



those raw-foods diets

Raw-food cookbooks and restaurants featuring all-raw menus are becoming trendy. But do you need to eat all your foods raw to attain and maintain good health?

going raw

Including plenty of fruit and vegetables in your diet, as well as raw nuts and seeds, is beneficial. For example, raw fruit and vegetables supply higher levels of heat-labile nutrients, such as vitamin C and folate. Raw (and boiled) foods also contain the lowest levels of cancer-causing acrylamide, with fried/grilled the highest. However, the notion that raw foods provide enzymes to aid digestion is myth, as they're destroyed by the acid conditions in one's stomach. Also, eating a totally raw-foods diet can result in nutrient deficiencies.

A study of people following the mostly raw-foods vegetarian diet (the "Hallelujah diet") found it didn't provide sufficient vitamin B₁₂, D, calcium, selenium, zinc or protein for good health.

advantages of cooked foods

For many foods, cooking improves palatability, and also enables proteins and starches to be more easily digested. For example, legumes,

grains and potato are better digested if cooked. Cooking food also protects against harmful bacteria.

While some people argue that cooked foods contain little nutritional value, research shows that cooking improves the availability of certain anti-cancer nutrients. For example, the red pigment in tomato (lycopene) is actually more available for absorption from pasta sauce than from a raw tomato! Similarly, the body can extract more of certain carotenoids from carrots when cooked. (Which is not to say that raw carrots are unhealthy, as they still contain plenty of carotenoids!)

keep a balance

There is no scientific validity of consuming a totally raw foods diet and we should be careful to avoid extremes in eating. A healthy diet should include both fresh and cooked foods. When cooking vegetables, be careful not to overcook them, so as to retain more nutrients.

See **page 30** for a healthy recipe.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further information on healthy eating, please contact *Sanitarium Nutrition Service*

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