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Clean Eating Tips for the 30 Day Challenge

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I hope this list provides you with the tangible guidance you need to succeed. Remember, this is for 30

days, not the rest of your life! Hopefully you will decide to keep many of the healthy habits once the 30 days is over. But for now, get prepared and then take it ONE day at a time. Keep a positive attitude and remain present!

1. **Eat three moderately portioned meals a day.** Listen to your body by eating mindfully and truly tasting your food. Whole, real foods have wonderful tastes and textures! Don't stuff yourself. Stop eating when you are comfortably satisfied. And, do NOT skip meals. Nourish yourself, don't starve or deprive yourself of calories.
2. **Eat vegetables at every meal**. Yes, this means getting SOME vegetable in your body at or before you eat breakfast. Think: green smoothie, veggie omelet, or even munching on a few raw veggies as you prepare your kids morning meal! Here's what I do in the morning to get my greens: My morning routine [1]
3. **SALADS:** You can eat raw salads as often as you want. However, limit the kind of dressing you use to organic, unprocessed varieties. I especially love just drizzling olive oil and squeezing some lemon over the top with a touch of salt and pepper. One larger salad with nuts/seeds/beans/avocado or an animal protein per day is good too. I choose lunch for this type of salad.
4. **Cooking vegetables.** Use coconut oil, real butter or ghee to sauté or roast your veggies in. (Olive oil is to be used at room temperature or at very low temperatures.) A starchy carbohydrate is not necessary at each meal.
5. **Include GOOD fats and a quality protein at every meal.** Despite our culturally typical meals, starchy carbohydrate (bread, pasta, etc.) are not necessary at each meal. You may eat a portion of what's included on the list [2], but ALSO be sure to get those GOOD fats and healthy proteins in.
6. **Eat your grains in the first half of the day.** As listed, you may eat ancient whole grains and sprouted grains in moderation. Try as often as possible to eat them in your first two meals and not for dinner. I realize this may not always be possible, but keep it in the back of your mind and consider at least consuming SMALLER PORTIONS of the grains in your dinner meals.
7. **GO CRAZY with good fats:** Good fats are found in organic butter, ghee, coconut oil, extra virgin olive oil, avocados, nut butters (limit peanut butter) and seeds (especially chia and flax). Because good fats are more concentrated in calories (9 calories per gram verses 4 in carbohydrates and proteins), it's important that if you are also watching your weight, you consume small portions. But most people can truly benefit from increasing the amount and frequency of eating good fats (i.e., healthy oils, avocados, nuts, seeds).
8. **Snacking.** If you're hungry between meals, choose raw nuts, real food snacks, a fruit or veggie combined with a protein (for example, an apple a piece of raw cheese, some veggies and hummus [3], or almond butte [1]r on celery). I also love eating avocado, guacamole or hummus right from the spoon for a snack! Take a look through some of the recipes on the site. There are several acceptable snacks such as granola bars [4] and roasted chick peas. [5] My snack suggestions and food combinations here aid in maintaining blood sugar levels low rather than spiking them with higher glycemic foods (which leads to a plethora of other issues which I won't get into here.)
9. **Morning meal.** EAT ONE! See meal tips above.Keep a few real-food snacks in your car, purse or desk for when you're on the go. Allowing yourself to become over-hungry only leads to poor choices. Should that happen to you (and it probably will!), forgive yourself and make an immediate U turn!
10. **Avoid feeling famished. EAT.** Nourish yourself. Your body needs quality calories and restricting leads to poor choices later and an unhealthy mindset. Keep a few real-food snacks in your car, purse or desk for when you're on the go. Allowing yourself to become over-hungry only leads to poor choices. Should that happen to you (and it probably will!), forgive yourself and make an immediate U turn!

11. **Eat real food!** Avoid chemicals, processed foods, dyes and artificial flavors. Not negotiable. Basically, clean up your kitchen. [6]
12. **AVOID ARTIFICAL SWEETENERS:** END OF STORY.
13. **Sweet treat.** Try to focus on fresh fruit for a sweet tooth. Over time you'll find your sweet craving will lessen and maybe even diminish completely. But, if you're like me, you simply enjoy an occasional indulgence. A small piece of dark chocolate, a Medjool date or even a homemade clean-eating dessert are acceptable. If you need a sweetener for baking or coffee, stick to honey (raw and local if possible) or grade B pure maple syrup. A bit of coconut sugar can be used in baking. But remember, this is a 30 day challenge...so try to stay away as much as possible and absolutely NO white sugar. Here's a post about sweet indulgences [7] to explain more...
14. **NO refined or enriched grains.** Here's a post [8] with a bit more.
15. **Drink only one cup of coffee per day**
16. **Red, organic, sulfite free wine is permissible in moderation.** Remember, though, that drinking any kind of alcohol increases the likelihood that you'll choose to eat junk food (ah hem...I may be preaching to myself!). So stick with small amounts an no more than 2 times a week.
17. **Drink LOTS of water.** Filtered is best. Aim for at least half your body weight in ounces. Add lemon whenever you want.

OPTIONAL/Advanced Suggestions:

1. Drink warm lemon water on an empty stomach upon waking in the morning. Then, drink fresh lemon water as often as you'd like throughout the day.
2. If you'd like to really ramp up the detox effect of your diet over these 30 days, combine 2 to 3 teaspoons of Bragg Apple Cider Vinegar with water (as much as you need to tolerate—I just do mine as a shot!), and a bit of honey or a drop of liquid stevia. Drink this before meals, especially heavier meals.
3. **Highly recommended.** It's incredibly effective for cleansing, immunity and digestive health!!: Consume fermented foods and drinks such as kombucha, kefir, kimchi and sauerkraut. Limit fermented drinks to about 8 ounces each per day.

My final tangible tip to share: Clean out your kitchen. I've written a post about this [6] in the past. If you remove boxed and processed goods (or anything on the Stay 100% Away List) [2], while you may not be happy about it when you're experiencing a craving, you sure will be in the morning! If your family doesn't support or want to join you in this challenge, try keeping a small box of foods for them someplace away from the main kitchen where you do all your work. Not only will they begin to understand how important this is to you, maybe they will actually start reaching for heathier alternative! Call me hard core, but if you really want to succeed, sometimes the tough has to get going!



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