



March-April 2018

Berkshire Health Group

# Wellness Connection

## What are Whole Foods and why are they so good for us?

The encouragement to eat a whole foods diet is something you may have heard from nutritionists, your doctor, or from general health websites. The reason for this is that eating whole foods can have huge health benefits!

### What is good about Whole Foods?

Research shows that a whole food diet can reduce the risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes. It has been shown to help with weight loss, energy, and mood. There are a number of reasons why eating whole foods is so good for you. For one, whole foods are rich in phytochemicals—powerful nutrients found in plant foods. They also offer more vitamins and minerals than processed foods and have less sodium and unhealthy fats.

### What is a Whole Food?

The Journal of American College of Nutrition defines whole foods as plant



foods that are unprocessed and unrefined, or processed and refined as little as possible. Examples of whole foods include legumes, nuts, seeds, fruits, vegetables and fats and protein from animals that they themselves have eaten and lived well.

Another definition of whole foods is from Nina Planck's book, *Real Food*. She defines whole foods as "Real foods are old. These are foods we have been eating for a long time—in the case of meat, fish, and eggs for millions of years. Second, real foods are traditional. To me, traditional means 'the way we used to eat them.' That means different things for different ingredi-

ents; fruit and vegetables are best when they are local and seasonal; grains should be whole; fats and oils unrefined. From the farm to the factory to the kitchen, real food is produced and prepared the old-fashioned way."

### How to identify a Whole Food

When it comes to eating packaged food; read the full ingredient list. Choose products that contain a shorter list and also one that contains ingredients that are recognizable and known to be healthy. The payoff of eating a high quality diet is incredible in terms of promoting optimal health and disease prevention.



## INSIDE...

1. What is a Whole Food?
2. Spring Calendar
3. More Tips on Eating for Optimal Health
4. Recipe, and your Wellness Programs and Benefits

# Spring 2018

What are 3 health goals you would like to achieve?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

1

Do something kind for



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Have 2 glasses of water as soon as you wake up

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Be present with everything you do

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Aim for 8 hours of rest

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Acknowledge your strengths

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Do more of what makes your soul happy

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Add 2-3 veggies in each meal

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Let go of negativity that doesn't serve you

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Take time for Self Care



## More Tips on Eating for Optimal Health!

### Optimize your meal timing.

This means eating during the day (when you are more active), setting an eating cut off time and fasting through the evening/night hours when you are less active. Research shows people lose more weight (even when they eat the same things) when they eat more food for lunch than for dinner.

**Eat a rainbow.** Eat fruits and vegetables that are a variety of different colors. The color of a fruit or vegetable can be an indicator of the types of vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients it provides.

**Protein is key!** Including enough protein in your diet can help with satiety, nutritional diversity, maintaining/building muscle and supporting a higher metabolism. A key factor in making good animal based protein choices is to choose animals that they have lived well (and been fed well) themselves. Beans, legumes, and nuts are also a great place to get protein.

**Choose high quality carbohydrate sources.** High quality sources include vegetables, fruit, beans, nuts, seeds and whole kernel grains. A whole kernel grain is one that has not been ground into flour. Choosing quinoa, oats, brown rice or barley is a better option than a flour product made with those grains.

**Eat less added sugar.** This is a good tip for everyone. The American Heart Association suggests that men and women eat no more than 9 or 6 teaspoons of added sugar/day respectively.



## Try the Plate Method

*This is an easy formula to help you eat healthy well-balanced meals and practice portion control.*

- Fill 1/2 of the plate with 2 servings of nonstarchy vegetables
- Fill 1/4 of the plate with lean meat (3 ounces cooked) or other high-protein food
- Fill 1/4 of the plate with a starchy vegetable or whole grain serving (amount varies depending on food selected)
- Include a serving of fruit and/or dairy

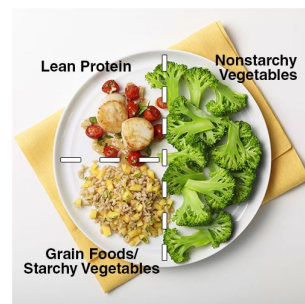
### Breakfast



### Lunch



### Dinner



***“Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food!”***

**-Hippocrates**

# Avocado Quinoa Salad



*This Avocado Quinoa Salad is a powerhouse salad packed with good-for-you ingredients and the best healthy lemon vinaigrette.*

## Ingredients-Salad

- 1 cup uncooked quinoa
- 8 ounces fresh cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 large cucumber, chopped
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 5 ounces fresh spinach, roughly chopped
- 2 large ripe avocados, pit removed and chopped

## Dressing:

- 4 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard, do not use regular mustard
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 lemon (2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice)

**Instructions:** Cook the quinoa according to package directions. Fluff and set aside to cool. Meanwhile, prep the dressing. Whisk the red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, oregano, garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt (or to taste), and 1/4 teaspoon pepper (or to taste) together in a small bowl. Slowly add in the olive oil into the vinegar mixture while whisking briskly. Whisk in the lemon juice. Pour into a jar and store in the fridge while prepping the vegetables. Prep the veggies: Halve the cherry tomatoes, chop the cucumber (peel if desired, we leave the peel on), finely chop a quarter of a red onion, roughly chop fresh spinach, remove the pits and chop the avocados. Finely chop the cilantro if desired. Enjoy immediately. Source: <https://www.chelseasmessyapron.com/avocado-quinoa-salad/>

## Wellness Programs

### February- "The No Diet, Diet Challenge"

7 locations participating : Williamstown Town Hall, McCann, Adams Town Hall, Lanesborough School, CBRSD, BHRSD, Williamstown Elementary

### March—"21 Day Gratitude Challenge"

Practicing gratitude regularly can lead to a more positive outlook, increase your overall happiness, improve your sense of well-being, make you more resilient and even give your immune system a boost! The challenge focuses on writing 3 things you are grateful for 21 days and see what a difference it can make!

### March -May- "Walk with me in the Berkshires"

Registration March 27th at 10am

Walking Weeks April 16<sup>th</sup>-May 27<sup>th</sup>

The goal of the program is to increase your step count each week. For this challenge you will form teams ranging from 2 to 20 people and your team captain will register your team on the iBerkshires website.

*Please speak with your Wellness Champion about the upcoming Challenges*

## Take Advantage of your Wellness Benefits!

- Diabetes Care Program
- Colonoscopy Incentive Program
- BCBS Fitness Reimbursement
- BCBS Weight Loss Reimbursement
- HERO Coaching Program

**For more information regarding any BHG Wellness Programs, please contact:**

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