



The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed

EPISODE #9

TITLE: WHAT TO EAT for Weight Loss, Health & Healing

Millions of us struggle with the what-to-eat conundrum for weight loss and well-being. So we go from diet to diet, looking for the magic answer. It's not really a secret. Here are the foods that lead to weight loss. And to preventing--even reversing--many physical and mental ailments.

TRANSCRIPT

Hello! Welcome to The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed. TODAY'S TOPIC: What to eat for weight loss, health, and healing.

I'm Deborah Kesten—nutrition researcher and host of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed, and I'm on a mission: To give you the science-backed, weight-loss wisdom you need to eat less and weigh less. Without dieting.

In each episode, I'll translate cutting-edge weight-loss research into actions you can take that can make a real difference in your weight and well-being.

LET'S GET STARTED!

Millions of us struggle with the what-to-eat conundrum for weight loss and well-being. So we go from diet to diet, often looking for the magic mixture of protein, carbs, or fat that'll bring success.

Optimal eating for weight loss and well-being really isn't a secret. For decades, state-of-the-art studies have given us the scientifically sound answer--not only about eating to attain and maintain weight loss. But also to prevent--even reverse--physical and mental health problems--from overweight and heart disease to depression, anxiety, and more.

Here are the foods that lead to weight loss. And to preventing--even reversing--many physical and mental ailments.

Today, I'm going to demystify the what-to-eat riddle for weight loss, health and healing. You'll discover state-of-the-art insights into foods that contribute to overeating and weight gain and other ailments. And, conversely, food choices that can lead naturally to weight loss, health, and healing.

Let's start with a success story.

What to Eat for Weight Loss, Health & Healing

One evening after physician Mark Hyman had given a lecture, a morbidly obese sixty-year-old man named Samuel approached him. Weighing more than three hundred pounds, Samuel asked Dr. Hyman if he would be his doctor. Hyman agreed.

During the office visit, Samuel described a life filled with excessive overeating and bingeing; for instance, two cups of heavy whipping cream each night was a typical nightcap. He had a history of extreme yo-yo dieting: losing weight and then gaining it back . . . plus even more. As his obesity worsened, so did his health. By the time Samuel came to see Dr. Hyman, he had a plethora of infirmities—profound fatigue, difficulty breathing while walking, stuffed sinuses, swollen legs, severe sleep apnea, dry skin, imbalanced hormones, food sensitivities, and an impaired liver—as well as a wide range of risk factors linked to heart disease, such as diabetes.

What happened next changed Samuel's health and weight, indeed his life, forever: Dr. Hyman gave him hope. "I told him that if he did everything I suggested, he would lose weight, feel better, and his symptoms would go away. Everything he had done, he did to himself and could undo," writes Dr. Hyman in his article in the journal *Alternative Therapies*.

What did Hyman suggest? The core of the program he recommended was a diet abundant in nutrient-dense, fresh, unprocessed whole, plant-based foods (fruits, vegetables, *whole* grains, beans and peas, and nuts and seeds) "without any restriction on calories or portion size." To enhance Samuel's weight loss, Dr. Hyman included a conservative exercise plan of walking slowly, then added interval training once Samuel was in better shape. He also augmented Samuel's fresh-food diet and exercise plan with supplements and herbs that would be helpful in turning around his various ailments. Armed with this advice, Samuel left Dr. Hyman's office somewhat skeptical but determined.

After three months on the program, Samuel had lost thirty pounds, his food cravings had disappeared, and some of his symptoms were less severe. Eight months later, "I was shocked when he weighed in," writes Dr. Hyman. "He had lost 110 pounds without being on a strict deprivation diet."

There was more good news: along with his excess weight, most of Samuel's ailments had vanished or diminished. Just as encouraging, after he had replaced a diet of mostly fast, processed, fat-filled food with fresh, whole, flavor-filled real nourishment, what remained was his "continued pleasure in food," writes Hyman.

Samuel achieved weight and health success—without deprivation, without restricting calories, and without suffering—in large part because he replaced a predominantly high-calorie, empty-calorie, fast-food--and ultra-processed food--diet with a low-fat, nutrient-dense, fresh, and whole-food way of eating that provided the nutrients—in the ratio nature intended—that his body needed to heal.

Meet the 'Fast Foodism' Overeating Style

What was it about Samuel's change from fast food and ultra-processed food (UPF) to a fresh, whole-food way of eating that led to such powerful—seemingly effortless—improvements in his weight and other aspects of his well-being? And if it worked for him, might it be beneficial for the millions of us who struggle with the perennial question about weight: what's the best diet for losing weight and keeping it off?

To give you a better perspective, let's first go backward a bit before we go forward.

Fast Foodism is a key overeating style that behavioral scientist--and my husband--Larry Scherwitz and I discovered when we did research with more than 5,200 people on our Whole Person Integrative Eating (WPIE) program. What we found can give us clues about how a diet of mostly fast and ultra-processed foods increases your likelihood of being overweight and ill—and, conversely, how consuming mostly fresh, whole, plant-based foods—which is the Whole Person Integrative Eating antidote to the Fast Foodism overeating style—can lead to weight loss and wellness.

I'm taking the time during this episode of *The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed* for you to become familiar with both the Fast Foodism overeating style *and* its remedy, the WPIE fresh, whole food guideline, because, of the seven overeating styles Larry and I identified, Fast Foodism ranked number two as a predictor that you'll (1) overeat (2) and gain weight.

A brief aside... What overeating style ranked #1 for weight gain? Emotional Eating.

The bottom line: Over the six weeks of Larry's and my study, the more people shifted from a fast, ultra-processed food diet to fresh, whole foods--and they also made changes in their *eating behaviors*--they ate less and lost weight. Without dieting.

What's also useful for you to know is this: Our research linking weight loss with fresh, whole foods isn't novel. For decades, many, many other studies have linked a predominantly fresh, whole food, plant-based diet not only with weight loss, but with preventing and reversing other chronic physical and mental conditions.

For more about this, please visit Episode 8 of this podcast, "The Diet and Lifestyle that Prevent and Reverse Chronic Conditions."

Now, so you can be clear about what to eat--and what *not* to eat--for weight loss and wellness, let's take a deep dive into ultra-processed foods (UPFs) and fresh whole food. As you discover more about optimal eating, please keep in mind I'm not suggesting a diet--a restricted way of eating you go on, then off, for a while. Rather, what I'm hoping you will consider a *dietary lifestyle*--a most-of-the-time way of eating--that leads naturally to weight loss, health and healing. Without dieting.

Demystifying Ultra-Processed Food

Let's begin by demystifying ultra-processed food (the acronym is UPF)--because these are the foods--well, food products--that most Americans eat. In her excellent article in *The Guardian*, titled "Ultra-processed US foods are ultra-bad for you. Here's what to know," journalist Cecilia Nowell writes that "these industrially formulated products...make up 73% of the U.S. food supply today," and, continues Nowell, "the average American [adult] gets more than 60% of their daily calories from ultra-processed foods"; for kids it's nearly 70%--"more than in any other country in the world."

Here's a closer look at ultra-processed food.

Some say it's "snack crack." Others call it an "industrial artifact." Corporations proclaim it's a "commodity." While people in France call it "Frankenfood." Here's a sampling of UPFs: fries, chips, donuts, packaged cereals and packaged breads, triple cheeseburgers, fried chicken, and super-sized colas.

These food products typically have five key features: they are (1) often *processed*, with *heated* (often rancid) *oil*, (2) typically *packaged*, and *calorie-* and *chemical-dense*, (3) they are inexpensive and pre-prepared and served quickly in restaurants such as McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, KFC, and Taco Bell; (4) and these processed foods have been cooked, baked, cured, heated, dried, mixed, ground, separated, extracted, sliced, and preserved for a long shelf life.

Then there's this, #5: Have you had your maltodextrin, guar gum, or carboxymethyl cellulose today? It's very possible if you eat lots of ultra-processed foods, which are made with some, or many, of the more than 2,500 chemical substances that are intentionally added to foods to modify texture, appearance, flavor, color, stability, or cost.

Ultra-Processed Food and Your Health

Why should you care that so much of what we eat are UPFs? Here's why: what's in UPFs make you fat and sick. Physically and mentally.

The first study to link a UPF diet to overeating and weight gain was done just five years ago, in 2019, by researcher Kevin Hall, a senior investigator with the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Hall conducted the first randomized, controlled study (the gold standard of research) on ultra-processed food. And his study gave use the most convincing evidence that a UPF diet leads to overeating and overweight.

To make this discovery, over four weeks, Hall had 20 healthy adults eat a UPF diet for two weeks, then switch to a minimally processed diet for two weeks. Importantly, both diets were equally matched nutrient for nutrient; and both groups were free to eat as much or as little as they wanted throughout the four-week study.

Here's Hall's monumental finding: when participants were on the ultra-processed diet for a two-week period, they ate 500 calories more each day--and gained weight--compared to the two weeks on the minimally processed diet.

"Something about ultra-processed foods left people hungry and wanting to eat more" writes journalist Nowell in her piece in *The Guardian*.

If you're one of the many millions who struggle with weight, especially, here's another key concept for you to keep in mind: At the same time that Hall's findings emerged, linking UPFs with overeating and weight gain, the food industry funded research designed to shift the blame for obesity away from food and to exercise.

Just sayin'...

Since Hall's significant study, the evidence that a UPF diet harms your health continues to grow. For instance...

- In 2023, at the European Society of Cardiology Congress in Amsterdam, researchers presented a study linking a 10% increase in UPF intake with increased risk of heart disease.
- Also last year, a Harvard study found that (1) women who ate the most UPFs were 50% more likely to develop depression when compared to women who ate the least UPFs. (2) Another Harvard study linked refined breads, artificially and sugar-sweetened beverages, animal-based products and ready-to-eat meals with a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. (3) And still another study out of Harvard found that eating UPFs – particularly artificially sweetened food and beverages – was associated with risk of developing depression.
- Finally, a recent, collaborative study--an overview of existing research about UPFs and health, from Deakin University in Australia, Johns Hopkins University, the Sorbonne and others--linked a UPF diet with 32 health-harming ailments--from heart disease to mental health conditions, higher mortality rates, and more.

The Bottom Line

The bottom line in terms of your weight--and your health--is this: A mostly UPF diet is what the Fast Foodism overeating style looks like. Perhaps a breakfast bar, donut, or packaged cereal for breakfast; Chicken McNuggets or a burger and a Coke for lunch; and maybe a pepperoni-and-sausage pizza delivered from your nearby pizza parlor for dinner.

And we can add the supersizing of such fast-food staples as burgers, franks, fries, and other food products, such as potato chips; and the many chemicals and food additives added to UPFs that also play havoc with weight and health. Clearly, a mostly UPF diet puts so many of us on the path to overweight and obesity--and poor health.

What to Eat for Weight Loss & Well-Being

Now, let's dive into the fresh, whole food that heals and helps with weight loss, and preventing and reversing many chronic conditions. You can find out more--a lot more--about this in Episode 8, "The DIET & LIFESTYLE that PREVENT & REVERSE Chronic Conditions."

What I'm saying is: optimal eating is about more, much more, than weight loss. We know this because 21st century scientific breakthroughs tell us that a predominantly plant-based diet also has the power to

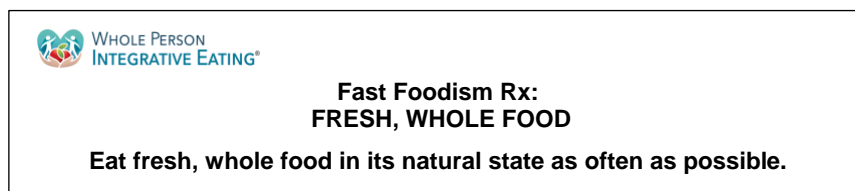
switch off potentially health-harming genes; boost your immune system; help you prevent health problems for which you're at risk; and even reverses chronic conditions you may already have.

For more about this, please see my Special Series--Episodes 5, 6, and 7.

Fresh, Whole, Plant-Based Foods for Weight Loss & Well-Being

Let's look closely now at what to eat for weight loss, health and healing.

The science-backed secret--the Cliff Notes version--of eating to get slim and stay slim lies in this Whole Person Integrative Eating Fast Foodism Rx--prescription or antidote; it is the way our ancestors ate for thousands of years--and it is close to the Mediterranean diet--voted the #1 best diet, six years in a row, by *U.S. News & World Report*. It is: **Eat fresh, whole food--in its natural state--as often as possible.**



In Dr. Dean Ornish, M.D.'s bestselling book, *Eat More, Weigh Less*--a reminder, Dr. Ornish is the "father of lifestyle medicine"--clearly shows weight loss is not just about *how much* you eat; it's primarily *what* you eat. Actually, what "eat more, weigh less" really means is that if you eat more of certain *types* of food (hint: fresh, whole, mostly plant-based food) instead of focusing on the *amount* of food and calorie-counting, you are likely to lose weight. And more...

For instance, when researchers at the University of Bologna did a review--a meta analysis--of 48 previously published studies on vegan and vegetarian diets--which included randomized controlled clinical trial, the gold standard of research--they found that plant-based diets were firmly associated with better health outcomes regarding blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and body mass index scores. Plus, plant-based diets also lowered ischemic heart disease and gastrointestinal and prostate cancers.

Can Gut Microorganisms from Fast Food Make You Fat?

Perhaps the most illuminating study about the influence of a UPF diet versus a plant-based diet on weight was a study about the trillions of microorganisms in our gut, or gut microbes, and their link to obesity and weight.

The researchers who discovered the causal--cause and effect--gut microbes-obesity relationship conducted what's called a *transplant experiment*: they transplanted various gut microorganisms harbored in the gastrointestinal tract--from both lean and obese mice--to germ-free mice, meaning mice with organism-free guts. After only two weeks, the mice given the microbiota from obese mice gained more body fat compared to the mice injected with the gut microbiota from lean mice. Clearly, certain gut bacteria were involved in the development of obesity!

The next step: Knowing that many obese people have what obesity researchers call *Western diet-induced obesity*--meaning obesity linked to a mostly UPF diet--the research team now wanted to know if there was a relationship between gut microbiota, diet--specifically, the UPF, standard American diet--and energy balance (meaning, high-calorie intake from the Western diet). To find out, they transplanted gut microbiota due to a fast-food, UPF diet into germ-free mice. Again, the microbiota from a fast food/UPF diet promoted more fat gain than transplants from lean donors.

Because of such state-of-the-art studies on the microbiome, it's clear that the *quality* of the food you eat (fast and processed versus fresh and whole) and your weight are intimately and strongly interconnected.

And we also know that gut microbiota—influenced by the quality of the food you eat—is a new unifying factor in the study of obesity.

The Takeaway

Here's the takeaway. Simply put, calories from ultra-processed food and calories from fresh, whole food aren't the same; your body metabolizes whole food and UPFs differently.

"Think of it this way," says behavioral scientist Larry Scherwitz, PhD--Co-Founder of Whole Person Integrative Eating: "Feeding your gut whole foods is like fertilizing soil for healthy plants," says Larry. "Tend to your 'gut garden' by feeding it fresh, whole foods that will allow it to thrive. Conversely, continues Larry, "UPFs not only damage the intestinal lining, which in turn allows toxins to enter the bloodstream, ultra-processed food also upsets the balance of 'good bacteria' in your gut that maintains health. The end result: increased odds of anxiety, depression, emotional-eating episodes, inflammation, autoimmune conditions . . . and weight gain," says Larry.

Here are the Plant-Based Food Groups for Well-Being

Here's a closer look at the fresh, whole, plant-based foods that lead to weight loss and well-being. And some scientific studies that support the Whole Person Integrative Eating what-to-eat guideline: **Eat fresh, whole foods in their natural state as often as possible.**

#1. Fruit. An apple a day may do more than keep the doctor away; it may keep you slim. When researchers from the State University of Rio De Janeiro in Brazil put two groups of women on a comparable-calorie diet, those who snacked on an apple lost more weight than those who munched on oatmeal cookies.

#2. Vegetables. Studies have linked abundant mixed salads with weight loss. By "abundant," I mean more than the typical iceberg-lettuce-and-tomato duo that often passes for a salad in the U.S. Rather, I'm talking about a resplendent mix of vegetables that might include lettuces, spinach, and arugula tossed with cherry tomatoes, chopped mushrooms, sliced cucumber, chopped red and green peppers, slices of avocado, beans (such as garbanzos), or baked tofu, a sprinkling of chopped walnuts, grated cheese, and perhaps some raisins.

When researchers at Penn State University studied women who consumed a satisfying salad prior to eating pasta for lunch, they discovered that they ate less pasta than those who hadn't had salad. And there are other weight-loss benefits to both fruits and vegetables: they are the only source of vitamin C. A Purdue University study suggests that vitamin C may be a significant weight-loss aid, helping you to burn fat during physical activity. In fact, this study suggests that vitamin C may be a key determinant of weight loss.

#3. Whole grains. Since *whole* grains—that include the germ, fiber, and endosperm (the technical word for the "white flour" part of the grain)—were first cultivated more than 10,000 years ago, they've been a boon to health.

Recent research from Harvard University, published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, reveals that they also prevent weight gain. In a 12-year study conducted with more than 12,000 nurses ages 38 to 63, researchers found that those who ate the most whole-grain foods (such as quinoa, brown rice, and multigrain breakfast cereal) weighed less than those who ate the least. The difference was quite significant: women in the high whole-grain group had a 49 percent lower risk of gaining weight.

(A brief aside: because of what researchers have recently learned about gluten-containing grains and health, consuming *ancient grains*, such as quinoa and amaranth, which have *not* been hybridized and changed from their original nutrient composition, may be a smart choice.)

#4. Legumes. It's a fact. Including dried legumes such as pinto, navy, and lima beans in your diet (I'm not talking about green beans or soybeans) may help you lose weight. When Maurice Bennink, professor of

nutrition at Michigan State University, reviewed a plethora of studies on beans published over a 25-year period, he discovered compelling evidence that beans work their weight-loss wonders in two ways:

- Satiety—beans are rich in fiber, so you feel full.
- Sustained energy—beans have a very low glycemic index, which means that glucose is released slowly into the bloodstream, so your blood sugar remains stable.

#5. Nuts and seeds. I wouldn't call any kind of high-fat nut a weight-loss food per se. Still, Harvard researchers found that frequent nut eaters (who consume perhaps a handful of raw nuts each day) are less likely to gain weight—possibly because nuts are high in protein and fiber, two macro-nutrients that slow absorption and decrease hunger.

And the news gets better: When Dr. Frank Hu, professor of nutrition and epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, looked at results based on 120,000 participants in the Nurses' Health Study and the Physician's Health Study, he found that those who consumed nuts daily were less likely to die prematurely of cancer, heart disease, and respiratory disease. Wu speculates that the composition of fiber, healthy fats, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals in nuts may be the mechanism by which they help us maintain health.

Get Fresh, Weigh Less

Here's the bottom line about what to eat for weight loss and well-being... What fruits, vegetables, *whole* grains, beans and peas, and raw nuts and seeds have in common is this: Their components add up to more than the sum of their parts.

In other words, while last century, 20th century nutrition typically focuses on isolating particular nutrients in food that are either health enhancing or health robbing--or maybe counting calories, carbs, and fat grams (I call this 'eating by number')--the key to optimal nourishment in the 21st century is *not* to pursue "parts" of foods by turning, for instance, to synthetic, isolated supplements for health and well-being.

Rather, nature knows best: follow the Whole Person Integrative Eating guideline to *consume fresh, whole foods in their natural state as often as possible*, and you'll obtain nutrients in the ratio nature intended. These are the foods that can help to keep you slimmer and healthier. For the long-term.

A brief note...

To help you do this, familiarize yourself with the free The Fresh, Whole Food PRIMER I created for you. To access the free primer, just click on the "IN-ACTION" CTA--next to the yellow light bulb--at HealingSecretsPodcast.com.

YOUR IN-ACTION EXERCISE

A tip, step, or reflection that can contribute to your success.

So you can reap the rewards of what you discover on each episode of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed, I close each episode with an '**In-Action**' **Idea** for you to try. This may be a **Quick-Tip** about how to implement the healing secret of food we just discussed; or a **Practical Step** you can take, such as ordering a size-down of your favorite coffee concoction. Or perhaps I'll suggest a **Self-Insight Exercise**, an internal-reflection that can lead you closer to achieving your food-related health goals.

I offer an In-Action Exercise at the end each episode that can contribute to your transformation from today's, 'new-normal' way of eating—which leads to overeating and overweight—to Whole Person Integrative Eating—which I describe as your scientifically sound, personal guide to eating less and weighing less. Without dieting.

Consider keeping a Healing Secrets of Food Revealed journal to write about your experience with each In-Action Exercise.

TODAY'S IN-ACTION IDEA

PRACTICAL STEPS

Today's In-Action idea is two Practice Steps.

#1. PRACTICAL STEP

Read--and consider--the Whole Person Integrative Eating (WPIE) antidote to the Fast Foodism overeating style. It is the Whole Person Integrative Eating optimal eating guideline for weight loss and well-being: **Eat fresh, whole food in its natural state as often as possible.**



**Fast Foodism Rx:
FRESH, WHOLE FOOD**

**Eat fresh, whole food
--mostly plant-based food with small (or no) servings of animal-based food--
in its natural state as often as possible.**

#2. PRACTICAL STEP

Familiarize yourself with the free Whole Person Integrative Eating Fresh, Whole Food PRIMER I created for you. To access the free Primer, visit HealingSecretsPodcast.com and click on the 'IN-ACTION' CTA next to the yellow light bulb.

The Whole Person Integrative Eating (WPIE) Fresh, Whole Food PRIMER

Scores of studies support the Whole Person Integrative Eating guideline to *consume fresh, whole foods in their natural state as often as possible*--to be slimmer and healthier. For the long-term.

As a start, familiarize yourself with The WPIE Fresh, Whole Food PRIMER I created for you.

PLEASE NOTE.

THE WPIE FRESH, WHOLE FOOD PRIMER IS THE **GOLD STANDARD** OF OPTIMAL EATING. IT IS *NOT A DIET*. THE GOAL IS TO MAKE IT YOUR MOST-OF-THE-TIME WAY OF EATING.

IF FRESH WHOLE, CHEMICAL-FREE FOODS ARE NOT EASILY AVAILABLE FOR YOU, OR THEY DON'T FIT YOUR BUDGET, OR YOU SIMPLY CHOOSE NOT TO EAT THIS WAY, NO PROBLEM.

REMEMBER
THE GUIDELINE IS TO EAT FRESH & WHOLE "AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE."

IN-ACTION GUIDE WPIE Fresh, Whole Food PRIMER Your Fresh-Whole-Food Guide

What exactly are "fresh, whole foods"? They're foods that are real, natural, nourishing, and healthful; their original integrity is intact, and they offer balanced nutrients in the ratio nature intended.

What follows is an easy-to-access primer on fresh, whole, plant- and animal-based foods.

**A CAVEAT
For Your Consideration . . .**

The following foods and food groups are meant as a general guideline only. Avoid any food or food group for which you have a health condition, sensitivity, full-blown allergy, or philosophy that doesn't support consumption.

CHOOSE PLANT-BASED FOODS

Here, a medley of plant-based foods to get you started. Suggestion: go organic as much as possible in order to avoid toxic pesticides and herbicides.

The 5 Plant-Based Food Groups

Vegetables. Dark leafy greens, salad greens, carrots, beets, and cruciferous veggies such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, radishes.

Include fermented, cultured veggies in your diet, such as sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, miso, tempeh.

Whole pieces of fruit (instead of fruit juice). Apples, berries (such as blackberries, blueberries, and red berries), cherries, plums, pomegranates, oranges, pears, grapefruit.

Ancient whole grains. Modern wheat is a hybrid descendant of three wheat species considered to be ancient: spelt, einkorn, and emmer. The operative word is *hybrid*, meaning the constituents and nutrient balance of the original kernel have been changed due to technology. Ancient non-wheat grains include bulgur, millet, barley, teff, and oats; pseudo-cereals are quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat, and chia. If whole grains are part of your diet, consider consuming these ancient options.

Ancient legumes. Anasazi beans, adzuki beans, black beans, black-eyed peas, chickpeas, but also pinto beans, kidney beans, red beans.

Nuts and seeds. Raw walnuts, almonds, pumpkin seeds, flax seeds (ground to increase absorption).

AVOID:

Refined, processed grain products. White flour, white rice, white corn, packaged snacks, packaged, refined bread, and refined-grain cereals.

Refined vegetable oils. There are dozens of variations of refined vegetable oils (soy, canola, sunflower, etc.) that have been heated to high temperature so they can sit on supermarket shelves for years, literally. Choose *cold-pressed* oils, and when cooking do not heat oil so that it smokes.

Trans fats and hydrogenated fats. Packaged and processed food products, all fried food.

ANIMAL-BASED FOODS

Where do fish, poultry, meat, and dairy fit into the whole-food picture? Technically, because they're not plant-based, fish, poultry, meat, and dairy products aren't whole foods. Still—if you do eat animal-based food, which many of us do—it's useful to also think of these foods in terms of *fresh* and *whole*.

This is because, in general, conventional animal foods contain many environmental pollutants, such as herbicides and insecticides, plus hormones and antibiotics. And because these pollutants are hard for both animals and humans to get rid of, they tend to settle in the liver and in body fat. For damage control, as with plant-based foods, go organic as often as possible, and avoid animal foods with antibiotics, hormones, and herbicides and pesticides in the feed.

Here are some suggestions to get you started:

Find out if grass-fed beef, free-range poultry, cage-free eggs, or dairy foods that are hormone- and antibiotic-free are available in your grocery store or community.

Choose fresh animal-based food (such as beef, poultry, and wild fish).

Integrate probiotics into your diet for a healthy microbiome. A sampling: unpasteurized yogurt, kefir, raw milk cheeses.

Select fresh-water or wild-caught fish because fresh, wild fish contains fewer chemicals. Avoid farm-raised fish, if possible.

Choose dairy that is free of bovine growth hormone, antibiotics, and other hormones. Consider raw or fermented goat and sheep milk, because these dairy sources are less inflammatory.⁴⁰

AVOID:

Highly processed “products” such as salami, bacon, chicken “nuggets,” fried fish, etc.

Animal foods with added hormones, antibiotics, etc., plus feed that includes herbicides, pesticides, GMOs, etc.

In other words, the key to optimal nourishment and attaining and maintaining weight loss is to trust that nature is the best nutritionist possible. To reap the rewards—both weight- and health-wise—decide to make fresh, whole food your most-of-the-time way of eating. It's *the* secret to ensuring your mind, body, *and* microbiome will obtain nutrients in the ratio nature intended.

Thank you...

If you would like a summary of today's In-Action Exercise, please visit HealingSecretsPodcast.com. Then look for the yellow light bulb next to the “In-Action” CTA. At HealingSecretsPodcast.com, you can also listen to this episode again, and read the transcript and my Article about what to eat for weight loss and well-being. And, please consider joining The Healing Secrets Podcast Community—where I'm looking forward to meeting you.

I want to thank you for joining me today on The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed. With each show, I'll share step-by-step, science-backed insights you need to nourish 'all of you' – body, mind, soul, and social well-being – each time you eat. So you can thrive.

I'm Deborah Kesten, host of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed.

Until next week, BE NOURISHED.

Disclaimer: This transcript is for informational purposes only. This transcript is not intended to be a substitute for professional health or weight loss advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your health professional or another qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding your condition or well-being.