



You may have heard the term ‘clean-eating’ but aren’t quite sure what that means. ‘Clean-eating’ is a relatively new term used to describe a very ancient practice; eating foods that are as close to their natural state as possible, or essentially, eating how our ancestors ate. A processed food is a food that is altered from its natural state. Much of the food we eat is processed in some way, we can’t eat most grains without processing them and couldn’t drink coffee without roasting beans. In America though, many foods have been so over-processed they barely qualify as food anymore. Highly-processed foods are often low in nutrients and high in calories, unhealthy fats, preservatives, dyes, sugar, salt and flavor enhancers. Most people can’t even identify the ingredients in their food! 68% of the calories Americans consume come from highly processed foods. This is resulting in a nation that is eating almost twice the amount of calories needed but only a fraction of the nutrients. When our body isn’t getting enough nutrients, our brain tells us to eat more, even though we’ve consumed the calories we need. So...we have a country that is over-weight yet malnourished! The chronic disease rates in this country are a testament to this. 85% of Americans have some sort of chronic ailment and 70% of them are on a prescription drug. In 2017, Americans spent 13 trillion dollars on health care. Unfortunately, very little of this was spent on prevention and instead spent on treating illnesses. If we look to nature, we find that no other animal on the planet has disease rates like this. This is because they’re eating the food their bodies are designed to eat.

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Clean-eating is not a fad diet. It’s a lifestyle change that involves phasing out processed foods and incorporating real foods like fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds, beans, whole-grains, animal products that come from clean, humane farms, and wild-caught fish in to your everyday diet. It doesn’t mean you can’t or won’t ever eat a processed food again, but most people find they don’t desire overly processed foods and that natural foods are much more satisfying to their palate. We live in a society that revolves around food and cooking clean, scratch meals at home is a thing of the past, so any level of ‘clean-eating’ can be challenging. I recommend making small realistic changes such as increasing your daily intake of vegetables or eliminating a processed food/drink from your diet each month. If you’re concerned about cost, keep in mind these foods are much higher in nutrients and you’ll find you are eating less because you are nutritionally satisfied. Also keep in mind plant-based foods are often cheaper than animal products. Avoid grocery shopping when you are hungry and keep healthy snacks on hand to prevent binging on processed snacks. Invite your family or friends to cook with you. Cooking teaches children many skills and can be a great way to spend time together. These changes take time and patience, but you will soon find, as many of my clients have, you aren’t craving those addictive processed foods and you will see significant improvements in your mood, sleep, energy levels, weight, and overall health. For more information please visit our website. Wishing you all health and happiness!



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**Monthly Meal Menu:**

- April 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> – Blackened Haddock
- April 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> – BBQ Meatloaf
- April 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> – Chicken/Eggplant Parmesan
- April 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> – Pork Tenderloin
- April 29<sup>th</sup> – May 3<sup>rd</sup> – Make Your Own Tacos

**Upcoming Events:**

- Wellness Seminars
- Newstead Public Library 6:30 PM Free**
- April 8<sup>th</sup> – Gut Health
- May 13<sup>th</sup> – The Reality of Processed Foods
- St. Paul’s Lutheran Church Wmsvl 10:00 AM Free**
- April 6<sup>th</sup> – Setting SMART Goals

