

Diet and Nutrition

We've often heard the phrase "you are what you eat," yet what does it really mean? If you eat granola are you a hippie? Or a health nut? Are you a rabbit if you eat a lot of carrots? How does the food we eat shape the person that we are?

We are complex biochemical organisms with trillions of cells, all relying on the food and drinks we consume to function properly. Every second of every day, our body is processing what we eat and drink, turning these raw ingredients into the myriad of compounds that feed these trillions of cells. When these cells get what they need, they do what they are designed to do. And when they don't get what they need, they are ill-prepared to carry out their duties. In this context, "you are what you eat" is deeply true. Our physical body, our brain and muscles and bones and organs, depends on our diet to maintain wellness.

Plants are the basis of the food chain. Humans are mostly omnivores, consuming plants, dairy and animals. Only the plants have the phytochemicals that nourish our cells with a vast array of anti-inflammatory compounds. Since chronic inflammation underlies most diseases, it is essential to eat vegetables and fruits often to insure a constant supply of these plant compounds. Blueberries, kale, broccoli, and apples are just a few of the plants that are particularly high in phytochemicals such as flavanoids, xanthins, lignins, indoles, and carotenoids. The list is long, and more of these compounds are being "discovered" as scientists look deeper into the healing properties of the plant world.

As we shift our diets away from a reliance on animal foods to a reliance on plant foods, we literally shift who we are. Our bodies become increasingly able to counter the stresses that cause chronic inflammation. As we lower inflammation, symptoms diminish and less energy is needed to manage pain and disease. Which means that more energy is available for vitality - for feeling good and being able to do more of the things that bring us joy. You have more energy for exercise, for clarity of mind, for taking care of yourself and your loved ones. In this elemental sense, "you are what you eat."

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