Food Choices

This handout is designed to help you understand the labels on your foods as well as make healthier choices that will benefit you far into the future.

Food labels are designed to list their ingredients in the order of the highest amount used within that food. If “Sugar” is the first ingredient listed, then sugar is makes up the highest single percentage of any ingredient.

Be aware of products that use multiple ingredients that do the same function, such as foods that will list “high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, sorbitol, and sucrose” all within the same label. These are all sugars and we must take all of them into account.

**Our General Rule of Thumb**

✓Eat as natural as possible. Organic is Best

* If you can’t find the ingredients listed on your food sold individually within a grocery store, or if you can’t even pronounce some of the ingredients, they are most likely chemical additives from sources unknown. Our bodies can deal with a certain amount, but too many of these over a long period of time can cause serious problems.
* Food should be somewhat similar to its original form in order for our bodies to get the most benefit from them. The further it gets processed, the further it gets stripped of what made it nutritious. Since we don’t find Twinkies growing on trees, we probably shouldn’t eat them.
* Organic foods are grown without chemical pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers. Those chemicals leech into our food and little by little add up to a big effect on our health.

**Sweeteners:**

• **Avoid**:

* Anything that lists a sweetener as one of the first few ingredients. Many foods have sweeteners added to them to increase your psychological desire for them, making you eat more than you should. Find a version of the same food, only without the sweeteners.
* Fructose (especially High Fructose Corn Syrup) Sucrose, Maltose, Dextrose – anything with -ose at the end of the word.
* Sugar and sugar substitutes such as Nurtisweet, Amino-Sweet, Splenda, Aspartame, Sorbitol, and many more.
* These simple sugars are implicated in nearly all of the health problems that have been on the rise for the last few decades and we as Americans have continued to eat more and more of them on average.

• **Eat These Instead**: (Moderation is crucial!!!)

* Cane Sugar or Sugar in the Raw – available at most health food stores
* Pure Maple Syrup – anything natural like maple syrup is better than something made in a chemical laboratory.
* Stevia or Truvia – all current indications point to this being a healthy non- caloric alternative, although long-term study is still needed.
* Fruit – Organic is best.

**Breads and Pastas:**

* **Avoid**:
o Anything that says “refined”, “enriched”, or “white flour”. Nutrients have been stripped from these grains through processing and are later added back, or “enriched”, by synthetic chemical isolates that our bodies don’t digest, providing us no nutritional value at all.
* **Eat These Instead**:
o Anything that lists “100% Whole Grain” as the only wheat product.

“Whole Wheat” is not good!!! Sprouted grains, such as Ezekiel Breads (found in the freezer section in most stores), are best and are even well- digested by people with gluten issues.

o Quinoa Pasta is easy to find, and organic rice flour pasta is a great alternative, as well as tapioca flour.

**Oils & Fats:**

* **Avoid**:
o Any “hydrogenated” oils. These are the “Trans-Fats” and are more chemically similar to plastic than they are to food. These oils, which include margarine and other butter-alternatives, were originally heralded as healthy alternatives to other fatty oils, but have now been shown to have a far worse effect on heart health.

o Read the labels! Just because the packaging says “No Trans-Fats”, there can still be .49 grams of trans-fats per serving. These add up!

o Be on the lookout for “interesterified” fats. These are just another unnatural fat.

* **Eat These Instead**:
o Real butter. The only ingredients should be cream and salt. Preferably organic non-pasteurized cream and sea salt.
o Coconut Oil, Olive Oil (cold pressed), Flaxseed Oil, Peanut Oils. o Leftover Bacon Grease from nitrate and nitrite free bacon.
o *Note: Cholesterol is not negatively affected by* ***healthy*** *oils.*

**Whole Food Recipes**

1. Breakfast Hash

Ingredients:

* 2 T Organic Butter
* 1 Small baked Potato
* 1 small Yellow Onion chopped
* 6 Cage Free Eggs
* ½ cup chopped bacon
* ¼ tsp Celtic Sea Salt
* ¼ Pepper
* 1/8 cup fresh Parsley (optional)

Directions:

In large skillet, melt butter. Chop up precooked potato and add to butter. Add onions. Cook on medium until potatoes are a bit brown. Add Scrambled eggs, bacon and spices. Cook until eggs are done. Enjoy!

2. Vinaigrette Salad Dressings:

Basics: 1part Vinegar (or citrus juice) to 2 parts Extra Virgin Olive Oil

-Vinegars: Balsamic, White, Rice-Citrus: Fresh Squeezed Lime, Lemon or Orange

Example:

* ½ Cup EVOO
* ¼ Cup Balsamic Vinegar
* 1 T Dijon or Honey Mustard
* ¼ tsp Black Pepper
* 1/8 tsp Celtic Sea Salt
* ¼ cup water

\*Shake together and let stand 30 minutes before adding to Salad\* Make your own variations using Italian seasoning, garlic, honey or ginger.

3. Homemade Coleslaw

Ingredients:

* 3 cups shredded Green Cabbage
* 3 cups shredded Red Cabbage
* 1 cup shredded Carrots (3 medium)
* ¼ cup thinly sliced Green Onions
* ½ cup full fat Organic Mayo
* 1 T White Vinegar
* 1 tsp 100% Maple Syrup
* ¼ tsp Celtic Sea Salt
* ¼ tsp Pepper

Directions:

Shred all veggies in food processor. Mix mayo, vinegar, maple syrup and spices in bowl. Add to cabbage mixture and toss. Cover and refrigerate 2 to 24 hours. Enjoy!

4. Lentil and Tomato Salad

Makes 4-6 dinner salads or 6-8 side salads

Ingredients:

* 1 cup uncooked lentils
* 1 onion, finely chopped
* 1 quart water
* 1 bay leaf
* Celtic Sea Salt to taste (optional)

Dressing:

* 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
* 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
* 1 clove garlic
* 1 pinch each of dry mustard, cracked black pepper and Celtic Sea Salt (optional)
* 1 large tomato, chopped
* 2-6 sliced green onions (less for milder flavor)
* 1 diced bell pepper
* 1-2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Directions:

In a large saucepan, combine lentils, chopped onion, water, bay leaf and sea salt. Bring to a boil. Cover and let simmer for 25-30 minutes or until lentils are tender but not mushy. Make dressing by blending the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, and optional seasonings. Stir dressing into warm lentils. Set aside to cool. To serve, stir in tomato, bell pepper, green onions and parsley.

5. Coconut-Lime Chicken Soup

Ingredients:

* 8 ozof cooked Chicken
* 1 15 oz can of full fat Coconut Milk
* 2 Cups Water
* ¼ cup fresh Lime Juice
* 3 medium Carrots sliced
* 1 T Liquid Amino (soy sauce substitute)
* 2 t Thai Seasoning
* ¼ tsp Celtic Sea Salt
* Fresh Cilantro

Instructions:

Put all ingredients in sauce pan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer covered 10 minutes or until carrots are tender. Serve with fresh cilantro and lime wedge.

6. Mexican Chicken Soup

Ingredients:

* 1 whole Chicken
* 1 T Celtic Sea Salt
* 1 lb Nitrate Free Bacon
* 1 large Red Onion
* 6 Garlic Cloves
* 2-4 Hot Jalapeno Peppers
* 2 cans diced Tomatoes
* ¼ tsp Black Pepper
* 2 cans Black Beans
* Block of Smoked Mozzarella Cheese

Directions:

Boil chicken for 1.5 hours in large pot with enough water to cover it. Add 1 T Celtic Sea Salt for boiling process. While that boils, fry up entire lb of bacon. Set bacon aside. Keep all bacon fat. Chop up red onion and peppers. Mince Garlic. Sauté ¾ of onion, pepper and garlic in bacon fat for 5 minutes. When chicken is done, remove entire chicken and let it cool. When cool enough remove meat and put it into the broth. Add contents of bacon fat and veggies to broth. Add the 2 cans of diced tomatoes. Crack fresh pepper into broth. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and let simmer covered for 30 min. While this cooks, cut mozzarella into chunks and crumble the bacon. Add 2 cans beans to broth. Let simmer another 15 minutes. Serve with fresh red onion, bacon and cheese on top. Enjoy!

7. French Onion Soup

Ingredients:

* 2 T Butter
* 4 medium Yellow Onions sliced
* 20 oz organic condensed Beef Broth
* 1 ½ cup Water
* 1/8 tsp Pepper
* 1/8 tsp dried Thyme
* 1 Bay Leaf
* 4 slices of Ezekiel Bread
* 1 cup shredded Raw Mozzarella Cheese
* ¼ cup grated Parmesan Cheese

Directions:

Melt butter in large pot. Stir in onions to coat with butter. Cook uncovered over medium-high heat 10 minutes, stirring every 3 minutes. Reduce heat to medium low. Cook another 35 to 40 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes until onions are light golden brown. Stir in broth, water and spices. Heat to boil. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer 15 minutes. Remove bay leaf. Set over to broil. Place bread in 4 ovenproof bowls or individual casseroles. Add soup. Top with cheese. Place bowls on cookie sheet. Broil with cheese about 5 inches from heat 1 to 2 minutes or until cheese is golden brown. Enjoy!

8. Curry Pumpkin Soup

Ingredients:

* 2 T Butter
* 1 large chopped Onion
* ½ cup chopped Carrots
* ½ cup chopped Celery
* 1 tsp Curry Powder
* 1 tsp Pumpkin Spice
* 2 15 oz cans of Pumpkin
* 28 oz Chicken Broth
* 2/3 cup Water
* 1 cup Cream
* ½ tsp Celtic Sea Salt
* ¼ tsp Pepper

Topper:

Dried Cranberries, Shredded Orange Peel, Fresh Italian Parsley

Instructions:

Melt butter and add onions, carrots, and celery. Cook 10 minutes until tender. Add curry powder and pumpkin spices. Cook and stir one minute. Add Pumpkin, broth, and water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer covered 15 minutes. Cool slightly. In a food Processor, blend 1/3 of mixture at a time. Return puree to pan. Add cream, salt and pepper. Heat throughout. Do not boil. Top with “topper.”

9. Green Bean Casserole

Ingredients:

* 1 lb 85% ground Beef
* 3 cans Organic Green Beans
* 1 can Organic Valley brand Cream of Mushroom Soup
* 1 tsp Celtic Sea Salt•¼ tsp Pepper
* 1 bag Organic Frozen Hash Browns (defrosted)

Directions:

Brown beef after adding the salt and pepper to it. Do not drain the fat. Put into an ungreased 9x12 pan. Add 3 cans of beans and can of mushroom soup. Top with Hashed Browns. Bake at 350 for 25 minutes.

10. Homemade Chili

Ingredients:

* 1 lb 85% Ground Beef
* 1 med.Yellow Onion
* 2 Jalapenos(optional)
* 4 Cloves Garlic minced
* 2 cans diced Tomatoes
* 2 cans Tomato Sauce
* 2 T Chili Powder
* 2 tsp Cumin
* ½ tsp Celtic Sea Salt
* ½ tsp Black Pepper
* 2 cans Black Beans
* 2 cans Red Kidney Beans

Directions:

In large pot, brown hamburger until almost done. Do not drain the fat. Add salt, onion, peppers and garlic. Sauté for several minutes. Add all 4 cans of tomatoes, and spices. Cover and simmer 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Stir in beans. Simmer uncovered about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve topped with shredded cheddar cheese.

11. 30-Minute Turkey Chili

Ingredients:

* 3 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
* 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
* 5 cloves garlic, chopped
* 1 tablespoon kosher salt
* 1 tablespoon chili powder
* 2 tsp cumin
* 1 tablespoon dried oregano
* 1 tablespoon tomato paste
* 1 chipotle chile en adobo, coarsely chopped, with 1 tablespoon sauce
* 1 pound ground turkey
* 1 (12-ounce) Mexican lager-style beer
* 2 (14 ½ oz) can whole peeled tomatoes, with their juice
* 2 (15 ½ ounce) can kidney beans rinsed and drained
* 2 cans black beans, rinsed and drained
* 2 slice scallions, cilantro sprigs, avocado, sour cream, grated Monterey jack cheese and/or tortilla chips for garnish, optional

Directions:

Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic, salt, chili powder, and oregano and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and the chipotle chile and sauce, cook 1 minute more. Add the turkey, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, and cook until the meat loses its raw color, about 3 minutes. Add the beer and simmer until reduced by about half, about 8 minutes. Add the tomatoes—crushing them through your fingers into the skillet—along with their juices and the beans; bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until thick, about 10 minutes. Ladle the chili into bowls and serve with the garnishes of your choice.

12.Crock Pot Pizza

Ingredients:

* 1 lb ground beef. Brown in skillet with 1T Sea Salt. Keep drippings.
* 2 cups dry brown rice. Cook according to package instructions
* 2 cans pizza sauce
* 1 jar spaghetti sauce
* 1 medium yellow onion chopped
* 1 medium green pepper chopped
* 1 can sliced mushrooms
* 1 can sliced black olives
* 1 package of shredded mozzarella cheese

Instructions:

Layer ingredients in large crock pot as follows: ground beef, rice, vegetables, sauces, cheese. Set crock pot to “warm” as you do not want to overcook the already cooked ingredients. Let simmer for up to 4 hours. Enjoy!

13. Paleo Crock Pot Chicken Curry w/ Peppers &Cabbage

Ingredients:

* 1 to 1.5 pounds of boneless chicken thighs –I pick these over chicken breasts because I find them tastier, and they are often cheaper.
* 1 or 2 cans of coconut milk –I used 2 cans because Trader Joe’s has them for cheap and I love coconut milk more than you know. One could get away with a single can if it is pricey for you, yet you will simply have a thicker curry
* Curry paste –Types and amounts obviously vary. I use the paleo-friendly brand Thai House, and used about 3 tbsp of their Red Curry.
* 1 small yellow onion
* 1 medium red bell pepper
* 1 medium green bell pepper
* 1/2 head of cabbage. You could use more if you wanted to.

Instructions (this is easy):

1. Turn your crock pot on before you start your prep, and get a head start.

2. Pour your coconut milk into your Crock Pot and add your curry paste. Make sure you stir until dissolved in the coconut milk. Some recipes will call for you to do this in a sauce pan first, yet I really would rather not do more dishes than I have to.

3. Cut your chicken thighs into 1′′ cubes. Don’t be fancy. Just cut them up and dump them into the pot and stir.

4. Cut your red and green peppers into similar 1′′ cubes. Dump into pot and stir.

5. Cut your onion into similar chunks, you get the idea.

6. Cut your head of cabbage in half, and quarter the half you are going to use. Simply cut the wedges into thin strips and then break apart with your hands. This is much easier than using a grater, and you can always chop the cabbage to your desired shape. I personally wanted longer pieces. Add the cabbage to the top of your pot and again stir, trying to coat the cabbage with the coconut milk. It is fine if the cabbage is not submerged, it will cook down.

7. Cover and let cook on low for 4 hours. This recipe should take about 10 minutes of combined prep and cleanup time, and is very cost effective. Like I said, this is quite likely the high point of my week, and I’m totally OK with that.

8. I chose to garnish mine with some scallions and red chili sauce. This is totally unnecessary, yet I am a huge fan of red chili sauce on most things.

14. Mexican Casserole

Ingredients:

* 1 lb 85% Ground Beef
* 1 cup uncooked Brown Rice
* 1 tsp Celtic Sea Salt
* ½ tsp Pepper
* 1 cup fresh Salsa
* 1 can Black Beans (drained)
* Full fat Natural Sour Cream
* Shredded cheddar cheese

Directions:

Cook brown rice according to the package. This will take about 40 minutes. Brown beef with the salt and pepper. Do not drain the fat. In ungreased 9x12 baking dish add beef, cooked rice, salsa and beans. Cover with tinfoil and bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Top with sour cream and cheddar cheese.

15. Pasta-Free Chicken Alfredo with Vegetables

Ingredients:

* Boneless skinless chicken breast
* 1 Green Bell Pepper
* 1 Red Bell Pepper
* 1 Large Red or Yellow Onion
* 1 Zucchini
* 1 Cup uncooked Brown Rice
* 1 Stick Butter
* 1 Cup Cream
* ½ Cup gratedParmesan Cheese
* Fresh Ground Pepper

Instructions:

Prepare Brown Rice according to package. (Will take 45 Minutes or more) Rinse and slice up chicken breast. Wash and slice up vegetables. In one skillet, sauté chicken breast in peanut or coconut oil. In different skillet, sauté vegetables in peanut or coconut oil. This will take about 25-30 minutes.5 Minutes before chicken, rice and vegetables are ready to serve, melt stick of butter in separate skillet. Once melted, add cup of cream. Heat on medium to medium Low until well mixed. DO NOT BOIL. Add parmesan cheese and pepper. Heat till warm. Layer in bowls, rice, then vegetables, then chicken. Cover with Alfredo Sauce. ENJOY!

16. Penne Al Vodka with Chicken

Ingredients:

* 1 package Brown Rice Penne Pasta
* 3 T Extra Virgin Olive Oil
* 1 lb Chicken Breasts
* 1 large Yellow Onion
* 6 minced Cloves Garlic
* ¼ C Vodka
* 1 package Prosciutto sliced up
* 1 T dried Oregano
* ½ tsp Pepper and Salt
* ½ to 1 tsp Red Pepper Flakes
* 1 tsp Italian Seasoning
* 1 16 oz Can Tomato Sauce
* 1 28 oz can crushed Tomatoes
* ½ C Parmesan Cheese
* 1 C Natural Cream

Directions:

In large pan cook onions in olive oil. Sweat about 5 minutes. In separate pan cook sliced chicken in olive oil until fully cooked. Set aside. Add garlic and sliced prosciutto to onions. Cook 5 min. Add Vodka. Cook 5 minutes. Add crushed tomatoes and tomato sauce, all seasonings and grated cheese. Simmer uncovered for 30 minutes. Stir occasionally. Add heavy cream slowly until fully mixed. Add chicken. Simmer 15 minutes. While that simmers, boil water with 1 T Celtic Sea Salt and cook penne pasta according to box. Pour sauce over pasta and serve with parmesan cheese on top. Enjoy

17. Fajita Lettuce Wraps

Ingredients:

* 3 Chicken breasts, sliced into thin strips
* 2 Bell peppers (red, yellow, and orange), seeded and sliced into strips
* 1 Onion, sliced into thin strips
* Fajita seasoning, see recipe below
* Lettuce leaves, washed and dried (Boston lettuce)

Directions:

Sauté onion and peppers in skillet with 2 tablespoons of butter until Al dente. Transfer to a separate bowl and keep warm. Add chicken to same skillet and cook through. Add cooked peppers and onions back to skillet with chicken. Sprinkle with fajita seasoning to taste, 2-3 teaspoons. Place fajita chicken, peppers, and onions into a lettuce leaf. Top with cheese, sour cream, guacamole, and salsa. (Yummy Tip: mix sour cream and guacamole together).

Fajita Seasoning-Combine all ingredients and store in airtight container

* 4 tsp. Celtic sea salt
* 4 tsp. Paprika
* 3 tsp. Onion Powder
* 1-1/2 tsp. Garlic powder
* 1 tsp. Chipotle chili pepper
* 1 tsp. Cumin
* 1 tsp. Oregano (dried)
* ½ tsp. Cayenne Pepper

18. Yogurt with Quinoa

Ingredients:

* Full fat Organic Yogurt
* Quinoa
* Strawberries
* Bananas
* Honey (If needed)

Directions:

Cook Quinoa according to package directions. Refrigerate and have on hand. Chop up strawberries and Bananas. Add ½ cup yogurt with ¼ cup Quinoa. Top with Fruit.

19. Homemade Vanilla Ice Cream

Ingredients:

* 2 Cage Free Eggs
* 1 C Natural Cream
* 3 C Raw or Natural Whole Milk
* ½ C 100% Maple Syrup
* 2 tsp Vanilla
* ¼ Celtic Sea Salt

Directions:

Mix all ingredients with electric mixer in large mixing bowl. Churn in electric ice cream maker until set. (about 30 min) Enjoy!

20. Homemade Peanut Butter Goodness

Ingredients:

17 oz. Cocktail Peanuts

6 tbsp of Real Butter2 tbsp of Peanut Oil

1 tbsp of Stevia

Salt optional (Cocktail peanuts have salt in them)

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a Food Processer and mix till very creamy. Add more butter and peanut oil if it’s not as creamy as you would like (More butter than Oil). Keep in refrigerator when done. If you’re ok will a little sugar, substitute Honey for Stevia. Add Honey till its sweet enough for you.

21. Stimulating Dessert

Ingredients:

* 4 bananas halved lengthwise, then in half
* 2 tbs coconut oil or organic butter
* Pinch of ground cardamom (I like cinnamon and nutmeg instead)
* Pinch of Himalayan salt
* Lime

Directions:

Heat some coconut oil over moderately high heat and sauté bananas, turning over once (aprox 1-2 min per side). Heat remaining oil, add stevia, cardamom and pinch of salt, stirring for about 2 min. Pour over bananas and sprinkle with some lime.

22. Poached Pears with Blackberries

Ingredients:

* 4 pears, peeled, but left whole
* ½ lemon, juice and zest of
* 8 ounces blackberries
* 1 1/3 cups water
* 1 ounce honey

Directions:

Put the pears in a saucepan with the lemon zest and the lemon juice. Add in half the blackberries and the water. Heat until the mixture bubbles, then cover and cook gently for 20 minutes or until the pears are tender. Flip the pears over half way so they cook evenly on both sides. Lift the pears from the cooking liquid and cool for a few minutes. Slice each one in half and scoop out the cores with the tip of a teaspoon. Tip the cooking liquid into a sieve set over a bowl and rub it through leaving the seeds behind. Pour the fruity syrup back into the saucepan, add the rest of the blackberries and reheat gently for a minute to lightly cook them. Pour the blackberry sauce over the pears. 45 minutes preparation time. Makes 4 servings