

# A “Whole” New Approach Diet Plan

BY Terri Fites, MD

No guilt, but if you’re looking for a diet plan, here’s a basic outline for one. You can start it any day of the year. Any hour of each new day. You can take off for your birthday and start the day after. Just eat this way nearly daily, always coming back to it after a day or two or month off, *for the rest of your life*, and you’ve got a good, successful, healthy diet plan. Tweak it how you want, although keep true to the whole, real food “bones” of the plan. Health is important. Eating right is important. But most importantly, YOU are important. *Eating is a tool to make YOU the BEST YOU!*

## **The Goal: Take it down to 100% whole, real food that hasn’t been processed.**

This is what you’re shooting for here: Pretend you had farms, orchards, and fishing boats all over the world. The food you’re about to buy or cook with should be something you could have grown, picked, gathered, pressed, squeezed or butchered from the abundance of your farms, orchards, or from the waterways you travel with your boat. Loosen up the “rules” as your waistline and/or health goals allow. Loosen up when it becomes too cumbersome. But keep this as your goal, your vision, your “perfect” plan, so you don’t stray back to eating fast food or too many boxed foods.

### ❖ **Yes! You can eat any fresh, unpackaged fruit or vegetable.**

Eat them how you want. Raw. Steamed. Poached. Baked. Boiled. They’re on the table. If you have an upset stomach from eating them, pay attention to which ones! Eat less of those. Try them prepared a different way. Or eat another kind. (Some people don’t tolerate certain fruits and vegetables well, but there is PLENTY to choose from! Look up something called “FODMAPS” and see if you can sort out which foods might be causing you abdominal distress. BUT don’t go too crazy with it! It’s your body, and the FODMAP tables are only guidelines.)

### ❖ **Yes! You can eat any fresh meat that has not been processed.**

Meats that are canned with nothing added can be used occasionally, like canned tuna or salmon. Bacon and cold cut meats are convenient but require caution because they are usually processed with added chemicals or fillers.

### ❖ **No refined flours at all.** (Insert sad face. Right?)

None. No exceptions. Read labels. Most whole grain products are made with refined flour also.

### ❖ **No added “sugar” of any kind to the food you buy.** (Insert another sad face.)

No sugar. No honey. No maple syrup. No dextrose. And definitely no high fructose corn syrup. Buy food items without sweetener, and then, if it tastes “yucky,” sweeten it yourself just to the lowest sweetness you can tolerate. You can control “sugar” (or honey or maple syrup) this way. It’s a difficult rule. You may find yourself making some exceptions, but don’t make many.

### ❖ **No artificial colors added.**

I can think of NO reason an artificial color is needed. Many children, especially, are sensitive to food dyes. All food dyes do is muck up the body and brain with no benefit to nutrition. Eliminate them.

### ❖ **No preservatives.**

Like eliminating sugar, this is a tough rule. But it’s still important to not allow too many exceptions. Preservatives alter the VITAL gut bacteria that our bodies DEPEND on for health. I cannot stress enough how we must protect our gut bacteria to protect us from all disease states.

### ❖ **No more than 3-5 ingredients that you understand and have access to yourself should be listed in the ingredients for the product.**

Do you understand maltodextrin? Or soy protein isolate? Don’t buy that stuff.

❖ **Oils and fats should be ones you could make right there on that farm or orchard we talked about at the beginning! Extra virgin olive oil, coconut oil, or butter are oils and fats you could make!**

This is a huge, very important topic! Processed oils like Canola oil, soybean oil, and vegetable oil, as they are purchased in the supermarket, are faulty oils that place a large stress on the body. Liquid oils should have the date they were squeezed from the food they came from (called the pressed date) on them, and they should be simply pressed—not extracted under high heat and processed with deodorizers. Solid fats should be solid naturally, like butter and coconut oil are. Margarine, Crisco, and hydrogenated fats are liquid fats that have been chemically processed to be solid. Do NOT eat them if you can help it.

❖ **Watch for food sensitivities and be aware that gluten and dairy have lots of pesky proteins which make them top health offenders.**

After eliminating processed foods, it's time to explore if there are sensitivities. Common problematic foods include: eggs, nuts and seeds, grains, dairy, legumes, shellfish. But any food can cause symptoms. Anything you swallow can have side effects, and each person is different.

❖ **What is guilt telling you?**

Guilt doesn't make us healthy. It is just a part of us screaming (or whispering) because it wants us to do the right thing to find balance and safety, even in our eating. Let go of the guilt about your eating and start doing the right thing for your health, your body, and your mind. Usually, the path for health will be clear and you'll stick to homemade soups and salads and yummy, crunchy nuts day in and day out! But then, there will be moments where eating unhealthy is the healthiest thing to do in that moment for you, like at your birthday or Christmas. Paradoxes like this make life (and eating) a fun art!

Best wishes for a pattern of LIFELONG real, whole eating! I wish you vitality and health as long as you walk the Earth. Too many people have lost vitality and health. But may *you* paint, sew, write, sing, or garden as long as you live. May you travel with your grandkids, bike with your friends, or climb up on the tractor for another season of harvest with little effort and lots of ease.

The world needs more real, whole, healthy people—inside and out! Eating is a tool to make you the best you. Are you eating that way?

Try a “whole”new approach!

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