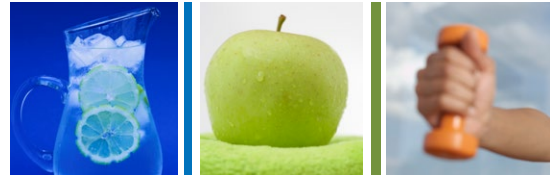


# TAKE CHARGE!



July 2024

## Eat to Beat the Heat

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

As the temperature rises during the hot summer months, it's essential to stay cool and hydrated. Incorporating the right foods and beverages into your diet can help you beat the heat all summer long. Here's a guide to some delicious options that are perfect for summertime:

**Drink water.** Don't wait until you feel thirsty. Keep a water bottle handy and sip all day. You can also stay hydrated with unsweetened beverages, such as coconut water and unsweetened iced coffee or tea.

**Snack on hydrating fruits.** Load up on juicy fruits, such as watermelon, strawberries, cantaloupe and berries. Their high-water content keeps you hydrated. **Bonus:** They are also filled with beneficial vitamins, minerals and fiber, which support optimal health.

**Enjoy refreshing salads.** Salads allow you to keep the oven off but still enjoy a balanced meal. Start with a layer of hydrating vegetables, such as cucumbers, lettuce, celery and tomato. Add dressing and your favorite no-cook protein: Try rotisserie chicken, canned chickpeas, cheese cubes or tuna.

**Rely on frozen treats.** Replenish fluids with homemade popsicles made from fresh puréed fruit and yogurt. Try ice granita or frozen grapes as nourishing dessert options.

**Scale back on caffeine and alcohol.** Both can be dehydrating when consumed in excess. Stick to no more than three cups of coffee (or other caffeinated beverages) per day. If you don't drink alcohol, don't start. If you do, limit yourself to one drink (female) or two drinks (male) per day.

**Add mint.** Incorporate cooling herbs, such as peppermint and spearmint, into your salads and meals — and into your water bottle. They add flavor and have natural cooling properties.



### city events

#### Deferred Compensation Webinars

##### Online Tools and Tips

**Wednesday, July 10**

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm Register [here](#)

##### Funds and Fees

**Tuesday, July 16**

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm Register [here](#)

##### Understanding Your Deferred Compensation Statements

**Friday, July 26**

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm Register [here](#)

#### Opening up About Mental Health

**Wednesday, July 10**

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Register [here](#)

#### New ComPsych EAP Orientation for Employees

**Thursday, July 11**

11:30 am – 12:30 pm Register [here](#)

#### New ComPsych EAP Orientation for People Leaders

**Wednesday, July 17**

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Register [here](#)

#### Mental Fitness for Optimal Brain Power

**Friday, July 19**

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm Register [here](#)

#### Best Practices for Supporting Others

**Wednesday, July 24**

11:00 am – 12:00 pm Register [here](#)

#### New ComPsych EAP Orientation for Employees

**Thursday, July 25**

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm Register [here](#)

#### Planning for Your Child's Best School Year Yet

**Wednesday, July 31**

10:00 am – 11:00 am Register [here](#)

The Smart Moves Toolkit, including this issue's printable download, [Get in the Swim](#), is at [personalbest.com/extras/24V7tools](https://personalbest.com/extras/24V7tools).

# PRESCRIPTION: Plant Foods to Help Prevent Illness

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**All too often, the word *diet* connotes restriction and sacrifice.** That's not the case with the diets that are most recommended to Americans. These include the plant-based Mediterranean diet and DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet. They are filled with a variety of delicious, nourishing foods that are filling, satisfying and loaded with nutrients.

**Before you grimace** at the thought of never having a steak again, it's important to understand that a plant-based diet is **based** on plant foods but not to the exclusion of eating some meat or poultry.

## A balanced plant-based meal has these components:

- 50% plate of vegetables and fruits (which come from plants).
- 25% plate of whole grains (which come from plants).
- 25% plate of protein-rich foods (plants, e.g., beans, tofu and nuts; or animal sources, e.g., eggs, fish, meat, poultry, and dairy).

**Every meal is automatically 75% plants** (vegetables, fruit and grains), which forms the base of the diet. The remaining 25% can be plant or animal based. Some days you may feel like salmon; other days you may prefer chicken or tofu. They all fit.

**Many years of clinical research support** using plant-based Mediterranean or DASH diet to help reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, cognitive decline and some types of cancer.

## Both the Mediterranean and DASH diets:

- Are plant-based.
- Contain lots of vegetables and fruit.
- Recommend eating beans, lentils, nuts and seeds.
- Include grains, especially whole grains.
- Recommend vegetable oil, such as extra-virgin olive oil.
- Make room for poultry, fish, eggs and dairy products.
- Recommend cutting back on red meat and sweets, but still include these foods as part of the pattern so there's no deprivation.

**Research shows that people following the Mediterranean diet** had a 25% lower risk of developing heart disease during a 12-year study compared to people following typical American

diets. Another study found that women following a Mediterranean diet were 46% more likely to age healthfully due to their increased intake of fish and plant foods, paired with a lower intake of meat.

**The statistics in cancer care are equally impressive.** Plant-based diets, especially those that contain cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage, help protect against cancer. Researchers have found that plant-based diets may reduce the risk of breast, colorectal and prostate cancer by 60% to 70% and lung cancer by 40% to 50%. The protective benefits come from the fiber, antioxidants and other nutrients in plant-based foods.

## Some examples of plant-based meals filled with vegetables, grains and protein include:

- Chicken and mixed vegetables stir-fry with brown rice.
- Black bean quesadillas with sautéed peppers and onions.
- Lentil and beef tacos with tomato, lettuce and red pepper.
- Shrimp linguine with broccoli.
- Salmon, cucumber and tuna sushi rolls with avocado salad.



## BUDGETING for Couples

**Communicating about money is paramount for couples.** If you and your partner tend to rumble when discussing a budget, here are a few thoughts to consider:

**You and your partner may have different financial backgrounds** and different financial beliefs. Financial behaviors and views influence daily life as well as long-term decisions. If you haven't already, learn how your partner perceives money.

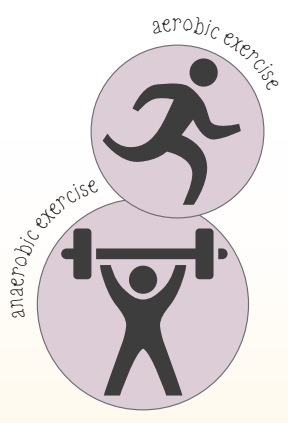
## Here are a few questions to get started:

- Did your parents argue about money?
- As a child, did you feel you had as much, more, or less than your peers?
- What is your relationship with money?
- What role does money play in your life?

**Knowing your spouse's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors,** as well as how they were formed, will give you a deeper, more empathetic understanding of how they approach money.

**If you and your partner** manage different responsibilities at home (e.g., one of you manages the money and the other runs the household), swap roles for a brief period. It is common for partners to misunderstand each other's roles.

**Change responsibilities.** Person A can take on grocery shopping, clothes buying, and entertainment spending to see how much they cost. This is also an opening for discussing family goals. Often, both spouses or partners have genuine intentions and only want good outcomes for the family.



# Dietitian's Guide to Farmers Markets

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**Summer brings the thrill of farmers market stalls lined with juicy berries, farm-fresh kale and colorful heirloom tomatoes.** A robust market will usually sell eggs, cheese, meat and bread, too.

**Shopping at a farmers market teaches you more about how your food was raised or grown,** what type of pesticides or medications are used, and how long it's been stored for. Here's a guide to your best farmers market picks.

**Get fresh produce.** The proximity of markets to farms means that the time between harvest and purchase is minimized, preserving the freshness and flavor of your favorite vegetables, fruits and herbs. Stock up on leafy greens, basil, tomatoes and local fruits.



**Watch out for** vendors selling commercial produce that's simply repackaged to look farm-fresh. Are products labeled as **local** without proper certification? Ask questions and seek transparency from vendors to ensure the authenticity of their offerings.

**Pick proteins.** You'll often find fresh eggs, chicken, meat, milk and cheese at farmers markets. You can learn how the animals were fed, raised, etc. Ask about animal welfare certifications.

**Watch out for vendors selling unpasteurized milk** (it's unsafe to consume) or unrefrigerated meat or dairy. These items can harbor harmful bacteria that can cause illness. Only buy perishable items kept in fridges and freezers.

**Other helpful tips are to bring cash, carry reusable grocery bags and go early for the best selection.** Choose vendors wearing disposable gloves (if they are touching food) and using tongs to distribute samples. Always try something new, and ask the farmer their favorite way to prepare and enjoy it.

## TIP of the MONTH

### Herbs and Spices Storage Tips

**Herbs and spices add flavor to meals.** They also have health benefits from vitamins and antioxidants. To keep your dried herbs and spices fresh as long as possible, store them in airtight containers. Make sure lids are tight and bags are sealed to eliminate moisture. Keep herbs and spices in a dark cabinet away from sunlight and heat. Before you use them, do the smell test. If you can't smell the pleasant, vibrant aroma, it means the volatile compounds have faded — and they won't provide much flavor. Then it's time to buy new products.

### Tomato, Nectarine and Burrata Salad

- 4 cups favorite salad greens
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp honey
- Pinch each salt and pepper
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- 2 cups cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- 2 nectarines, sliced
- ½ cup pitted cherries
- 8 oz. burrata cheese, torn into chunks
- 2 tbsp toasted pecans



**EASY** recipe

**Lay** salad greens on a large platter. **In** a small container with a lid, add oil, vinegar, mustard, honey, salt, pepper and basil. **Shake** well to combine. **In** a large bowl, combine tomatoes, nectarines and cherries. **Top** with half of the dressing and stir to combine. **Add** fruit mixture over salad greens. **Top** with chunks of burrata and pecans, and drizzle the remaining dressing on top. **Serve.**

**Makes 4 servings. Per serving:** 301 calories | 10g protein | 23g total fat | 2g saturated fat | 15g mono fat | 5g poly fat | 17g carbohydrate | 12g sugar (1g added sugar) | 4g fiber | 65mg sodium

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## EXPERT advice — Eric Endlich, PhD

### Q: Tips for coping with body envy?

**A:** If you notice other people's bodies and then feel dissatisfied with your own, you may be experiencing body envy.

Given the widespread media images of models and attractive actors, it's no surprise many people feel this way. Persistent fixation on a perceived flaw may be a sign of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), a more serious condition, but body envy can be distressing in any case.

#### What to do:

- Limit your exposure to social and other media that trigger these feelings.
- Get involved in activities that promote self-acceptance and well-being, such as exercise, meditation or hobbies.
- Focus on parts of your body that you like.
- Identify distorted thoughts and challenge them.
- Allow yourself to feel grateful for all of the things your body can do.
- Seek support from others, including professional counselors, if needed.

## News & Notes



**Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Provider:** Starting July 1, ComPsych will provide **EAP services** to all City of Seattle employees and their household members free of charge. Along with counseling, legal and financial consultations, work-life assistance, and crisis support services, members will have two (2) additional counseling sessions per issue, per year, access to a diverse provider network, convenient online scheduling, unlimited well-being coaching sessions with an expert health coach, and more.

Contact ComPsych anytime for confidential assistance:

- **Phone: 1-800-858-6715; TRS: Dial 711**
    - 24/7 toll-free line, answered by masters-level clinicians.
    - The GuidanceConsultant will gather some general information and recommend services according to your needs
  - **Online: [www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com); Registration Web ID: SeattleEAP**
    - Chat with a Guidance Consultant, send an email, or use ComPsych's online scheduling tool to find a provider
  - **Via the GuidanceNow app**, available for Apple and Android devices
- Questions? Contact your [department's benefits representative](#).



## Going Barefoot? Think Again

**Keeping your feet safe and healthy** are key to staying active, fit and free of chronic, painful foot problems that slow you down. These basic tips are sure to help you stay in step for the miles ahead.

**Only wear shoes that fit well and allow your feet to function normally.** The right shoes will provide support and comfort for your feet, legs and back. Well-fitted shoes can help prevent blisters, bunions and chronic pain in the heel, arch and forefoot.

**Bad news shoes:** High heels can cause foot and leg problems by cramping toes and applying added pressure to the ball of the foot. Flip flops lack stability, arch support and cushioning.

**Notice changes in your feet.** Don't delay reporting symptoms to your health care provider, such as worsening pain in your arch and heel (plantar fasciitis), a large bump on a big toe joint (bunion) and curling toes (hammer toes). All should be reported.

**Don't walk barefoot.** Footwear helps you avoid foot injuries (e.g., bumps, jams and cuts), which can lead to infections, bites and stings. Shoes also shield your feet against bacteria and fungi in public places.

**Practice foot hygiene.** Wash your feet and toenails daily. Use a pumice stone to smooth out callused areas. Trim your toenails straight across, but not too short.

**If you have diabetes, professional foot care is critical** to avoiding serious foot problems worsened by nerve damage. Always wear shoes to avoid injuries. Make sure your provider routinely checks your feet for injury or infection. Examine your feet daily to spot any new sores or areas that are slow to heal.