

Everything You Know About Nutrition Is Wrong

[← Back to article](#)

 Posted By Daniel Duane On February 16, 2011 @ 4:18 pm In *Features, Food & Drink, Mind & Body*
[CLICK HERE to print](#)


A New Set of Rules to Eat Right

 by Daniel Duane
 photographs by Travis Rathbone

During the past several years, conventional dietary wisdom — skimp on fat, count calories — has started to crumble, thanks largely to a one-man wrecking crew named Gary Taubes. In his latest book, *Why We Get Fat: And What to Do About It*, Taubes argues that calories and fat aren't to blame for the world's increasing girth and high incidence of heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. He contends that exercise, while a healthy habit, won't help with weight loss and that most Americans would benefit from eating more red meat and eggs because animal proteins and saturated fat don't cause cardiovascular disease and weight gain: Simple sugars and carbohydrates do.

Taubes's critique of dietary tradition is so pointed and vociferous that reading him will change the way you look at calories, the food pyramid, and your daily diet. While his recent book is primarily a slam against the established science of obesity, his philosophy of nutrition upends everything you've been told about eating to stay healthy and trim. Adopting a similar approach doesn't mean you can't ever consume carbohydrates, but it does mandate a new set of dietary rules that will help you live longer, be leaner, and better enjoy the foods you love.

1. Don't go on a diet — change your diet.

Starving yourself or cycling through fad diets isn't a sustainable, effective way to lose weight and stay healthy over a lifetime. Some diets may work for some people in the short term, but dieting has been shown to fail over the long haul. A 2007 [analysis](#) conducted by researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles reviewed 31 long-term diet studies to find that, on average, one-third to two-thirds of people who lose 5 to 10 percent of their weight in the first six months of a diet gain it back — and then some — within four to five years. Scientists found the effect so consistent across studies that they were forced to conclude that one of the best predictors of weight gain is having been on a diet at some point in the past.

2. Don't eat anything with BHA, BHT, sodium nitrite...

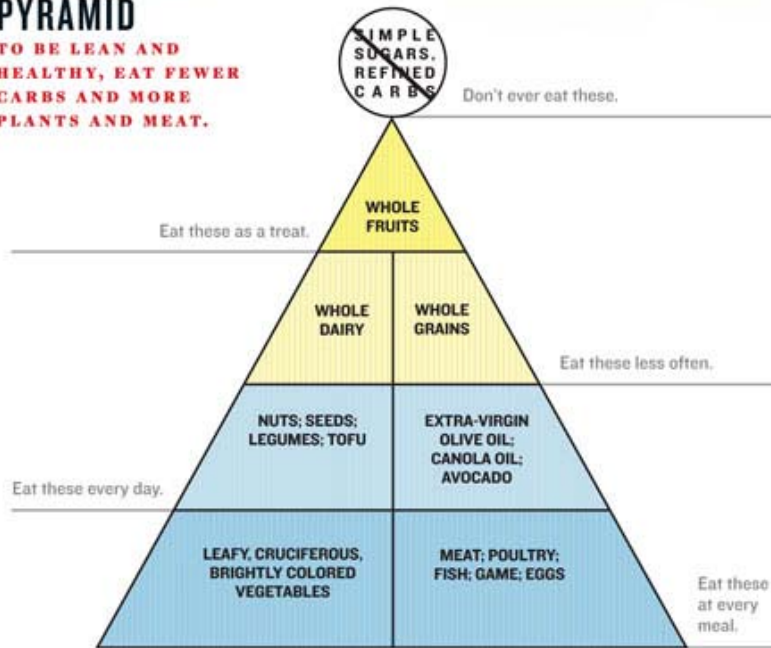
If you want to live by one rule instead of 10, this is it, not least because it's the easiest to follow. Shop only the periphery of the supermarket, choosing whole fruits, vegetables, meats, fish, and dairy products — instead of fruit juices, canned vegetable soups, chicken fingers, fish sticks, and chocolate-covered ice cream bars — and you'll avoid the majority of what's wrong with the modern Western diet. Packaged processed foods are altered from their natural state for convenience and to extend shelf life, but they contain fewer nutrients and more sugars and unhealthy fats than whole foods do.

A good way to tell if a food is overly processed is to scan the nutrition label for ingredients you can't pronounce or visualize in an organic form. These include, among others: hydrogenated oils, a common source of trans fats shown to boost the risk of heart disease; high-fructose corn syrup, a processed sugar associated with obesity and diabetes; butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), a food preservative and suspected carcinogen; butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), a preservative found in potato chips and jet fuel; and sodium nitrite, a chemical used in deli meats that is linked to cancer, heart disease, and other ailments.



BUILDING A BETTER FOOD PYRAMID

TO BE LEAN AND HEALTHY, EAT FEWER CARBS AND MORE PLANTS AND MEAT.



3. Don't count calories.

You've heard it a million times: To lose weight, you have to burn more calories than you consume. But the idea that we have to match or exceed the calories we eat with the calories we expend isn't accurate. The "calories in, calories out" concept fails because it measures only how many calories are present in the body at one given time rather than what the body actually does with these calories after they've been consumed. People's bodies vary. Some of us store more carbohydrates as fat, while others use more carbohydrates as energy. If all people were similar and calories the only precursor of weight gain, then a man could put on two pounds a year — 50 pounds in 25 years — simply by overeating a mere 20 calories a day, or the real-food equivalent of fewer than 10 red grapes.

The body's fat tissue doesn't act like a garbage can, indiscriminately collecting every calorie we toss in. Instead, hormones control whether available calories in the body are stored as fat or liberated as energy. The more you eat of certain foods, the more hormones your body releases, and the more fat your body stores. The more fat your body stores, the more calories you need to eat to feed your fat. As a result, you're not getting fat because you overeat: You overeat because you're getting fat.

If you set out to use calorie-counting to help you maintain your weight or determine how much food you should eat during the course of a day, the effort won't necessarily help you accomplish either goal. Once you understand this, you can stop worrying about counting calories and start focusing on what really matters.

RECIPE: Whole-Grain Farro With Garlicky Kale (Serves 4)

- 2 cups whole-grain farro
- 1 carrot, peeled
- 1 yellow onion, peeled
- 1 leek, white and light-green parts only, split lengthwise and cleaned
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 4 oz prosciutto, shredded
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp minced parsley
- 2 tbsp minced shallot
- Salt and pepper
- 2 large bunches kale, stems removed, leaves chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp red pepper flakes
- 2 tsp red-wine vinegar

1. In a large pot, cover farro with cold water by 2 inches. Add carrot, onion, leek, bay leaf, and thyme, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 50 minutes, until



farro is tender. Drain water; discard vegetables and herbs. In a bowl, mix farro with prosciutto, 1/4 cup oil, parsley, and shallot. Season with salt and pepper.

2. In a large skillet, heat 1/4 cup oil over medium heat. Add kale in a 1-inch layer, and cook until wilted. Keep adding kale in layers until all is wilted. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender.

3. Tilt skillet and add 2 tbsp oil to the lower end, closest to the burner. Add garlic and red pepper to oil, heat to sizzle, and toss with kale. Add vinegar and salt and pepper to taste. Remove from heat and serve kale warm with farro.

4. Get to know the glycemic index.

If calories don't make you fat, what does? Carbohydrates, especially simple ones like sugar, honey, and refined white flour. When you eat carbohydrates, your body breaks them down into sugar, which enters your blood. Your pancreas responds to blood sugar by producing the hormone insulin, which tells your fat cells to hold on to fat and store it — but not necessarily as permanent fat. When everything's working right, fat acts "more like a wallet than a savings or retirement account," Taubes says: You're constantly putting money in and taking it out again. In the case of the body, fat gets stored in cells and rereleased after digestion to ensure steady energy.

Simple carbs, like those found in cake, candy, and fruit, contain lots of sugar and will eventually cause a large insulin response. If you eat simple carbs with any regularity — or worse, drink them — your fat cells hold on to accumulated fat because there's always more sugar, and consequently more insulin, in the body. Over time, your fat cells continue to acquire more fat than your body can use as energy. To lose weight, then, you have to cut back on your carbohydrate consumption, to push your insulin level low enough that it forces your body to release the stored fat that your muscles and organs burn as fuel.

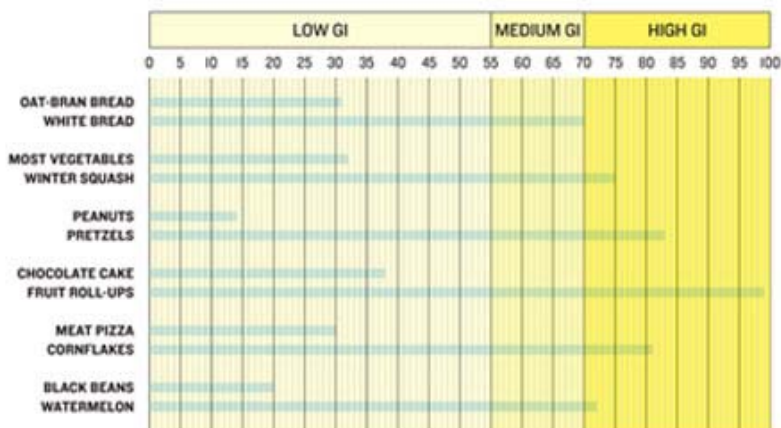


EAT RIGHT WITH THE GLYCEMIC INDEX

FILL UP ON CARBS THAT WON'T SPIKE YOUR BLOOD SUGAR.

The glycemic index ranks foods that contain carbohydrates from 0 to 100 based on how they affect blood sugar. High-GI carbs (>70) cause

blood sugar to spike; low-GI foods (<55) have a more moderate effect on insulin levels. For a database of more foods, visit glycemicindex.com.



If you're looking to maintain weight, remember that not all carbs are created equal. Complex carbs, such as legumes, whole grains, and leafy vegetables, produce only a moderate effect on blood sugar. All legumes, except baked beans, are particularly healthy because they're high in fiber and protein; aim to eat them on a daily basis. You shouldn't eat pasta, cereal, and baked goods as frequently, but when you do, choose only those made from whole grains. Look for products that specify whole flours, but read labels carefully: Without the word whole, "100 percent wheat flour" doesn't count. Opt for sprouted-grain, oat-bran, or 100 percent whole-wheat bread; [Alvarado Street Bakery](#), [Food for Life](#), and [Rudi's Organic Bakery](#) are all reliable brands. Choose less processed, high-fiber cereals, like [Nature's Path Organic SmartBran](#) and [Cascadian Farm Hearty Morning](#), and whole-grain pastas, such as [Eden Organic Kamut & Buckwheat Rigatoni](#). Brown rice is preferable to white, but whole-kernel substitutes like barley, farro, and quinoa are even better because they contain more protein and fiber.

5. Eat meat from farms, not factories.



Humans have spent nearly all of evolutionary history as hunter-gatherers, with only a short time as agriculturalists and an even smaller span as industrial urbanites, eating processed carbohydrates. While anthropological studies show that Paleolithic men ate a wide range of foods, virtually none of them were vegetarians. Most cultures got the majority of their calories from land animals or fish, yet none of this fat and protein eating produced any significant obesity, diabetes, or heart disease.

Unfortunately, the flesh of most modern domesticated animals bears little resemblance to the wild meat consumed by our forebears. From time immemorial, humans ate animals that led active lives, eating only wild foods. Today, we eat meat mostly from sedentary animals raised on grain feed that they never evolved to digest. Grain-fed meat tends to have more fat and fewer nutrients — such as omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin E, and beta-carotene — than wild and grass-fed meat.

You can solve the problem by buying organic, local, or grass-fed animal products: Look for an official organic seal or “grass-fed,” “pastured,” or “free-range” on labels. Meat from small-scale local ranchers is often pastured and grass-fed; visit eatwild.com for a list of producers in your area. Wild game, like venison, is also naturally free-range; find game at specialty butchers or online at brokenarrowranch.com.

Eat plenty of fish, but avoid big-predator breeds like swordfish and tuna that can be high in mercury. Opt for wild halibut, cod, and sole, or choose tiny, oily fish like sardines and mackerel. Don't like sardines? Try this: Toss 6 fresh filleted sardines with olive oil, and lay skin side up in a pan. Dust with panko bread crumbs, capers, garlic, lemon, lime, olive oil, and salt. Bake 5 minutes at 500°.

If you don't eat meat, be sure to get adequate protein from tofu, nuts, beans, and low-sugar dairy.

RECIPE: Grass-Fed New York Steak With Port Wine Reduction, Chanterelle Mushrooms, and Frisée Salad (Serves 2)

- 1/2 cup walnuts
- 3/4 cup plus 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 lb chanterelle mushrooms, sliced
- Salt to taste
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 tsp fresh thyme, minced
- Canola oil
- 2 8-oz grass-fed New York strip steaks
- 2 tbsp shallots, minced
- 1 tsp rosemary, minced
- 1 cup port wine
- 1 tbsp veal demi-glace
- 3 tbsp butter
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tsp red-wine vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 cups frisée, white and light-green parts only
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 tbsp parsley, minced
- 1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese

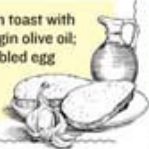

1. Preheat oven to 400°. On a sheet pan, roast walnuts for 7 minutes, until toasted.
2. In a skillet, heat 2 tbsp of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, and season with salt. Cook until browned, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Add garlic and thyme, and cook 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from pan.
3. Heat a thin layer of canola oil over high heat. Add steaks, and cook 2 minutes per side. Flip, and cook 1 minute per side. Remove from pan and let rest.
4. Reduce heat to medium; add minced shallots and rosemary. Cook until shallots are translucent, about 1 minute. Add port and simmer until liquid reduces by half. Add demi-glace and cook until liquid reduces to 1/4 cup. Remove from heat. Whisk in butter and 1 tsp vinegar until creamy. Transfer to a small bowl.
5. Whisk mustard, 1/2 cup vinegar, and 3/4 cup olive oil. Toss with frisée, whole minced shallot, parsley, walnuts, and cheese. Serve with steaks, mushrooms, and port wine sauce.

Weekly Meal Planner

Find the foods you like, then create a regular rotation to help you eat well, week after week.



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
BREAKFAST	Mixed-herb omelet with applewood-smoked bacon; side of sautéed spinach	Steel-cut oatmeal with organic raspberries and sliced almonds	Sprouted-grain toast with almond or peanut butter; whole orange
LUNCH	Free-range chicken Caesar salad with extra chicken, no croutons; apple	Chef salad with extra egg; no bread; pear 	Black-bean or buffalo burger on whole-wheat bun; garden salad
DINNER	Double-cut pork chop with caramelized onions and sweet potato fries; roasted kale	Pan-roasted halibut with sautéed leeks and celery-root puree; quinoa	Farro with garlicky kale; wild sole; baked apple or nuts and yogurt

	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
BREAKFAST	Oat-bran toast with extra-virgin olive oil; scrambled egg 	Steel-cut oatmeal with halved, raw walnuts and fresh blueberries
LUNCH	Leftover farro mixed with more kale from Wednesday's dinner; blueberries	Sliced rotisserie chicken salad with spinach, blue cheese, and green apple
DINNER	Crab cakes with tartar sauce and coleslaw; Bibb salad 	Time to cheat: pizza and beer; ice-cream sundae; more beer

	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
BREAKFAST	Scrambled eggs with bacon at your neighborhood diner; swap cottage cheese for hash browns	Time to cheat again: banana pancakes with melted butter and maple syrup
LUNCH	Smoked salmon or roasted sardines; tomato salad; apple	BLT on sprouted-grain toast with bacon and sliced avocado
DINNER	Grass-fed New York steak with port wine reduction, chanterelle mushrooms, and frisée salad	Roast chicken with mashed cauliflower and gravy; sautéed zucchini. <i>For recipes and cooking tips, visit mensjournal.com</i>

6. Eat leafy green and brightly colored vegetables at every meal.

You can spend a lot of time trying to figure out which foods have which antioxidants when all you need to know is that people who consume more vegetables are at lower risk for chronic diseases than those who don't. According to the [Harvard School of Public Health](#) and other leading research institutions, the healthiest vegetables to eat include leafy green ones like lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, and mustard greens, and cruciferous varieties such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, and kale. The HSPH also advocates consuming plenty of brightly colored vegetables, such as tomatoes, bell peppers, summer squash, and eggplant, which generally contain more health-boosting nutrients than their paler counterparts.

Leafy, cruciferous, and brightly colored vegetables are also excellent sources of fiber and complex carbohydrates, and they contain less sugar than most other carbohydrate sources. If you've tried adopting a low-carbohydrate diet in the past but felt sluggish or didn't have enough stamina to finish your afternoon workout, you probably weren't consuming enough complex carbohydrates. Avoid this draggy feeling by making vegetables part of every meal, along with a healthy source of protein from meat, fish, eggs, legumes, or soy.

While it's almost impossible to eat too many leafy, cruciferous, or brightly colored vegetables, it's best to limit starchy ones like white potatoes, corn, and winter squash, which pack too much of a sugar punch — and subsequent insulin response — to be consumed with any frequency. Instead, when craving potatoes, choose sweet potatoes, which are higher in beta-carotene and lower in starchy carbohydrates (see the recipe on page 82 for sweet-potato fries). Instead of white mashed potatoes, which score especially high on the GI (85), opt for mashed cauliflower, which has a similar consistency, less sugar, and arguably more flavor. In a large pot, boil a whole head of cauliflower until soft. Drain water from the pot, and using a potato masher, mash the cauliflower until the texture is consistent. Add a small amount of cream, extra-virgin olive oil, minced garlic, and cooked, crumbled bacon, if desired. Using a hand mixer, whip the cauliflower until creamy. Season with salt and pepper, and serve.



RECIPE: Mixed-Herb Omelet with Applewood-Smoked Bacon

(Serves 1)

- 8 oz organic applewood-smoked bacon
- 3 pastured-farm eggs
- 1/2 tsp each of minced parsley, chives, tarragon, and chervil (Substitute other fresh herbs if these are unavailable; don't use dried.)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil



1. In a skillet, cook bacon over medium-low heat, turning every few minutes. TIP: Cooking bacon over low heat may take as long as 20 minutes, but the method renders fat more slowly, yielding a much crispier final product. Remove from heat, and place bacon on paper towel to absorb excess fat.

2. Crack the eggs into a small bowl, add herbs, and season with salt and pepper. Beat gently with a fork until blended.

3. In a medium-size nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add eggs. Holding the skillet in one hand and a fork in the other, shake the pan back and forth across the burner, using the fork to scramble and scrape the eggs, reincorporating curds as they form. This method will make your omelet fluffy.

4. When eggs appear glossy but are no longer runny, remove pan from heat. Run a fork's tines around periphery of eggs to loosen. Tilt pan at an angle, and use fork to fold the upper end of the eggs over into an omelet. Transfer to plate and serve with bacon.



Photo by Kristen Lara Getchell

The Dietary Maverick

Gary Taubes has toppled conventional nutrition — for the better.

With his refusal to swallow conventional wisdom — or pasta, for that matter — low-carb evangelist Taubes has grown accustomed to clashing with vegetarians, vegans, medical doctors, and, on occasion, his own wife. “Our discussions often turn into arguments,” says Taubes, who studied physics at Harvard, aerospace engineering at Stanford, and journalism at Columbia University. “She asks why I don’t just accept what she says, why I always question everything. But it’s just what my brain does. On some fundamental level, I walk around thinking I never know what to believe or whom to believe.”

True to this line of logic, Taubes has spent the past nine years challenging established nutrition, and he’s adamant that the authorities have it all upside down — in particular, in blaming dietary fat for global health problems when carbohydrates are actually at fault. In his latest book, *Why We Get Fat: And What to Do About It*, Taubes makes a powerful case for a set of dietary heresies. He rejects the idea that weight maintenance is a matter of balancing calories expended with calories consumed, and he argues against exercise as an effective weight-loss aid. Instead, he proposes that carbs are what have made Americans fat and increased the national incidence of heart disease, diabetes, and other major health problems. Finally, he contends that dietary fat, even the saturated kind, is essentially harmless.

TAUBES'S 5 RULES FOR WEIGHT LOSS

If you're overweight or obese, Gary Taubes and the Lifestyle Medicine Clinic at Duke University Medical Center advocate a more radical approach to weight loss.

1. LOW CARBS Eat no more than 20 grams of carbohydrates a day, which amounts to one large dinner roll. This is shockingly low and will require doing math — it also means no sugar or honey; no beer, fruit, or fruit juice; no grains, not even the whole kind; and no rice, cereal, flour, bread, pasta, muffins, bagels, crackers, or starchy vegetables such as carrots, potatoes, and corn.

2. MUCH MEAT Satisfy your hunger primarily with meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, and eggs — without worrying about fat content.

3. PLENTY OF PLANTS Eat greens — and lots of them — on a daily basis.

4. MINIMAL DAIRY Hard aged cheeses and creams are fine in moderation, but stay away from milk, which contains sugar.

5. EAT WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY; STOP WHEN YOU'RE FULL.

Taubes became interested in health after publishing a book in 1993 on the shaky underpinnings of cold-fusion research, when a physicist friend told him, "If you think the science in cold fusion is bad, you should look at some of this stuff in public health." That comment led to a series of investigative articles that remain some of the most influential pieces of health journalism published in the past decade. In 2002, Taubes wrote a story for the *New York Times Magazine*, "[What If It's All Been a Big Fat Lie](#)," linking the low-fat, high-carb dietary craze in vogue since the 1950s with the obesity epidemic that began to crop up by the '80s. In the same article, Taubes suggested that Dr. Atkins's high-fat, low-carb approach could be a safe and effective way to lose weight, even though, at the time, most doctors considered the diet dangerous quackery. The article sparked a revival of the Atkins diet for several years, but it was ultimately dismissed as a fad. "People go on a low-carb diet, the diet works, but eventually they fall off because doctors tell them it's a fad," says Taubes.

In the wake of the *Times* article, he began work on *Why We Get Fat*'s predecessor, *Good Calories, Bad Calories*, a dense, meticulously footnoted, 640-page chronicle of how doctors came to believe that carbs were healthy and fat was the real killer. The book, published in 2007, was convincing and solidly rooted in real science, but so long and complicated that many doctors, even those in the field, failed to read it.

At 257 pages, *Why We Get Fat* is an easier read, and Taubes is hoping it makes the difference. "There are people in the world who are literally being starved. But they're obese and just think they're doomed," Taubes concludes. "They're going to fight this battle their whole life, yet nobody is going to explain. How do you just walk away from that?" —Brian Hiatt

RECIPE: Crab Cakes With Tartar Sauce and Coleslaw (2 main courses or 4 appetizers)

- 1 cup plus 2 tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp dill, minced
- 1 tsp parsley, minced
- 1 tsp capers, minced
- 1 tbsp gherkins, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 head green cabbage, tough outer leaves removed
- 1 carrot, shredded through a wide-hole cheese grater
- 1/4 cup crème fraîche
- 2 tbsp white-wine vinegar
- 1 squeeze of lemon
- 1 lb fresh crabmeat
- 2 tbsp flat-leaf parsley, minced
- 1 tsp Old Bay seasoning

- 1 egg, gently beaten
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- Canola oil

1. In a small bowl, combine 1/2 cup mayonnaise and 1 tsp mustard with next four ingredients. Season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate tartar sauce.

2. Cut the cabbage in half, lengthwise. Using a small knife, cut out white core from both halves. Using a chef's knife, cut the cabbage halves into quarter-inch wedges. In a small bowl, shred cabbage wedges and combine with carrots, 1/2 cup mayonnaise, crème fraîche, and vinegar. Refrigerate coleslaw until serving.

3. In a medium bowl, combine 2 tbsp mayonnaise, 1 tbsp mustard, and lemon. Add crabmeat, parsley, and Old Bay, and season with salt and pepper, stirring gently to combine. Add egg and 1/2 cup bread crumbs, stirring gently to combine. Place remaining bread crumbs in a shallow bowl.

4. In a skillet, heat 1/4 inch oil. While oil heats, shape crab mixture into small balls. Roll each in bread crumbs until well coated; press gently into thick disks. Place disks in oil and cook until cakes are browned. Remove cakes from heat, and drain on a paper towel. Serve warm with tartar sauce and coleslaw.



7. Put your mind into mindless eating.

A guy's got to snack: It's simply too much fun. Plus when you're hungry or bored between meals, there's usually no stopping that impulse to cram something into your mouth. But the world of snacks is also the world of simple carbohydrates and processed foods: potato chips, crackers, cookies, muffins, pastries, and granola bars. Stay stocked up on healthy, low-GI foods like nuts, beef jerky, cheese, plain yogurt; low-sugar fruit like berries and apples; and even energy bars made from only whole ingredients, like [Lärabar](#), [Raw Revolution](#), and [Clif Nectar](#). In the store, reach for natural nut butters like [Justin's Classic Almond Butter](#) or plain organic yogurt from [Stonyfield](#). Pair a stick of [Golden Valley Natural](#) organic beef jerky with cheese sticks from [Horizon Organic](#), or indulge in a low-sugar treat by looking for dark chocolate with a cacao content of greater than 70 percent.

Craving something salty? Avoid pretzels, potato chips, and rice cakes, and reach for a bag of mixed nuts or pop your own popcorn and flavor it with extra-virgin olive oil. If you like crackers, choose [RyKrisp](#), [Ryvita](#), or [Wasa](#) instead of Saltines, Ritz, Melba Toast, Wheat Thins, or others made from enriched wheat flour. Sweet-potato chips and even protein-packed pork rinds can be healthy snacks when consumed in moderate amounts.

8. Go easy on the fruit.

Fresh fruit is loaded with fiber, vitamins, and cancer-fighting antioxidants, but because of its high sugar content, you shouldn't think of fruit as the all-you-can-eat food group many nutritionists purport it to be. Most fruit causes a large insulin response, but there are a few low-sugar fruits that, given their other healthy properties, are a perfect snack or dessert when you're craving something sweet. Good choices include apples, cherries, grapefruit, plums, pears, raspberries, blueberries, and strawberries. Eat up to two servings of these fruits a day with a small amount of protein or fat to help balance your blood sugar.

High-sugar fruits, like cantaloupe, pineapple, and watermelon, are best viewed as an occasional treat. Not all dried fruits are bad for you, either, but stick to dried apricots, pears, and prunes instead of dates and raisins. Consuming whole fruit is always preferable to drinking juice, which, without fruit's natural fiber, isn't much better for your blood sugar than drinking Coke and other sweetened beverages.

Since many conventional fruits contain a high number of pesticides, it is important to buy some only from organic sources. Consult the [Environmental Working Group's](#) list (below) of fruits and vegetables to find out which types to buy from organic suppliers and which to buy from conventional suppliers.



GUIDE TO BUYING ORGANIC	
BUY ORGANIC	BUY CONVENTIONAL
1. CELERY	1. ONION
2. PEACHES	2. AVOCADO
3. STRAWBERRIES	3. SWEET CORN
4. APPLES	4. PINEAPPLE
5. BLUEBERRIES	5. MANGO
6. NECTARINES	6. SWEET PEAS
7. BELL PEPPERS	7. ASPARAGUS
8. SPINACH	8. KIWI
9. CHERRIES	9. CABBAGE
10. KALE/COLLARDS	10. EGGPLANT
11. POTATOES	11. CANTALOUPE
12. GRAPES (IMPORTED)	12. WATERMELON

9. Eat some saturated fat — eat more omega-3s.

Another reason to thank Taubes is for his disproving of the so-called lipid hypothesis — or the notion that eating fat increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular problems. Many major research institutions, including the Harvard School of Public Health, no longer believe that dietary fat, even saturated — found in red meat, pork, butter, and cream — is bad for heart health. What's more, a [study](#) published last year in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found no link between saturated-fat consumption and incidence of heart attacks.

This rethinking of dietary fat doesn't mean you can consume all the steak and eggs you want. While it's best to eat a little protein at every meal, you should vary the type you consume by rotating through beef, poultry, fish, game, and pork, in addition to eggs and plant-based protein like soybeans. If you don't have unhealthy LDL-cholesterol levels, you can probably safely eat as many eggs as you want; if you do have high LDL, limit your egg intake to one daily.

The true enemy in the lipid world isn't saturated fat but trans fat, found primarily in partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, which are common components of processed, packaged foods. Research has shown that trans fats boost LDL cholesterol and the risk of heart disease and other chronic illnesses. Since margarine often contains processed oils and trans fats, butter made from organic cream is a healthier spread. For the best sources of good fat, look to foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which studies show can help lower the risk of arthritis, heart disease, and some cancers. Complement your omega-3 intake with monounsaturated fats from extra-virgin olive oil, canola oil, and avocados.

RECIPE: Pan-Roasted Halibut With Sautéed Leeks and Celery Root Puree (Serves 2)

- 1 large celery root
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 large leeks, white and light-green parts only, sliced into 1/4-inch rounds
- 2 6-oz halibut steaks, skin removed
- Canola oil

1. Using a vegetable peeler, remove rough exterior from celery root. Coarsely chop root into 1-inch-square chunks. In a large pot, cover root, garlic, and bay leaf with salted water. Simmer over medium heat until chunks pierce easily with a paring knife, about 20 minutes. Drain water; discard garlic and bay leaf.

2. In a food processor, pulse celery root, adding 1/4 cup olive oil slowly and in a steady stream until well combined. Season with salt and pepper.

Keep warm until serving.

3. In a skillet, heat 2 tbsp olive oil over medium heat. Add leeks; season with salt and pepper. Sauté, stirring gently, until leeks are translucent, about 15 minutes.

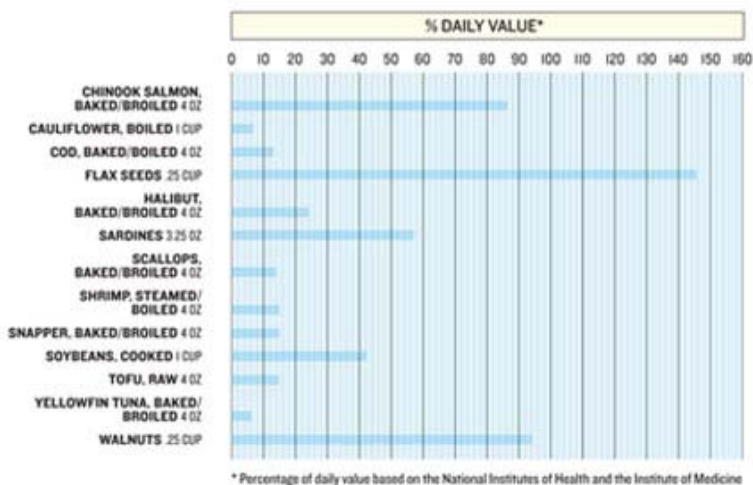
4. Pat dry halibut with a paper towel. Season steaks on both sides with salt and pepper. In a heavy-bottomed skillet, heat a thin layer of canola oil over medium-high heat until oil smokes. Add steaks, smooth-side down (for a nice sear and attractive presentation), and cook for 2 minutes without touching. Flip, and reduce heat to medium. Cook 3 more minutes, until browned. TIP: You can tell when halibut (or any fish) is done if you insert a metal skewer into the center and count to 5. Remove the skewer from fish and press to your lips: If it feels at all warm, your fish is done.

5. Remove steaks from heat and serve over leeks with celery puree on the side.



FOODS HIGHEST IN OMEGA-3S

EAT THESE OFTEN FOR OPTIMUM HEALTH.



10. Learn to cook.

The best thing you can do to eat nutritiously for the rest of your life is to learn how to cook at home. Processed foods play no role in fine cooking, and simple carbs are usually not the main ingredients in most high-quality recipes. Invest in good cookbooks from serious chefs like **Laurent Tourondel**, **Thomas Keller**, **Rick Bayless**, and **Alice Waters**, whose recipes are appealing and approachable. Some community colleges offer cooking classes, but making food at home doesn't have to be challenging. Many gourmet recipes, including Tourondel's Adobo-Marinated Hanger Steak and Keller's Salt-Crusted Striped Bass with Lemon Aioli, are surprisingly easy to make.



RECIPE: Double-Cut Pork Chops with Caramelized Onions and Sweet Potato Fries (Serves 2)

- 2 cups water
- 1/4 cup kosher salt
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tbsp juniper berries
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 cups ice cubes
- 2 bone-in Berkshire pork chops, each about 1.5 inches thick, 1.5 lb total
- 3 large yellow onions, sliced into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp white-wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp minced thyme
- 2 large sweet potatoes, cut into wedges
- Canola oil

1. In a large pot, boil water, salt, sugar, juniper berries, and thyme sprigs, stirring until salt and sugar dissolve. Remove from heat. Cool with ice until brine reads 45° or less on a meat thermometer. Place brine and chops in a ziplock bag. Refrigerate for 4 to 6 hours. Discard brine, and refrigerate chops if not cooking immediately.

2. Clean pot; add onions and 1/4 cup oil. Season with salt and pepper. Heat over medium-low heat for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add vinegar and thyme. Cook for another 15 minutes, until onions are browned. Keep warm until serving.

3. Heat oven to 400°. Toss potato wedges into a bowl with 1/4 cup oil. Season with salt, pepper, and thyme. On an oiled baking sheet, place wedges skin-side down and roast for 30 to 40 minutes, until tender.

4. While the fries cook, remove chops from refrigerator and season with salt and pepper. Heat a thin layer of canola oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add chops, and cook 2 minutes. Turn chops, and cook 3 minutes. Turn again, then remove from heat. Place chops in oven with fries for about 10 minutes, until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of a chop reads 130°. Let rest 10 minutes. Serve chops with onions and a side of fries.

—
This article originally appeared in the February 2011 issue of Men's Journal.

**Follow us on Twitter: @MensJournal and @MJGearGuy
and on Facebook**

Article printed from Men's Journal: <http://www.mensjournal.com>

URL to article: <http://www.mensjournal.com/everything-you-know-about-nutrition-is-wrong>

Copyright © 2009 Men's Journal. All rights reserved.