. If you need to chew, hit the raw veggies and you may find your mood as well as your health improves.

25. I like to eat vegetables seasoned with fatty meat.

Because it tastes good? Yep! And you crave the comfort of fat. Switch to virgin olive oil and save that fatty meat for the cat.

26. If I eat a larger than usual lunch, I won't skip supper.

Skipping meals is rarely a good idea. It's fine to have supper but make sure it's a smaller serving than usual.

27. I never take a shopping list to the grocery store.

Humans can't handle too many items of information at one time. That's why we invented lists. Then you don't have to try to remember everything you need at the store. Everything is on the list. It's called preparation and it makes life so much easier. Try it and see.

28. If I am bored, I will snack more

Boredom is a sure sign of an idle intelligence. We are surrounded by more visual stimulation, electronic media and entertainment material than at any other time in the history of the species and you're bored? Are you still alive? Wake up and open your eyes. The world around you is a miracle. Experience it every single day. And you are part of it.

29. I eat whatever I want at social events.

You have to be prepared. Once you begin to understand the real consequences of poisoning your body - and there's no pretty way of describing this - you'll take full responsibility for what goes into the cake hole. Putting your body under strain with toxic food can trigger problems that can kill you. Social events are meant to be enjoyed. They're not supposed to be lethal.

30. I am not very conscious of how much fat is in the food I eat.

We live in a world where this information is now widely available. As you develop awareness of what to eat, you'll find yourself checking labels more often. Getting in shape is a very important part of boosting good health and confidence. Keeping in good shape just requires a little more awareness. No more chomping like a zombie. Wake up and start paying attention to the things that can either help or harm. And that applies to what you eat.

31. I usually keep cookies in the house.

House rules! Make it a cast iron, non-negotiable rule - no cookies in the house. No junk food in the house. Scrap the temptation and you won't have to fight the urge to poison yourself.

32. I have a serving of meat at every meal.

Don't you get bored with meat? Don't you need some variety in your diet? Times have changed. The developed world has never had such incredible access to a truly vast array of foodstuffs. Give your taste buds a treat and your health a boost by enjoying delicious, nutritious food every single day.

33. I associate success with food.

There's a definite shift in cultural expectations. We used to associate success with cigars, alcohol and rich, sugary foods. Now we know better. Success also means feeling great, respecting the miracle of your body and living a healthy life so that you can enjoy the success. It's only a question of habits. You can easily associate success with getting a massage, enjoying a really healthy meal, taking better care of yourself. That's total success.

34. A complete meal includes a meat, a starch, a vegetable and bread.

It's amazing that these medieval ideas can persist for so long when the world is full of new data, new perspectives and life changing research. If you've been following the advice in your workbook you'll know pretty well what you need to eat and what to avoid to get into the best possible shape and discover the joys of real health.

35. On Sunday, I eat a large meal with my family.

What a perfect opportunity to share the good news about healthy nutrition and respecting your body. Be the example to your family. Be the change that motivates them to take care of themselves. Share your new knowledge. Spread the word. They only get the one life. Help them to make the very most of it by encouraging them to join you in a total commitment to feeling fantastic.

36. Instead of planning meals, I will replace supper with a snack.

Make it a house rule. Three healthy meals a day and healthy snacks to keep your appetite under control.

37. If I am busy, I will eat a snack instead of lunch.

Everyone's busy. How come some people get a healthy lunch? They prepare in advance. Organisation is the answer. Start planning for great things in your life, including great nutrition.

38. Sometimes I eat dessert more than once a day.

Sugar will kill you. You know that. You're giving yourself nasty insulin spikes with those desserts. The only way to handle the addiction is to go cold turkey and ban sugar for three days. That's how long it takes for your insulin levels to reset. Then it gets much, much easier.

39. To me, cookies or crunchy food are an ideal snack food.

Poison is never ideal unless you want to die. Slowly. Sugar is toxic. How can a toxic substance make you feel well? It doesn't, does it? Ban all cookies. Sugary crunchy snacks should have a skull and crossbones on the label. Ban the sugary snacks. The rule for living longer and enjoying your life is to banish sugar and anything that contains it.

40. My eating habits are very routine.

Fantastic! As long as you've developed the habits of eating healthily. If not, it's time to change those habits before your body starts to protest under the constant, habitual burden of food toxicity.

41. When choosing fast food, I pick a place that offers the tastes I like and not healthy foods.

Educating your palate can be tremendous fun but most of the foods we think we like are just an excuse to cram our guts with garbage. Might be healthier for you to save some money and dine right out of the dumpster. It's the sugar addiction - it's in so many foods these days that you're addicted to the stuff. Ban sugar from your diet and everything starts to get better. Stop poisoning yourself with garbage and start to appreciate what your body really needs.

42. I eat at a restaurant at least three times a week.

Eating out can be great fun. You just have to choose a restaurant with healthy food on the menu or ask the kitchen to make things for you that support your new wellbeing and health programme.

Summary - Getting organised

Identify your behaviours and eating choices

Learn to understand the real consequences of your behaviours

Accept your body and start to treat yourself with kindness and understanding

Identify where your habits and behaviours came from

Set up house rules and meal planning schedules

Switch on your awareness

Chapter 9: GUT BIOLOGY

Your gut biology and the secrets of effective, sustained weight loss

Let's get right down to the guts of the matter! Whilst countless diet books have focused on fads and fleeting feeding fashions, we've had to wait until now to discover that the key to successful weight control is hidden in our intestinal flora. Encouraging the right balance of microbes in our gut and enhancing natural digestion are two of the most important and positive contributions we can make towards generating great health and real weight control.

There is an ancient tradition in many cultures that our intelligence is not simply located in the brain. You might find it surprising that recent research is taking a fresh look at this unusual question and producing some unexpected answers.

Dr Natasha Campbell Macbride, an authority in this fascinating area, states "The importance of your gut flora, and its influence on your health cannot be overstated. It is truly profound. Your gut literally serves as your second brain and even produces more of the neurotransmitter serotonin - known to have a beneficial influence on your mood - than your brain does".

It gets better.

Your gut is also home to countless bacteria, both good and bad. These bacteria outnumber the cells in your body by at least ten to one. We refer to the world of your intestinal flora as the microbiome.

Your microbiome is closely inter-connected with both of your brain systems. Yes. We're proceeding on the basis that we have two locations for the body's operating systems. In addition to the brain in your head, embedded in the wall of your gut is the enteric nervous system (ENS), which works both independently of and in conjunction with the brain in your head.

According to New Scientist: "The ENS is part of the autonomic nervous system, the network of peripheral nerves that control visceral functions. It is also the original nervous system, emerging in the first vertebrates over 500 million years ago and becoming more complex as vertebrates evolved, possibly even giving rise to the brain itself."

Our ancient enteric nervous system is thought to be largely responsible for your "gut instincts," responding to environmental threats and sending

information to your brain that directly affects your well-being. I'm sure you've experienced various sensations in your gut that accompany strong emotions such as fear, excitement and stress. Feeling "butterflies" in your stomach is actually the result of blood being diverted away from your gut to your muscles, as part of the fight or flight response.

These reactions in your gut happen outside of your conscious awareness because they are part of your autonomic nervous system, just like the beating of your heart. Your ENS contains around 500 million neurons. Why so many? Because eating is potentially fraught with danger: "Like the skin, the gut must stop potentially dangerous invaders, such as bacteria and viruses, from getting inside the body". This sounds like a perfectly helpful defence mechanism to foster our survival. And what better place to locate a defensive system to protect the body than in the very spot where food can cause the most damage: the gut.

Evolution really has been generous in equipping us with so many ways to keep us safe. If a pathogen should cross the gut lining, immune cells in the gut wall secrete inflammatory substances, including histamine, which are detected by neurons in the ENS. The gut brain then either triggers diarrhoea or alerts the brain in the head, which may decide to initiate vomiting, or both. In other words, the reactions in the gut will send instructions to purge the system as rapidly as possible.

We now know that this communication link between your "two brains" runs in both directions and is the main pathway for the way that foods affect your mood. For example, fatty foods make you feel good because fatty acids are detected by cell receptors in the lining of your gut, which then send warm and fuzzy nerve signals to your brain. Knowing this, you can begin to understand how not only your physical health but also your mental health is deeply influenced by the state of your gut and the microbial zoo that lives there. Your intestinal microbes affect your overall brain function, so this means that your eating behaviour is also affected by the health of your gut!

When it comes to Inflammation, Your Microbiome Rules

Scientists have found a specific pattern of intestinal microbes that can measurably increase your risk for Type 2 diabetes. This pattern can serve as a biomarker for diabetes probability. Similarly, researchers have also found marked differences in bacterial strains between overweight and non-overweight people. A strain of beneficial bacteria called *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* has been identified as being helpful for women to lose weight.

The best way to optimize your gut flora is through your diet. A gut-healthy diet is one rich in whole, unprocessed, unsweetened foods, along with traditionally fermented or cultured foods. But before these powerful foods can work their magic in your body, you have to eliminate the damaging foods that get in their way.

The conclusions of the latest research confirm that a good place to start is by drastically reducing grains and sugar. We covered this in our very first piece of advice. Did you print out the warning and tape it to your fridge? We also need to avoid genetically engineered ingredients, processed foods, and pasteurised foods. Pasteurised foods can harm your good bacteria and sugar promotes the growth of pathogenic yeast and other fungi (not to mention fuelling cancer cells). Grains containing gluten are particularly damaging to your microflora and overall health. This would be a good time for you to review the table above that lists foods, drugs and other agents that harm your beneficial microbes so that you can take steps right now to avoid as many as possible.

And In with the Good!

Consuming naturally fermented foods is one of the best ways to optimize your microbiome.

Not only are your gut bacteria important for preventing disease, but they also play a critical role in defining your body weight and composition.

Scientific studies have revealed a positive-feedback loop between the foods you crave and the composition of your microbiome, which depends on those nutrients for survival. So, if you're craving sugar and refined carbohydrates, you may actually be feeding a voracious army of Candida! Once you've begun eliminating foods that damage your beneficial flora, start incorporating fermented foods such as sauerkraut and naturally fermented pickles for example.

Your gut bacteria - and therefore your physical and mental health - are continuously affected by your environment, and by your diet and lifestyle choices. If your microbiome is harmed and thrown out of balance (dysbiosis), all sorts of illnesses can result, both acute and chronic. Unfortunately, your fragile internal ecosystem is under constant assault nearly every single day.

Some of the factors posing the gravest dangers to your microbiome are outlined in the following table. You should be already familiar with some of these toxic substances from previous chapters!

- Refined sugar, especially processed high fructose corn syrup (HFCS)
- Genetically engineered (GE) foods (extremely abundant in processed foods and beverages)
- Agricultural chemicals, such as herbicides and pesticides. Glyphosate appears to be among the worst
- Conventionally-raised meats and other animal products; CAFO animals are routinely fed low-dose antibiotics and GE livestock are raised on Gluten
- Antibiotics (use only if absolutely necessary, and make sure to reseed your gut with fermented foods and/or a good probiotic supplement) NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) damage cell membranes and disrupt energy production by mitochondria)

The microbes in our gut have evolved to function as highly efficient food processors and they are directly affected by whatever we eat. When the microbiome is out of balance, we often see varying degrees of inflammation throughout the body.

The Skinny Delicious Diet, which is blissfully free of refined grains, flour, sugar, and processed vegetable oils supports the healthiest mixture of gut microflora. On the other hand, the typical Western diet – very high in calories from refined carbohydrates but lacking in essential nutrients – tends to have the opposite effect, contributing to a harmful imbalance in gut bacteria. This is so serious that it can lead to the development of insulin resistance, diabetes, obesity, and heart disease. An unhealthy microbiome naturally tends towards weight gain so we can see how closely our health and wellbeing is linked to the state of our intestinal flora. When the unhealthy microbes predominate in the gut, they send signals to the brain to supply more fuel in the form of refined carbohydrates, dramatically increasing the chances of you putting on more weight. As we've stated earlier in the book, taking control of your weight is only one of the benefits of creating a normal and healthy environment for your gut flora. Better health, longer life and a reduction in the risk of disease are all connected to a healthy, efficient and happy microbiome!

Gut Biology Summary

The gut is the site of the 'second brain'

Inflammatory conditions are deeply influenced by the microbiome

Correcting intestinal flora is the key to health and weight loss

Identify the toxins that harm the body and disrupt normal gut functioning

Eliminate harmful substances from daily diet to restore balance



Chapter 10: YOUR New Career

Welcome to Your brand new and exciting career! You are now Managing Director of Your Fit and Fabulous Life. Inc. Congratulations. It's simply the Best Job in the Whole World and now it's yours.

Your most important job from now on is to focus on making the right food choices. You don't need to weigh or measure, you don't need to count calories. Wow, I bet that sounds like a new way of dealing with the old weight loss issue, doesn't it? Just make that one decision to follow the programme under any and all circumstances, under any amount of stress and your body will do the rest.

Your only job?

The most important job in your life!

Eat the Right Food for Your Fit and Fabulous Life

Fall madly in love with your absolute best weight-loss foods - and watch them fall in love with you and your new, skinnier body

From all the information you've absorbed so far, you'll know for sure that certain food groups (like sugars, grains and dairy products) could be having a very negative impact on your health and wellbeing without you even noticing. But when you think about your present state of wellbeing, you might be wondering how much of your health - or lack of it - has been caused by the food you've been eating. Weight loss is a great example. If you've tried to lose weight but always found it a struggle, experiencing initial success but then putting the pounds back on, you know that you have to do something different. It's time to recognise that cutting down the calories isn't enough. If you're still eating the wrong foods, the problems will remain. It's time to remove the source of the problem and that's only going to happen by removing all the harmful, toxic foods from your diet.

Say goodbye to all the psychologically unhealthy, hormone-unbalancing, gut-disrupting, inflammatory food groups and see the weight fall off. That's right. You might want to read that sentence again. It's essential to your future health. Let your body heal and recover from the years and years of weight gain and from all the other nasty effects of those nasty, toxic foods. It's time to re-programme your metabolism and flush away the inflammation.

Learn once and for all how the foods you've been eating are really affecting your health, your weight and your long term health. We've arrived at

one of the most important reasons for you to follow this programme.

This is about to change your life.

Epigenetics demonstrates the vital link between the things you do and how you live to the way your body behaves, all the way down to the cellular level. This might be one of the most surprising revelations about the entire body transformation programme. I think you're going to like it because you're going to love the results.

We cannot possibly put enough emphasis on this simple fact.

Like many of the most important elements in our lives, the answers are so simple that it's too easy to blink and miss the power of this revelation.



The Fifty, Fit and Fab Transformation

Are you ready for this?

Well, take a deep breath, my friend, because this is the answer you've been waiting for.

Eat. Real. Food.

Eat real food.

Only eat real food.

And now you know.

Real food is unprocessed, additive free and as natural as nature intended.

Real food includes lean, organic game and poultry, line caught seafood, organic free range eggs, tons of fresh vegetables, some fruit, and plenty of good fats from fruits, oils, nuts and seeds.

Eat foods with very few ingredients and no additives, chemicals, sugars or flavourings. Better yet, eat foods with no ingredients listed at all because then

they're totally natural and unprocessed.

Don't worry, these guidelines are outlined in extensive detail in our essential life-enhancing Fifty, Fit and Fabulous Shopping list.

What to avoid if you want to be healthier, leaner, skinnier and in better shape forever.

More importantly, here's what NOT to eat. Cutting out all of these foods and drinks will help you regain your natural, healthy metabolism, reduce systemic inflammation and help you to realise exactly how these foods are truly affecting your weight, fat percentage, health, fitness and every aspect of your life.

- Sugar. It's out. It's that simple. Do not consume added sugar of any kind whether it's real or artificial. No maple syrup, honey, agave nectar, coconut sugar, Splenda, Equal, Nutrasweet, Xylitol. The only exception is Stevia, the natural sweetener that avoids the toxicity of all the other sweeteners. Start reading the labels because food companies love to use sugar in their products to cater for your sugar addiction and they use it in ways you might not recognise. Great way to sell more products. Disastrous for your health.
- Do not consume beer in any form, not even for cooking. And let's be brutal about that other global addiction - tobacco. Absolutely no tobacco products of any sort. Ever. Wine though, in moderation, is fine. Ideally you'll opt for dry wines and a small amount of spirits but NO liqueurs ever!
- Do not eat grains. This includes wheat, rye, barley, oats, corn, rice, millet, bulgur, or sprouted grains
- The very occasional exceptions are buckwheat and quinoa which are not technically grains but, unfortunately, they have many grain like qualities. The answer is to limit your consumption and always exercise moderation. Cutting out grains also includes all the ways we add wheat, corn, rice and other starches to our foods in the form of bran, wheat germ, modified starch and so on. Again, read the labels.
- Do not eat legumes, except for some occasional sprouted legumes. This includes beans of all kinds (black, red, pinto, navy, white, kidney, lima, fava, etc.), peas, chickpeas, lentils, and peanuts. No peanut butter, either. This also includes all forms of soy, soy sauce, miso, tofu, tempeh, edamame and all the many ways we sneak soy into foods (like lecithin).

- Do not eat dairy. This includes cow, goat or sheep's milk and milk products such as cream, cheese (hard or soft), kefir, yogurt (even Greek), and sour cream. Use coconut milk, coconut yoghurt and coconut cream. It's the Delicious in Skinny Delicious!
- Do not consume carrageenan, MSG, sulphites or any additives whatsoever. If these ingredients or any E numbers appear in any form on the label of your processed food or beverage, don't even touch it!



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/tsausawest/8508069576>

Sounds tough, doesn't it? But that's because we've been conditioned to connect really bad food and sugary sweet flavourings with good times. We get sweets and candy as a reward during childhood and the comforting feeling gets embedded in our behaviour.

Before long we're addicted to all the things that effectively poison us. Take a look around you. Do you see much evidence of happy, healthy people in the local population? Disease incidence and obesity are ballooning. Something's radically wrong and you are one of the few, lucky ones to know exactly where the problem really lies.

Knowledge is power, my friend. Let's put this life-changing knowledge to the best possible use. Right now. You know what to do. All you have to do is make one powerful choice for health, normal weight and a tremendous increase in energy and the quality of your life and your body will do the rest.

At this stage of the programme, you might be surprised to know that we're not going to obsess too much about the weighting scales. The really important changes are taking place inside your body and your weight will improve naturally as you allow it to flush out all the toxins and reduce inflammation levels.

The Fine Print

These foods are the exceptions to the rule and the good news is they are all allowed in your new super healthy eating plan

- Certain legumes. Green beans and peas. While they're technically a legume, these are generally good for you.
- Vinegar. Most forms of vinegar, including white, apple cider, red wine, and rice, are allowed. The only exceptions are balsamic, vinegars with added sugar, or malt vinegar, which generally contains gluten.
- Salt but only low sodium or sodium-free salt. Did you know that all iodised table salt contains sugar? Sugar (often in the form of dextrose) is chemically essential to keep the potassium iodide from oxidising and being lost.

Limitation Foods – be careful 5%

High sugar fruits – watermelon, grapes, mangoes.

Buckwheat and quinoa – it behaves like a starchy carbohydrate a bit

Clever but slightly naughty indulgences – 10%

Chocolate – organic cocoa powder,

Fried potatoes – use sweet potatoes or lots of vinegar to help with digestion,

Muffins cakes and cookies with almond and coconut flour and stevia

Nut and Seed Butters..its ok but still processed

Fats to help you burn fat – 20--%

Coconut oil, extra virgin olive oil, walnuts, macadamias and their oils, coconut products, avocados

Vegetables to fuel your system 30%

Really go to town and enjoy as many servings in as many formats as you can...raw is best, but steamed and stir fried work wonderfully well

Proteins for weight loss 35%

Fish, Turkey (chicken if you must), game and hemp seed protein are the best forms for weight loss

For more info about the Fifty, Fit and Fab Shopping list see my book Fifty, Fit and Fab Cookbook



Chapter 11: Toxins and weight loss problems

Food processing or food poisoning techniques?

The modern industrial approach to food production and processing is responsible for a ghastly range of chemicals and additives that are directly involved in producing weight gain, fat and obesity. Amongst the thousands of additives, we have bovine growth hormone and antibiotics injected into meat, poultry, and dairy products, flavour enhancers such as monosodium glutamate, artificial sweeteners such as NutraSweet (aspartame) and Splenda (sucralose). Our list also includes man-made sugars such as high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, dextrose, sucrose, fructose, highly refined white sugar, processed molasses, processed honey, maltodextrin, etc., plus the other 15,000 plus chemicals that are routinely added to virtually every product you buy, and that includes conventionally grown fruits and vegetables.

Man-made trans-fats such as hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils also cause weight gain and obesity. Even standard food processing techniques such as pasteurisation, which now applies to virtually every product in a bottle or carton, homogenisation and irradiation all contribute to weight gain.

At the end of this disturbing list of toxins, poisons and health-damaging additives we have some refreshing and deeply reassuring news. Your revolutionary skinny delicious epigenetic weight control system addresses all of these issues safely and effectively and offers the fast lane out of the nightmare of processed food. Once you know you have the tools to make things better, you can breathe a sigh of relief and start to take action..

Poisons polluting the planet and everything that lives on it. You've probably heard a lot already about the increasing levels of toxicity in the environment. The fact is that our environment has become increasingly more toxic. Our exposure today is higher than at any point in human history.

We are exposed to more than 10,000 different forms of toxin and they are almost everywhere. They're in the air we breathe, the water we drink and wash in, our daily cleaning materials, cosmetics and, of course, our precious food supplies. If you add the daily quota of toxic chemicals we consume in the form of artificial sweeteners, flavour enhancers such as MSG, pesticides, preservatives, caffeine, over-the-counter medications, alcohol, nicotine and damaged fats, the list of daily toxic consumption could give you nightmares. But beyond the discomfort of a nightmare, these toxins are harming your

body. We should also include those naturally occurring toxins produced by the body as a result of normal, essential cellular functions.

The problem is that these pesky toxins can accumulate in the body and that's when the damage occurs. It is the accumulation of these toxins that creates total havoc in the body. Yes we can process and remove many harmful substances and neutralise their influence but when we take on board more than we can handle, the body is effectively poisoned. As a result, excessive oxidative stress occurs, which in turn threatens our health by damaging our precious DNA. And as you now know, damaged DNA can lead to a long list of health problems.

Let's get this uncomfortable subject sharply into focus. Entire populations are suffering the effects of toxicity: the problems show up as a combination of headaches, fatigue, joint pain, insomnia, mood changes, weakened immune system, or other chronic issues. This total toxic overload has been implicated in: cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic fatigue, weight loss resistance, allergies, skin conditions, asthma, mental illness, hypertension, gastritis, kidney disease and obesity. Not a happy list.

We know you like to have all the facts so let's see how toxins can even influence human metabolism.

There are five important mechanisms that are harmed by toxins:

- hormone regulation,
- neuro-regulatory mechanisms,
- immuno-regulatory mechanisms,
- mitochondrial function,
- and oxidative stress.

Toxins alter thyroid hormone metabolism and receptor function leading to a slow down in metabolic rate. Slower metabolic activity means more fat retention. It isn't difficult to see the connections between constant exposure to toxins and lots of nasty little health problems, unintended weight gain being one of the most obvious.

The Environmental Protection Agency in the U.S. has monitored human exposure to toxic environmental chemicals since 1972.

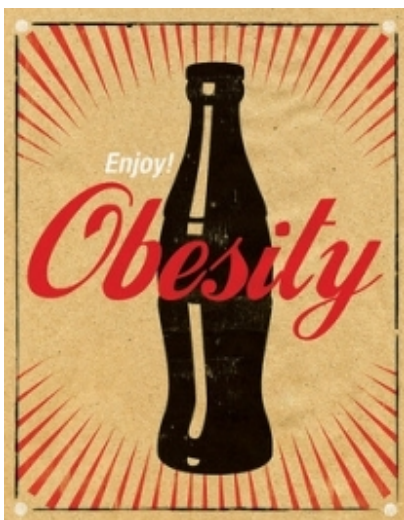
That's when they began the National Human Adipose Tissue Survey. This study measures the levels of various toxins in fat tissue extracted during autopsies and from surgical procedures. Five of what are recognised as the most toxic chemicals were found in 100% of all samples.

Toxic chemicals from industrial pollution dominated the samples, toxins that damage the liver, heart, lungs, and nervous system. Nine more chemicals were found in 91-98% of samples: benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, DDE (a breakdown product of DDT, the pesticide banned in the US since 1972), three dioxins, and one furan. Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were found in 83% of the population.

A Michigan study found DDT in over 70% of 4 years olds, probably received through breast milk. With the spread of the global economy, we may be eating food that was picked a few days before in Guatemala, Indonesia, Africa or Asia, where there are fewer restrictions on pesticides than there are in the United States or Europe.

I don't want to put you off your lunch but many of these chemicals are stored in fat tissue, making animal products a potentially concentrated source of contamination. One hundred percent of beef in the U.S. is contaminated with DDT, as is 93% of processed cheese, hot dogs, bologna, turkey, and ice cream. Bon appetit!

But just because there are plenty of reasons to get paranoid about our food, there are plenty of healthy, life-affirming, nourishing and tasty alternatives out there.



OBESITY AND TOXICITY: What is the real connection?

Effects on Thyroid and Metabolic Rate

If you've ever attempted a weight loss programme, you'll probably recognise the familiar plateau phase where many people lose a few pounds but then find it really difficult to shed the rest.

What might be getting in the way of further weight loss and even interfering with the metabolic control system? A review paper, "Energy balance and pollution by organochlorines and polychlorinated biphenyls," published in *Obesity Reviews* in 2003 describes the effects of toxins on metabolic rate and weight regulation.

The authors conclude that pesticides (organochlorines) and PCBs (from industrial pollution), which are normally stored in fat tissue, are released during the weight loss process and lower the metabolic rate. That will slow down the rate at which we can lose the pounds. How do the chemical toxins interfere with our metabolism?

People with a higher body mass index (BMI) have a larger volume of places to hold onto the toxins. They store more toxins because they have more fat. Those toxins interfere with many normal aspects of metabolism, including reducing thyroid hormone levels, and increasing excretion of thyroid hormones via the liver.

Toxins also compete with the thyroid hormones by blocking the thyroid receptors and competing for the thyroid transport proteins. We all know that toxins are bad news for the health but clearly we need to have an effective strategy to deal with the effects of toxins leaking into the system as we launch our weight management system. The good news is that we've got a great strategy for handling this problem! And we'll be getting to it very soon.

The Secret Power of Leptin!

Leptin is a very powerful and influential hormone and it's produced by your fat cells.

Putting it simply, science has discovered that leptin is an incredibly powerful metabolic regulator and it tells your brain whether you should be hungry, whether you should eat and whether to produce more fat. Leptin is the way that your fat communicates with your brain to let your body know how much energy is available and, very importantly, what to do with it.

In a perfect world, as you gain weight, you secrete more leptin from your fat cells. This in turn tells your brain you have stored enough fat so it naturally reduces your appetite, sending messages to help you balance your system by burning excess fat.

But there's a problem! Sometimes the leptin doesn't get the chance to communicate effectively. It isn't good news because many people have something called "leptin resistance". This means that no matter how much

leptin you create from your fat cells, the brain just doesn't see it. This leads to a cycle of unhappy consequences.

Your brain thinks you are starving, so you burn fewer calories, your appetite goes into overdrive and finally every morsel of food you consume gets stored around your belly! So, until you address leptin resistance, you're not going to lose weight.

Optimal Leptin Levels

When you have your leptin levels checked by a professional, your goal is to keep your leptin below 12. But not too low. Researchers have discovered that when leptin levels fall too far below the 12 mark, we can expect an increase in Alzheimer's and dementia. A leptin above 12 is not considered healthy either.

Leptin levels can now be measured with a simple blood test. Levels above 12 are linked to weight gain, accelerated ageing, increased risk of infertility, diabetes and heart attack. In addition, high leptin levels are associated with belly fat and numerous cancers. Leptin rises if you don't sleep well and if you have any kind of perceived stress. So it really is an important and often ignored component in the whole weight control mechanism.

Thyroid Connection

If you are having difficulty losing weight, I recommend you get your leptin checked. Remember you want it under 12. From a thyroid perspective, if your leptin is above 12 you will commonly see low T3 (the most metabolically active thyroid hormone) and elevated reverse T3. This is not good for those trying to lose weight.

The Solution:

You become leptin resistant by eating the typical American or western diet, which is full of sugar, refined grains, and processed foods. The solution is to eat a diet that emphasises good fats and avoids blood sugar spikes.

These answers are often surprising because they really are incredibly simple. When you choose a diet that emphasises those essential, healthy fats, lean meats and lots and lots of vegetables, (raw whenever possible), your body can recover its natural healthy functioning and those pesky pounds start to melt away,

For a full thyroid/leptin analysis, I recommend a medical practitioner with a thorough training and knowledge in functional medicine.

For a list of Functional Medicine Doctors in your area contact us via our website, www.skinnydeliciouslife.com

Toxins Summary

Pollutions and toxins are everywhere

Obesity and toxicity are closely related

The power of leptins

The thyroid connection

Cleansing and healing the body for permanent weight control

Chapter 12: The Exercise Myth



One of the great myths about weight loss is that all you have to do is burn more calories and everything will be absolutely fine. Clearly, from all the information we've studied and absorbed so far, we know this cannot be the whole story.

We know for a fact that people can lose weight by burning more calories. No question.

The problem is that it's rarely a permanent loss. As soon as you take a break from the routine, the pounds pile back on. And we're committed to a permanent and healthy weight adjustment that will benefit every aspect of your life. So let's remind ourselves that if we're going to take control of our weight, we need to change our metabolism. If we can encourage our metabolism to speed up, we'll burn our food more efficiently and encourage our bodies to burn fat.

Adding exercise to our routine can certainly help to speed up the weight loss programme but we're encouraging you to exercise because it really can improve the overall quality of your life. We want you to be fitter, stronger, leaner, more flexible and happier in the way your body works. Does that

sound like a good idea? Do you want to live in a body that works the way Nature intended? It's a lot more fun than being trapped in an overweight, physically uncomfortable body that lacks the energy and stamina to enjoy life to the full.

When it comes to exercise, we're truly spoiled for choice. It seems that every time we turn on the TV there's a super-fit girl or boy bouncing up and down with the latest fitness fad, screaming at us to join the craze. But fitness is not about fashion. It isn't about gadgets and it isn't about trying to look like someone else. It's about feeling great and making the body as efficient as nature intended. Yes, we have to move the body to make it fitter but using exercise intelligently will serve our purposes better than blindly following the latest exercise in television fitness marketing.

The first question to raise in our quest for intelligent exercise is "What kind of exercise will help me lose excess fat and weight most efficiently?" The short answer, perhaps not surprisingly, is the kind of exercise that burns the most calories. But we need to burn calories in the most efficient manner possible for the longest period of time whilst encouraging an increase in metabolic rate. OK. Not such a short answer but even a simple question can offer important insights into what we're really seeking in terms of safe, intelligent exercise.

There is a common consensus that cardiovascular workouts are the best in terms of straightforward calorie burning but there is a growing realisation that interval workouts, where we switch between short bursts of high intensity effort followed by brief periods of less intense exercise, are one of the best ways to turn up the fat-burning mechanism. Interval training can raise your metabolic rate for up to four hours after a session, meaning you'll burn more calories even after the workout is over.

Easy? Well before you jump into your exercise shorts and slip on the Spandex leotard, we need to recognise that too many intense cardio sessions can harm your body, causing burn out, leaving you tired, low in energy, suffering strained joints and muscles and too exhausted to keep up the exercise programme. Less is sometimes more. Try using the higher intensity interval approach a couple of days a week and substitute a less intense endurance session for your other workouts. Endurance training means exercising at an intensity where you can still talk without getting breathless. This combination gives the body time to recover, reduces strain whilst still promoting a more efficient metabolism. And you'll probably enjoy it more too.

Muscle, my friend. You were probably wondering about muscles, weren't you? You'll definitely need more metabolically active lean muscle mass to give your body new strength, shape and definition while you continue to reveal the skinnier new you. Light resistance exercises will help. Using lighter weights will help you use whole body without risk of strain or injury. Lighter weights mean more repetitions and more reps will give you the lean definition that is a sure sign of a fit and healthy body.

The real challenge is getting started, taking the first step and then committing to a programme of movement and exercise. That's why it's helpful to recognise the importance of enjoying the exercise as much as possible. Find alternatives to the dreaded treadmill. Join group classes that focus on high energy movement. Take Pilates classes every week or follow a Pilates video with an excellent teacher. The body positively thrives on new and different movements so yoga and Pilates are fantastic ways to develop a stronger, more flexible body. An active yoga class, for example, that keeps your heart rate elevated can count as a cardio session and a Pilates class that incorporates added resistance from bands or weights can count as strength training.

Finally, don't forget that it's really easy to eat back all the calories you burned off at the gym in just a few unplanned minutes of pure self-indulgence. So for permanent weight loss success, combine your workouts with our Skinny Delicious Epigenetic Diet. That's an unbeatable combination for health, fitness and total wellbeing.



Here are the Skinny Delicious Intelligent Exercise Choices that have proved effective time and time again!



Walking your way to weight loss? Yes! It absolutely helps.

1. Walking

Walking really is an ideal exercise for weight loss even if your eyebrows just shot up in surprise! Walking really works. But it's something you have to do every single day. You don't need special equipment, you don't need special clothes, you don't even need a gym membership to do it. Just you and a pair of comfortable shoes. It's a low-impact exercise too, which reduces strain on your knees, feet and hips.

For those with obesity and heart disease, walking is an effective, low-intensity weight-loss activity that can lead to better overall health, as well as better mental wellbeing. Depending on how much you weigh, walking at a pace of four miles per hour will burn between 5 and 8 calories every minute, or between 225 and 360 calories for a 45-minute stroll. If you're interested in the maths, walking every day at this pace for 45 minutes can mean losing up to a pound a week without changing any other habits. That's every week and the accumulative effect can be truly dramatic.

So put on your walking shoes, turn up the headphones and go for a brisk stroll through the neighbourhood. If you live close to where you work or shop, make walking your primary mode of transportation and watch the excess weight slip away. Don't let the weather get in the way of your daily walk. When the weather's bad, walk indoors or take your stroll on a treadmill.

There's a lot to be said for breathing fresh air too so, if the opportunity presents itself, experience the joy of taking a walk in the woods or in the countryside. It's a good idea to take water with you too, keeping the body properly hydrated. If you aren't used to walking, take your time.

Start gently. Don't push yourself too much. Patience is a key to good exercise routines and building up your capacity to do more should leave you feeling motivated to extend your range until you can walk comfortably for as long as you wish. That in itself can mark a significant achievement and boost your confidence in your increasing levels of fitness.



Splish splash! Come on in, the water's lovely!

2. Swimming

Swimming is such a fun way to enjoy your exercise. It's another great way to share the benefits of physical exercise and include the family as well. The great news is that this exercise works. It's really effective for weight loss and for toning. When we swim, we use all the major muscle groups, including your abdominals and back muscles, your arms, legs, hips and glutes. It's a great way of enhancing the effects of other exercises, like running and walking, or it can be your preferred form of fitness. It's also widely recognised that swimming is ideal during pregnancy, especially during the last trimester, but it's often forgotten that it's a perfect way to exercise for obese individuals and for arthritis sufferers. Water supports ninety percent of the body's weight yet provides twelve times the resistance of air so moving or swimming in the pool is a perfect way to strengthen and tone the body whilst burning calories.

Swimming has long been used as an effective tool for building stamina so you can look forward to getting fitter and building healthy reserves of energy whilst having fun in the water. Whether you're walking from side to side in the shallow end or swimming lengths, the pool is a perfect place to measure your progress. Just add an extra width or length every week and you'll be amazed how quickly your fitness levels start to climb.

Don't be square. Round is much more fun!

3. Elliptical Training

A fantastic alternative to the dreaded treadmill is the elliptical trainer, regarded by many as the better way to work out at home or at the gym. The main advantage over the conventional treadmill is that the elliptical trainer provides a low impact cardio workout that reduces strain on the key, load-

bearing joints of the body. It's an ideal piece of equipment for burning calories and boosting the metabolism. Elliptical trainers have moving handles which encourage you to move your arms and give you the benefit of an upper body workout. You can select an appropriate level of resistance and intensity to match your growing levels of strength and fitness and you can expect to burn a respectable 600 calories an hour.

When you're overweight, running places enormous strain on your joints and the combination of poor posture, inadequate muscle strength and poor lumbar support is a recipe for pain and injury. The elliptical trainer is an ideal machine for allowing gentle, safe and controlled movement without stressing hips, knees and ankles. The elliptical movement that the equipment is named for reduces back strain and opens up the possibility of effective and risk free weight reduction.

As with swimming, you can increase the speed or intensity of the workout every week and build up your stamina, strength and fitness gently, carefully and effectively as the excess pounds fall away.



Not just for supermodels! Pilates really is for everyone. And that includes you!

4. Pilates

As a Pilates Master Teacher and Yoga Teacher, I can vouch for the fact that Pilates especially contributes to weight loss – and so does yoga – but this indirectly as explained later on in the chapter...but look at the change in shape of my body and that is all you need to see if you are looking at getting into your best shape!

Pilates is deservedly famous for creating longer, leaner, fitter bodies. The Pilates method promotes weight loss and a leaner, more muscular appearance. But how does it work?

The precisely positioned exercise burn calories. How many calories you burn obviously depends on your body type and the level of effort.

Creating lean muscle mass, as Pilates does, is one of the best ways to increase your calorie-burning potential.

Pilates tones and shapes the whole body.

Sample some Pilates mat exercises:

One of the best ways to look and feel thinner is to have beautiful posture. Pilates creates a leaner look by emphasizing both length and better, healthier bodily alignment.

Pilates promotes deep and efficient respiration, which is essential for calorie burning and tissue regeneration.

Engaging in an exercise program, like Pilates, promotes self-esteem and heightened lifestyle consciousness. Both are associated with weight loss.

One of the most frequently asked questions about Pilates is: Will Pilates help me lose weight? The short answer is yes, Pilates is supportive but not the cause of weight loss. In many cases just beginning a Pilates class, or a home routine, is enough to jump start weight loss. However, as time goes by you may find that your body becomes accustomed to your workout level. Then, you will need to increase the intensity of your workout enough to help you continue to burn extra calories. Here are some ideas to help you ramp up your workout:

If you take a Pilates class regularly, talk to your instructor and find out if it is possible to move the class along a little more quickly. Sometimes a class needs to take that step. On the other hand, it may be that some members of your class are not ready to increase the pace of their workouts and you will have to graduate yourself to a more advanced class.

If you workout at home, it is a good idea to have a routine or two that you know quite well. That way you can focus on the breath and flow of the workout and not have to pause to review the exercise instructions or sequence.

Another great way to get a weight loss workout at home is to expand your Pilates DVD collection. Look for workouts that push your current level or add a new challenge like the magic circle, fitness band, or exercise ball. There are also a number of excellent Pilates based DVDs specifically oriented toward weight loss. As a Pilates Master Trainer I will be happy to give you a personal

recommendation for good quality Pilates DVD's. Contact me at beranparry@gmail.com

Fully Commit to Each Exercise

Even if you can't move through a routine rapidly, do make sure that you get the most out of each exercise. Stretch to your fullest length at every opportunity, go for the extra scoop of the abs, breathe deeply, be precise, move with control and grace. This kind of fully engaged attitude is very much in keeping with what Joseph Pilates taught, and increases the exertion level (read weight loss potential) of your workout tremendously.

Add Equipment

Adding equipment , or different equipment, to your workout will help build muscle and strength by giving your body new challenges. Remember, muscle burns a lot of fat. If you go to a studio to workout, you could move from the mat to the reformer. If you have been using the reformer, take a chance and sign up for a class that includes a new piece of equipment, like the wunda chair or ladder barrel.

At home, smaller types of Pilates equipment such as magic circles, exercise balls and fitness bands can add the extra challenge. They also help keep your workouts interesting.

Use Less Resistance

Now here is a Pilates trick that is not used by many other fitness systems: If you are working out with Pilates resistance equipment, decrease the resistance level. This seems counter intuitive, but the instability that less resistance creates provides a significant challenge to the muscles as they attempt to maintain control and balance, especially the core muscles. This technique works very well on the reformer where you can use lighter springs, but you can apply the same principle to a lighter resistance magic circle or fitness band. You may be surprised at the level of intensity that instability can add to your workout, especially as you work to maintain precision and control during both the exertion and the release phase of an exercise, as we do in Pilates.



Will Doing Yoga Help Me Lose Weight?

5. Yoga

Doing yoga regularly [offers many benefits](#), including making you feel better about your body as you become stronger and more flexible, toning your muscles, reducing stress, and improving your mental and physical well-being. But will it help you lose weight? Practicing any type of yoga will build strength, but studies show that yoga does not raise your heart rate enough to make it the only form of exercise you need to shed pounds.

In order to lose weight, you must eat correctly and burn calories by doing exercise that raises your heart rate on a regular basis. More vigorous yoga styles can provide a better workout than gentle yoga, but if weight loss is your primary goal, you will want to combine yoga with running, walking, or other aerobic exercise.

How Yoga Can Help

Yoga can still help you lose weight by bringing you to a better in tune with your body, improving your self-image and sense of well-being, and encouraging a healthy lifestyle.

If you are just starting to do yoga , are very overweight , or are quite out of shape, always choose a beginner-level class. To minimize the risk of injury, make sure find good teachers and listen to your body first and foremost.

What Kinds of Yoga Are the Most Vigorous?

The most athletic yoga styles fall in the vinyasa or flow yoga category. These styles usually start with a fast-paced series of poses called sun salutations, followed by a flow of standing poses which will keep you moving. Once you are warmed up, deeper stretches and backbends are introduced. Vinyasa includes many popular, sweaty yoga styles, such as:

Ashtanga:

Ashtanga yoga is a very vigorous style of practice and its practitioners are among the most dedicated of yogis. Beginners are often encouraged to sign up for a series of classes, which will help with motivation.

Power Yoga:

Power yoga is extremely popular at gyms and health clubs, though it is widely available at dedicated yoga studios as well. Power yoga is based on building the heat and intensity of Ashtanga while dispensing with fixed series of poses.

Hot Yoga:

Vinyasa yoga done in a hot room ups the ante by guaranteeing you'll sweat buckets. Be aware that Bikram and hot yoga are not synonymous. Bikram is a pioneering style of hot yoga, which includes a set series of poses and, indeed, a script developed by founder Bikram Choudhury. These days, there are many other styles of hot yoga that make use of the hot room but not the Bikram series.

Yoga Workouts at Home

Keep yourself exercising by doing yoga at home on the days you can't make a class. Follow along with a video if you are new to yoga. When you are ready to plan your own workouts, use these yoga sequencing ideas to help you come up with yoga sessions of varying lengths that will fit your schedule. To maximize yoga's benefits, it's great to do a little bit each day.

Your Skinny Delicious Exercise Plan and Log

Keeping an exercise log helps you stay motivated, track progress, and plan improvements. This becomes even more relevant when you have a goal like weight loss.

Skinny Delicious Exercise Planner and Workbook

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
AM	walking 20-60 minutes or a slow jog or swimming	walking 20-60 minutes or a slow jog elliptical or cycling training or take a fun dance or movement class	walking 20-60 minutes or a slow jog or swimming	walking 20-60 minutes or a slow jog elliptical or cycling training or take a fun dance or movement class	walking 20-60 minutes or a slow jog or swimming	walking 20-60 minutes or a slow jog elliptical or cycling training or take a fun dance or movement class	walking 20-60 minutes or a slow jog
PM	Pilates	yoga	Pilates	yoga	Pilates		
Eve	10-60 minutes meditation	10-60 minutes meditation	10-60 minutes meditation	10-60 minutes meditation	10-60 minutes meditation	10-60 minutes meditation	10-60 minutes meditation

Workout More Frequently

Working out more often is an obvious choice for weight loss and it can work like a charm. After all, the more opportunity you take to increase your

respiration, build strength, and tone your muscles, the more weight you can lose and the trimmer you will appear.

Exercise Summary

Check out a selection of exercises that are best for weight loss

The smart way to exercise is best

Walking your way to health – a fabulous daily habit!

Swimming as a safe alternative – or choose something unusual

Use Pilates to shape your body!

Boost your programme with Yoga





Chapter 13: Your weight loss helpers!

Vitamin D and Magnesium

Now that you've taken the most important steps possible to take total control of your weight and give your body the best possible opportunity to feel simply amazing, it's time to introduce you to a select group of helpers that can make your programme even more effective. We're going to start with Vitamin D, the famous sunshine vitamin. Now, as you might have guessed by now, we love sharing the results of cutting edge medical and scientific research. So when we looked at the conclusions of over 3,000 independent clinical studies that have been carried out all over the world in the last year alone, we were not surprised to learn that good old Vitamin D has now been recognised as the superstar in the weight loss supplement industry.

Vitamin D and Weight Loss

Vitamin D is produced by the body when it's exposed to sunlight. It's a naturally occurring substance and it can also be acquired through diet or supplements. The great news is that it increases the metabolic energy of fat cells which encourages faster weight loss. Surprised? Happy to have another potent asset to help you move those excess pounds and keep you trimmer, fitter and healthier? Not only does it speed up metabolic rates for fat cells but it helps to eliminate toxins too. Now that's another great reason to ensure healthy levels of Vitamin D in your body.

One surprising insight that has emerged from the research is that both muscle and fat may well act in a similar way when it comes to storing vitamin D for future use.

New research using mathematical models has shown that a heavily muscled man and an obese man who weigh exactly the same would need the same amount of vitamin D. The key to determining how much vitamin D is appropriate for an individual would seem to be connected to body weight rather than body fat. The research is fresh so this important revelation has not been widely appreciated by most experts.

If you're overweight you're more likely to need more vitamin D than a thinner person. This new rule also applies to people with higher body weights even when it's a result of muscle mass.

Your best source for this vitamin is daily exposure to the sun, without sunblock on your skin, until your skin turns the lightest shade of pink. Too

much sun is as bad as too little so don't be tempted to overdose on anything and that includes sunshine. Getting healthy exposure to the sun isn't always possible due to seasonal changes and the simple fact of where you live but moderate exposure is the ideal to aim for as it will optimize your vitamin D levels naturally.

To use the sun to maximize your vitamin D production and minimize your risk of skin damage, the middle of the day (roughly between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.) is the best and safest time. During this UVB-intense period you will need the shortest sun exposure time to produce the most vitamin D.

If getting out into the sunshine isn't possible, you might consider using one of the safer tanning beds. These use electronic rather than magnetic ballasts and this avoids unnecessary EMF exposure. Safe tanning beds produce less of the dangerous UVA than sunlight, while unsafe ones have more UVA than sunlight. If neither of these options are available to you, then you should take an oral vitamin D3 supplement and this is where the dosage becomes important.

What's the Correct Dose of Vitamin D?

Based on research published by GrassrootsHealth from the D*Action study, the average adult needs to take 8,000 IU's of vitamin D per day in order to elevate his or her levels above 40 ng/ml. This is considered to be the minimum requirement necessary for disease prevention. Ideally, you'll want your levels to be between 50-70 ng/ml. As Carole Baggerly, director and founder of GrassrootsHealth, noted:

"We just published our very first paper. We have about 10 people in this study now that are taking 50,000 IU a day and they're not reaching a potential toxicity level of 200 ng/ml. It should be noted, however, that this is not a recommended intake level. The study reported data on about over 3,500 people. ... One very significant thing shown by this research was that even with taking the supplement, the curve for the increase in the vitamin D level is not linear. It is curvilinear and it flattens, which is why it's even hard to get toxic with a supplement."

This means that even if you do not monitor your vitamin D levels on a regular basis, there is very little risk of taking too much. There is evidence that the safety of vitamin D is dependent on vitamin K, and that vitamin D toxicity (although very rare with the D3 form) is actually aggravated by vitamin K2 deficiency. So if you take oral vitamin D, ideally you should take vitamin K2

as well or use organic fermented foods that are high in vitamin K2, as you need about 150 mcg per day.

It must be said that it is challenging to work out precisely how much vitamin D your body produces naturally and then calculate how much you might need in supplement form. Most people are deficient in Vitamin D and the best way to correct this imbalance is to consult your doctor, take the 25 OH D blood test and then either increase your exposure to sunlight or request supplements with a dose somewhere in the range of 5,000-40,000 IU. Follow up tests should be done to check your new Vitamin D levels after a few months of taking the recommended supplements.

The latest clinical data concerning the benefits of healthy Vitamin D levels reveal that this essential chemical does a lot more than help with weight issues. It's got an impressive list of advantages for everyone:

- targets belly fat first
- turns body into fat burning mode instead of fat storing mode
- lowers high blood pressure
- helps form stronger bones to fight osteoporosis
- helps protect against different cancers
- boosts natural immune system
- reduces inflammation & joint stiffness
- influences the important hormone leptin

Calcium and the Link to Vitamin D

As you can see from the list above, there are many health benefits associated with having sufficient Vitamin D in the body. When the body experiences a lack of calcium, it is usually due to a vitamin D deficiency. This triggers the body to increase its production of synthase, a fatty acid enzyme that turns calories into fat. A calcium deficiency will cause the body to increase its synthase production by up to 500%, which may explain a further cause of obesity. When vitamin D supplements are combined with sunlight, calcium, and a low-calorie diet, it helps the body to regulate blood sugar levels, digest food properly and, for those who are interested in losing the excess pounds, it also promotes weight loss.

Recommended Intake of Vitamin D

The recommended daily intake of vitamin D should be between 400 and 600 IU. However, current research has suggested that a higher dosage would be more therapeutic. In order to improve health and heal the body, the body needs approximately 4,000 and 10,000 IU of vitamin D per day. Depending on

skin tone, the body will need 10 to 20 minutes of sun every day to produce 10,000 IU of vitamin D. When the sun is not a viable option, it is best to supplement your diet with a vitamin D supplement.

2. Magnesium and Weight Loss

Obesity. Is it really connected to your epigenetic behaviour?

The popular view in the media has constantly repeated the myth that obesity is somehow inherited. People have looked at their obese relatives, sighed sadly over their bulging stomachs and resigned themselves to the apparent injustice of their bad genes. But it just isn't that simple. Oh, no. If you take a mouse with an obesity gene and deprive it of B vitamins, the obesity will be expressed. The mouse gets chubby. But if it receives plenty of B vitamins, the obese gene stays in neutral and our little mouse stays thin. The process of metabolising B vitamins is called methylation and magnesium is one of the most important elements in this process.

Magnesium plays a crucial role in many aspects of the body's health but here are some of the most relevant examples

1. Magnesium helps the body to digest, absorb, and process proteins, fats, and carbohydrates.
2. Magnesium is an essential chemical to allow insulin to open cell membranes for glucose.
- 3. Magnesium helps prevent obesity genes from expressing themselves.**

Magnesium and THE WEIGHT CONNECTION

Magnesium and the B-complex vitamins are important for helping to access the energy that's contained within our food. They're responsible for switching on enzymes that control digestion, nutrient absorption and the way we process proteins, fats, and carbohydrates. When our bodies don't get enough of these essential nutrients, we can experience a surprising range of negative consequences. Some of the unexpected consequences include hypoglycaemia, anxiety, depression and even our old friend, obesity.

The fact is that amidst an extraordinary array of foods and an incredible choice of what and how much to eat, we are often starved of essential nutrients. There is a fascinating research project that has identified the connection between our food cravings for foods and the way our bodies lack those essential nutrients.

Processed foods that lack the essential nutritional content that supports healthy metabolism are effectively empty calories. They only serve to add unhealthy weight to the body without contributing to the body's total nutritional requirements. So, as a result, you're often really hungry. So you keep eating. But you're still hungry and your body's packing on the extra weight but in reality you're starved of good nutrition.

The study suggested that changing to a healthy diet can re-set the brain's triggers for high fat, high calorie food and create a much healthier response to food choices that avoids over-eating and focuses on a naturally low-fat, high energy diet. You just know that's going to help to keep the unwanted weight off and introduce you to a whole new world of feeling great.

Magnesium also produces the metabolic reaction that instructs insulin to allow the transfer of energy-providing glucose into our cells. If the body doesn't have enough magnesium to fulfil this important role, both insulin and glucose levels increase. The excess glucose is converted into fat and this obviously contributes to obesity problems. Having excess insulin also raises the risk of diabetes.

Is stress connected to weight gain? Oh yes it is. But we have the answer!

The powerful connection between stress and obesity has long been understood. When our bodies are stressed, we produce more of the chemical cortisol and the cortisol effectively forces a metabolic reversal that makes weight loss almost impossible. The great news is that our good friend and helper, magnesium, can effectively neutralise these undesirable effects of stress.

ABDOMINAL Fat - Is a corset the only answer? No!!

Gaining weight around your middle is strongly related to magnesium deficiency and an inability to properly utilise insulin. This is when we run the risk of encountering Syndrome X. You only need a tape measure to diagnose a predisposition to Syndrome X. If you have a waist size above 40 inches in men and above 35 in women then you're at risk. In their book *The Magnesium Factor*, authors Mildred Seelig, M.D., and Andrea Rosanoff, Ph.D., refer to research that demonstrates over half the insulin in the bloodstream is directed at abdominal tissue. They suggest that as more and more insulin is produced to deal with a high-sugar diet, abdominal size increases mainly to process the extra insulin.

Magnesium and SYNDROME X

The term "syndrome X" refers to a set of conditions that are really the product of long-standing nutritional deficiency, especially magnesium deficiency. Syndrome X is simply the result of starving the body of those essential nutrients. The long list of problems includes high cholesterol, hypertension and obesity. It also includes elevated triglycerides and high levels of uric acid. High triglycerides are usually found when cholesterol levels are too high but it happens most often with people who consume a daily high-sugar diet and that includes fizzy drinks, cakes, biscuits, candy and pastries. Syndrome X is a description of what happens when we eat badly.

Vitamins and minerals are the driving forces that produce our metabolism. Without them, we get problems. So, the first step in treating non-specific symptoms is to consider diet and dietary supplements, not drugs. It is also important to note that many of the diets that people adopt to lose weight are often deficient in the vital ingredient that can make such an important contribution to weight control - magnesium.

We mentioned above that magnesium is an essential part of the process that allows insulin to play its part in the way that glucose is transferred into our cells. The cells need that energy to function normally so, if there isn't enough magnesium, the cells can't absorb the glucose and this is what follows:

1. Glucose levels become elevated.
2. Glucose is stored as fat and leads to obesity.
3. Elevated glucose leads to diabetes.
4. Obesity puts a strain on the heart.
5. Excess glucose becomes attached to certain proteins (glycated), leading to kidney damage, neuropathy, blindness, and other diabetic complications.
6. Insulin-resistant cells don't allow magnesium into the cells.
7. Further magnesium deficiency leads to hypertension.
8. Magnesium deficiency leads to cholesterol build-up and both these conditions are implicated in heart disease.

Syndrome X, according to Dr. Gerald Reaven, the individual who coined the term, may be responsible for a large percentage of the heart and artery disease that occurs today. Unquestionably, magnesium deficiency is a major factor in the origins of each of its signs and symptoms, from elevated triglycerides and obesity to disturbed insulin metabolism.

INSULIN RESISTANCE

Food. Food. Glorious Food.

We've made lots of references and observations about food. Well, it's one of the keys to truly great weight management. It's time now to take a closer look at the way that specific foods can make you gain unwanted weight at an alarming rate and stack the fat around your belly.

Insulin is a very powerful hormone and, as you might expect, it can produce very powerful reactions in humans. You've probably seen news items and articles referring to the glycemic index. Foods that feature at the top of this index are a cause of massive increases in insulin secretion and this produces intense cravings, hunger and an increase in fat production. Foods that score high on the glycemic index are a disaster for healthy weight control and a menace to good health. There's a great deal of debate about saturated or unsaturated fats. All of these components have some level of importance. However, nutritionists and doctors virtually never mention the most important and significant components of food which can lead to weight gain and obesity. We need to lift the lid right now on food processing techniques

We've identified a key role that insulin plays in the body: it opens up sites on cell membranes to allow the flow of glucose, a cell's source of energy. Cells that no longer respond to the signals from insulin and refuse the entry of glucose are called insulin-resistant. As a result, blood glucose levels rise and the body produces more and more insulin. Glucose and insulin are pumped around the body, causing tissue damage that results in further depletion of magnesium, an increased risk of heart disease and the likelihood of adult onset diabetes.

So, get your weight loss cure today. Start taking magnesium, soak in Epsom Bath Salts or spray it on your body and watch the weight drop off. Sometimes it really is the simplest things that can make the most dramatic difference. In this case, we're highlighting magnesium as one of the best allies we can recruit to our weight control cause.

Helpers - Summary

The power of sunshine and the Vitamin D connection

Magnesium and weight loss

Syndrome X

Insulin resistance

Relieving health issues with smart nutrition

Disclaimer:

The information you have read in this chapter needs to be matched with your current medical status to determine how to use these fantastic weight loss aids safely and effectively. Please consult with a Functional Medicine Specialist in order to take these supplements safely. I will be happy to recommend a suitable professional in your area. Just contact me on beranparry@gmail.com



Chapter 14: Fifty, Fit and Fab PALEO KETO Delicious Recipes at your disposal

All these delicious recipes are unbelievably tasty and they are ALL:

Grain free

Gluten free

Dairy free

Sugar Free

Processed Free

Low Sodium

The great news is that they are all suitable for every day use or whenever you want to create mouth wateringly tantalising delights.

Enjoy and to benefit even more consider downloading the Fifty,Fit and Fab Cookbook



SKINNY DELICIOUS
SMOOTHIES

Paleo KETO Epigenetic Smoothies

1. Tantalizing Key Lime Pie Smoothie

Ingredients:

1 cup coconut milk

1 cup ice

1/2 avocado

zest and juice of 2 limes

Pure liquid stevia to taste

1 tablespoon hemp protein powder

Instructions:

Add all ingredients to Vitamix or blender and blend until smooth.

2. High Protein and Nutritional Delish Smoothie

Ingredients:

1 cup almond milk

1/2 Avocado

4 Strawberries

1/2 Bananas (Very ripe)

1/2 cup Raw Kale or spinach

1/4 cup Carrot or 100 % Orange Juice (legal) (water can be subbed)

1 cup Coconut Yogurt..or almond milk)

1 tablespoon hemp protein powder

Instructions:

Add everything to your blender, Bullet, Ninja, etc

More water or ice can be added to help with your preferred texture/thickness.

3. Voluptuous Vanilla Hot Drink

Ingredients:

3 cups unsweetened almond milk (or 1 1/2 cup full fat coconut milk + 1 1/2 cups

water)

Stevia to taste

1 scoop of hemp protein

1/2 Tbsp. ground cinnamon (or more to taste)

1/2 Tbsp. vanilla extract

Instructions:

Place the almond milk into a pitcher. Place ground cinnamon, hemp, anilla extract in a small saucepan over medium high heat. Heat until the pure liquid stevia is just melted and then pour the pure liquid stevia mixture into the pitcher.

Stir until the pure liquid stevia is well combined with the almond milk. Place the pitcher in the fridge and allow to chill for at least two hours. Stir well before serving.

4. Almond Butter Smoothies

Ingredients:

1 scoop of hemp protein
1 Tablespoon natural almond butter
1 cup of hemp milk
1 banana, preferably frozen for a creamier shake
few ice cubes

Instructions:

Blend all ingredients together and enjoy!

5. Baby Kale Pineapple Smoothie

Ingredients:

1 cup almond milk

1/2 cup frozen pineapple

1 cup Kale

1 tablespoon hemp protein powder

Instructions:

Place the almond milk, pineapple, and greens in the blender and blend until smooth.

6. Vanilla Blueberry Smoothie

Ingredients:

2 cups hemp milk

1 c fresh blueberries

Handful of ice OR 1 cup frozen blueberries

1 Tbsp flaxseed oil

2 tblsp hemp protein powder

Instructions:

Combine milk, and fresh blueberries plus ice (or frozen blueberries) in a blender.

Blend for 1 minute, transfer to a glass, and stir in flaxseed oil.

7. Zesty Citrus Smoothie

Ingredients:

1 cup almond milk

half cup lemon juice

1 med orange peeled, cleaned, and sliced into sections

Handful of ice

1 Tbsp flaxseed oil

2 tsp hemp protein powder

Instructions:

COMBINE milk, lemon juice, orange, and ice in a blender.

Blend for 1 minute, transfer to a glass, and stir in flaxseed oil.



SKINNY DELICIOUS
SOUPS

Paleo KETO Epigenetic Soups

1. Creamy Chicken Soup

Ingredients:

1/2 cup coconut oil, olive oil, or other oil of choice

2 stalks celery, finely diced

2 medium carrots, finely diced

6 cups low sodium chicken broth

1/2 cup cool water 1 teaspoon dried parsley

1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

1 bay leaf

2 teaspoons low sodium salt 3 cups cooked chicken, cubed

1 1/2 cups coconut milk (1 can full-fat canned or homemade; or pureed cauliflower; see Notes for alternate version)

Instructions:

Place oil in a large soup pot over medium heat. Add the celery and carrots. Cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, 10 to 15 minutes.

Add broth. If using arrowroot, place it and 1/2 cup cool water in a small bowl or jar and whisk or shake to combine. Add to pot along with parsley, thyme, bay leaf, and low sodium salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until bubbly and thickened (if using arrowroot).

Reduce heat, just enough to maintain a boil, and cook, stirring occasionally for 15 minutes.

Stir in coconut milk (or pureed cauliflower) and chicken and heat through. This is a fairly thick soup; if you like it thinner, add more water, broth, or coconut milk and heat through. Remove bay leaf just before serving. Leftovers may be frozen.

Note:

Alternatively, you can use pureed cauliflower instead of the coconut milk. This version is just as creamy.

To puree the cauliflower, place florets from two medium heads in a pot. Optionally, add a peeled and smashed garlic clove. Add water to cover and about 1/2 tablespoon low sodium salt. Boil 20 minutes or until soft. Drain away water and puree until very smooth using hand blender or other method. Yield is about 4 cups; add the entire amount to the soup.

2. Delicious Lemon-Garlic Soup

Option – add 6 shrimps

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon crushed and chopped fresh garlic

6 cups good-quality low sodium shellfish stock (or mushroom or chicken stock)

2 eggs

1/3 to 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon coconut flour for thickening

1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper

chopped fresh cilantro or parsley, if desired

Instructions:

In a 4-quart pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat and saute the garlic for 1-2 minutes, or until just fragrant. Do not let the garlic brown.

Reserve 1/2 cup of the stock to mix with the eggs. Pour the remaining 5 1/2 cups of stock into the pot with the garlic. Let the mixture come to a simmer.

In a small bowl, whisk together the eggs, lemon juice, arrowroot, white pepper, and half of a cup of reserved stock. Pour the mixture into the simmering stock and stir until it all thickens--this will only take a few minutes.

Serve the soup hot, sprinkled with fresh cilantro or parsley.

3. Turkey Squash Soup

Ingredients:

1 large acorn squash

1/2 teaspoon olive oil

low sodium salt and pepper to taste

2 cups chicken or vegetable stock

1/4 cup coconut milk

1-2 turkey breasts shredded

3/4 teaspoon ground ginger

Pinch or two of cayenne pepper

Pomegranate seeds and/or sliced almonds, for serving

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 400. Cut the acorn squash in half and scoop out the seeds and pulp. Brush each half with about 1/4 teaspoon olive oil and sprinkle with low sodium salt and pepper. Place in a foil-lined baking pan and roast, cut sides up, until fork tender (about an hour).

When the squash is cool enough to handle, scoop out the flesh and place it in a medium saucepan, or in a blender if you don't have an immersion blender.

Add the remaining ingredients and process with an immersion blender (or regular blender) until smooth. Place the saucepan over medium heat and cook, stirring often, until heated through. Serve hot or warm, with pomegranate seeds and/or sliced almonds.

4. Cheeky Chicken Soup

Ingredients:

2 large organic chicken breasts, skin removed and cut into ½ inch strips
1 28oz can of diced tomatoes
32 ounces low sodium organic chicken broth
1 sweet onion, diced
2 cups of shredded carrots
2 cups chopped celery
1 bunch of cilantro chopped fine
4 cloves of garlic, minced - I always use one of these
2 Tbs tomato paste
1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp cumin
low sodium salt & fresh cracked pepper to taste
olive oil
1-2 cups water

Instructions:

In a crockpot place a dash of olive oil and about ¼ cup chicken broth. Add onions, garlic, jalapeno, low sodium salt and pepper and cook until soft, adding more broth as needed.

Then add all of your remaining ingredients and enough water to fill to the top of your pot. Cover and let cook on low for about 2 hrs, adjusting low sodium salt & pepper as needed.

Once the chicken is fully cooked, you should be able to shred it very easily. I simply used the back of a wooden spoon and pressed the cooked chicken against the side of the pot.

Top with avocado slices and fresh cilantro. Enjoy!

5. Ginger Carrot Delight Soup

Ingredients:

3 tbsp unsalted butter or coconut oil
1 1/2 pounds carrots (6-7 large carrots), sliced
2 cups chopped white or yellow onion
1 cup diced turkey breast
low sodium salt
2 teaspoons minced ginger
2 cups low sodium chicken stock
2 cups water
3 large strips of zest from an orange

Instructions:

Heat up the butter or coconut oil in a large soup pot.

Add the chopped carrots, turkey breast and onion to the pot and cook over medium heat for 5-10 minutes. Don't allow the carrots or onion to brown.

Add in the remaining ingredients (ginger, orange zest, water, and stock). The orange zest will be pulled out prior to puréeing so make sure they are in large, easy to identify strips rather than small pieces.

Bring to a boil then simmer for 10 minutes.

Remove orange zest strips.

Purée the mixture with an immersion blender. Or divide into 3-4 batches and blend in a regular blender.

I garnished my soup with a touch of olive oil and some freshly ground low sodium salt and pepper.

6. Wonderful Watercress Soup

Ingredients:

1 quart low sodium chicken stock
1 medium leek
1 bunch water cress
1 large onion
1/2 celeriac root skinned and chopped
2 cups diced chicken breast – organic
low sodium salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

Gently heat the chicken stock in the pot.

In the fry pan sauté the onion, leek and celeriac until soft.

Place the onion, leek, chicken and celeriac in the pot of stock reserving 1/3 aside.

Season with low sodium salt and pepper.

Add the bunch of watercress and simmer a few minutes until it is wilted.

With the immersion blender blend the soup.

Add the chopped vegetables that you reserved, back into the pot.

7. Celery Cashew Cream Soup

Ingredients:

300 grams celery, washed and chopped

1 small onion, chopped

1.5 tbsp olive oil

500 mls vegetable stock

40 grams cashew nuts

low sodium salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan then add the celery and onion, stir to coat with oil. Turn the heat low and put the lid on leaving the vegetables to sweat for 5 minutes.

Add the garlic, give a quick stir then add the vegetable stock and simmer for 10 minutes.

Add the cashew nuts to the saucepan and simmer for another 5 minutes or until the celery is cooked through.

Tip the soup mix into a blender and purée until smooth.

Season with the low sodium salt and pepper and serve.



Paleo KETO Epigenetic Salads

1. Incredibly Delish Avocado Tuna Salad

Ingredients:

1 avocado
1 lemon, juiced, to taste
1 tablespoon chopped onion, to taste
5 ounces cooked or canned wild tuna
low sodium salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

Cut the avocado in half and scoop the middle of both avocado halves into a bowl, leaving a shell of avocado flesh about 1/4-inch thick on each half.

Add lemon juice and onion to the avocado in the bowl and mash together. Add tuna, low sodium salt and pepper, and stir to combine. Taste and adjust if needed.

Fill avocado shells with tuna salad and serve.

2. Italian Tuna Bonanza Salad

Ingredients:

10 sun-dried tomatoes
2 (5 oz) can of tuna
1-2 ribs of celery, diced finely
2 Tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
1 cloves garlic, minced
3 Tablespoons finely chopped parsley
1/2 Tablespoon lemon juice
low sodium salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

Prepare the sun-dried tomatoes by softening them in warm water for 30 minutes until soft. Then, pat the tomatoes dry and chop finely.

Flake the tuna. and mix the tuna together with the chopped tomatoes, celery, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, parsley, and lemon juice. Add low sodium salt and pepper to taste.

If not serving immediately, mix with extra olive oil just before serving.

Optional: Make cucumber boats with them.

3. Rosy Chicken Supreme Salad

Ingredients:

For the chicken:

450g chicken mince, free range of course

1 long red chili, finely chopped with the seeds

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

Little nob of fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped

1 stem lemon grass, pale section only, finely chopped

1/2 bunch of coriander stems washed and finely chopped (I don't waste anything, save the leaves for the salad)

2 1/2 tbsp fish sauce

1/2 lime rind grated

1/2 lime, juiced

A pinch of low sodium salt

Coconut oil for frying (about 3 tablespoons)

For the salad:

1/4 red cabbage, thinly sliced

1 large carrot, peeled and grated

1/2 Spanish onion, thinly sliced

2 tbsp green spring onion, chopped

1/2 bunch of fresh coriander leaves (saved from the stems used in the chicken)

A handful of fresh mint or Thai basil if available

1/2 cup crashed roasted cashews or some sesame seeds

For the dressing:

2 tbsp olive oil

3 tbsp lime juice

1 tbsp fish sauce

1 small red chili, finely chopped

Instructions:

Once you've prepared all your ingredients for the chicken, heat 1 tbsp of coconut oil in a large frying pan or a wok to high.

Throw in lemongrass, chili, garlic, coriander stems and ginger and stir fry for about a minute until fragrant.

Add chicken mince and lime zest. Stir and break apart the mince with a wooden mixing spoon until separated into small chunks (this might take a while as chicken mince is quite sticky).

The meat will now be changing to white colour.

Add fish sauce and lime juice. Stir through and cook for a further few minutes. Total cooking time for the chicken should be about 10 minutes.

Prepare the salad base by mixing together sliced red cabbage, onion grated carrot, and fresh herbs.

Mix all dressing ingredients and toss through the salad.

Serve cooked chicken mince on top of the dressed salad and topped with roasted cashews, dried shallots, coconut flakes and extra fresh herbs.

4. Sexy Italian Tuna Salad

Ingredients:

10 sun-dried tomatoes
2 (5 oz) can of tuna
1-2 ribs of celery, diced finely
2 Tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
1 cloves garlic, minced
3 Tablespoons finely chopped parsley
1/2 Tablespoon lemon juice
low sodium salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

Prepare the sun-dried tomatoes by softening them in warm water for 30 minutes until soft. Then, pat the tomatoes dry and chop finely.

Flake the tuna.

Mix the tuna together with the chopped tomatoes, celery, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, parsley, and lemon juice. Add low sodium salt and pepper to taste.

If not serving immediately, mix with extra olive oil just before serving.

Optional: Make cucumber boats with them.

5. Skinny Chicken salad

Ingredients:

Salad:

- 1 small head (or 4 cups) savoy cabbage, finely shredded –
- 1 cup carrot, julienned
- 1/4 cup scallions, trimmed and julienned
- 1/4 cup radishes, julienned
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh mint, chopped
- 2 cups cooked organic chicken

Vinaigrette:

- 2 tablespoons coconut or rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil (use unrefined or cold-pressed)
- juice of 1/2 a lime
- 1 chipotle pepper - optional
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, grated

Instructions:

Salad – Combine cabbage, carrots, scallions and radishes. Top with chicken, cilantro and mint and set aside.

Vinaigrette –Combine the vinaigrette ingredients. Taste to see if it needs any adjustments. If it is too spicy, you can add more lime juice to counteract it.

Drizzle salad with vinaigrette & enjoy.

6. Turkey Taco Salad

Ingredients:

1/2 lbs (ish) leftover turkey, cooked and chopped
1 1/2 Tbsp taco seasoning (recipe follows)
1 tblsp. coconut or olive oil and 1 tblsp rice vinegar
1/4 c. water
Shredded lettuce

Optional Toppings - sliced olives, tomatoes, red onion, avocado, bell peppers, crushed sweet potato chips

Taco Seasoning:

Mix together, 4 Tbsp. chili powder, 1 tsp each garlic powder, onion powder, and oregano, 2 tsp each paprika and cumin, 4 tsp low sodium salt, and 1/8-1/4 tsp red pepper flakes.

Instructions:

In a skillet, heat 1 teaspoon oil and add in chicken - I like to fry it for a minute to give some extra flavor. Add in water and taco seasoning, let simmer until liquid is gone.

Meanwhile, shred, chop, and dice all your toppings.

Assemble, lettuce, optional toppings, chicken, leftover oil and vinegar dressing, and crushed chips.

7. Cheeky Turkey Salad

Ingredients:

For the Turkey:

1 lb boneless turkey breasts
1 tbsp olive oil
low sodium salt and pepper, to taste

For the Salsa:

1 large tomato, quartered
1/2 red onion, cut into large chunks
1 garlic clove, peeled
1 small bunch of cilantro leaves
Juice of 1 lime
low sodium salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375 F.

Bake turkey breasts dipped in olive oil on a baking sheet for 35 to 40 minutes, until no longer pink in the center.

While baking, add all salsa ingredients to a food processor and pulse using the chopping blade until finely chopped. Transfer the salsa to a large bowl and clean out the food processor. You will be using it to shred the turkey.

(If you don't have a food processor, just dice the tomato, onion, pepper, cilantro and garlic and add to a bowl with the lime juice, low sodium salt and pepper).

Remove turkey from the oven and allow to cool. Once cool enough to handle, cut each breast into three or four smaller pieces and add to the food processor. Pulse using the chopping blade until shredded.

Add turkey to bowl with salsa and mix well with a fork.

Refrigerate for at least two hours until turkey salad is chilled.



S K I N N Y

DELICIOUS
EGG DISHES

Paleo KETO Epigenetic Egg Meals

1. Spicy Spinach Bake

Ingredients:

6 eggs

1 bunch fresh spinach chopped (a box of frozen will do if you do not have fresh)

1/2 tsp hot pepper flakes

Olive oil

Low sodium Salt and pepper

Instructions:

Scramble the eggs in a bowl. Add the spinach, low sodium salt and pepper.

Scramble together. Heat a large non-stick skillet with about 1/2 cup olive oil.

When the oil is hot put the hot pepper flakes in then pour the mixture in. When it starts to cook on the bottom, flip it over.

Try not to cook it until it is dry, take it out when it is medium scrambled. Let cool and eat.

2. Spectacular Eggie Salsa

Ingredients:

2 pounds fresh ripe tomatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped
2 to 3 serrano or jalapeño chillies, seeded for a milder sauce, and chopped
2 garlic cloves, peeled, halved, green shoots removed
1/2 small onion, chopped
2 tablespoons oil
Low sodium salt to taste
4 to 8 eggs (to taste)
Chopped cilantro for garnish

Instructions:

Place the tomatoes, chillies, garlic and onion in a blender and puree, retaining a bit of texture.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over high heat in a large, heavy nonstick skillet, until a drop of puree will sizzle when it hits the pan.

Add the puree and cook, stirring, for four to ten minutes, until the sauce thickens, darkens and leaves a trough when you run a spoon down the middle of the pan. It should just begin to stick to the pan.

Season to taste with salt, and remove from the heat. Keep warm while you fry the eggs.

Warm four plates. Fry the eggs in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat.

Use the remaining tablespoon of oil if necessary. Cook them sunny side up, until the whites are solid but the yolks still runny.

Season with salt and pepper, and turn off the heat. Place one or two fried eggs on each plate.

Spoon the hot salsa over the whites of the eggs, leaving the yolks exposed if possible. Sprinkle with cilantro and serve.

3. Scrambled Eggs with Chilli

Ingredients:

4 fresh green chillies with skins removed

2 tablespoons (30g or 1 oz) coconut oil

1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped

6 eggs

1/4 cup (62ml or 2 fl oz) coconut milk

low sodium salt to taste

Instructions:

After removing chilli skins, remove and discard seeds and finely chop remaining chilli.

Beat eggs, coconut milk and salt in a bowl and set aside.

Heat oil in a medium size saucepan over a medium heat.

Reduce heat to low and add egg mixture to saucepan and mix well.

Scatter chilies over mixture.

Cook over a low heat until eggs are cooked.

Serves 4. Serve hot.

4. Spectacular Spinach Omelet

Ingredients:

2 eggs

1.5 cups raw spinach

coconut oil, about 1 tbsp

1/3 c tomatoes and onion salsa (lightly fried in pan)

1 tbsp fresh cilantro

Instructions:

Melt coconut oil on medium in frying pan. Add spinach, cook until mostly wilted. Beat eggs and add to pan.

Flip once the egg sets around the edge. When it's almost done add the salsa on top just to warm it. Move to plate and add cilantro.

Serves one.

5. Outstanding Veggie Omelette

Ingredients:

3 eggs, beaten

1 carrot, matchstick cut

3 scallions, diagonal sliced

1 handful tiny broccoli florets or whatever leftover veggies you have

Bits of leftover cooked turkey

Safflower oil

Low sodium salt

Instructions:

Heat oil in a wok or large cast iron skillet over medium heat, until hot enough to sizzle a drop of water.

Add broccoli and carrots, stir fry 2 min. until soft.

Add cooked turkey, stir fry 1 min. until heated through.

Add scallions and eggs, scramble.

Add salt to taste. Serve.

6. Spicy India Omelet

Ingredients:

3 Eggs

1 Onion, chopped

4 Green Chilli (optional)

1/4 cup Coconut grated

Low sodium Salt asrequired

1 tblspoon olive oil

Instructions:

Beat the Eggs severely.

Mix chopped onion, rounded green chilli, salt and grated coconuts with eggs.

Heat oil on a medium-low heat, in a pan.

Pour the mixture in the form of pancakes and cook it on the both sides.

7. Spicy Scrambled Eggs

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 red onion, finely chopped
1 medium green pepper, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
1 chilli, seeded and cut into thin strips
3 ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 large organic eggs

Instructions:

Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy, preferably nonstick skillet over medium heat.

Add the onion and cook until soft, 6 to 7 minutes.

Add the pepper and chilli and continue cooking until soft, another 4 to 5 minutes.

Add in the tomatoes, and salt and pepper to taste and cook uncovered, over low heat for 10 minutes.

Add the eggs, stirring them into the mixture to distribute.

Cover the skillet and cook until the eggs are set but still fluffy and tender, about 7 to 8 minutes. Divide between 4 plates and serve.



SKINNY DELICIOUS
NO GRAIN MUESLI

Paleo KETO Epigenetic Breakfasts (Grain Free)

1. Divine Protein Muesli

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsweetened unsulfured coconut flakes
- 1 tbsp chopped walnuts
- 1 tbsp raw almonds (~10)
- 1 tbsp chocolate chips (soy, dairy, and gluten free brand)
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon (Ceylon)
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 scoop hemp protein

Instructions:

In a medium bowl layer coconut flakes, walnuts, almonds, raisins and chocolate chips.

Sprinkle with cinnamon.

Pour cold almond milk over the muesli and eat with a spoon.

2. Ultimate Skinny Granola

Ingredients:

1 cup of unsweetened coconut milk or unsweetened almond milk or kefir

Stevia liquid to taste

1 tspoon of unsalted pecan pieces

1 tspoon of unsalted walnut pieces

1 tspoon of silvered almonds

1 tspoon of unsalted pistachios

1 tspoon of unsalted raw pine nuts

1 tspoon of unsalted, raw sunflower/safflower seeds

1 tspoon of unsalted, raw pumpkin seeds

2 Tbspoons of frozen or fresh berry selection (e.g. blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, or other kinds etc)

Instructions:

Put all the nuts & seeds in a breakfast bowl.

If using unsweetened milk, you could optionally add a teaspoon of pure liquid stevia and stir it well in.

Add the berries and milk.

If using frozen berries, wait for 2-3 minutes for them to get warmer.

The berries will now release some colour into the milk, making it look really interesting. Enjoy!

3. High Protein Breakfast Gold

Ingredients:

1/2 cup (c). Flax-Meal, golden

1/2 c. Chia seed

Stevia liquid to taste

2 tbs. dark ground cinnamon

1 tbs. hemp protein powder

2 tbs. coconut oil, melted

1 tsp. vanilla extract

3/4 c. + 2 tbs. hot water

Instructions:

Begin to spread the dough out until its super thin, onto a parchment paper lined cookie sheet. Bake at 325 for 15 minutes, then drop it down to 300 and leave for 30 minutes.

Before dropping it, pull out the sheet and cut it. Put it back into the oven exactly like this, don't separate the pieces.

When the 30 minutes are up, pull it out and separate the pieces.

Drop the pieces to 200 degrees F for 1 hour. They will be completely dried out at this point.

Enjoy with almond or other nut milk!

4. Sweetie Skinny Crackers

Ingredients:

1 egg
pure liquid stevia to taste
1 Tbspn coconut oil, melted
1.5 cups almond flour
.5 cup coconut flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350°

In a large bowl, whisk together the egg, pure liquid stevia and melted coconut oil

Add the coconut and almond flour and stir to combine.

Give the dough a couple of kneads so it's well incorporated.

Turn the dough onto a piece of parchment paper and flatten a bit with your hands.

Place another piece of parchment on top and roll out with a rolling pin until it's about 1/8 inch thick.

Remove the top piece of parchment and cut the dough into 1/4 inch squares for cereal, and about 2"x3" for crackers

Sprinkle the cinnamon into the dough mixture.

Slide the dough with the bottom parchment paper onto a baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes.

Turn down the oven to 325° and bake for another 10-15 minutes, or until the cereal / crackers are crisp.

5. Gutsy Granola

Ingredients:

1 cup cashews

3/4 cup almonds

1/4 cup pumpkin seeds, shelled

1/4 cup sunflower seeds, shelled

1/2 cup unsweetened coconut flakes

1/4 cup coconut oil

Stevia to taste

1 tsp vanilla

low sodium salt to taste

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the cashews, almonds, coconut flakes and pumpkin seeds into a blender and pulse to break the mixture into smaller pieces.

In a large microwave-safe bowl, melt the coconut oil, vanilla, and stevia together for 40-50 seconds. Add in the mixture from the blender and the sunflower seeds, and stir to coat.

Spread the mixture out onto the baking sheet and cook for 20-25 minutes, stirring once, until the mixture is lightly browned. Remove from heat. Add low sodium salt.

Press the granola mixture together to form a flat, even surface.

Cool for about 15 minutes, and then break into pieces.



SKINNY DELICIOUS
MAIN COURSES

Paleo KETO Epigenetic Main Meals (Lunch or Dinner)

1. Delicious Turkey Veggie Lasagne

Ingredients:

For the meat sauce:

- 1 large yellow onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 lbs. ground turkey
- 1/2 cup tomato paste
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup red wine
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 sprigs thyme
- low sodium salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

For the lasagne:

- 1 eggplant, sliced lengthwise thinly
- 1 tsp low sodium salt
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 yellow squash, sliced thinly
- 1/2 cup torn fresh basil leaves
- 8 oz. white mushrooms, sliced
- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 2 large zucchini, sliced lengthwise into ribbons

For the topping:

- 1/2 head cauliflower
- 1 tbsp olive oil

1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp low sodium salt
Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Instructions:

To make the meat sauce, place the onion and garlic in a food processor and pulse to finely chop.

Heat the olive oil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and season with low sodium salt and pepper. Cook for 12-15 minutes until beginning to brown, stirring frequently.

Add the turkey to the pot and season with low sodium salt and pepper.

Cook for 15 minutes until browned. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add the red wine to the pan and cook for 5 more minutes.

Add the tomato sauce, bay leaf, and thyme to the pan. Bring to a simmer, and then add 1/2 cup water.

Cook at a low simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally and adding more water if necessary. Adjust seasonings to taste. Discard the bay leaf and thyme.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Sprinkle the eggplant with low sodium salt and set aside for 15 minutes to drain. Rinse and pat dry.

Heat one tablespoon of olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Cook the eggplant for 2-3 minutes per side until golden.

Layer the lasagne in a baking dish. Start by layering the yellow squash as the base. Add one third of the meat sauce on top of that, then lay the eggplant slices, fresh basil, and mushrooms.

Next add the rest of the meat sauce, then the spinach, zucchini, and finally drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with low sodium salt and pepper. Bake for 40-45 minutes.

While the lasagne is baking, place the cauliflower in a blender and process until it reaches a rice-like consistency.

Add to a skillet and sauté with the olive oil, garlic powder, low sodium salt, and pepper over medium heat.

Cook for 6-8 minutes until soft, adding a tablespoon of water if necessary. After the lasagne has cooked for 20 minutes, sprinkle with the cauliflower and return to the oven for the remaining cooking time. Serve hot.

2. Spicy Turkey Stir Fry

Ingredients:

2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken or turkey breasts, cut into 1-inch slices
2 tbsp coconut oil
1 tsp cumin seeds
1/2 each green, red, and orange bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 tsp garam masala
2 tsp freshly ground pepper
low sodium salt, to taste
Scallions, for garnish

For the marinade:

1/2 cup coconut cream
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tsp ginger, minced
1 tbsp freshly ground pepper
2 tsp low sodium salt
1/4 tsp turmeric

Instructions:

Place all of the marinade ingredients into a Ziploc bag. Add the chicken, close the bag, and shake to coat.

Marinate in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes, or up to 6 hours.

In a wok or large sauté pan, melt the coconut oil over medium-high heat.

Add the cumin seeds and cook for 2-3 minutes.

Add the marinated chicken/turkey and let cook for 5 minutes. Stir the chicken/turkey until it begins to brown, and then add the peppers, garam masala, and freshly ground pepper.

Sprinkle with low sodium salt. Cook for 4-5 minutes, stirring regularly, or until the bell pepper is cooked to desired doneness. Serve hot.

3. Roasted Lemon Herb Chicken

Ingredients:

12 total pieces bone-in chicken thighs and legs

1 medium onion, thinly sliced

1 tbsp dried rosemary

1 tsp dried thyme

1 lemon, sliced thin

1 orange, sliced thin

For the marinade:

5 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

6 cloves garlic, minced

Stevia to taste

Juice of 1 lemon

Juice of 1 orange

1 tbsp Italian seasoning – salt free

1 tsp onion powder

Dash of red pepper flakes

low sodium salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Instructions:

Whisk together all of the marinade ingredients in a small bowl. Place the chicken in a baking dish (or a large Ziploc bag) and pour the marinade over it. Marinate for 3 hours to overnight.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Place the chicken in a baking dish and arrange with the onion, orange, and lemon slices.

Sprinkle with thyme, rosemary, low sodium salt and pepper. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes.

Remove the foil, baste the chicken, and bake for another 30 minutes uncovered, until the chicken is cooked through.

4. Basil Turkey with Roasted Tomatoes

Ingredients:

2 turkey breasts
1 cup mushrooms, chopped
1/2 medium onion, chopped
1-2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Half cup thinly sliced fresh basil
low sodium salt and pepper, to taste
1 pint cherry tomatoes
Stevia to taste
Fresh parsley, for garnish

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Place the tomatoes on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil and stevia.

Sprinkle with low sodium salt and pepper and toss to coat evenly.

Bake for 15-20 minutes until soft.

While the tomatoes are roasting, heat one tablespoon of olive oil in a large pan over low heat. Add the onions and mushrooms and cook for 10-12 minutes to soften and caramelize, stirring regularly. Clear a space for the chicken.

Season the turkey with low sodium salt and pepper and then place it in the pan.

Simmer for 15 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through. Every 5 minutes or so, spoon the sauce in the pan over the turkey.

To assemble, divide the tomatoes between two plates. Place one turkey breast on each and then spoon the onions, mushrooms, and pan drippings over the turkey. Garnish with parsley.

5. Scrumptious Cod in Delish Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. cod fillets
- 1/3 cup almond flour
- 1/2 tsp low sodium salt
- 2-3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp walnut oil, divided
- 3/4 cup low sodium chicken stock
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/4 cup capers, drained
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions:

Stir the almond flour and low sodium salt together in a shallow bowl. Rinse off the fish and pat dry with a paper towel. Dredge the fish in the almond flour mixture to coat.

Heat enough olive oil to coat the bottom of a large skillet over medium-high heat along with one tablespoon walnut oil. Working in batches, add the cod and cook for 2-3 minutes per side to brown. Remove to a plate and set aside.

Add the chicken stock, lemon juice, and capers to the same skillet and scrape any browned bits off the bottom. Simmer to reduce the sauce by almost half. Remove from heat and stir in the remaining tablespoon of walnut oil.

To serve, divide the cod onto plates, drizzle with the sauce, and sprinkle with parsley.

6. Sensational Courgette Pasta and Turkey Bolognese

Ingredients:

4 medium zucchini

For the sauce:

1 lb ground turkey

1 small onion, chopped

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 tbsp coconut oil

1 tomato, chopped

1/2 jar of tomato sauce

1 tbsp Italian seasoning

low sodium salt and pepper to taste

Fresh basil, for garnish

Instructions:

Use a julienne peeler to slice the zucchini into noodles, stopping when you reach the seeds. Set aside.

If cooking zucchini noodles, simply add to a skillet and sauté over medium heat for 4-5 minutes.

Melt coconut oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add chopped onion and garlic and cook for 4-5 minutes.

Add ground turkey and brown the meat, stirring occasionally. Season with low sodium salt and pepper.

Add the chopped tomato, tomato sauce, and Italian seasoning and stir to combine. Simmer on low heat, stirring occasionally.

Add the sauce to the noodles and ENJOY.

7. Superior Salmon with Lemon and Thyme OR Use any White fish

Ingredients:

32 oz piece of salmon or any fresh white fish

1 lemon, sliced thin

1 tbsp capers

low sodium salt and freshly ground pepper

1 tbsp fresh thyme

Olive oil

Instructions:

Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper and place salmon, skin side down, on the prepared baking sheet.

Season salmon with low sodium salt and pepper. Arrange capers on the salmon, and top with sliced lemon and thyme.

Place baking sheet in a cold oven, then turn heat to 400 degrees F. Bake for 25 minutes. Serve immediately.

8. Spectacular Shrimp Scampi in Spaghetti Sauce

Ingredients:

For the Spaghetti:

1 spaghetti squash

Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

low sodium salt and pepper

1 tsp dried oregano

1 tsp dried basil

For the shrimp scampi:

8 oz. shrimp, peeled and deveined

3 tbsp butter

1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 cloves garlic, minced

Pinch of red pepper flakes

low sodium salt and pepper, to taste

1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

Juice of 1 lemon

Zest of half a lemon

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Place squash in the microwave for 3-4 minutes to soften.

Using a sharp knife, cut the squash in half lengthwise.

Scoop out the seeds and discard. Place the halves, with the cut side up, on a rimmed baking sheet.

Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with seasonings. Roast in the oven for 45-50 minutes, until you can poke the squash easily with a fork.

Let it cool until you can handle it safely. Then scrape the insides with a fork to shred the squash into strands.

After removing spaghetti squash from the oven, melt the butter and olive oil in a skillet over medium heat.

Add in the garlic and sauté for 2-3 minutes. Then add in the shrimp, low sodium salt, pepper, and a pinch of red pepper flakes.

Cook for 5 minutes, until the shrimp is cooked through.

Remove from heat and add in desired amount of cooked spaghetti squash.

Toss with lemon juice and zest.

Top with parsley.

9. Mouthwatering Stuffed Salmon

Ingredients:

1 lb wild Alaskan or sockeye salmon, cut into 2 pieces
6 oz raw shrimp, peeled, deveined and chopped
1 large egg
2 tbsp raw onions, chopped
2 tbsp Italian flat leaf parsley, chopped
2 tbsp almond meal (or almond flour)
2 tbsp coconut butter
1 clove garlic, minced
low sodium salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

For the Salmon:

Preheat oven to 400F

Pat dry the salmon filets with a paper towel.

Combine the cinnamon, coriander, cumin, cloves, and cardamom. Sprinkle evenly over the salmon filet side.

Heat an oven safe skillet (preferably cast iron) to medium high heat. Test the heat by placing a drop of water. It should immediately evaporate.

Add the coconut butter and let it melt.

Place the salmon filet side down and let sear for about 1-2 minutes. Flip and sear on the skin side for 1 minute.

Place the skillet inside the oven, with the skin side down.

Bake at 400F for 6-7 minutes.

For the Lime Mustard Mayo:

Combine dressing, lime juice, low sodium salt, and mustard.

Dip with salmon and enjoy!

10. Divine Prawn Mexicana

Ingredients:

1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp low sodium salt
1 lb. medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 avocado, pitted and diced
Shredded lettuce, for serving
Fresh cilantro, for serving
1 lime, cut into wedges

For the tortillas:

6 egg whites
1/4 cup coconut flour
1/4 cup almond milk
1/2 tsp low sodium salt
1/2 tsp cumin
1/4 tsp chili powder

Instructions:

Combine all of the tortilla ingredients together in a small bowl and mix well. Allow the batter to sit for approximately 10 minutes to allow the flour to soak up some of the moisture, and then stir again. The consistency should be similar to crepe batter.

While the batter is resting, heat a skillet to medium-high. Mix together the olive oil, chili powder, and low sodium salt and toss with the shrimp to coat.

Cook in the skillet for 1-2 minutes per side, until translucent. Set aside.

Coat the pan with coconut oil spray. Pour about 1/4 cup of batter onto the skillet, turning the pan with your wrist to help it spread out in a thin, even layer. Cook for 1-2 minutes, loosening the sides with a spatula. When the

bottom has firmed up, carefully flip over and cook for another 2-3 minutes until lightly browned, then set aside on a plate.

Repeat with remaining batter.

Top each tortilla with cooked shrimp, shredded lettuce, avocado, and cilantro. Serve with a lime wedge.



Paleo KETO Epigenetic Snacks

1. Butternut Squash-raw Veggie Dip

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked and peeled squash
- ½ cup COCONUT cream
- ½ teaspoon low sodium salt
- 1 teaspoon chipotle paste
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 ½ teaspoons finely chopped shallot
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon chili powder

Instructions:

Place squash in a medium bowl and smash with a fork. Add remaining ingredients, mixing until thoroughly combined.

Serve dip with carrot sticks, veggies, or SKINNY CHIPS.

2. Skinny Power Balls

Ingredients:

- 1 medium size cooked sweet potato
- 2 cups almond meal
- 1 tsp vanilla powder
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 3 egg yolks
- 4 Tbsp melted Coconut Oil
- 1-2 tsp liquid stevia (I used Sprouts liquid stevia)
- 3 Tbsp coconut flour (I used Coconut Secret brand)
- 1 cup of unsweetened shredded coconut and coconut flakes

Instructions:

Peel and mash cooked sweet potato until no more chunks left.

Mix in almond meal, vanilla powder, baking powder until everything incorporates.

Mix in the wet ingredients (egg yolks, melted coconut oil and liquid stevia), stir until everything combines.

Add 3 Tbsp coconut flour. Notice the mixture will be less wet but not too dry. Do not try to put too much coconut flour as it absorbs a lot of moisture and the balls would be too dry and flaky.

Line a baking sheet with a parchment paper. Pre-heat the oven for 350°F

Shape the balls into ping-pong ball size and roll each of them in the bowl of unsweetened shredded coconut and coconut flakes.

Bake the balls in 350°F for about 25 minutes or until the edges turned golden brown or they are dried out already. Remove from heat and let them cool down. The balls are soft when they're still warm but as they cooled down, they should be more firm. After they cooled down, put them in a fridge so they'll be more firm.

3. Delectable Parsnip Chips

Ingredients:

500g (1.1 pounds) Parsnips

1/4 Cup Coconut Oil, Melted

3 Tablespoons liquid stevia

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 200°C (392°F) and get out an oven proof dish.

Peel the parsnips and cut them into chip sized pieces and place into the oven proof dish.

Pour over the coconut oil and distribute evenly.

Drizzle over the liquid stevia and stir to combine well.

Place in the oven and cook for 15 minutes.

Remove from the oven and toss the parsnips over to allow the other side to brown.

Place back in the oven and cook for a further 10 to 15 minutes or until golden.

4. Skinny Power Snack

Ingredients:

1/2 Avocado

1/2 tsp Paprika

1/2 tsp low sodium salt

1/2 tsp Garlic Powder

Instructions:

Sprinkle with all the seasonings and enjoy.

5. Gummy Citrus Snack

Ingredients:

3/4 cup lemon juice, freshly squeezed*
1/4 cup apple juice freshly squeezed
4 Tbsp. good quality vegetarian gelatin
liquid stevia to taste
1/4 tsp. ginger (freshly grated or ground)
1/4 tsp. turmeric (freshly grated or ground)

Instructions:

In a small saucepan, whisk together citrus juice, and gelatin until there are no lumps. Heat the liquid over low heat until liquid is warmed and gelatin is completely dissolved.

Remove from heat and stir in liquid stevia, ginger and turmeric with a spoon.

Pour into a casserole dish*.

Refrigerate until liquid is set (at least 30 minutes).

Serve cold or at room temperature.



Chapter 15 : Introduction to FFF Skin Beauty in Midlife

There is no such thing as an ugly woman.

You deserve to love yourself and accept who you are!

All women are beautiful. You are beautiful, you are fabulous, we all are beautiful but the question is how do I reflect this beauty on my face, hair, body and soul? The answer is easy and doesn't need a lot of effort and money. All you need is few minutes of your time each day. Yes, just a few minutes each day so let's get started right now!

The skin types vary from person to person. Some have dry skin; some have oily skin while others have normal skin. My goal here is to help you to get your skin looking fabulous and rejuvenated using natural products from your kitchen! Yes, everyday household or kitchen items are the thing you can use to create glowing and healthy skin.

Not only can you treat your skin, no matter what type it may be, you can treat your hair with food items as well. No matter what products you find out there you will find a home treatment that is just as effective or even more so. For instance, women have been using Knox gelatin for many, many years to strengthen their nails. When they say beauty comes from the inside it is not just about the soul of a woman. The foods you eat affect the health of your body including your nails, skin and hair.

When it comes to choosing products for your face, skin, nails and hair you probably have found there are unlimited sources of products all claiming to be better than the next. Some are extremely expensive and tough to fit into the average budget today and others that may be cheap really do not do the job as you might expect. What do you do?

We all realize that taking good care of our health is a very important task but did you know that eating correctly and exercising is also a way to bring out your natural beauty? What I am about to share with you is not one of the latest fads that celebrities use or some ridiculously expensive new tonic that celebrities say they use.

Foods that Improve your Appearance from the Inside Out

Foods that will improve your general health will also improve your healthy appearance. A healthy glow is always a very attractive quality. Of course there are the obvious choices like eating plenty of green leafy vegetables. These are considered complex carbohydrates or 'slow' carbs which are excellent for your body. They take a long time to be processed in your system and contain vitamins and iron that is essential for healthy skin, nails and hair. Using balance in your diet with a combination of both vegetable carbohydrates, proteins, and good fats will not only bring health to your body but will enhance your outer beauty.

You want to eat foods every day that contain vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and iron to keep your body healthy and to keep it functioning correctly. Digestive problems can cause your body to build up toxins in the system that in an effort to leave the body can cause blemishes.

Consuming the following foods will not only help your overall health but will specifically help your outer appearance.

---- Supple Skin ----

Apple cider vinegar will really do wonderful things for your system. Some say it helps your body process sugar and fat which helps in weight control. For your skin it is wonderful because it helps to give it that supple quality. The experts say that it also helps in the shedding of dead skin. You can mix a teaspoon to a tablespoon in your juice or drink it straight if you can tolerate the taste. Organic apple cider vinegar is the optimum choice.

---- Prevent Premature Aging ----

Carrots: Vegetables like the green leafy ones we mentioned and other vegetables like carrots are important. The carotene in carrots is said to help to prevent premature aging. Known for their ability to improve eyesight they are also great for regulating the sugars in your body, detoxifying your liver which will help to prevent blemishes. Carrots are also a good source for the vitamins your body needs for healthy skin and hair. *Carrots contain a large amount of vitamin A plus other nutrients that are wonderful nourishing agents for the skin and do prevent dry skin. The list of benefits from eating carrots is impressive.*

Apples: Have you heard the expression, “an apple a day keeps the doctor away”? For skin that is youthful in appearance, you cannot beat the benefits of eating apples, especially Red Delicious and Granny Smith. Not only will eating apples help with the elasticity of your skin but can help to protect damage to your skin from UV rays. Apples contain procyanidin B-2 which is known to promote hair growth and help in the prevention of cell damage.

---- **Urinary Tract Health** ----

Cranberries: Consuming cranberry juice or eating cranberries will help with your urinary tract health.

---- **Prevent Wrinkles** ----

Garlic is something you can eat to help stop your skin from wrinkling because it restores tissues.

Another great food for preventing wrinkles from forming is **Sweet Potatoes**. They are loaded with vitamin A which does wonders for your skin in general. Your skin will be smoother and clearer. Sweet potatoes do not have the starch that the white potato has so it is a much healthier choice all around.

Foods that have natural bacteria like **Hard Cheeses** can prevent cavities and help stop bacteria growth in the mouth.

Other foods containing natural bacteria like **Yogurt** can help with your digestive health. Sugar can actually add to the problems of a yeast infection. The yogurt also is great for fighting tooth decay and helps to keep your teeth whiter.

Vitamins A, C and potassium (great for skin and hair): Consuming citrus type fruits will help the body form collagen which holds the skin cells together. *Be sure to include citrus fruit in your daily diet for its other health benefits like lots of vitamin C.*

Tomatoes which are a fruit rather than a vegetable like most think are also great for the skin and contain quantities of vitamins A, C and potassium.

Avocados are also a good source of potassium. They contain natural oils and vitamins that help both your skin and your hair.

Hair care: Bananas help to protect the elasticity of the hair which prevents the ends from splitting and it makes the hair soft and strong preventing breakage. Bananas keep the hair shiny and help it grow. They control dandruff and are great for repairing damaged hair while adding volume to the hair.

Skin care: Actually just rubbing the peel of the banana on the skin, especially where there are any irritations like acne or insect bites can be very beneficial. Using the pulp of the banana directly on the face by mashing it up and spreading it on will help to make the skin soft and supple as well.



More General Health Tips

Before moving on to specific health treatments, let's talk for a minute about getting proper exercise. Of course everyone knows that exercising every day is important to weight control but when you exercise you perspire. This actually clears the body of toxins that can cause blemishes and pimples. Toxins can only be released through the liver, the kidneys and the pores of the skin. As the toxins are released through the pores they will remain on the skin unless you wash them off after exercising. Failure to do this will increase your chances of getting a fungal or bacterial infection. Here are a few more things to consider:

Exercise also tones the body and skin and the more it is toned the better it will look and feel. The appearance of cellulite can be lessened by toning the muscles. The firmer and stronger the muscles the more elastic the skin will appear.

The blood flow and the oxygen level of the body is increased with exercise which in turn flows to the skin. If you are diabetic you will greatly benefit from regular exercise as this will reduce the risk of problems with the skin that can eventually lead to the amputation of limbs.

Exercise does relieve stress and advantages of this do extend to the complexion. Some experts say that stress will cause acne or at least cause flare-ups. Regular workouts can help make skin problems manageable.

Exercising helps the skin produce more of its natural oils which will keep your skin looking healthy, glowing and supple.



Skin, Face and Eye Care

The skin is the largest organ of the body and as we have discussed, caring for your skin begins with the healthy foods you eat. The outward appearance of the skin needs to be cared for on a regular basis. Skin that is smooth, supple and glowing in appearance is a thing of beauty. Caring for your skin does not need to take hours of your time each day nor does it need to cost thousands of dollars each year. My methods are a simple, safe and practical approach to caring for your skin using natural ingredients. You will use different foods and household items you most likely already have on hand. Here are a few of my favorite beauty secrets for keeping your skin, face and eyes looking amazing.

The following are recipes for making facial masks using common foods you most likely already have in your kitchen.

Follow these easy steps to get the pores clean and to have refreshed healthy looking skin:

1. Wash your hands before touching your face and remove your make up before washing your face.
2. Do not use hot water to wash your face. Use warm water and always try to finish up with cold water.
3. Massage special organic face cleansing products into your skin using circular motions all over your face. Start with your forehead, your nose and then your cheeks. Rinse your face with cold water and make sure you wash it off good.
4. Dry your face with a soft towel and do not rub your face with the towel but just tap it over your face.

Ways to Make Facial Masks at Home

Facial Masks are beneficial for many reasons but the most important is to draw out the toxins that are buried in the pores of your skin. Regular cleansing of the skin will only remove the surface layer of dirt that collects so using a facial mask after cleansing your face but before toning will greatly improve the overall health and glow of your skin. When applying any mask be sure to avoid the area around the eyes and the mouth. Use your fingers to gently spread a thin layer of the mask mixture to the skin, give it time to do its magic and then remove it with clear water and a soft cloth.

While you wait for the mask to work it is best to relax your body and mind. Listen to some soothing music or meditate. This is also a good time to

treat your eyes with kindness. Place cucumbers on the eyes to protect them and restore moisture. If you have dark circles you may want to try using used black tea bags or even green, white, or Chamomile tea bags that have been squeezed to remove excess water. Just place them over your eyes to remove puffiness and dark circles. This should be done two times per week.

The following is a list of easy homemade facial masks that can enhance health of your skin.

The 50-Cent Botox Alternative:

Nature's Face Lift !!

This is one time it is good to have egg on your face. The egg white is the best mask to lift your face. Eggs are very rich in the protein Albumen which is known to be nature's face lift. This is probably my favorite treatment because it is simple and works wonders. I have even found that my male friends are amazed at how well this works. Take an egg, crack it open to get the egg white and keep the yolk to use for something else later. Add a few drops of lemon juice and mix for a few seconds. Use a cotton ball to spread it over your face. Be sure to avoid using this mixture around the eyes, mouth and neck. Try to listen to relaxing, soft music while you lay down with your eyes closed. Leave the mask on for 20 minutes and then wash in nice cold water. For the best results you should use this mask twice a week. This mask really works well for oily skin.

There is yet another way to use your eggs as a facial mask and that is using the yolk of the egg only. This one will lift the face and smooth out any wrinkles plus help to prevent dry skin. Use two egg yolks and a teaspoon of sugar. Whisk the egg yolks until you have a consistent mixture and then you can slowly whisk in the sugar. You can apply this mixture in the same way as the egg whites but leave it on for 25 minutes. Then with warm water and a clean, soft cloth remove the egg. **This same treatment works for the neck as well!**

Shiny Alive Skin

The Olive oil gives your skin a beautiful alive and shining appearance. This is pretty straight forward. Put Olive oil on your face and neck keeping it there 10 minutes or longer if it is needed. There should not be any excess to remove.

Clean Your Face

Green Tea – Boil green tea for 3 minutes and leave to cool down. Then wash your face. The green tea helps the freshness and clarity of the skin and

also helps to get rid of bacteria. It also helps to relax muscles around the eyes which help to diminish the wrinkles around the eyes.

Eye Care

Besides using cucumbers or used tea bags for your dark circles you can try using potato slices placed over your eyes. This will help get rid of stress and tiredness. Potato slices can remove the puffiness under your eyes that spending long working days can create or that staring at a computer screen for hours on end will cause. Keep the slices on your eyes for 10 minutes.

Nature's Moisturizer

Honey is one of the best moisturizers for your skin. Spread it over your face for 5 minutes as a face mask. Do this twice a week as a regular regime.

Oranges are rich in vitamin C and do wonders for your skin. Dip a cotton ball into orange juice and wipe the face and neck every day. This will help to moisturize and revitalize your skin. Oranges not only taste delicious but are used in the manufacture of a lot of cosmetics because of their ability to revive and soften dry and cracked skin.

Dry Skin

Almond oil helps protect the skin from the sun. You can use almond oil in conjunction with an avocado mask making this great for any skin type but especially good for dry skin. Avocado contains the right amount of essential fatty acids, and it's good for dry skin. Use the meat from one half of a ripe avocado and mash it up. To this add about 6 teaspoons of sweet almond oil and mix it into the avocado mash. You can add essential oils if you wish. Add a couple of tablespoons of plain yogurt and mix until you get a good consistency. You can also add some honey which is a great moisturizer. Pat this onto your face with a cotton ball or sea sponge and leave it set for about 20 minutes. Finish by washing the face with lukewarm water which helps the mask give the skin youth and vitality.

Minimize The Pores

Tomatoes are the most important natural substance that helps minimize the pores of the face. Prepare the mask by taking the fruit of the tomato and the peel of half a lemon and mashing them both well. Then mix the two with a few drops of lemon juice. This is a mask that is placed on the face for 15 minutes and then washed with warm water. You can use this mask once a week.

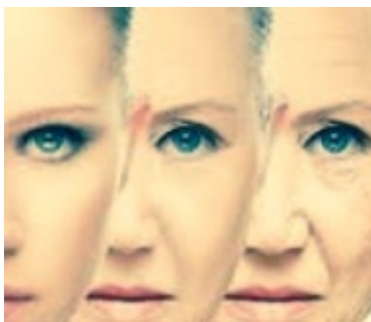
Repairing Discolored Skin

For brightening fair skin as well as fading dark spots you can use ½ ground cucumber, egg white and 2 scoops of powdered milk. Mix all the materials together and then apply this substance to your face. Leave the mixture for 20 minutes and then wash your face with warm water. You can use this treatment twice a week. Cucumber improves blood circulation making fair skin brighter, and over time will naturally lighten the complexion of darker skin. For this reason it works wonders on fading dark spots for both fair, medium and dark complexions. For discolorations on the body try using sweet almond oil. This will help to whiten dark spots and soften dry skin areas of the body.

Treating Acne And Pimples

This is very simple. Mix together one teaspoon of fresh lemon juice with one teaspoon of ground cinnamon. Use a cotton ball or swab to apply to the affected areas and leave it sit for 15 minutes. Then you can gently wash it off with cold water.

What Makes Wrinkles Appear On The Skin?



The appearance of wrinkles depends on the degree of exposure to harmful rays and generally women are less prone to skin damage than men. Women usually start with the appearance of wrinkles around age 35. However the onset of mental illness and physical conditions can affect the appearance of the skin, causing wrinkles to show up at an earlier age.

Stand-out Foods for Anti-Wrinkle/Anti-Aging Beauty Enhancement

Grape Antioxidant: There is an antioxidant agent contained in grape juice and seeds when transformed into sugars, tannins, vitamins and fruit acids that work on the smoothness of the skin. They create a peel to get rid of dead cells. The substances found in grape seeds tighten the skin and also fight free radicals that affect the skin tissue.

Recipe: *To make a mask to use as an anti-wrinkle agents mash grapes with honey (cluster of black grapes, washed well) and apply the mixture on the*

skin and leave for 20 minutes. Then rinse with warm water before applying moisturizing cream.

Bananas: Bananas are one of the materials that help to prevent wrinkles. Mix a banana with two tablespoons milk and after mixed well apply it to the face. Leave the mask on the face for 15 minutes and then finish with warm water.

Tomatoes against wrinkles: The secret is the lycopene in tomatoes is great for keeping your skin bright and works well as anti-wrinkle agent. Tomatoes clean the skin and are a gentle way to remove facial lines.

Recipe: *Mash two pieces of tomato after removing the seeds; mix them with the juice of half a lemon and a tablespoon of olive oil and apply this dough to the skin. Leave for 15 minutes and then rinse with warm water.*

Lemons benefits and uses:

- Folk medicine used lemon juice and the rind. Lemons have been used in history against the following diseases; scurvy, jaundice, tuberculosis, tachycardia, hemorrhoids, leprosy and against worms.
- Lemon contains both vitamin C and flavonoids that increase the body's immunities. Because these materials are antioxidants, they protect the stomach from cancer while flavonoids aid in Vitamin C absorption. The amount of vitamin C in the rinds is three times greater than the pulp.
- Lemons are rich in vitamin C which helps iron absorption within the digestive system and is one of the protectors of the body's cells against oxidative symptoms.
- Because lemons are rich in fiber they can help lower the cholesterol in the blood (LDL).
- Lemon is included in many of the refreshing recipes for skin lightening and skin tightening.
- Lemon acts as a disinfectant to the skin and works to reduce the swelling of the pores without causing dryness in the skin.

Cucumber Cleanser: Cucumbers contain a large amount of the mineral zinc, a natural cleansing property. Cucumbers also have a large proportion of the mineral zinc which is a cleanser for the face.

Recipe: *Cut the skin off the cucumbers and then cut thin slices. Put them on the face and neck and then leave for 20 minutes. Remove the slices and rinse your face with Baltonak or mineral water.*

Sun Rays and Your Skin

So be careful during the summer elements as much as possible and try not to stay a long time in the hot sun. You can prevent these risks by relying on nutrition for the prevention of diseases caused by the sun. Food that contain vitamin C, beta carotene, selenium and other basic foods are helpful as they reduce free radicals, protect you from skin cancer, prevent wrinkles, prevent photovoltaic aging, inflammation and immune changes from exposure

Foods That Help Protect Your Skin From Sun Exposure:

- **Tomato:** Cooking tomatoes is a highly effective way to help extract the private beta carotene and lycopene Flavonoid that protects the skin from the sun's harmful rays. In addition olive oil or avocado with tomato salad helps to absorb the tomato's helpful benefits.
- **Carrots, broccoli, sweet potatoes and spinach:** Lycopene belongs to a group which includes beta carotene in foods like carrots, broccoli, sweet potatoes and spinach.
- **Chocolate:** Chocolate contains many Flavonoids and antioxidants so having a cup of hot cocoa every day reduces the risk of ultraviolet radiation, as it reduces the appearance of solar wrinkles, especially in the neck and under the eyes.
- **Green tea:** Drink green tea daily to reduce the damage caused by the sun's rays and prevent skin cancer. Green tea has preventive properties that contains high levels of potent antioxidants that eliminate harmful free radicals that form when skin is exposed to the sunlight's ultraviolet rays.
- **Pomegranate:** Pomegranates play an active role in protecting the skin from ultraviolet radiation risks.
- **Omega 3 oils:** Omega 3 oils work on the immune system response to the risk of skin exposure to sunlight. Fish like salmon are great sources for Omega 3 oils.
- **Fruit and vegetables:** Fruits and vegetables have their own effectiveness in preventing skin diseases because they contain antioxidants, especially in citrus fruits and carrots.

Always remember that the best times for exposure to the sun less the health risks are when the sun is at an angle and not directly above you. The

best times are before 10am and after 4pm.

Beauty Secrets for Hair Care

Hair care has a few very basic ground rules so to speak that are the foundation to caring for your hair on a daily basis. These beauty secrets are the bare essentials. Do these things on a regular basis and you are off to a good start.

1. Avoid washing your hair in hot water.
2. Try to do oil bath treatments for your hair at least twice a week.
3. Massage your scalp in circles, brushing your hair once or twice a day to allow the blood flow.
4. Eat foods that contain vitamin B and iodine, especially those found in fruits, vegetables and fish.
5. If your hair is oily then try to avoid oily foods. Eat foods that contain vitamins A and B.

Let's take a minute to talk about how to correctly massage your scalp. This is a very important component to maintaining healthy, glowing hair. Healthy hair reflects how well you take care of it. The condition of your scalp depends on lots of massages regardless of your hair type. The best way to massage your scalp is to put your fingers together on the top of your head and push down with the palms of your hands to massage.

Just a side note here; everyone loses about 100 or less hairs daily. This is considered normal so if you do lose this amount or less you do not have any kind of problem. However, if you experience more hair loss each day then your hair needs to be treated with some herbs and oils. I will address this later in the book.

---- Shampooing Your Hair ----

Hair normally grows 1.5 cm to 2 cm or a ¼ inch monthly and usually hair grows faster in the summer time rather than the winter months and in day time more than night time. To make sure you maintain this healthy growth it is important to wash your hair with clean water and avoid shampooing your hair every day. Shampooing your hair too often will wash off the natural oils in your hair so a better way is to wash your hair two or three times per week. Always remember to massage through your hair while showering.

Speaking of shampooing your hair, thoroughly scrubbing the scalp with your fingertips is an excellent way to loosen the debris and oils of the hair. Always be sure to rinse your hair with cool water both before and after your

shampoo process. Using hot water will make the hair appear lifeless and limp. Cool water will make the hair look healthier and increase the volume of your hair.

According to salon experts, if you are using a very high quality professional or salon shampoo you really will not need to rotate your shampoos. However, it is better to change your shampoo products as a rule because using the same product will leave a coating on the hair strands that will build up over time and negate the benefits of the shampoo products. Changing the shampoo products will keep the strands clean and healthy.

The condition of your water can affect how well your hair products work. If you have hard water conditions you will need to change your shampoos products more often. For traveling you can always take little small bottles of shampoo for different types of water conditions. That way you will be covered in any circumstance you encounter while traveling.

When you are shampooing your hair you can prevent tangles by combing your conditioner gently through your hair with a wide toothed comb right in the shower before rinsing your hair. Take some time to detangle your hair but never pull on the hair. Don't brush your hair while it is still wet as this can make it break because you will stretch it too far.

Another thing to keep in mind is that certain medications that you ingest orally will exit through your hair. When this is the case you will probably want to change your shampoo and styling products frequently. If the product you choose works well for a couple washings but then changes and weighs down the hair then you need to change the product. This usually happens with the cheaper products.

---- Brushing Your Hair ----

Choose a hair brush depending on how thick your hair is and it's better to use a wooden brush to avoid splits ends. Allow your hair to breathe and get some sun. Let it down after you take a shower and let it dry; don't put it up while it's still wet. If you have coarse or naturally curly hair it is best to use a ceramic boar bristle brush because this will condense the hair leaving it shinier and with much less frizz.

Helpful Tips For Brushing Your Hair:

- Always be sure your comb is clean before using and gently comb out any tangles while the hair is wet. A comb with wide teeth is best to use on wet hair. Avoid brushing the hair while wet because wet

hair means fragile hair. Start combing at the ends and then move your way up until all the tangles are released.

- Before brushing your hair allow it to dry thoroughly to avoid damaging the follicles of the hair. This is much better than using a hair dryer which can dry out your hair. Try fluffing your hair occasionally as you comb by running your fingers through the strands to make your hair dry faster.
- To create more volume in your hair, separate your hair into three different sections using a wide tooth comb.
- Release the sections making sure they remain separated.
- Brushing your hair should begin from the roots working all the way to the ends of the hair strands. Repeat this for each section remembering where you created your sections.
- Fasten the sections and sleep with them for a night. Once you take these down in the morning your hair will have a very healthy and shiny appearance.

The Best Masks For Splits Ends And Frizzy Hair:

Split ends and frizz is one of the most common problems that we need to deal with during the summer time, especially with humidity. However, the main reason is not just that your hair is not being taken care of or that we are treating it badly. There are effective ways to fight frizz.

Shampooing your hair too much or blow drying it a lot makes your hair lose its natural oils. Also a lack of minerals and vitamins in your diet can adversely affect the health of your hair. Treating your hair badly is when you put your hair up while it is still wet, wearing your hair up most of the time and pulling or tugging on the hair. Treating your hair badly is also not letting your hair relax, using a lot of chemical products on your hair, combing or brushing your hair while it is still wet or drying your hair with a towel that is so hard it makes your hair tired and unhealthy. So what is the solution? First of all please stay away from all chemical products telling you it's what you need to get rid of frizz or dryness in your hair. These products cover your hair with foam for few hours giving it the illusion of looking good for a while but it will go back to what it was and be even worse. So here is what you need to do for your split ends and frizzy hair:

Cut the ends. No matter how long your hair it needs a trim every 6-8 weeks to get rid of split ends.

Use hair conditioner after shampooing your hair because hair conditioner doesn't need hot water after you wash your hair. Wrap it up with a towel and don't rub it hard. Leave this on your hair for a minute. Because wet hair is more likely to break, let your hair dry naturally in the air.

Make a schedule for oil baths for your hair (olive oil, Castor oil and almond oil).

Using hot temperatures while blow drying your hair and doing it very often without any kind of treatment for your hair makes it weak and unhealthy.

Eating healthy reflects on your hair too. Always remember to add plenty of foods that contain Vitamin A, C and B complex, also copper, iodine and iron. Fruits and vegetables are always a good source of the vitamins and minerals your hair needs to look and feel healthy.

Massage your scalp with sesame oil and then wrap it with a cloth before going to sleep. Wash your hair in the morning with a herb shampoo and then rinse with about 20 spoons of vinegar added to a liter of warm, not hot water.

Bananas and sesame oil: Combine one banana with one spoon of sesame oil, one spoon of honey and mix them all together. Apply the mixture to your hair and leave it for at least half an hour. Now finish this procedure by washing your hair in warm not cold water.

If you wanted to make your hair less frizzy and shiny you can use this mask. Mix some hair conditioner with a spoon of olive oil and a spoon of plain yogurt and then apply it to your hair before taking a shower. Wait half an hour before washing the mask off and you will notice the difference.

Almond oil comes in two types. There is sweet almond oil and bitter almond oil. Both types are extracted from the same fruit but each type has a special use which is completely separate from the other. Almond oil contains metals, acids and high percentages of phosphorus, potassium, magnesium and it helps to get rid of split ends and frizzy hair as well as moisturizing the skin. Almond oil can be used to get rid of the existing cracks in the foot or the hands and also helps to remove dark spots on the body and get rid of freckles. It also prevents wrinkles and adds luster and shine to dry, brittle hair. Make sure to use sweet almond oil (not bitter.)

Massage the scalp with olive oil and then comb it through the hair. Leave this on the hair for an hour and then wash the hair with warm water. It is used for dry hair because it helps to hydrate and soften hair.

My Secrets For Preventing Hair Loss In Women:

Hair loss in women can be caused by over use of chemical products on the hair that build up over time. When this happens the follicles of the hair become clogged and the flow of blood to the follicles preventing proper circulation.

1. If your hair falls a lot, try a solution called Regaine obtainable from any pharmacy.
2. Onions are very good for your hair and they prevent hair loss. The juice of the onion helps blood flow so onion juice is highly recommended for massaging your scalp.
3. You can also try mixing 2 egg yolks with some olive oil and then put it on your hair. Cover your hair with a plastic bag and place a wet warm towel on top of it. Leave this for half an hour to an hour. Then you can wash your hair with warm water and feel free to use your shampoo. Repeat this process at least twice a week over a two month period.
4. When you comb your hair, start from the back and comb towards the front. Start right above your neck to help the blood. This also helps to prevent hair loss.
5. Another procedure is to mix Castor oil with almond oil in even quantities and put it on your hair. Cover your hair with a plastic bag and leave this for half an hour. Then you can wash your hair with warm water or feel free to use shampoo.

-- My Secret Princess Hair Tips ----

For Oily Hair

When washing your hair, don't rub your scalp hard and don't wash your hair with hot water but instead use warm or cold water. It is a good idea to use shampoo that is made for oily hair.

Fighting Dandruff

To get rid of the dandruff in your hair, apply some vinegar mixed with a little bit of oil olive to your hair. Let this dry for a few minutes and then wash as usual. Repeat this process until the dandruff disappears. Using vinegar on your hair will make it darker, especially in winter. Winter usually brings on dandruff which is a flaking caused by dead tissue. This will make your hair appear dirty and dull not to mention it can be embarrassing to have dry flakes on your clothing. Dandruff is usually accompanied with other problems like pimples, oily hair or hair that smells unpleasant. This is an unpleasant

condition that needs to be corrected but it does not require the use of expensive commercially made products.

For Shiny Hair

You can apply olive oil to your hair 2 hours before taking a shower or a bath. This will give your hair a shining and healthy look.

For Longer Hair:

For you ladies who want longer hair, use one teaspoon of castor oil with one spoon of olive oil, massage this through your hair and scalp and leave for half an hour. Then you can rinse your hair with warm water. Use this procedure twice a month as a very effective way to grow your hair longer.

For Thicker Hair

To make your hair thicker and have more volume mix one egg yolk with one spoon of honey and one spoon of olive oil. After it is well mixed you can apply it on your hair for half an hour. Then rinse your hair and dry it. You will feel the changes and it is okay to use this treatment twice a month.

Preventing Hair Loss

Garlic oil helps prevent hair loss and makes your hair strong. Put garlic oil on your hair and massage your scalp well for few minutes. Leave this on for 20 minutes and use this mask once a week.

Keeping Your Hair Color

If you are blond or have light brown hair and don't want your hair color to change, put 3 spoons of Chamomile flowers in 1 cup of hot water and leave it until it cools down. Then comb this through your hair and preferably put it on while under direct sunlight. I had friend who used to put it on and go for a walk or lay down by the swimming pool. Please note this is a natural method for lightening hair color. This should not be used on hair that is dyed unless you want to further lift the dyed color or accelerate removal of brown pigments

Handling Dry Frizzy Hair

If you are suffering from dry frizzy hair you can make an avocado paste and apply it on your hair. Leave this for 20 minutes and it will give your hair vitamins A and B and it will get rid of dry and frizzy hair.

Avoid Split Ends

Cut or trim your hair periodically to avoid split ends. The ultimate and the most important advice is healthy eating habits. Your food should contain vitamins and proteins. Eat lots of seasonal fruits and vegetables also lean

meat, eggs and dairy. Please stay away from fast foods and canned foods to have pretty, healthy hair. Also please avoid smoking and drinking alcohol. Lack of sleep, stress and worrying too much can damage your entire body including your hair!

Here Are Some ‘Eggy’ Recipes For Your Hair

Eggs are awesome for all types of hair whether it is damaged and weak, frizzy from split ends, dry or oily. Try using these ‘eggy’ recipes to bring your hair back to healthy and strong like the fairy tale princesses.

Damaged Hair: Add the yolk of one egg to one spoon of plain non-fat yogurt, a spoon of mayonnaise, a spoon of olive oil and last a spoon of honey. Mix it all together then apply this to your hair and leave for at least 2 hours. After waiting the two hours you can then rinse it off.

Split Ends: Combine two whole eggs with two spoons of corn oil and apply it all over your hair. Massage this through your hair for 5 minutes and then put your hair up and cover with a plastic bag for an hour. Then you can rinse this off with water and shampoo.

Dry Hair: Apply 2-4 egg whites, depending on the hair length and thickness by using a brush and working it the ends of your hair. Apply what’s left over to the rest of your hair and massage your scalp. Leave this on your hair for about half an hour. Now you can put your hair up and cover it with a plastic bag. Keep your hair like this for an hour and then take off the plastic bag. Let your hair down until the egg white dries. This may take another hour depending on the length and thickness of your hair. Then you can wash your hair with warm water and feel free to use shampoo and conditioner.

Oily Hair: This is done in the same way as above but instead of the egg white, use egg yolk.

Now you have all of my secret beauty tips for caring for your skin and your hair. Beauty comes from within and it also comes from proper care and treatment of your skin and hair. I have used these beauty secrets and have enjoyed the benefits of all of them. You can too. Remember that healthy skin and healthy hair enhances the inner fairy tale princess in every woman.



Chapter 16: The FFF (Fifty; Fit and Fab) Vision

We've covered some very important ground so far in identifying the best ways to get you to the healthier, leaner, ageless new you. Epigenetics prove in the clearest possible terms that we can influence and control our bodies at every level by taking control of what we eat and how we behave.

We've introduced you to the key points in your action plan for wellbeing, emotional health and weight loss control and opened up a whole new world of health and wellbeing possibilities. But we have another important insight to share with you. And now is the perfect moment to reveal it!

Humans have a secret weapon in their behavioural armoury that can work powerfully to help us - or it can work just as powerfully against us. It's our imagination. Or rather it's our ability to visualise. Most of the time, our thoughts drift around in a random pattern of uncoordinated ideas, prompted by whatever happens to pop up around us. We are drawn to whatever grabs our fickle attention.

Our thoughts and feelings are largely conditioned from early childhood experiences that shape our future emotional framework. We learn from an early age to let our thoughts pretty much wander wherever they choose. The mind follows random currents, blown around like a leaf in the wind, lacking focus or any sense of direction. A ship without a rudder.

This is where the risks of self-sabotage emerge; uncontrolled thoughts and feelings, self-doubt, memories of failure, feelings of a lack of self-worth. The list is endless and potentially destructive to our plans for absolute wellbeing. So now is the perfect time to switch on our powers of visualisation and give the mind some clear directions to follow for the future. It's time to bring on the really powerful support system that is hidden within your own mind!

It's incredible to realise how much our expectations shape our perceptions and our behaviour. Our programmed attitudes and responses play a major role in determining many of the outcomes in our lives. Happily, humans possess the immensely powerful gift of visualisation.

By visualising a desired outcome, our behaviours shift to favour those clearly visualised results. The technique of visualisation is incredibly simple. All we have to do is relax. That's right. Relax. Sit down and relax and close

your eyes. Now breathe a little more deeply. And see yourself exactly as you really, deeply desire yourself to be.

See your smiling face, see each part of your radiantly healthy, leaner new body. Smile at the strength, health, energy and vitality that surges through your newly visualised body. And feel really happy about it. Underline the vision with a warm, happy feeling of complete wellbeing. Hold the picture and imagine taking a photograph with your mind. Hear the camera shutter click as you record the stunning new picture of how you are. The picture of who you are becoming.

The powerful vision of the happier, fitter, skinnier new you! Lock this picture in your mind. Hold it in your heart. See it every time you close your eyes. This vision is the future. Use it all the time and you will rally all your hidden creative resources to bring this beautiful new vision of yourself into being.

We do not live in a culture that highlights the importance of mindfulness. We are constantly bombarded by images, noises, distractions and background chaos. We also have to live with the judgement of everyone around us. No wonder we find it difficult to concentrate and to relax. But there are many, simple and effective methods that can help us train our minds to follow our directions and meditation probably offers the simplest, most obvious and direct advantages. There is no religious or philosophical aspect to this exercise. It's just a technique for calming the mind. It takes only fifteen minutes. But it's a method that requires fifteen minutes every day. The daily repetition amplifies the results.

The only equipment you need is a chair, preferably a firm chair with good support for your back. A straight back is supposed to be better for meditation. Being comfortable is also very helpful. Relax your hands on your lap, close your eyes, focus on the spot between your eyebrows and breathe. Just follow your breath gently in and out. That's it. No chanting, humming or repeating strange mantras.

Just good old-fashioned breathing and the focus of concentrating lightly on the breath. The effects are cumulative. They build up gradually as you practise every day. You'll feel calmer. You'll find your powers of concentration improve. You'll be able to relax more easily. Your power to visualise will become more sharply defined. Your mind will begin to follow your directions. You will get a sense of the potential within you. Mastering the mind is a method for mastering ourselves. All this from just fifteen minutes a day. The

effects might surprise you because as you learn to become calmer, your body will feel much more comfortable. No prescriptions are required. Just those simple fifteen minutes of daily meditation and you'll soon be looking forward to the sessions with real enthusiasm. You might enjoy the benefits so much that you'll want to meditate for longer.

Your vision of the happier, fitter, leaner new you is the new background picture of your life. It represents the possibility of achieving everything you have chosen for yourself. Every day, you are living the journey of moving towards that possibility. The vision does not have a deadline. There can be no disappointment with the results because you are living every day in the possibility of its realisation.

Even if you slip and go backwards, the vision will put you back on track, guiding you every day towards its fulfillment. That's a powerful tool to have at your disposal. Put it to work right now. Use it every day. Use it every time you close your eyes and see the vision of how you are transforming yourself.

Ultimately, it's our behaviour that will guide our choices. Meditation is rightly considered to be a very powerful technique for bringing gentle control into the chaos of our minds. As we become more aware of our choices, as we experience the benefits of mindfulness, we can detect old patterns of behaviour that no longer fit our vision of health and vitality. We can understand the advantages of better choices.

We begin to respect the body's needs from a deeper, more caring perspective. The vision represents who we are becoming. The daily meditation helps us to become calmer, more resistant to stress and this healthier emotional framework lends itself to a physically healthier body. We also recommend a short meditation before you go to sleep at night. It's another effective way to calm the mind, still the thoughts and prepare for truly restful sleep.

Meditation has been practised as a tool for managing and directing the mind for thousands of years. It's so effective because we've been using it and refining the techniques as a species for millennia. We've highlighted the fundamental method here because we already use a form of meditation all the time. Have you noticed how easy it can be to day-dream? To drift off into another world of memories or fantasies, oblivious of what's happening around you? A brief reverie or a moment when you lose focus on what's going on around you?

These are altered states of consciousness and they happen all the time. Our purpose with the super simple meditation method is to control that tendency and direct it towards a focused, positive outcome. A way to become mindful yet relaxed. Aware yet calm. Centered yet connected. Still but alive with nurturing, positive energy. And all from fifteen minutes a day! Sounds like the bargain of a lifetime and it's all yours. For now and for the rest of your life.

You've heard it before and you're about to hear it again. We Are What We Eat. There's no getting away from it. You've learned enough by now to understand the vital connection between what you eat and how your body looks. Putting garbage into your body will ruin it. Eat garbage and you'll look like sh., I mean, waste products. But you know this. That's why you've joined us on this mission of personal transformation.

So far we've been exploring the mechanics of healthy weight control, shedding unwanted pounds and promoting the best health we can possibly enjoy and we fully appreciate the importance of intelligent nutrition. But there are other challenges out there and we've hinted at some of them earlier in Chapter.... We're talking toxins, my friend. Those totally unfriendly substances that pollute our food, poison our drinks and surround us in the air we breathe. Our world has become a scarily toxic place to exist and most of the problems are man-made. That doesn't make them any easier to live with.

You already know how important it is to avoid toxins by eating as naturally as possible but what about the toxins we inhale? What about the poisons that leach into our skin from the environment? The answer to this problem and the best the way to give your body a fair chance to neutralise these poisons is to use a cleansing diet for a few days. Fresh vegetables are the easiest and best source of natural cleansing. They promote natural digestion and contain nutrients that are very helpful in maintaining your health and wellbeing.

Stick to a detox section of the skinny delicious diet for a few days and you'll be amazed at the difference you'll feel in your overall wellness. And drink plenty of water too. The idea of cleansing the body is hardly new. We're just too busy to think of it. But now that we're on a journey of total physical transformation, let's give our bodies the best chance to feel fantastic.

And that means flushing out the garbage to restore total health and wellbeing. Getting away to a place with fresh air is another helpful way to restore balance to your body. Just breathing - and meditating - in the fresh air

can work wonders for our health and vitality. Sea air, mountain air, the fresh air in the forest or open countryside can restore you at so many levels. If it's at all possible, make a regular date for a mini cleanse and for some valuable down time in the fresh, open air.

Get a little help from your friends.

You're not alone. It's all too easy to imagine that we're the only ones who are experiencing problems, and think that the rest of the world is having fun, eating well and enjoying life to the full. But most of the world just isn't like that. Sharing your experiences, your challenges and difficulties, sharing your goals and intentions can gather support from everyone around you. You'll be surprised how many people will offer their encouragement and enthusiasm for your new way of life. It will help to reinforce your personal commitment to a healthier, fitter and happier way of being. So feel free to share and build that beautiful support group.

Personal Vision - Summary

Engaging the power of visualisation

Meditating on the powerful new you

Building a clear picture of who you are becoming

Daring to dream and engaging the power of focused visualisation

Total health and well being



About the Author

By the time I was twenty-two, more than thirty years ago, I began studying nutrition, integrative medicine and holistic health. I was immensely fortunate to find myself studying at one of the early pioneering centres of Integrative Alternative Medicine. This was the world renowned High Rustenberg Hydro, set in the beautiful countryside around Stellenbosch University, not far from my birthplace, Cape Town, in South Africa.

The Hydro at Stellenbosch, also known as the High Rustenberg Health Hydro, was founded by Sir Cleto Saporetti in 1972. The Hydro has become a world leader in holistic health and healing techniques, developing a range of methods to produce a balanced mind, healthy body and positive mental attitude. The original establishment comprised fourteen rooms and a staff of 25 under the supervision of Saporetti's co-visionary, Dr Boris Chaitow.

I studied very intensively for four years under the guidance of various medical and homeopathic doctors whilst also studying banking and finance. My studies continued right up until 1986 when I moved from South Africa to Europe.

The happy story takes a tougher turn when I went through the trauma of divorce and promptly acquired an extra 20 kilos of weight! I really piled on the pounds in record time and battled so hard to lose every single ounce. I really do understand the challenges of effective and enduring, healthy weight loss! In the meantime I was talking to colleagues about the practicalities of expanding my work experience and moving to Europe. Sometimes Fate takes a hand and, whilst attending a relative's funeral on my mother's behalf close to Europe, I applied for an interesting position offered in London by a financial institution that was well known to me in South Africa. One flight to London, a series of interviews, and I got the job.

Beran Moves to Europe!

As you might imagine, leaving my beautiful home in warm, sunny Cape Town and relocating to the cold and damp of northern Europe was not an easy process. The stress levels went off the chart and, well, I bet you can guess what happened. That's right. Those 20 kilos I'd worked so hard to lose came back with a vengeance. It was a fat-fuelled action replay of those dark days after my divorce. But it really made me wonder about the real connections between stress and unhealthy weight gain.

But even during those incredibly busy years, my fascination with health and nutrition always encouraged me to follow more courses, to pursue intensive studies and then to discover the inspiration to apply all this accumulated knowledge to my own weight issues. And guess what? Right again! The pounds slipped away and this time they stayed away. I'd finally found the methods and formulas that really worked. But life rarely follows a straight line and in 2000, my path took an unexpected detour when I was diagnosed with a serious health problem. It was my thyroid gland. This incredibly important little gland had produced a 6cm tumour that was growing and gradually blocking my windpipe. Not a happy discovery!

It was a turning point in my life and I realised in my heart that this time I really had to apply all my energies to the issues of health, weight control and wellbeing. This became my focal point. It grew into a passionate quest to share my knowledge and experience with as many people as possible. What started as a search for answers to my own health problems all those years ago became a quest to find universal principles that would apply to everyone. We made many changes from that point onwards and, as my health completely recovered, we discovered more insights into what really constitutes great health and profound wellbeing.

The range of interests broadened, encompassing naturopathic medicine, eating behaviours and disorders, orthomolecular medicine and the ancient Ayurvedic traditions that are witnessing a global revival after thousands of years of practise.

Those years of training, study, practise and experience are distilled and crystallised right here in your personal transformation workbook.

The reality is that I'm fitter and healthier today than at any other time in my life. Despite all the negative expectations surrounding the subjects of ageing and weight control, I now have shown you how to tame your body-fat problems and turn back the clock, helping you find a younger, fitter, leaner, stronger, healthier you.



I am so delighted that you have chosen this book and it's been a pleasure writing it for you. My mission is to help as many readers as possible to benefit from the content you have just been reading. So many of us are able to take new information and apply it to our lives with really positive and long lasting consequences and it is my wish that you have been able to take value from the information I have presented.

Thank you for staying with me during this book and for reading it through to the end. I really hope that you have enjoyed the contents and that's why I appreciate your feedback so much. If you could take a couple of minutes to review the book, your views will help me to create more material that you find beneficial.

I am always delighted to hear from my readers and you can email me personally at beranparry@gmail.com if you have any questions about this book or future books. Let us know how we can help you by sending a message to the same email address.

Thanks again for your support and encouragement. I really look forward to reading your review.

Stay Healthy!

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