

# NEW YEAR'S FAT-LOSS DIET REVOLUTION

## ***BURN FAT AND HAVE BETTER SEX!***

By Susan M. Kleiner, Ph.D., RD, FACN, CNS, FISSN

This year you will lose weight, feel better, look great and perform at your best, all by thinking about how much food you need to eat, not what you *can't* eat! It's a revolutionary concept, turning 180° from what you've always read and learned about food, your health and your weight. We are taking you down a new road to your new life. Contrary to the "don't eat this" research from the last century, 21<sup>st</sup> century nutrition science is all about the foods that we must add to our diets to enhance our health, our looks, how we feel and how we perform, from the courtroom to the boardroom to the bedroom.

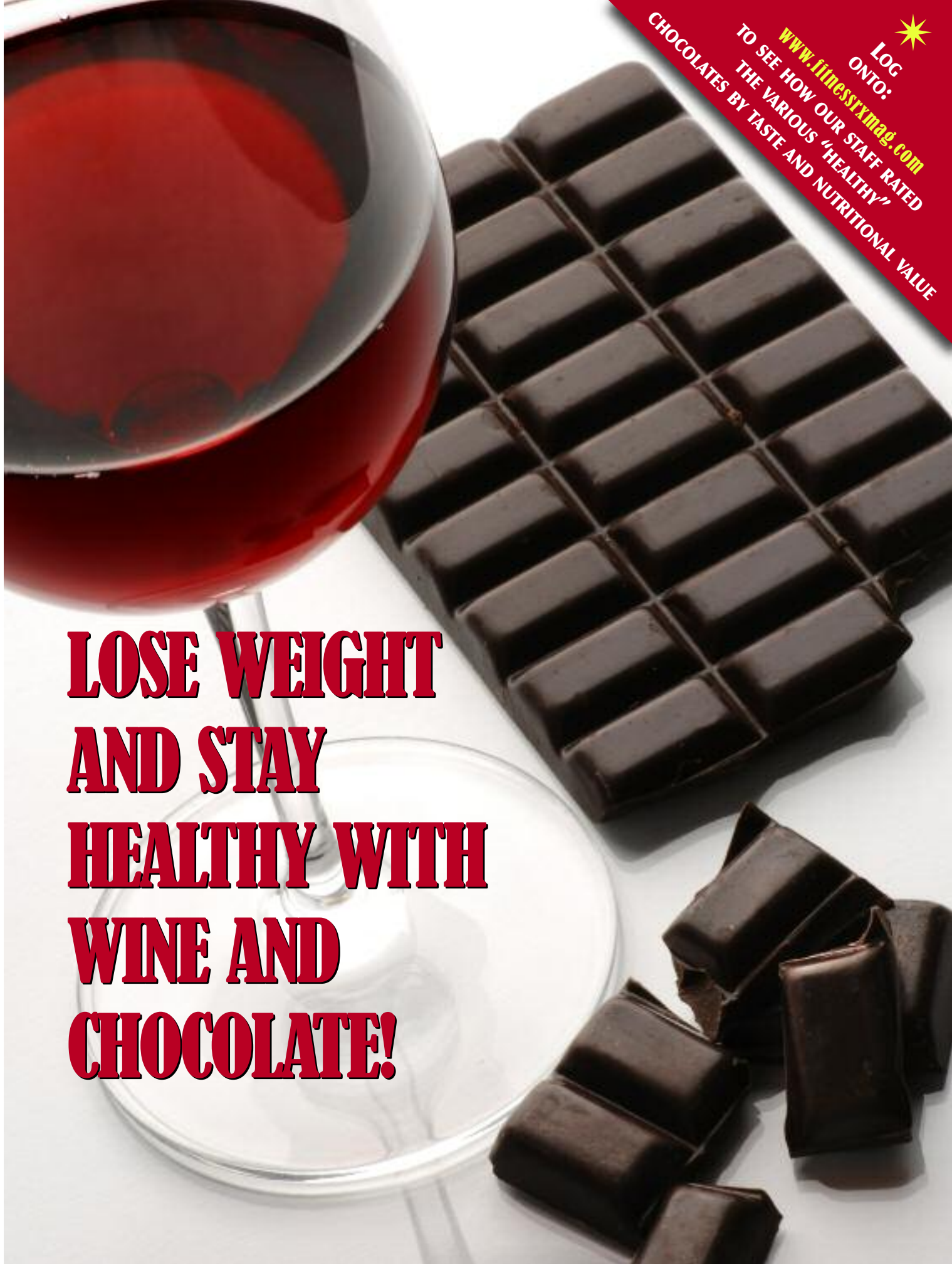
### **The 21st Century Lifestyle**

The first strategy on the revolutionary road to your new life is to create a modern lifestyle plan. This is really an all-encompassing approach to life, and starts with a positive outlook. The old negative approach to eating focused on *limiting* what you could eat, which meant that you were always thinking about what you *couldn't* eat. Food is such an integral part of our lives, an important element in our everyday personal interactions, work interactions, celebrations, and spiritual and

creative endeavors. If we are always holding back, thinking about what we *can't* do, then it flows over into how we see and interact with the world around us. We limit our horizons.

Now I want you to switch to a positive track, to focus on the limitless possibilities that life has to offer, the abundance of wonderful food that our bodies desire to maximize our health and our potential. The opportunities that living an active life makes available: from meeting other healthy and active people, to experiencing exciting new places. Exercise keeps our minds clear and our moods high, and helps us to think and remember into the senior years of our lives. When you think positively, you are creative and exciting, and more likely to try new things and be successful.

You must approach this with an open mind. Some of the things that you'll read about in this article will go against what you always thought was true. The nature of science is that it is a never-ending investigation searching for the most well-supported conclusions from the facts at hand. When it comes to diet, at some point we have to take the data and make recommendations. But the research continues, and the conclusions can change. Sometimes dogma takes on a life of



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its own, even when there is no science to support it at the outset. All the information that you will read in this article is supported by the state of the science today.

## The Mediterranean Food Experience

Once you have your outlook set, you need an outline. In the 1950s, scientists went beyond trying to understand nutritional deficiencies and began to investigate what kinds of foods prevent disease and promote health. We are now in the early stages of answering that question and the picture is coming into better focus.

Many dozens of studies point to the traditional Mediterranean-style diet as a good bet for the right answer. The traditional Mediterranean-style diet is characterized by a high intake of vegetables, legumes, fruits and nuts, whole grains, a high intake of olive oil, a low intake of saturated fats, a moderately-high intake of fish, a moderate intake of dairy products, a low intake of meat and poultry, and a regular but moderate intake of alcohol, primarily red wine during meals.

This style of diet has been associated with better health and longevity, and numerous studies suggest that the dietary pattern may also be protective against the development of obesity. But the data are conflicting.

It is possible that the conflict arises when the diet, or the foods that make up the diet, are studied alone. The diet pattern may be just part of the story; the experience surrounding eating the food, and the entire traditional Mediterranean lifestyle, may at least be another part of the beneficial impact on health. The traditional Mediterranean lifestyle is plentiful in physical activity, rich in close relationships, with a diet abundant in a variety of fruits and vegetables, not just a limited few. And eating is enjoyable. Rather than shunning meals, they look forward to them. Food is to be savored, not avoided.

In other words, maybe it's the attitude toward food, and life, that makes a difference. We know that stress leads to an increase in the risks for obesity and many chronic diseases. If you are feeling stress around food, then you are stressed all day long. So I suggest that we change the concept from the Mediterranean Diet to the Mediterranean Food Experience. Even if we can't study it in a laboratory, you will definitely have a more stress-free life and enjoy yourself more. Now you're ready for the details.

## What You Need To Eat

There are hundreds of research studies investigating the impact of individual foods or food groups on physical health, mood and cognitive performance over the short- and long-term. While I can highlight a select list of those foods and eating styles here, the following pages include menus that you can create using lists of a wide variety of foods within food groups. Think of a Chinese restaurant menu, with choices from columns A, B and C. That is how the plan will work for you.

## Fish

While you may have already heard about the importance of fish oils in your diet, the protein from fish may be unique, playing an important role in the diet, separate from other

types of protein. There is considerable researched evidence linking cardiovascular health with consumption of omega-3 fats, specifically the marine oils docosahexanoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentanoic acid (EPA) that are found primarily in fatty fish. DHA and EPA are potent anti-inflammatory biochemicals that are also strongly linked with brain health and mood enhancement. Animal studies have shown that these unique fats can also counter diets designed to increase bodyweight and fat. In these studies, animals fed high-calorie, high-fat diets that were high in DHA and EPA did not gain fat weight as expected. The oils had an anti-obesity effect. Unfortunately, these results have not been consistently repeated in studies on humans.

Recent studies investigating the impact of including fish in the diet, rather than just fish oil supplements, may be shedding light on the conundrum in humans. Research conducted in Iceland studied the impact of weight-loss diets for young adults, varying in fish and fish oil content. During a period of eight weeks, 324 men and women between 20 to 40 years old were randomized into one of four diet groups on identical energy-restricted diets except for the following: 1. control group without any seafood but given sunflower oil capsules; 2. lean fish group given 150-gram portions (5.28 ounces) of cod three times per week; 3. fatty fish group given 150-gram portions (5.28 ounces) salmon three times per week; 4. fish oil group given DHA/EPA capsules, but no seafood.

The important finding of this study is that regardless of eating lean or fatty fish or fish oil, subjects lost more weight than did the control groups without any marine product. Weight loss (greater than 2 pounds in four weeks) and decrease in waist circumference was significantly greater in the groups receiving fish or fish oil when compared with the control group, but only in the men. The diets did not differ in their effect on weight loss for the women.

This is particularly intriguing because up until this study, the common wisdom was that only fatty fish was beneficial. In this research, the lean cod, high in fish proteins, contributed just as much benefit as the fatty salmon. The investigators speculate that the gender difference in weight loss response may be due to an increased ability by women to convert alpha-linolenic acid, a more common omega-3 fatty acid found in vegetables, to DHA, making the dietary intake slightly less critical in women compared to men in this study.

In a new study led by the same researcher as the previous study, 126 young, overweight and obese subjects were given 5.28-ounce servings of cod either 0, 3 or 5 times per week for eight weeks, but their diets were otherwise identical and energy-restricted. Body measures and cardiovascular risk factors were assessed. By the end of the study, bodyweight, waist circumference, blood pressure, triglycerides and insulin were significantly reduced. The risk of Metabolic Syndrome dropped from 29 percent to 21 percent. According to the analysis, the subjects who consumed fish five times per week lost an additional 3.74 pounds, compared to the control group, showing a meaningful dose response relative to weight loss, but not compared to the cardiovascular improvements which were seen across all groups.

Exercise plus fish might be a very powerful combination. A study from Australia has shown that fish oil and aerobic exercise independently improve metabolic and cardiovascular fac-

tors, and when combined, bodyweight loss is even greater.

One of the most common questions that I hear when I talk about eating fish is whether lean fishes like cod and tilapia are significant sources of omega-3. My answer has always been that any fish has more omega-3 fats than a hot dog, but now we know that it's not only the fats that are important; it's the fish proteins, as well. So include a wide variety of fish in your diet, three to five times weekly. Choose wild salmon whenever possible, and minimize the threat of mercury contamination by checking out the Seafood Watch list at the website for the Monterey Bay Aquarium ([montereybayaquarium.org](http://montereybayaquarium.org)). Also, combine your diet with a great aerobic exercise program to create the total lifestyle experience.

## Olive Oil

You might be surprised to find the first two foods on the list are fats, especially after decades of pushing the concept of low-fat diets and creating a fat-phobic nation. The last decade of research has made it absolutely clear that we need fats in our diet. The omega-3 fats from fish, along with monounsaturated fats (MUFA) from olives, olive oil, avocados, nuts and seeds, are critically important for cutting the risk of heart disease and Metabolic Syndrome, enhancing brain health and the health of the central nervous system, and possibly reducing the risk of becoming obese.

The leading source of these high-performance fats is extra-virgin olive oil. Along with the rich content of MUFA, extra-virgin olive oil contains a unique non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agent, oleocanthal, that acts just like ibuprofen and inhibits the activity of cyclooxygenase (COX) enzymes. This natural anti-inflammatory activity puts extra-virgin olive oil at the top of the list of high-performance fats. According to biologist Dr. Gary Beauchamp from the Monell Institute, only extra-virgin olive oil carries this property. Oleocanthal might be what is primarily responsible for the measurable anti-aging effects and health properties associated with traditional Mediterranean-style diets rich in olive oil.

## Fruits and Vegetables

One of the hallmarks of the Mediterranean-style diet is an abundant variety and quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables. Studies examining the impact of the Mediterranean-style diet on bodyweight, obesity, and waist circumference are not always consistent in results regarding bodyweight, but waist circumference, describing abdominal adiposity, is in good agreement. Statistics worldwide indicate that abdominal adiposity, or enlarged waist circumference, increases the risks for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and insulin resistance, and some hormone-related cancers. Diets abundant in fresh fruits and vegetables, rich in fiber and health-promoting phytochemicals and antioxidants and low in saturated fats, boost health and longevity. This is likely an important factor to the health benefits of the Mediterranean Food Experience.

Variety is just as important as quantity to experience the full power of the health benefits of the food plan. Eating carrots all day long, and no other vegetables, is a good start, but not great. The same goes for fruit. Don't be misled by non-scientific rumors that fruit will make you fat. On the contrary, a recent review of 16 studies examining the relationship between fruit consumption and obesity concluded that there

is an inverse relationship between eating fruit and the incidence of obesity. In these studies, the higher the fruit intake, the lower the risk for obesity.

In the menu plan that follows you will see the columns of fruits and vegetables to choose from several times each day. They are long, and could be longer if every single fruit and vegetable on the planet were included. Since there just isn't room for an unabridged list, feel free to get creative and try new fruits and vegetables. Eat them at the beginning of your meal so that you don't crowd out your appetite with other foods before you get to them.

## Whole Grains and Starchy Carbohydrates

We absolutely need carbohydrates in our diets, but it's the quality, quantity, and what we eat them with that also count. Diets that contain fewer than 40 percent of calories from carbohydrates are depressing. Really! It's the carbohydrates in the diet that allow for serotonin, the mood-lifting neurotransmitter in the brain, to be manufactured in amounts that keep your mood enhanced and ward off depression.

A recent study investigating the impact of different diet strategies on development of Alzheimer disease-related changes in the brains of mice, found that a high-protein/low-carbohydrate diet led to brains that were 5 percent lower in weight, compared to brains of mice on all other diets. It was not clear how this deficit impacted cognitive function, and further research needs to be done. A weight-loss study published this month from Australia used two different diet strategies: a very low-carbohydrate diet (4 percent of calories from carbohydrates) and a moderate-carbohydrate diet (46 percent of calories from carbohydrates). This study showed that despite similar weight loss outcomes, only the group on the moderate-carbohydrate diet maintained an improved mood state, and the low-carbohydrate group reverted to a more negative, baseline mood.

The quality of the carbohydrates in your diet is very important. Traditional Mediterranean-style diets use whole grains and minimally-processed foods. Starchy foods are eaten in combinations with protein-rich and fat-rich foods, rather than eaten individually as snacks. This creates a diet that is low on the Glycemic Index scale and low in glycemic load.

A study from London, England, published in 2009, investigated the additional impact of a diet Low in Glycemic Index and load (LGI) when added to healthy eating advice and weight loss compared to a group that followed a High Glycemic Index (HGI) plan with healthy eating advice and similar weight loss outcomes.

Fasting insulin concentration and insulin resistance were lower in the LGI than the HGI group. The reduction in total cholesterol and blood pressure was bigger in the LGI than the HGI group, and only the LGI group had significant reductions in pulse wave velocity of the arteries (a measure of the health of arteries), LDL cholesterol and triglycerides. Therefore, the LGI style diet had an additive effect to the healthy eating advice and weight loss.

An interesting study investigated the impact of lowering glycemic index foods in a meal, rather than lowering the quantity, or the load, on the rate of fat oxidation, or fat-burning. The researchers found that lowering the glycemic index of the foods but maintaining the carbohydrate load resulted in



the highest rate of fat-burning after the meal.

The ideal strategy for maximizing the use of fat as fuel appears to be including carbohydrates in your meals, but being sure to choose those that are low-to-medium on the glycemic index scale, such as minimally-processed whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, root vegetables and winter squashes, beans, pasta, and dairy foods. It may be especially savvy to eat a low-glycemic index, carbohydrate-rich pre-exercise snack to promote fat-burning during exercise.

## Red Wine

Leave it to the Italians to do a research study that shows that red wine leads to better sexual health in women. The investigators studied healthy women from the Tuscany region (Chianti area). They were divided into groups by their drinking habits: daily moderate (1-2 glasses) red wine consumption; teetotalers; and those who drank more or other types of alcohol, and the subjects completed questionnaires regarding their sexual health and function. The moderate red wine drinkers reported significantly higher scores for sexual desire, lubrication, and overall sexual function, compared to the two other groups.

Other research has found that women eating a Mediterranean-style diet have a lower risk of Metabolic Syndrome. This constellation of chronic disease conditions plays a strong role in the development of Female Sexual Dysfunction. Italian researchers have found that the Mediterranean-style diet improves sexual function in women with Metabolic Syndrome, likely due to the high level of antioxidants, anti-inflammatory agents, high fiber and low saturated fat content of the diet.

Clearly, in addition to the red wine, the food included in the diet plays a very important role in these health benefits. The addition of the wine, both its phytochemical impact and its impact on stress and mood, is all part of the Mediterranean Food Experience.

## Chocolate

After sex and wine, few things are higher on the list of stress-reducers than chocolate. For years it was thought that the impact came from taste, smell, and the overall feeling of indulgence that comes from eating chocolate. A study from Switzerland gives some insight into the true impact that chocolate may have on stress. The investigators gave 1.4 ounces of dark chocolate to subjects daily, in a divided dose (a.m. and p.m.) for two weeks, and among many measurements, followed their stress hormone responses. Subjects were identified as predisposed to a high-stress response or not predisposed to a high-stress response.

Daily consumption of dark chocolate for two weeks resulted in a decrease in the levels of catecholamines (adrenaline, noradrenaline, normetanephrine), corticosterone and the stress hormone cortisol, in the urine of subjects prone to high stress. These metabolites are associated with a chronic stress response, and the data indicate that dark chocolate benefited the subjects by reducing their mental and/or physical stress response to the level of those subjects not prone to stress. Dark chocolate is considered to be at least 60 percent cocoa solids, or more.

Cocoa powder is rich in anti-inflammatory agents and has

been studied for its beneficial impact on biological markers associated with cardiovascular disease. A study investigating cocoa powder on the modulation of some of these biological markers in high-risk subjects showed that daily consumption of cocoa powder in milk for four weeks does have a beneficial effect on some markers for cardiovascular disease risk.

However, the amount of cocoa powder consumed in this study was quite high (40 grams or approximately 8 tablespoons) and unlikely to be reasonably consumed by the average person. Also, only non-dutched (no alkali added) cocoa powder is rich in anti-inflammatory agents. This kind of cocoa powder is typically labeled "natural" and is available in supermarkets.

## Your New Life

You are now well-equipped to set off on your own Mediterranean Food Experience. This is really all you need to know to create the lifestyle that will keep you healthier and happier. If you have specific goals in mind, then continue on with the menus and recipes that will steer you toward more targeted results. It's going to be a great new year!

# FitnessRx New Year's Fat-Loss Diet Revolution Menu Planning Guide

## Daily Fruits:

Choose at least one from Column A, one from Column B and one from Column C each day. Make sure to vary your choices throughout the week.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C
CITRUS	BERRIES	ALL OTHER FRUITS

Orange	Billberry	Tropical/Exotic
Grapefruit	Blackberry	Tree fruit
Lemon	Blueberry	Melons
Lime	Boysenberry	Seeded fruit
Pummelo	Cranberry	Etc., etc., etc.
Tangelo	Currant	
Tangerine	Gooseberry	
Ugli	Grapes	
	Huckleberry	
	Raspberry	
	Strawberry	



## Daily Vegetables:

Choose at least one from Column A, one from Column B and one from Column C each day. Make sure to vary your choices throughout the week.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C
ALLIUM FAMILY	BRASSICA/CRUCIFEROUS FAMILY	DARK GREEN LEAFY AND DEEPLY COLORED VEGETABLES
Onion	Horseradish	
Garlic	Kale	Arugula
Shallot	Chard	Broccoli
Leek	Collard greens	Collard Greens
Chives	Daikon	Dandelion Greens
	Mustard greens	Endive
	Cabbage	Kale
	Brussels sprouts	Mustard Greens
	Kohlrabi	Romaine, Loose Leaf, Red Leaf, Green Leaf, Boston, Bibb, Cos Lettuces
	Broccoli	Spinach
	Cauliflower	Swiss Chard
	Bok choy	Beets
	Mizuna	Bell Peppers
	Radish	Carrots
	Rapini	Tomatoes
	Rutabaga	Sweet potato
	Turnip	Yam
		Winter squash



## Legumes, Nuts and Seeds:

Choose one from Column A and one from column B each day. Make sure to vary your choices throughout the week.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
Red beans	Almond
White beans	Brazil nut
Pinto beans	Cashew
Navy beans	Chestnut
Chickpeas	Coconut
Lentils	Filbert
Green beans	Hazelnut
Peanuts	Macadamia nut
Peas	Pecan
	Pistachio
	Walnut
	Pine nut
	Flaxseed
	Pumpkin Seed
	Sesame Seed
	Sunflower Seed



As you begin to design your own menus, emphasize the following principles:

- Fish, 3-5 servings per week
- Low-fat dairy from milk, yogurt and cheese
- Small (4-ounce) portions of lean meat and poultry
- One egg each day
- Olives and extra-virgin olive oil for your added fat every day
- Whole grains and the least processed cereals
- Always eat carbohydrate-rich foods together with protein-rich and fat-rich foods.

If you drink alcohol, choose red wine most frequently, have no more than 5 ounces per day, and drink it with meals.

Enjoy a couple of heaping tablespoons of natural cocoa powder every day and a 1-ounce portion of dark chocolate once or twice each week.

# Sample Menu

<b>BREAKFAST</b>	Omelet 1 egg plus 2 egg whites ¼ cup chopped onion, ¼ cup sliced mushrooms, ¼ cup chopped red pepper, ¼ cup chopped tomato (sauté with oil and add egg) 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil salt and pepper to taste ½ grapefruit 1 cup nonfat milk
<b>SNACK</b>	½ cup three bean salad
<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>Chef salad:</b> 2 cups leafy green lettuce, ¾ cup chopped tomato, ¼ cup chopped carrot 2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil, 2 tsp. vinegar 3 oz. sliced turkey  <b>Dessert:</b> 1 cup fresh strawberries and blueberries
<b>SNACK</b>	6 almonds 1 apple
<b>DINNER</b>	Entrée: Grilled shrimp and vegetables 5 oz. shrimp on skewers for the grill 1 tsp. olive oil and balsamic vinegar for marinating shrimp 2 Tbsp. Italian dressing for marinating vegetables 2 cups mixed vegetables such as mushrooms, onions, broccoli, cauliflower, to grill (using a grill basket is easiest) ½ cup wild rice 1 glass merlot
<b>SNACK</b>	1 cup hot cocoa, prepared with natural cocoa powder

# Recipes

(Recipes with permission from Kleiner SM, Condor B. *The Good Mood Diet. Feel Great While You Lose Weight.* Springboard Press, NY, NY, 2007)

## POTATO LEEK SOUP

This soup is a delicious way to get in your allium vegetables (from the onion family) and still keep you kissable. This is a very thick soup. It remains hot for a long time, so don't burn your tongue. If you want a white soup, use only the white of the leeks.

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 8 large potatoes, diced
- 4 leeks, cleaned and sliced
- 8 cups vegetable broth
- Salt and white pepper to taste



1 can evaporated skim milk  
Minced chives

Sauté potatoes and leeks in olive oil until the leeks are tender.  
Add vegetable broth and bring to a boil.  
Cover and simmer on low until potatoes are tender.  
Add evaporated skim milk.  
Add salt and pepper to taste.  
Whip with a submergible electric wand or place in blender and blend to desired consistency.  
Serve topped with minced chives.  
Makes 16 servings

## PAN-ASIAN HALIBUT

This recipe has been a family favorite for many years. It is so easy to make and serve—no one will believe that it took you five minutes to do the preparation. And it makes you *feel so good!*

### Marinade:

½ cup aged apple cider vinegar  
(you can use apple cider as a substitute)  
2 Tbsp. tamari or soy sauce  
½ Tbsp. toasted sesame oil  
2 cloves fresh garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon fresh minced ginger (or ½ tsp. ginger juice)  
12 ounces halibut steak  
Cilantro sprigs for garnish



Mix together the marinade ingredients and pour over halibut to marinate in a small glass baking dish for 30 minutes or up to four hours in the refrigerator.

Bake halibut in 350° degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes.  
Place under broiler for three to five minutes, or until browned but not burned.  
Serve garnished with sprigs of cilantro.  
Makes 2 servings

## CARAMELIZED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

While my produce experts at Sosio's stand at Pike Place Market call these "little green balls of death," you'll love this recipe. If you avoid cooked Brussels sprouts because of their sulfurous odor, this recipe eliminates that problem by sautéing them instead of boiling.

2 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 Tbsp. garlic  
10 oz. Brussels sprouts, washed and quartered  
½ red bell pepper, julienned  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Optional: dried, crushed red pepper



Heat oil in a nonstick skillet.  
Add garlic.  
Add peppers and Brussels sprouts.  
Do not stir.  
Cook until first side browns.  
Stir and reposition Brussels sprouts so non-browned side is down.  
Add peppers and continue cooking until peppers are soft.  
Stir to prevent burning.  
Add salt and pepper and crushed red pepper to taste.  
Makes 4 servings

## CHOCOLATE SOUFFLÉ

It's nice to have a truly decadent treat for those special occasions. For the most special touch, use individual custard cups.

Nonstick spray  
2 large eggs (separated and allowed to come to room temperature)  
2 large egg whites only  
2½ Tbsp. sweet butter  
3 oz. dark chocolate  
1 Tbsp. sugar  
1 Tbsp. Splenda  
2 tsp. vanilla  
1 cup raspberries



Preheat oven to 350°  
Spray custard cups with nonstick spray.  
Melt butter and chocolate together on low in microwave.  
Cool chocolate to room temperature  
Beat egg whites to soft peak stage; add sugar and Splenda and beat until incorporated.  
Beat yolks into the chocolate mixture. And add the vanilla.  
Fold chocolate into egg whites.  
Spoon into custard cups and bake for 12-15 minutes. The centers should be soft.  
While the soufflés are baking (or prior to beginning) puree 2/3 of the raspberries and strain to remove seeds. You can add 1-2 tsp. of Splenda if you prefer this sweeter.  
Drizzle sauce over soufflé and garnish with whole fresh raspberries.  
Makes 4 servings

Log onto: [www.fitnessrxmag.com](http://www.fitnessrxmag.com) to see how our staff rated the various "healthy" chocolates by taste and nutritional value. (And did we ever enjoy it!)

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