

A NUTRITION PRACTICE

Recharge Your Life *With Food*

Keep It Simple

Eating well can feel complicated.

Between the trending diets and the shifting advice, it's easy to feel like the rules keep changing.

But when we step back and look at the research, some surprisingly simple themes emerge.

You don't need to find the perfect diet.

Begin with a few simple ideas, stay curious, and let your body show you what works.

01 Start With Real Food

The Mediterranean-style pattern of eating is one of the most extensively researched approaches to nutrition and long-term health.

And the basics are pretty simple.

THINK MORE

*Vegetables · Fruits · Beans & lentils · Nuts & seeds
Whole grains · Fish · Olive oil · Herbs & spices*

Rather than focusing on a long list of rules, look at the overall pattern.

How much of what you're eating looks like real food?

A SPOTLIGHT ON PLANTS

Eat the Rainbow

Color is more than beautiful, it is nourishment.

The bright colors in fruits and vegetables come from natural plant compounds called phytochemicals. Different colors carry different compounds, and each family plays a different role in the body.

When we eat a variety of colors, we invite a wider variety of nutrients to the table.

**RED & PINK**

Tomatoes, strawberries, watermelon, pink grapefruit.

Lycopene, anthocyanins. Studied for heart and cellular health.

**ORANGE & YELLOW**

Carrots, sweet potato, mango, squash, citrus.

Carotenoids, vitamin C. Support immune function and eye health.

**GREEN**

Leafy greens, broccoli, kale, herbs, avocado.

Chlorophyll, folate, glucosinolates. A cornerstone of nearly every long-lived population.

**BLUE & PURPLE**

Blueberries, blackberries, red cabbage, eggplant.

Anthocyanins, resveratrol. Studied for brain and vascular health.

**WHITE & TAN**

Garlic, onions, cauliflower, mushrooms.

Sulfur compounds, quercetin. Support immune and detoxification pathways.

AN EMERGING AREA OF RESEARCH

A growing body of research explores how plant compounds may influence the way our genes are expressed. This field is called nutrigenomics, and it is still early.

The findings so far suggest something simple and beautiful:

the foods we choose may help shape how our bodies read our own genetic code.

Aim for a rainbow across the week, not every meal or every day.

Just a little more color, a little more often.

02 Look at Your Plate

You don't have to count calories or measure everything to become more aware of what you're eating.

Simply take a look at your plate.

Do you see a combination of:

Plants + Protein + Fiber-rich foods + Healthy fats

Then get curious.

- What's already working?
- What might be missing?
- Is there something you'd enjoy adding?

Sometimes one small addition can change the whole meal.

03 Experiment With Food Order

Here's an interesting idea from glucose research that doesn't necessarily require changing what's on your plate.

It's called food sequencing.

Research suggests that eating fiber-rich vegetables and protein before carbohydrate-rich foods can reduce the rise in blood glucose following a meal.

ONE WAY TO EXPERIMENT

Fiber first · Protein & fat next · Starches last

For example, if dinner is broccoli, salmon and roasted potatoes:

Broccoli · Salmon · Potatoes

The same meal, in a different order.

FOOD SEQUENCING, CONTINUED

A 2026 systematic review examined food sequencing in healthy adults and found that most of the included studies reported lower post-meal glucose responses when vegetables, fruit, or protein-rich foods were consumed before carbohydrate-rich foods.

Think of it as an experiment, not a rule.

Try it a few times and notice how you feel afterward.

04 Focus on What to Remove

We often think getting healthier means figuring out what else we need to add.

Sometimes it's about what we can subtract.

One simple place to start is by noticing how much ultra-processed food has found its way into our everyday eating.

This has become an important area of nutrition research. Higher consumption of ultra-processed foods has been associated with a number of poorer health outcomes.

Food quality AND food processing may both matter.

A large 2025 study followed more than 22,000 adults for approximately 15 years and looked at Mediterranean-style eating together with ultra-processed food consumption.

The findings suggest that both the nutritional quality of our overall eating pattern and the amount of food processing may matter for long-term health.

SO BECOME CURIOUS

- Turn over the package.
- Read the ingredients.
- Compare your choices.
- Could you find a simpler option?

05 Cook More at Home

One of the simplest changes with some of the biggest research behind it.

Cooking at home doesn't have to mean becoming a chef. It simply means preparing more of your meals yourself, from ingredients you choose.

And when we look at the research, this one habit connects to nearly every theme in this handout: more real food, more plants, less ultra-processed food, better overall diet quality.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SUGGESTS

Better diet quality. People who cook at home more often consume more fruits and vegetables and follow eating patterns closer to the Mediterranean and DASH diets.

Lower ultra-processed intake. More frequent home cooking is associated with lower intake of sugar, refined fats and fast food.

Healthier body composition. In one large population study, people eating home-cooked meals more than 5 times a week were 28% less likely to have an overweight BMI.

No extra cost. Cooking dinner at home more often has been linked to lower overall food spending, not higher.

You don't have to cook everything. Even one more home-cooked meal each week starts to move the needle.

START SIMPLE

- Learn 3 to 5 simple meals you can make on autopilot.
- Keep a small list of staples on hand: eggs, beans, greens, olive oil, a whole grain.
- Batch one thing on the weekend: a soup, a grain, a tray of roasted vegetables.
- Involve someone. Kids, a partner, or a friend on video.
- Trade one meal out per week for a meal in.

Cooking is a skill. Every skill grows with practice.

A SIMPLE TOOL TO EXPLORE

The Yuka app allows you to scan the barcode of packaged foods to learn more about their nutritional quality, ingredients, and additives, and compare similar products.

It can be a useful tool for becoming more curious about what's in the foods you regularly buy.

A quick way to learn what's in the foods you already buy.

Use it as a tool, not a rulebook.

DOWNLOAD YUKA

Apple App Store: **Yuka – Food & Cosmetic Scanner**

Google Play: **Yuka – Food & Cosmetic Scanner**

And remember, some of the simplest foods don't need to be scanned at all.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Healthy eating doesn't have to start with a diet.

It can start with one small choice.

Adding another plant to your plate this week, choosing a food closer to its natural form, trying fiber first at your next meal, comparing the ingredient labels on two products you buy often, swapping one highly processed food for something simpler, or cooking one more meal at home.

You don't have to change everything.

Start where you are, stay curious, and find what works for you.

Recharge Your Life, one choice at a time.

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