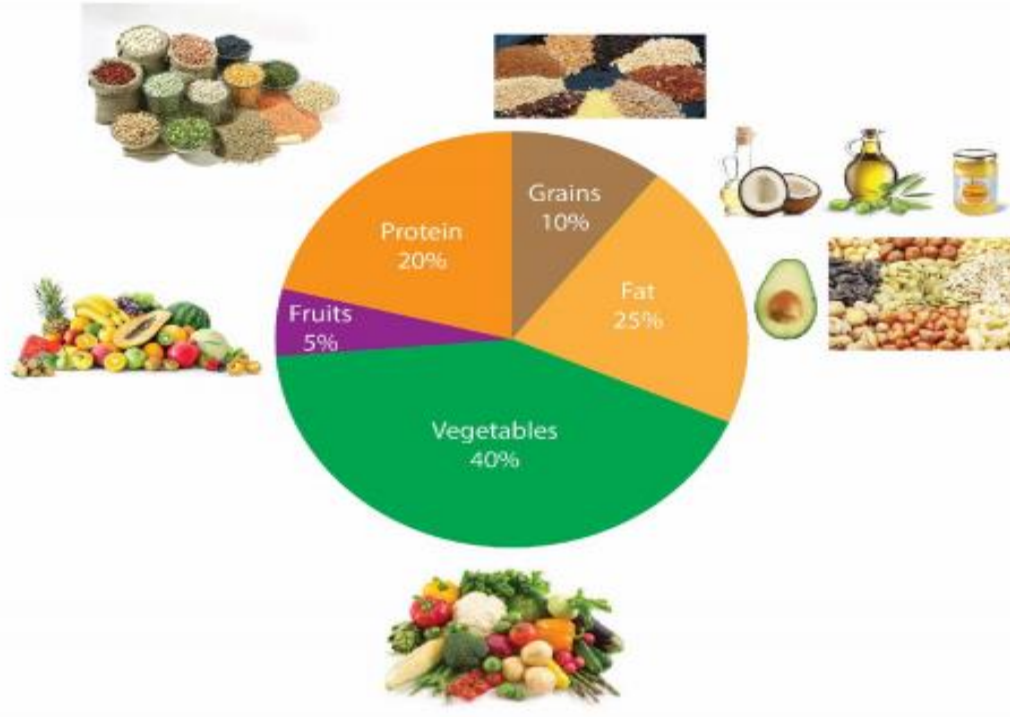


Holistic Food (Paushtik Ahar)



Holistic Food

The first important rule of holistic food is to avoid the two primary food poisons:

- Refined Sugar – Food and beverages
- Refined wheat flour

Two Modern Food Poisons



The quality of food consumed has the most significant effect on the preservation of health and prevention of modern food and lifestyle diseases. Nontraditional, unnatural, synthetic, packaged high glycemic foods, raise insulin levels and cause obesity and Type 2 diabetes. In contrast, traditional, natural, plant-based low glycemic foods, reduce the insulin demand and keep insulin blood levels low in the healthy range. Low insulin levels mean no unhealthy fat storage which eventually causes obesity and Type 2 diabetes. Holistic food is

about going back to 40 – 50-year old traditions of eating meals both in the quality as well as the frequency. Holistic foods are the natural food of plant origin- fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lentils, legumes, seeds, and nuts. Eaten in proper proportions these food provide a healthy balance of Macronutrients – carbohydrates, proteins, and fats as well as Micronutrients – vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Micronutrients are the elements present in colored fruits and vegetables, seeds and nuts. These assist with energy production in the cells as well as cleanse the cells of all the waste created during energy synthesis. Every cell in the body is like a micro kitchen, which is cooking up energy from the glucose.

- **Fruits** – up to 1 – 2 cups daily. Never drink fruit juices as these have no fiber and are very high glycemic. There are few great rules about eating fruit:
 - Eat fruits during the day and not after 5 pm or after dinner as dessert. Fruit sugar is called fructose sugar. It is a different type of sugar compared to glucose sugar which is present in foods other than fruits. Unlike glucose sugar, the fructose sugar does not increase blood glucose levels. The fructose sugar, therefore, does not raise insulin levels. That is great news. Unfortunately, however, too much of fruit, especially fruit juices can cause insulin resistance differently. The fructose from the fruit gets absorbed from the digestive tract and gets transported to the liver. In the liver, it converts to fatty acids which are used to make unique energy, called ketone bodies. The ketone energy is good for the brain and heart. That is why fruits have been considered heart healthy. However, too much fruit causes fatty liver, if the individual is not active. If there is no physical activity, the fatty acids get stored in the liver.
 - The simple rules to remember about eating fruits, therefore, are: **“Do not consume fruits as juices as juices are a concentrated form of fructose sugar. After eating fruits, stay active and mobile for 2-3 hours, so all the fructose fruit energy gets used up. Do not eat fruits after 5 p.m., and never before going to bed at night.”**
- **Vegetables** – 4-5 cups per day or more if possible. The vegetables have the lowest amount of carbohydrate. The root vegetables such as potatoes and corn have more carbohydrate as starch, these are to be consumed in moderation. Vegetables including root vegetables have lots of fiber which keeps the stomach full and prevents constipation. The fiber in the food also reduces absorption of sugar and fat from the digestive tract. Half the daily amount of vegetables should be eaten raw.
 - Do not overcook the vegetables as it destroys the nutrients.
 - Eat a variety of different vegetables for maximum benefit.
- **Grains** – Eat coarsely ground grains, preferably multigrain chapatis - ragi, barley, millet, quinoa (rich in protein), jawar (sorghum), and oats. Some good rules about the grains are:
 - Minimize grain consumption, as grains are rich in carbohydrates. Minimize wheat consumption as much as possible. Eat only coarsely ground wheat, which

is rich in fiber and digested slowly. Do not eat refined wheat flour (Maida) and chapatis made from packaged wheat flour sold in stores. Both of these processed wheat flour preparations are poor in fiber and rich in gluten. The processed flours, increase blood glucose levels rapidly and cause high insulin levels. The blood glucose and insulin levels get very high after eating baked treats which are rich in refined flour, sugar, and fat. For example-cakes, pastries, bread, pizza, and pasta. Type 2 diabetics should avoid refined wheat flour in any form.

- White bread – A common expression used by the nutritionists is “Whiter the bread earlier you are dead.” The white bread made from highly refined, low fiber wheat flour raises blood glucose fast which causes higher insulin release and insulin resistance. If you like bread, preferably eat freshly baked, preservative-free, multigrain bread in a small amount – one to two slices in the entire day. Always eat bread or chapatti with a generous amount of healthy fat, such as olive oil or ghee or butter or preferably nut butter – almond or peanut butter. The healthy fat applied to bread and chapatis, keeps the stomach full, delays stomach emptying time and lowers the overall food consumption. Healthy fat also slows the absorption of sugar from the digestive tract. “Keep in mind that healthy plant-based fat is good for the health.”
- Use fine cracked wheat (fine dalia) for upma instead of rava sooji. Coarser the grain slower will be the absorption from the digestive tract. That means lower blood glucose levels and less demand for insulin. People with type 2 diabetes must minimize grain in all forms.
- Use coarse cracked/broken wheat (Dalia) or steel cut oats for breakfast porridge. One can make Dalia as a sweet or a savory preparation, like vegetable pilaf or khichri with lentils and vegetables. Coarse dalia is low glycemic compared to instant Quaker and rolled oats, which are precooked and raise blood glucose rapidly. For the sweetener in porridge use dates or brown jaggery (a good source of iron) or any sweet fresh fruit, instead of refined sugar.
- Boxed cereals are not healthy breakfast options as is claimed by the manufacturers. Boxed cereals are dried and desiccated grain chips rich in sugar, salt, and fat. Despite the stated claims, boxed cereals are neither nutritious nor have the heart-healthy fiber content.
- **Seeds and Nuts** – Eat a fistful of nuts and seeds a day.
 - Eat a variety of nuts and seeds – peanuts, almonds, walnuts, cashews, pistachios, sunflower seeds, chia seeds, sesame seeds, and melon seeds. Sesame seeds are the most abundant source of calcium. Seeds and nuts are a good source of protein and hearthealthy omega 3 oils. Do not overeat seeds and nuts as these are also rich in calories. A good rule is to eat a generous fistful which is 30 – 50 grams.

- **Healthy Oils and Ghee – A must for good health. (Eat 35 – 40gms/6 – 8 teaspoonfuls daily) ▪ Eat 3 – 4 tsp of ghee each day.**
 - Put it on chapatti, or rice to minimize the absorption of these grains in the digestive tract. That tames the appetite, postpones hunger and prevents overeating. Fat is the only macronutrient in the food, which does not raise blood glucose and insulin levels. In comparison carbohydrates as well as proteins raise insulin levels. Healthy fat, therefore, is good for a Type 2 diabetic patient.
 - Eat 5 – 7 tsp of a variety of healthy oils – olive oil (low boiling point - not meant for frying), coconut oil, and cold compressed nonhydrogenated vegetable oils such as mustard oil, sesame oil, rice bran oil, grapeseed oil, and unrefined vegetable oils. Minimize deep frying as high heat converts even the healthy oils into unhealthy trans fats. Commercial store-bought fried snacks and packaged savory treats (chivda, potato chips, etc.) are rich in trans-fats. These increase the risk of heart attacks, by causing blood vessel blockage. These are the first item on the food list, which the heart surgeon will ask you to stop eating, after a heart bypass surgery or angioplasty.
- **Lentils (dals) and Legumes (beans) –** Eat a variety of lentils for the maximum nutritional benefit. Beans are great food options for digestive health and prevention of colon cancer.
- **Sprouts –** Moong, white chana (chickpeas), Masoor, Methi (fenugreek seeds) and alfalfa sprouts are a rich source of Vitamin B complex and protein. Sprouting process increases the protein content of the seeds by 30%. In Ayurvedic tradition, sprouts have been considered “Prana – the source of life” foods.
- **Curds/Yoghurt –** Up to 1 small cup daily. Keep in mind that milk has lactose sugar and saturated fats. Minimize concentrated milk product consumption, such as milk-based sweets and cheese including paneer. Every 100 gram of Paneer does have 18 gram protein but along with it comes 20 gram of saturated fat. The vast majority of Asians have a deficiency of the enzyme lactase, so they cannot digest lactose sugar in the milk. Traditionally, southeast Asians (Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese) do not consume milk and milk products. A feeling of indigestion, rumbling, bloating and gas after drinking milk or eating milk-based sweets; suggests lactose intolerance. The best dairy option for Asians is fermented milk products like yogurt, curds (dahi) and thin savory buttermilk (lassi) without sugar. All fermented milk products have lactase enzyme which facilitates digestion of lactose sugar in the milk.

Essential Tips for Holistic Meal (Paushtik Aahar):

Prolong the night-time fasting cycle by delaying the first meal of the morning. That keeps the insulin levels low and forces the body to use stored fat for energy. More extended the night time fasting hours, less the fat accumulation in the body, especially fat around the belly. Belly fat is the most significant risk factor for fatty liver, Type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

1. Start the day with sugar-free drinks such as lemon and ginger water, Indian spice tea and other calorie-free beverages (see recipes at the end of the book). The aim is to delay eating opportunity in the morning to prolong the night-time fasting period. One can have these drinks any time of the day.
2. Do not consume fruit or vegetable juices, as juicing removes all the heart-healthy essential fiber. Leave the juices for the babies, the old and sick who have no teeth or strength to chew their fruit and vegetables.
3. The best way to get the fiber is to eat natural fruits and vegetables. Do not get fooled by the labels on packaged foods, especially boxed cereals, claiming heart-healthy fiber. The body needs natural fiber and not factory manufactured, dry and desiccated fiber.

Breakfast:

- Half a cup of sprouts – Raw or lightly steamed.
- Up to 2 cups mixed fruit bowl with few mixed nuts. Nuts and seeds add protein and healthy fat, both of which slow the absorption of fruit fructose in the digestive tract. Eating fruit with the morning meal minimizes the overall grain intake.
- Breakfast meal options – Follow the cultural tradition: minimize grain consumption adding lots of vegetables and peanuts, or other nuts. Use coarse grain options such as millet dosa; lentil dosa cracked wheat upma (not refined sooji). Vegetable parathas made with vegetables and healthy fat. Replace potatoes with low glycemic sweet potatoes. Eat in the cultural tradition and not western breakfast options made from refined flours and sugars, such as white bread, muffins, boxed cereals, waffles, croissants, and doughnuts. These items start the vicious cycle of high blood glucose, high insulin, food cravings and fat storage very first thing in the morning.

Major Meal of the Day (Lunch/Dinner):

Overeating or eating more than the body's needs leads to weight gain, even if one is eating the most healthy and holistic food. The best way to prevent overeating is to eat slowly over 20 – 30 minutes. That much time is needed to get the brain signal that the stomach is full.

“Fast eating always leads to overeating, so always eat mindfully savoring every morsel of your food with no distractions. “

Eat smart – A variety of fresh vegetables and fruits. Minimize grain consumption and eliminate refined wheat flour preparations.

- Start with a bowl of mixed salad as a meal starter – Include 3 to 4 seasonal vegetables - tomatoes, radishes, salad greens, cucumber, mixed seasonal fruits, few sprouts, nuts of your choice (peanuts, almonds, walnuts, etc.) and seeds (sunflower, chia, flax, melon, sesame, etc. Flax seeds are difficult to chew and digest when eaten whole, so use freshly ground flax seed

powder. It is not a good idea to roast seeds and nuts as roasting causes loss of essential omega 3 oils. Use lemon juice or apple cider vinegar as the dressing for a salad with the desired amount of salt and condiments- cumin powder, black pepper powder, etc. Apple cider vinegar 1 – 2 tablespoons daily, helps with digestion. It also lowers the blood sugar level and is suitable for diabetic patients. This holistic salad is filling and can be a complete carry-out lunch option for office goers. Eating salad as a meal starter, significantly minimize the need for the grains – rice and chapatis, which contribute to obesity and Type 2 diabetes.

- Eat multigrain chapati made from coarsely ground wheat with ragi, jawar (sorghum), bajra (millet), barley, oats, etc. Multigrain options cut down the wheat content of chapatti. The wheat content can also be minimized by adding blended vegetables and boiled mixed lentils while kneading the dough. These holistic chapatis made from unrefined multigrain flours with vegetables and lentils are nutritious, rich in protein and keep one full for many hours.
- Cooked vegetables of choice. Over a week try to eat all varieties of vegetables. Biodiversity in food provides the body with all necessary nutrients, minerals, and vitamins.
- Lentil (Dals)/Legumes (Beans) – Eat all varieties during the week and whenever possible eat mixed lentils and legumes. Several ready-made diverse lentil options are available in the market, or you can design your lentil mixture.
- Rice – Eaten in small amount rice is healing grain for the digestive tract. A small half-cup serving of cooked rice does not raise blood sugar and is safe for a diabetic patient. A smart way to eat rice is adding 1 – 2 tablespoon of rice to a bowl of lentil soup (dal), rather than pouring dal into a plate full of rice. Of all the varieties of rice basmati rice has the lowest glycemic index.
- A small bowl of yogurt/curds with vegetables or glass of thin lassi (buttermilk).
- Freshly made Immunity boosting pickles – Fresh haldi (turmeric), ginger, green chilies in lemon juice or mixed veggies/raw mango pickle with freshly ground spices-mustard, methi, and turmeric.
- If hungry between lunch and dinner, one may have a small high protein snack which is fresh fruit or nuts or savory chaat made from boiled moong and chana. Avoid packaged, synthetic, pre-prepared and fried snack options.
- Eat only when hungry not because the food is in front of you or someone insists that you must eat or taste a little.
- Always eat mindfully and slowly working on each bite and savoring all the flavors. The brain takes 20 – 30 minutes to get signal that the stomach is full. Eating a meal in less than 20 minutes leads to overeating.

NO to Fast Foods



Breakfast Options: *No fast, fake, or junk foods*

