

Recommended Reading

There will always be some disagreement between the various authors, but that shows the degree of uncertainty existing in this field. Stay flexible and keep reading. You will be constantly fine-tuning your own rules, but the most important principle will keep floating to the top: good food is great medicine.

Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy; The Harvard Medical School Guide to Healthy Eating (Walter C. Willett, MD, Dr. P.H., ©2001)

An enjoyable read as well as a valuable source of information on the science and common sense of eating well. His chapter on calcium is worth the price of the book. The book lays out the evidence and conclusions for healthy eating and includes a large section on “the practical translation of nutritional science to food selection and preparation”.

The Omega Diet (Artemis P. Simopoulos, M.D., and Jo Robinson, ©1999)

Explores both theoretical and practical applications of a Mediterranean-type diet. Focuses on maintaining a balance of essential fatty acids, and offers a nutritional program based on the traditional diet of the Greek island of Crete. Lots of science as well as menus, recipes, and useful tips.

The Mediterranean Diet Cookbook (Nancy Harmon Jenkins, ©1994)

One of the best reasons to buy this book (or check it out from the library) is the 9-page Introduction: The Mediterranean Diet and Health written by Antonia Trichopoulou, M.D. and Dimitrios Trichopoulos, M.D. As a cookbook, it is for the serious Mediterraneanophile.

The Mediterranean Diet (Marissa Cloutier, MS, RD and Eve Adamson, ©2001)

An unpretentious little paperback with tiny print, but a thorough and enthusiastic presentation of the cultural and nutritional aspects of the Mediterranean way of eating. The authors are a little too opposed to saturated fat, in our opinion, but a good book nonetheless.

The Food Pharmacy Guide to Good Eating (Jean Carper, ©1991) **Food — Your Miracle Medicine** (Jean Carper, ©1993)

Both of these books by Jean Carper have lots of good information in brightly-written and easily read formats. Scientific substance is not the first reason to pick these up, but the wealth of practical information and motivation are rewarding.

Passionate Vegetarian (Crescent Dragonwagon, ©2002)

Whether or not you are a vegetarian, this is a woman we could all use in our kitchens. There are over 1000 exuberant pages of recipes and food-talk. The sheer mass of ideas alone is likely to inspire even reluctant cooks.

**The New American Plate Cookbook
(American Institute for Cancer Research
© 2005)**

This book is the work of a team of cooks, writers, and scientists working with the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR). Their mission was to produce a cookbook that would “satisfy your conscience while it dazzles your palate”, and at the same time helping to reduce our risk of serious health problems like cancer and heart disease as well as maintain a healthy weight. The photographs are glorious.

**The Schwarzbein Principle: The Truth About Losing Weight, Being Healthy and Feeling Younger
(Diana Schwarzbein, M.D. and Nancy Deville,
© 1999)**

This is an excellent book to acquaint the reader with the concept of using a whole foods diet to minimize insulin resistance, a metabolic problem that is related to the majority of cases of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some cancers.

On Food and Cooking: The Science and Lore of the Kitchen (Harold McGee, © 2004)

One of the best books on food ever written. Not surprisingly, the author is fascinating, too. He was enthralled by chemistry and physics growing up and decided to study astronomy, then switched to English literature. Harold McGee wrote the first edition of this book in 1984, but as he points out, “A lot has changed in twenty years! It turned out that *On Food and Cooking* was riding a rising wave of general interest in food, a wave that grew and grew, and knocked down the barriers between science and cooking, especially in the last decade.”

**What to Eat
(Marion Nestle © 2006)**

Marion Nestle is one of the greats of contemporary academic nutrition but she is also a food lover and consumer. These aspects come together well in this easily-read yet powerful book which takes you on a tour of a North American supermarket. In each section there is a discussion of the food’s origin, what has gone on during its production to affect the food, and her recommendations for the consumer.

The breadth of material she covers is vast; production methods, historical comparisons, political and environmental controversies, federal government and special interest group influences, and practical applications of nutrition research are all blended into a very useful set of realistic and humbly presented recommendations. The assumptions and thought processes she uses are laid out clearly to help the reader see whether her conclusion is something they can share. Often her conclusions are amusingly simple: “Milk is just a food. There is nothing special about it. Cow’s milk is not necessary and it is not perfect (at least not for humans). But cow’s milk is also not a poison.”

We do not always share her concerns or solutions. A couple of areas of disagreement would be her position on saturated fats, and her ‘Taking Action’ conclusions that seem to encourage the imposition of centralized controls over which foods the consumer can buy.

However, excellent tools are given to allow the consumer to practice personal responsibility and take control of their own food environment, and the disagreements we may have are far outweighed by the rich store of practical knowledge you will gain from reading this book.

In the interests of open-minded and healthy intellectual hiking, we are also including books that test confrontational waters on some of the controversial nutritional issues.

The Cholesterol Myths (Exposing the Fallacy That Saturated Fat and Cholesterol Cause Heart Disease)
(Uffe Ravnskov, MD, Ph.D., © 2000)

Dr. Ravnskov is a cheerful Swede who addresses the flaws in the argument that dietary fat and cholesterol are responsible for heart disease. This book is only for the genuinely open minded, and those who want to read a contrarian but evidence-based view. It is probably only helpful for those who already have a reasonable knowledge of the evidence underpinning contemporary dietary recommendations.

The Fat Fallacy: The French Diet Secrets to Weight Loss
(William Clower, Ph.D., © 2003)

A lively, funny, well-written book contrasting the American obsession with low fat dogma and the French disregard for fat and carbohydrate restrictions. The author points out the much higher rate of obesity and heart disease in this country and tries to show how the prudent use of chocolate, butter, eggs, and cheese can help you lose weight and gain health.

French Women Don't Get Fat
(Mireille Guiliano © 2005)

Yet it was precisely the experience of getting fat, albeit as an exchange student in the U.S. that inspired the author – who is French – to write this book! Regardless of the accuracy of the title, the book is full of

practical advice, real-life case histories, and recipes. She says the book is for women who need to lose up to thirty pounds, but anyone would benefit from her message.

Nourishing Traditions; The Cookbook that Challenges Politically Correct Nutrition and the Diet Dictocrats

(Sally Fallon with Mary G. Enig, Ph.D., ©1999, 2001)

This book delivers *exactly* what the title promises, and does so with the efficiency of a machine gun and the firmness of an Italian grandmother. It is an encyclopedic blend of old-fashioned liver-and-onions and Adele Davis at her most radical. Each page is crowded with recipes as well as often-fascinating facts on diet, history, religion, sociology, and medicine. This is a book to read on a desert island even if you disagree with something on every page. It may be the only place you'll find a recipe for Brain Omelet.

Eating Well Magazine

This is a self-described “intelligent magazine bringing together food and health.” It also does a decent job of presenting evidence-based information, although we are hoping they will stop tip-toeing around the good-fat-versus-low-fat issue and stop recommending stuff like egg substitute and low fat cheese.

www.eatingwell.com

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Excerpted from *Good Food, Great Medicine*. For more information see: www.goodfoodgreatmedicine.com