

COVER STORY

# A CLEAN TICKET TO HEALTH

AS THE PHRASE GOES, 'GARBAGE-IN, GARBAGE-OUT'; WHAT WE PUT IN OUR BODIES AFFECTS US PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY. FIND OUT WHY YOU SHOULD EAT CLEAN AND HOW YOU CAN BEGIN

If you can't visualise an ingredient found on your dinner plate on a tree, bush, plant or farm, it is best to avoid it – this is one of the fundamental principles behind clean eating, where you consume 'clean' food for better health.

Clean eating is not about washing your food thoroughly; rather, it is adopting "the way our grandparents used to eat", as analogised by certified raw food chef and nutrition educator Sunita Vira of The Raw Food Centre. One such popular movement is the 'Eat-Clean Diet' conceptualised by nutritional therapy practitioner Tosca Reno, which advocates consuming 'clean' food for good health.

In general, to eat clean is to avoid processed food as they have no nutritional value. This includes food made from white flour and sugar, artificial sweeteners, alcohol, chemical additives and preservatives, and those that are high in trans and hydrogenated fats. If you are still considering whether to eat clean, here are five reasons to start.

## #1: IT IMPROVES PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Food is the bedrock for our physical appearance, mental health and emotional strength. With more people realising this relation, and with more health and wellness issues arising in society, more are turning towards a cleaner diet to improve their overall health and wellness, observes Sunita.

Some of the benefits of clean eating include experiencing increased energy levels, weight loss, glowing skin, stronger immunity, and mental clarity and stability.

## #2: SNACKING IS ALLOWED, YOU WON'T BE DEPRIVED

Though it may sound too good to be true, one of the key principles of clean eating is to have five to six small meals per day. This is because having snacks between the main meals prevents hunger pangs and sugar imbalance in the body, both of which are typical reasons behind cravings for sweet and fatty food.

Though snacking is encouraged, this is not the green light to binge on a bag of chips or gummy bears. ▶

## YOUR CLEAN EATING CHEAT SHEET



Follow these simple guidelines to eat your way to good health.

### UP YOUR PLANT INTAKE

Be it vegetables, fruits, grains, nuts or seeds, they contain lots of nutrients and are healing to the body. They are also free of chemicals, additives, artificial flavourings and refined sugar. For those who find it difficult to consume large amounts of greens, try dining at a health food restaurant or a juice bar for tasty green options.

### CHOOSE WHOLE FOOD

As opposed to processed food, whole food is one that has not been altered in any way in a factory or laboratory, and are as natural and fresh as possible. To flavour your food, use natural spices such as turmeric and cinnamon.

### LEAVE OUT REFINED SUGAR

Food containing refined sugar should be avoided as refined sugar contains empty calories and has no nutritional value. Watch out especially for seemingly healthy food that are actually high in refined sugar, including canned fruit, instant cereal, bottled pasta sauce and flavoured milk.

### EAT FIVE TO SIX MEALS A DAY

Frequent meals not only keep food cravings at bay; they increase your metabolism and feed your body and mind with energy throughout the day. Each portion you consume should be roughly half the size of your normal meal.

### READ LABELS AT THE SUPERMARKET

When shopping for groceries, be mindful of the ingredients on the label. If there is a name in the ingredient list that you can't pronounce, is strangely long or sounds like it comes from a laboratory, it is most likely a chemical additive or preservative, so put the item back on the shelf.

**BRUSH AND DETOX**

*Other than eating cleaner, there are other things you can do to purge toxins from your body. One of them is dry brushing.*

Our skin is the largest elimination organ in our body and it eliminates a quarter of the toxins in our bodies, shares Tiffany. Therefore, dry brushing aids the detox process and also reduces cellulite. To start, choose a brush that has natural fibre bristles and a long handle to reach your back easily, and follow the pointers below:

- Brush your body before you shower or bathe, preferably in the morning.
- Start at your feet and always brush towards your heart. Use brisk circular motions or long, even strokes.
- For areas with cellulite, concentrate the brushing there for 10 minutes daily to dissolve the cellulite.
- Brush lightly on sensitive areas like breasts and more firmly on areas such as the soles of the feet.
- Avoid brushing anywhere where skin is broken or where you have a rash, infection, cut or wound.
- Finish by taking a shower. After drying off, massage pure plant oils such as almond and sesame, into your skin.

For sugar addicts, ESPA's resident naturopath and nutritionist Tiffany Wee suggests having healthy snacks like dark chocolate, fresh fruits, muesli bars and berry smoothies.

Those who prefer savoury snacks can consider oven-baked vegetable chips, vegetable sticks with hummus or guacamole, and lightly-salted air-popped popcorn.

**#3: YOU DON'T HAVE TO OMIT ANY FOOD GROUPS**

Non-vegetarians should be happy to know that the clean eating diet does not compel you to drop meat and dairy from your diet. However, as clean eating advocates consumption of 'grass-fed' and 'free-range' products, be mindful of the source of the meat and dairy.

**#4: IT IS SUSTAINABLE**

Unlike fad diets which promote short-term

weight-loss goals, clean eating is a lifestyle that is not excessively restrictive and can be easily modified to suit an individual's taste. Hence, it is sustainable and practical as a long-term habit.

"Clean eating is not about deprivation but making choices," says Tiffany. You should choose the healthiest options in each of the main food groups and consume less of the

not-so-healthy food. Doing so retrains your palate, which has been de-sensitised by the frequent consumption of processed food. Over time, you will learn to appreciate and enjoy the natural flavours of food.

**#5: ANYONE CAN EAT CLEAN**

Regardless of your age and health condition, you can eat clean. The diet is based mainly on healthy eating principles, so it is generally safe

for anyone to adopt it, says Changi General Hospital senior dietician Ong Sik Yin, explaining that it advocates the avoidance of processed foods with additives and preservatives. As these are things that our bodies definitely do not need, there is really nothing to lose.

Ultimately it is about making better choices that will support your individual health and wellness goals. *ℳ*



Chilled Aloe Vera, Rosella Gelo & Calamansi

**DETOX AT ESPA**

Look no further than ESPA and its various offerings to help you eliminate toxins from within.

**INDULGE IN AN ESPA RITUAL**

Revitalise and refresh mind and body with one of four available Hamman rituals, which include a deep cleansing full body scrub, using a traditional Kese mitt and black olive soap.

**TAKE A VACATION AT THE DESTINATION SPA**

Enjoy a short break and kick start your cleansing process with the 'Intro to Detox' Lifestyle Retreat. Here, you will receive a personal lifestyle consultation to guide you through the detoxification process, and be recommended exercises and activities that will enhance detoxification. The retreat also includes daily detoxifying beverage shots as well as meals from Tangerine.

**TRY THE NEW MENU AT TANGERINE**

Celebrity Chef Sam Leong and his wife, Forest, have whipped up meals here, in consultation with Tiffany, to ensure that you get tasty, well-balanced and healthy dishes that are good for you. The menu has been recently refreshed to provide more variety for diners. You'll find more coconut and curry dishes as coconut oil promotes fat burning, shares Tiffany. Also included are the nutritional facts of each dish. New dishes include *Chilled Aloe Vera, Rosella Gelo & Calamansi* and *Double-boiled Canadian Wild morel Mushroom with Sakura Chicken Consomme*.

*ℳ*invites

**BE REJUVENATED**

Take some time to rest and detoxify yourself at ESPA

See page 15 for full details.

