



Nature's Treasure

Diet Diversity Cornerstone of Nutritional Adequacy

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9th Issue
Oct-Dec., 2026

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of Nutrition

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Every Day
365 Circle



Indian Super Foods



Millets



Dal



Roti



Fruits



Family Wellness Tips



Dinner Before 7 PM



Balanced Meal Daily



Stay Hydrated Daily



Active Play & Exercise Daily



Sleep well & Maintain Hygiene



Avoid Highly Refined Food

INSIDE

- Mindful Eating
- Rice vs Diabetes
What's on Your Feed
- Nature Deficit Disorder

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From Desk of Editor

Dr Sanjeev Pandey
Editor-in-Chief

"What We Eat Is Not, What We Become The Hidden Journey Of Food Inside Us"

This perspective invites us to look beyond the plate and into the profound biochemical dialogue that occurs after the very first bite of food. Modern nutrition science reveals that what we **become** is not a direct mirror of what we eat, but rather the result of a complex journey: **absorption, biotransformation, cellular utilisation, and excretion**—processes deeply shaped by our genetics, environment, gut health, and lifestyle.

Consider the polyphenols found in berries; they rarely circulate in their original form. Instead, gut bacteria convert them into active metabolites that regulate inflammation and support cardiovascular health. Similarly, the humble cruciferous vegetable carries compounds that are activated only when chewed, transformed by plant enzymes into molecules that actively support the liver's detoxification pathways.

Understanding this hidden journey reframes our approach to nutrition. It is no longer just about counting calories; it is about nourishing the intricate biological systems that convert food into function. Food is fundamentally information—a series of chemical signals that instruct our bodies how to repair, defend, and thrive.

The Internal Laboratory

Food enters our lives as more than just sustenance—it arrives steeped in story, habit, culture, and expectation. Yet, the fruit we bite, the grain we cook, and the spice we stir into a simmering stew do not simply become us overnight. Inside the laboratory of the human body, everything we consume embarks on a hidden transformation, dismantled and rebuilt into the very chemistry that sustains life.

Edible substances are not static compounds. Rather, they are dynamic matrixes—a complex interplay of macronutrients, micronutrients, bioactive phytochemicals, and dietary fibres (including mono-, di-, and polysaccharides)—each responding to our digestive system's silent orchestration.

The moment food is ingested, digestion begins. It is far more than a mechanical process; it is a cascade of enzymatic, microbial, and metabolic events:

- **Carbohydrates** are broken down into simple sugars to fuel our cells.
- **Proteins** are cleaved into amino acids to rebuild muscles, bones, and vital messenger molecules like hormones, RNA, and neurotransmitters.
- **Fats** are emulsified and repurposed to construct cellular membranes and synthesize essential hormones.
- **Vitamins** act as cellular VIPs; they are never broken down for energy, but their presence is mandatory for triggering and carrying out countless vital biochemical reactions.



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Dr Tulika Chandra
Professor and Head

Department of Transfusion Medicine
King George Medical University, Lucknow

NUTRITION

Eating for Life: The Foundations of Good Nutrition

In a world filled with diet trends, miracle foods, and conflicting advice, good nutrition can sometimes seem complicated. Yet the basic principles of healthy eating are remarkably simple: eat a variety of foods, choose mostly minimally processed options, stay hydrated, and pay attention to what your body needs.

Nutrition is not simply about weight or appearance. Food provides the energy and nutrients the body needs to grow, repair tissues, support immunity, maintain healthy bones, and keep the brain functioning. What we eat regularly can also influence our long-term health.

A Balanced Plate

A healthy diet begins with variety. No single food provides every nutrient the body needs, so meals should include different food groups.

Vegetables and fruits provide vitamins, minerals, fibre, and a wide range of naturally occurring compounds that support health. Whole grains such as oats, brown rice, whole-wheat products, and millets can provide fibre and other nutrients. Protein can come from foods such as beans, lentils, peas, eggs, fish, dairy products, nuts, seeds, and lean meats.

Healthy fats are also important. Nuts, seeds, fish, and plant oils can provide unsaturated fats that are part of a balanced diet. The key is not to eliminate fat, but to choose sources wisely and keep portions appropriate.

Fibre: The Often-Overlooked Nutrient

Fibre plays an important role in digestive health and can help people feel satisfied after meals. It is found naturally in vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.

Increasing fibre gradually and drinking enough fluids can make it easier to include more fibre in the diet. Simple changes—such as choosing whole fruit instead of juice or replacing refined grains with whole grains—can make a meaningful difference over time.

Less Processing, More Awareness

Not all processed foods are unhealthy. Foods such as pasteurised milk, frozen vegetables, canned beans, and whole-grain bread can be convenient and nutritious.

However, many highly processed foods are designed to be particularly easy to eat and may contain substantial amounts of added sugars, sodium, or saturated fat. Regularly relying on these foods can make it harder to maintain a balanced diet.

Reading nutrition labels can help. Instead of focusing on a single nutrient, consider the overall food: its ingredients, fibre content, protein, sodium, added sugars, and portion size.



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Hydration Matters

Water is essential for nearly every major function in the body. Fluid needs vary depending on factors such as climate, physical activity, age, and health.

For most people, water is a practical everyday choice. Unsweetened beverages can also contribute to hydration, while sugary drinks can add considerable amounts of sugar without providing the same nutritional value as whole foods.

Nutrition Is Personal

There is no universal menu that works perfectly for everyone. Nutritional needs can change with age, activity level, pregnancy, medical conditions, cultural traditions, and personal preferences.

This is why sustainable eating habits are generally more useful than extreme diets. A nutritious pattern of eating should fit into real life rather than require constant restriction.

For people with specific medical or nutritional needs, advice from a qualified dietitian or healthcare professional can help create an appropriate eating plan.

Small Changes Add Up

Improving nutrition does not require completely changing your diet overnight. Small, consistent adjustments can be easier to maintain.

Add a vegetable to lunch or dinner. Choose fruit as a snack. Include a source of protein with meals. Replace some refined grains with whole grains. Keep water readily available. Cook at home when practical.

The goal is not perfection. It is to build eating habits that provide nourishment, enjoyment, and balance over the long term.

Ultimately, good nutrition is less about following the latest food trend and more about developing a varied, balanced relationship with food. When healthy choices become ordinary parts of everyday life, nutrition becomes not a temporary project, but a foundation for lifelong well-being.

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Dt. Kalpana Singh

Owner/Founder , Santushti Diet Clinic, Lucknow

Assistant Professor, (Department of Nutrition & Dietetics) , Lucknow.



Diet Diversity: The Cornerstone of Nutritional Adequacy

Introduction

Nutrition is the invisible architecture of health. While calories fuel the body, it is the diversity of foods that ensures balance, resilience, and vitality. **Dietary diversity refers to the variety of food groups consumed over a given period, and it is directly linked to nutritional adequacy—the state of meeting essential nutrient requirements without excess or deficiency.**

Recent global studies confirm that diverse diets are associated with improved child growth, maternal outcomes, reduced micronutrient deficiencies, and lower risks of chronic diseases. In an era where processed foods dominate urban diets and staple-based meals persist in rural areas, dietary diversity emerges as a critical public health strategy.

The Science of Diversity and Adequacy

- **No Single Food Suffices:** Each food group contributes unique nutrients. For example, grains provide energy, pulses supply protein, dairy offers calcium, and fruits deliver vitamins and antioxidants.
- **Micronutrient Benefits:** Diverse diets improve intake of iron, zinc, vitamin A, folate, and vitamin B12—nutrients often deficient in monotonous diets.
- **FAO Guidelines:** The **Dietary Diversity Score (DDS)**, ranging from 0–10, is a validated proxy for nutrient adequacy. A score of 4–5 food groups daily is the minimum benchmark, while higher scores reflect optimal adequacy.



Recent Evidence:

- A 2026 systematic review in *European Journal of Nutrition* found that **diet quality scores including diversity strongly correlate with reduced risks of obesity, chronic diseases, and mortality in adults.**
- The **Hisayama Study in Japan (2026)** showed that dietary diversity was inversely associated with frailty and pre-frailty among older adults.
- A **Southwest China study (2026)** revealed that higher dietary diversity reduced antenatal anxiety and depression, highlighting mental health benefits.

Measuring Diversity

The **Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W)** indicator uses ten food groups: grains, pulses, nuts/seeds, dairy, meat/fish, eggs, leafy greens, vitamin A-rich fruits/vegetables, other vegetables, and other fruits.

- **Scoring:** Each food group consumed in the past 24 hours counts as one point.
- **Thresholds:** At least 4–5 groups daily are required for adequacy.



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- **Validation:** Studies in rural India (2026) confirmed that DDS accurately predicts micronutrient adequacy in children aged 6–10 years

MICRONUTRIENT FOODS CHART

GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES		Vitamin C Vitamin A Vitamin K Folate Magnesium
OTHER COLORFUL VEGGIES		Fiber Magnesium Potassium Vitamin A Vitamin C
FRUITS		Vitamin A Vitamin C Fiber Potassium
NUTS/SEEDS		Vitamin E Selenium Magnesium Choline
BEANS AND LEGUMES		Calcium Manganese Folate Phosphorus Iron

Factors Influencing Diversity

There are certain factors which affect the availability and accessibility . Few of them are listed below.

- **Socioeconomic Status:** Income and affordability determine access to diverse foods.
- **Cultural Practices:** Food taboos and traditions shape dietary choices.
- **Urbanization:** Reliance on processed foods reduces diversity.
- **Food Systems:** A 2026 review highlighted that many countries face shortfalls in domestic production of essential nutrients, leaving populations vulnerable to hidden hunger

There are some Challenges which affects the diet diversity also. Some of them are mentioned below.

- **Staple-Based Diets:** The staple diet which is followed by generation is also an obstacle in accepting variety of foods. These staple foods become comfort food for people and a hesitation is seen among people for trying new food items or avoiding /restricting a particular food group for maintaining good health. Rice, wheat, or maize dominate in many regions, limiting nutrient intake.
- **Food Insecurity:** People who belong to lower socio economic strata are often seen struggling with managing two square meal so the idea of diet diversity alone is difficult for them. Low-income groups often struggle to meet ends and access to diverse foods is limited.
- **Urban Diets:** People who belong to affluent class also struggle with diet diversity as their diet is rich in Processed, calorie-dense foods, which contributes to hidden hunger. This population often relies on fast foods, take aways, food delivery systems for food as they lack time for home cooking leading to lifestyle disorders like Diabetes , Hypertension and Obesity.
- **Environmental Pressures:** Climate change and resource constraints threaten food diversity. The level of pollution in urban and rural areas alike contribute to the quality and quantity of agricultural produce. And many times, due to floods or heavy rains or dry climate, cultivation is affected.

Strategies for Improvement

- **Nutrition Education:** There is an urgent need of campaigns to raise awareness of diverse diets. The importance of having diversity in diet, including multiple food



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groups, benefits etc should be taught to the population using relevant educational tools.

- **School Meal Programs:** Structured menus with multiple food groups improve child nutrition. The schools , colleges, hostels etc should be trained for such programs.
- **Policy Interventions:** Fortification, subsidies, and culturally adapted programs should be formed and implemented.
- **Food System Reforms:** Diversifying domestic production toward nutrient-dense crops and reducing food waste. Kitchen gardens should be encouraged in every household.

Global Evidence:

- A 2025 *Nature Food* study showed that biodiverse diets not only improve nutritional adequacy but also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and land use.
- A 2026 cross-sectional study in Bangladesh found that dietary diversity significantly improved nutritional status among cancer patients

Author is the Founder/Owner of Santushti Diet Clinic, Lucknow. She is also an Assistant Professor in the Department of Food and Nutrition, Institute of Allied and Healthcare Sciences, Integral University, Lucknow



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of
Nutrition

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- 2. Self Help Group (SHG) Women (स्वयं सहायता समूह)
- 3. Aanganwadi Workers (आंगनवाणी कर्मी)
- 4. General Female (18+ Years) (सामान्य महिलाएं)
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Mindful Eating

By Dr. Anjali Joshi, Yoga therapist and researcher, Nagpur

“Mindful eating is about falling in love with food again and again”

Introduction

Modern fast-paced lifestyles are frequently associated with distractions and multitasking while eating. Meals are often consumed while watching television, scrolling through social media, working, talking on the phone, or doing other activities. These habits can reduce sensory awareness of the food experience and the ability to sense the body's internal physiological signals of hunger and satiety. Many times, eating is a response to emotional or environmental cues rather than real hunger. Food intake is influenced by stress, boredom, anxiety, sadness, exposure to delicious foods, or social situations. Mindful eating is an approach that aims to improve these habitual patterns by cultivating an awareness of the experience of eating.

What Is Mindful Eating?

Mindfulness is being in the present moment and experiencing reality with curiosity, acceptance, kindness, and a non-judgmental attitude. When mindfulness is practiced during eating, the attention is directed towards the sensory, cognitive, emotional, and physiological experience associated with food intake. This involves awareness with all senses: the visual appearance of food, smelling the aroma, enjoying the taste, experiencing the texture and temperature, chewing, and swallowing. The thoughts and emotions associated with eating, sensations of hunger and fullness, and the feeling of satiety during a meal are observed. Thus, mindful eating is about how we eat, and not just about what we eat.

Mindful Eating Vs Conventional Diet

An important feature of mindful eating is that it is process-oriented and not exclusively outcome-driven. It does not intend calorie restriction, nor does it specifically prescribe carbohydrates, fats, or proteins. [1] Mindful eating differs from a conventional dietary recommendation because it does not primarily include a list of “permitted” and “restricted” foods. [2] This practice does not aim for weight loss. Instead, it encourages awareness of the eating experience and promotes food choices without excessive judgment or strict dietary rules.

Regular practice of this awareness may subsequently facilitate portion control, slower eating, savoring food more fully, or selecting foods consistent with individual health goals. However, these behavioral changes are not the sole objective of the practice.

The concept of mindful eating, therefore, is different from restrictive dieting. It emphasizes self-awareness, acceptance, and regulated eating behavior instead of externally imposed food guidelines. [1]

What Does the Scientific Literature Suggest?

Research investigating mindful eating has shown promising benefits on several eating behaviors. Evidence suggests a reduction in binge-eating behavior and beneficial effects for emotional eating. [3] Individuals with obesity and binge-eating disorder have reported short-term improvements in anthropometric measures, binge-eating episodes, body-image dissatisfaction, eating habits, and quality of life. [4] However, the outcomes regarding direct effects on body weight are less consistent. [3] Although some studies have demonstrated favorable changes in food habits and quantities consumed, others did not report substantial effects on body weight.



Therefore, mindful eating alone should not be considered a weight-loss strategy. Instead, the potential clinical implications may include modification of maladaptive eating behaviors and prevention of weight gain.

Potential Mechanisms of Action

The exact mechanisms through which mindfulness influences eating behavior are not yet fully understood. Several potential pathways have been proposed. Mindfulness may enhance awareness of hunger and satiety, reduce food cravings, improve self-regulation, encourage slower eating, reduce stress and help in modulating emotional responses.

Neuroimaging findings suggest that mindfulness is associated with reduced amygdala activity and reduced emotional arousal. These findings explain a possible neurophysiological mechanism through which mindfulness could influence emotionally driven eating. [3] However, many proposed mechanisms remain hypothetical or insufficiently supported by empirical evidence, and require further research to draw definitive conclusions. [5]

Principles of Mindful Eating

1. Minimize distractions
Limit watching TV, using a mobile phone, and doing other activities during meals to direct attention to the eating experience.
2. Slow the pace of eating
Allow sufficient time to chew, taste, and recognize the development of satiation.
3. Engage the senses
Pay attention to the appearance, aroma, texture, temperature, and flavor of food.
4. Monitor internal cues
Become attuned to the body's physiological signals of hunger, fullness, and satisfaction.
5. Non-judgmental attitude
Cultivate awareness of eating-related behaviors without criticizing self or strictly categorizing foods.

Practical Mindful Eating Exercise

A mindful eating exercise using a piece of raisin can be practiced as “*raisin meditation*” to experience how an otherwise automatic eating process can be transformed into a deliberate sensory experience. Self-reflection after the exercise encourages observation of eating behavior without judgment.

Integrating Mindful Eating into Daily Life

Mindful eating does not need any drastic changes in dietary intake. It can initially be introduced into a single occasion each day, for example, while sipping a cup of tea or coffee, and gradually integrated during meals.

Caution

It is important to note that mindful eating should not be considered as a substitute for evidence-based nutritional guidance or clinical treatment of an eating disorder or other medical condition. Rather, it can serve as a complementary behavioral approach to develop greater awareness of the relationship between food, emotions, environmental cues, and physiological signals.



Conclusion

Mindful eating is a behavioral and attentional approach to eating that focuses on present-moment awareness, non-judgmental observation, and responsiveness to internal physiological signals. Research evidence suggests that mindfulness-based eating practices may be especially beneficial to address binge eating and emotional eating, while evidence regarding direct effects on body weight remains inconsistent. Mindful eating may also facilitate changes in eating patterns, food quantity, and self-regulation.

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There is only ONE Disease -- The Nature Deficit Disorder

Dt Ayushi Shukla Senior Dietitian Eat Fruits and Heal

Reconnecting with Nature • Restoring Balance • Rediscovering Self-Healing

At a time when there is an increasing dependence on extensive and expensive investigations and medicines, even for relatively minor ailments, the idea of a life with minimal dependence on medicines may sound far-fetched and difficult to believe.

Yet, a deeper question deserves our attention:

Have we become so disconnected from nature that we have forgotten how to listen to our own bodies?

There is only ONE Disease -- The Nature Deficit Disorder—the growing disconnect between modern living and the natural conditions in which the human body evolved.

Our modern lifestyle often takes us further away from fresh air, natural sunlight, clean water, natural ideal human diet, wholesome foods, regular movement, adequate rest, emotional balance and meaningful connection with nature.

This deep-immersion approach is designed to help you reconnect with these foundations and understand how food, environment, movement, rest, emotions, thoughts and daily living influence your experience of health and well-being.

The Body's Capacity to Heal

The human body possesses remarkable mechanisms for maintaining balance and repairing itself. Rather than viewing health only through the lens of symptoms, we at Eat Fruits and Heal encourage participants to explore the conditions that support the body's natural healing and regulatory processes.

Modern medicine has an important role, particularly in emergencies, trauma and many serious conditions. At the same time, lifestyle and environmental factors can play a significant role in many chronic health problems and the real healing is possible without giving medicines.

Our aim is not to reject medical care, but to help people understand where nutrition, lifestyle, rest, emotional well-being and connection with nature and conscious living can become meaningful parts of a comprehensive approach to health.

From Soil to Human Health

Over the past several decades, industrial agriculture has increasingly relied on synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and other interventions. This has raised important questions about soil health, biodiversity, food quality and the long-term sustainability of our food systems.



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In the same way, modern human life has become increasingly dependent on processed foods, sedentary routines, chronic stress, insufficient sleep and constant stimulation.

At Eat Fruits & Heal, we invite people to question these patterns and return to simpler foundations:

Ideal human food. Natural light. Clean air. Clean water. Movement. Rest. Emotional awareness. Connection.

The Eat Fruits & Heal Approach

What began as an individual exploration of a fruit-based, natural lifestyle has evolved into a broader educational movement where thousands of people have benefitted and currently living a medicine-free life.

Our approach focuses on creating an environment in which participants can observe their body, listen to their natural instincts rather than following old patterns that made them sick, simplify their lifestyle and develop greater awareness of their physical and emotional needs and Karma

AIR

Every cell depends on oxygen, yet modern life often keeps us indoors and disconnected from fresh air.

We explore conscious breathing, time in nature and the importance of creating a healthier environment by living with a minimalist approach and adopting ethical veganism

WATER

Water is fundamental to life.

We explore hydration, water quality and appropriate use of water as part of a natural lifestyle—without presenting water as a substitute for necessary medical treatment.

NUTRITION

Food is more than calories.

We focus on fresh, whole, minimally processed plant foods, particularly fruits and other natural foods, while developing awareness around:

- What we eat
- When we eat
- How much we eat
- How we combine or sequence foods
- Mindful and grateful eating
- Listening to genuine hunger and satiety

MOVEMENT

The human body is designed to move.



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Rather than pursuing exercise only for appearance or performance, we encourage natural movement such as walking, stretching, running, mobility work, outdoor activity and functional movement according to individual capacity.

SUNLIGHT

Sunlight is an essential part of our relationship with the natural environment.

We teach participants how to incorporate appropriate outdoor daylight exposure while respecting individual skin sensitivity, climate and safe-sun practices.

REST

Healing and restoration require rest.

Quality sleep, relaxation, periods of reduced stimulation and adequate recovery are essential components of a sustainable lifestyle.

ATTITUDE & MINDSET

Our thoughts, emotions and daily habits influence how we experience life.

We encourage participants to move from fear and constant health anxiety towards awareness, responsibility, emotional stability and self-observation.

ETHICAL & EMOTIONAL HEALING

Health is not only about what is placed on the plate.

It is also about how we live, how we treat ourselves and others, how we relate to animals and nature, and how consciously we use our time and energy.

Through reflection, compassion, gratitude and emotional awareness, participants are encouraged to explore a deeper dimension of healing.

A Return to Simplicity

The objective of Eat Fruits & Heal is not to promise a magical cure or to ask people to blindly reject conventional healthcare.

It is to help people rediscover something that modern life can easily make us forget:

The body is not merely a machine that needs to be repaired. It is a living system that constantly works to maintain balance.

When we improve the conditions in which we live—our food, air, water, sunlight, movement, rest, thoughts and relationships—we may create a more supportive environment for health and well-being.

Eat naturally Move naturally Rest deeply Think consciously Live compassionately And learn to listen to the body.

Healing is not something we manufacture with a pill.

Healing is a natural biological process that the living body performs when the conditions for recovery are restored.



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A wound closes A fever resolves A tired body asks for sleep An exhausted nervous system asks for rest Appetite changes when the body needs less food The body continuously works to maintain and restore itself.

The important question, therefore, is not always:

“What medicine should I take to stop this symptom?”

A deeper question is:

“What conditions does my body need so that its natural healing processes can function?”

HOW EAT FRUITS & HEAL IS CHANGING LIVES

From disease-management to conscious living.

Sometimes, transformation begins with something very simple:

A fruit A glass of water A good night's sleep A walk in the sunlight A decision to slow down.

At Eat Fruits & Heal, we are witnessing people rediscover something they had forgotten:

The body has an incredible capacity to respond when we stop constantly working against it.

For many people, the journey begins with food—but it doesn't end there.

From “What medicine should I take?” to “How should I live?”

People come to EFH carrying years of confusion Multiple diets Conflicting advice Constant snacking. Late nights. Stress Sedentary living Highly processed food Fear of symptoms And sometimes, a belief that their body has betrayed them.

We invite them to ask a different question:

“What conditions am I creating for my body every day?”

This simple shift can change the entire way a person looks at health.

Food becomes simple

Fresh fruits.

Whole plant foods.

Raw foods where appropriate.

Simple meals.

Adequate hydration.

Less ultra-processed food.

And learning to recognize genuine hunger instead of eating simply because the clock says it is time.

The objective is not to create another complicated diet.

It is to move towards simplicity and awareness.

Lifestyle becomes the medicine of everyday life

At EFH, healing is not presented as something that happens only on a plate.

We talk about:

Sleep Rest Sunlight Fresh air Movement Nature & Ethical vegan Emotional awareness Relationships.

Compassion..

Because a person cannot sustainably transform their life by changing breakfast while keeping the rest of their lifestyle unchanged.



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☐ And then something beautiful happens...

People begin reporting changes in their everyday lives.

Some become more energetic.

Some become more active.

Some experience changes in digestion or appetite.

Some become more comfortable in their own bodies.

Some develop a completely different relationship with food.

Some begin sleeping better.

Some stop living in constant fear of their symptoms.

And perhaps the most beautiful transformation is this:

They begin taking responsibility for their lifestyle.

These experiences can be deeply meaningful, but individual results vary and should not be presented as proof that a particular diet cures disease

The transformation goes deeper than weight

True transformation is not just:

"I lost 5 kg."

It can also be:

"I started sleeping on time."

"I began walking every day."

"I stopped eating when I wasn't hungry."

"I learned to sit quietly."

"I stopped blaming my body."

"I became kinder to myself."

"I became more conscious of what my choices do to animals and nature."

"I finally started living instead of merely managing symptoms."

That is the transformation we want to encourage.

From patient to participant

EFH does not want people to remain permanently dependent on a practitioner.

The deeper purpose of education is to help people understand their own body and lifestyle so that they can make increasingly conscious choices.

Education → Awareness → Responsibility → Practice → Transformation

That is the journey.

This is the EFH journey.

From confusion to understanding.

From dependency to awareness.

From processed living to natural living.

From fear to self-awareness.

From merely surviving to consciously living.

Eat Fruits & Heal

Reconnect with Nature. Reconnect with Yourself



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What's on Your Feed—and What's on Your Plate?

Exploring the Impact of Social Media on Teenagers' Eating Behaviour, Nutrition and Mental Health

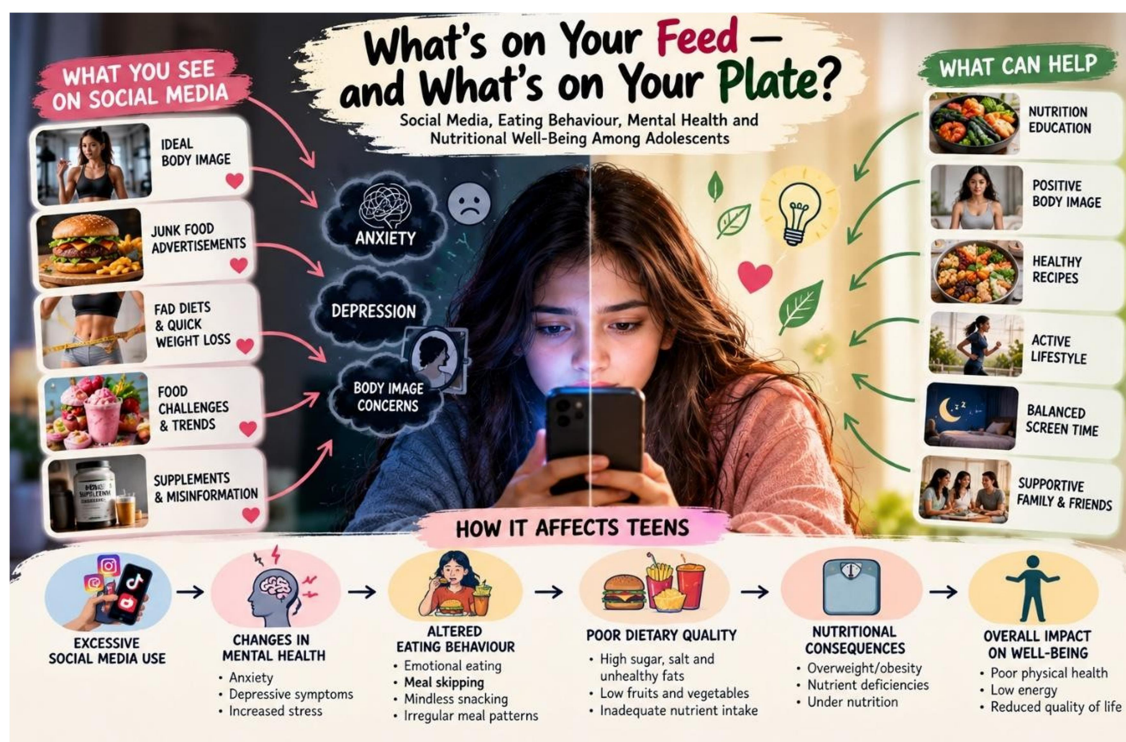
Introduction

For today's teenagers, social media is no longer simply a platform for communication and entertainment. Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and other digital platforms have become part of everyday life, influencing how adolescents communicate, perceive themselves, choose foods and understand health.

Adolescence is also a critical period for growth and development. Nutritional requirements increase during this stage, while eating habits and attitudes toward food are being established. Therefore, the influence of social media during adolescence deserves particular attention.

The relationship between social media and adolescent health is complex. Higher or problematic social media use has been associated in research with mental-health concerns such as anxiety, depressive symptoms, poor sleep and body-image dissatisfaction. At the same time, social media can influence eating behaviour through food advertising, influencers, viral food trends, dieting content and exposure to idealized body images.

The important question is therefore not simply **“How much time do teenagers spend online?”** but also **“What are they seeing, how does it affect their behaviour, and what happens on their plate?”**



Social Media and the Adolescent Mind

Social media provides opportunities for social connection, self-expression, education and access to information. However, excessive or problematic use may interfere with sleep, physical activity, academic activities and face-to-face relationships.

Repeated exposure to carefully edited images and idealized lifestyles can contribute to social comparison. Teenagers may compare their appearance, body size, lifestyle or diet with people they see online. For some adolescents, this may contribute to dissatisfaction with their own bodies and unhealthy attempts to change their weight.

Mental health and eating behaviour can also influence each other. Stress, sadness and anxiety may alter appetite and food choices. Some teenagers may eat more highly palatable foods during emotional distress, whereas others may restrict their intake or lose interest in food.

From Reels to Meals: How Social Media Influences Food Choices

One of the most visible ways social media affects nutrition is through food content.

Teenagers are continuously exposed to:

- Fast-food advertisements
- Sugary drinks and packaged snacks
- Restaurant promotions
- Food influencers



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- “What I eat in a day” videos
- Weight-loss challenges
- Fad diets
- Fitness and supplement content
- Viral recipes and food trends

This exposure can normalize certain eating patterns. Foods presented repeatedly in attractive and entertaining formats may become more appealing, particularly when influencers or celebrities are associated with them.

Social media can also promote positive dietary behaviours. Adolescents may discover healthy recipes, learn about fruits and vegetables, find ideas for balanced meals and access evidence-based nutrition education. Thus, social media itself is not inherently harmful—the **type, frequency and context of exposure** matter.

The “What I Eat in a Day” Effect

“What I eat in a day” content appears harmless, but it can have different effects on different viewers.

A teenager may compare their own diet with the highly curated diet shown online. If the content promotes unrealistic calorie restriction, extreme exercise or a particular body type, some viewers may attempt to imitate it without considering their own age, nutritional requirements, growth stage or health status.

This is particularly concerning during adolescence because inadequate energy or nutrient intake can interfere with normal growth and development.

Social Media, Body Image and Disordered Eating

Body image is an important link between social media and nutrition.

Exposure to idealized body types can encourage teenagers to believe that health has a particular appearance. This may lead to:

Social comparison → body dissatisfaction → dieting or restriction → unhealthy eating behaviour

In some individuals, persistent body dissatisfaction may contribute to disordered eating patterns. These can include restrictive eating, binge eating, compensatory behaviours or excessive preoccupation with weight and food.

It is important to distinguish **disordered eating behaviours** from clinically diagnosed eating disorders. Social media exposure alone does not establish that an individual will develop an eating disorder; multiple biological, psychological, social and environmental factors are involved.

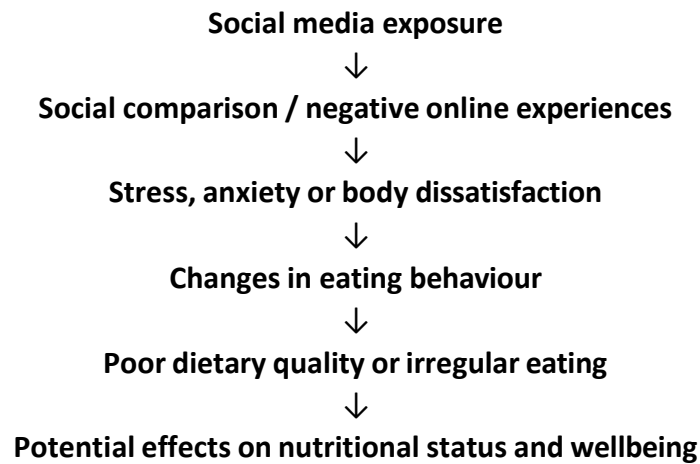
When Mental Health Meets Nutrition

Mental health and nutrition are closely connected, but the relationship is not one-directional.



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For example:



At the same time, poor sleep, inadequate dietary intake, nutrient deficiencies and unhealthy eating patterns may affect energy, concentration and overall wellbeing.

Therefore, adolescent nutrition should not be considered separately from psychological and social factors.

The Role of Sleep

Another important pathway is sleep.

Late-night scrolling can delay bedtime and reduce sleep duration. Poor sleep may subsequently affect appetite, food cravings, energy levels and daily eating patterns.

A teenager who stays awake late using social media may be more likely to:

- Skip breakfast
- Eat irregularly
- Snack late at night
- Choose convenient energy-dense foods
- Experience reduced physical activity the following day

Thus, the relationship between social media and nutrition may extend beyond food content itself.

Nutritional Consequences

The nutritional effects of excessive or problematic social media use are not the same for every teenager. However, unhealthy eating behaviours associated with social-media exposure may contribute to:

- Increased consumption of energy-dense foods
- Higher intake of added sugars and unhealthy fats
- Frequent snacking
- Meal skipping



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- Irregular eating patterns
- Restrictive dieting
- Inadequate intake of essential nutrients
- Risk of both excessive and inadequate energy intake

The ultimate nutritional outcome depends on the teenager's overall dietary pattern, physical activity, sleep, socioeconomic environment and individual health status.

Can Social Media Actually Promote Better Nutrition?

Yes.

Social media can also be a powerful nutrition-education tool. Evidence-based content can help teenagers learn about:

- Balanced diets
- Meal planning
- Hydration
- Fruits and vegetables
- Protein and micronutrients
- Healthy cooking
- Physical activity
- Food safety
- Understanding nutrition labels
- Identifying nutrition misinformation

The challenge is that reliable scientific information competes with commercial content, personal opinions and misinformation.

Therefore, **nutrition literacy and digital literacy need to develop together. What Can Be Done?**

For Teenagers

- Follow evidence-based nutrition professionals and reliable health organizations.
- Avoid blindly copying restrictive diets or “detoxes.”
- Question unrealistic body and diet claims.
- Maintain regular meals and adequate hydration.
- Avoid excessive screen use before bedtime.
- Seek professional help when food, weight or body image becomes a source of significant distress.



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For Parents

Parents can encourage open conversations about food, body image and social media rather than focusing only on weight. Creating regular family meals and healthy digital habits can also provide support.

For Schools and Colleges

Educational institutions can incorporate **nutrition literacy, media literacy and body-image education** into adolescent health programs.

For Nutrition Professionals

Nutritionists and dietitians can play an important role by providing evidence-based information, correcting misinformation and promoting realistic, culturally appropriate and age-appropriate nutrition.

When significant anxiety, depression, eating-disorder symptoms or other mental-health concerns are present, collaboration with an appropriately qualified mental-health professional is important.

Conclusion

The modern teenager's diet is influenced by more than what is available in the kitchen. It may also be influenced by what appears on a smartphone screen.

Social media can shape food preferences, eating behaviour, body image, sleep and perceptions of health. At the same time, it can provide valuable opportunities for nutrition education and positive health promotion.

Therefore, the goal should not simply be to remove teenagers from social media. Instead, adolescents need the skills to **consume digital content critically, recognize misinformation, maintain healthy eating habits and develop a realistic relationship with food and their bodies.**

Ultimately, the question is not only:

"How much time are teenagers spending on social media?"

It is also:

"What are they consuming online—and how is it influencing what they consume offline?"



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RICE vs DIABETES COMPILATION

(Top 10 Diabetics and Obesity friendly, Rice Varieties being grown in India)

Finding, facts, comments written and compiled by



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Off/on, We are use to listen a word or sentence or phrase, form mouth of **modern community- this is unscientific/not to be believed; this is very scientific, is reliable and so on.**

Interesting fact is, people, who invented, founded and drafted the laws of science, were not from science background but certainly, they believed, trusted and made observations form Nature's Laboratory based on Vedas- the source of ultimate supreme knowledge. Whatever, they invented, founded and drafted were, supported and decoded from of Nature's Law-the Vedas.

Some visionary people, integrated the Nature's Law with customs, religions and social practices to live people in good health, with prosperity as per guidance of Vedas. Later, due to missing links, Nature's Laws and Vedic principles got misunderstood by modern intelligent community thought them unrealistic and unscientific.

We are very fortunate that a few people have trust on Nature's Laws - Vedas. They are really working very hard continuously; to prove that Nature's Laws-the Vedas were and are very scientific and timely, for modern aged intelligent community to believe.

The recent study, on low glycemic (GI) rice relating to diabetes and obesity, revealed that Indian integrated meal pattern is very healthy diet pattern as per laws of modern dietetics.

'Eating rice with other foods can help reduce the overall GI of a meal and, when combined with regular exercise, can reduce the chances of getting Obesity and Diabetes. In addition, people who do exercise need more carbohydrates in their diet and can take advantage of low-GI foods for sustained activity.'

'Low Glycemic Index (GI) Rice varieties are diabetics and obesity friendly'

(Top 10 Rice Varieties with lowest GI were being grown and consumed in India)

Diabetic and Obese/ Overweight persons were, so far, advised by modern diabetologists to avoid rice consumptions but now, they can be rest assured that rice can be part of their healthy diet by selecting proper variety of rice.

Scientists in India and abroad have now found that the glycemic index (GI) of rice varies a lot from one type of rice to another, with most varieties scoring a low to medium GI. Low-GI foods are those measured 55 and less, medium-GI foods are those measured between 56 and 69, while high-GI foods measure 70 and above.



Low GI Foods Index	Med.GI Food Index	High GI Food Index
Less than 55	56-69	70 & above

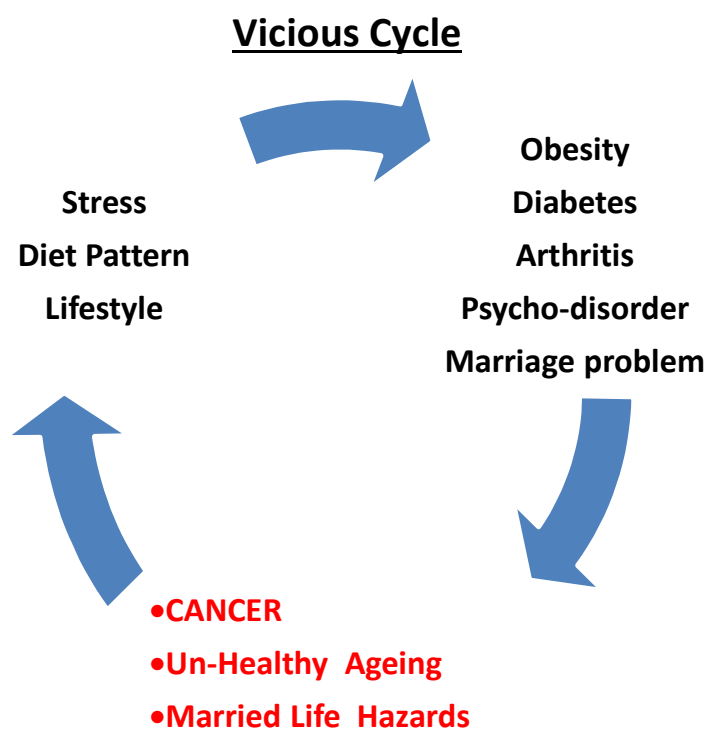
When food is measured to have a high GI, it is easily digested and absorbed by the body, which often results in fluctuations in blood sugar levels that can increase the chances of getting diabetes and, overweight/obesity and other noncommunicable diseases ; viz Unhealthy Ageing, Cancer.

At the same time, management of type 2 diabetes, overweight/obesity and other noncommunicable diseases becomes difficult with high GI foods. Conversely, foods with low GI are those that have slow digestion and absorption rates in the body, causing a gradual and sustained release of sugar into the blood, which has been proven beneficial to health, including reducing the chances of developing diabetes, overweight/obesity and other noncommunicable diseases ; viz Unhealthy Ageing, Cancer

Eating rice with other foods can help reduce the overall GI of a meal and, when combined with regular exercise, can reduce the chances of getting diabetes. In addition, people who do exercise need more carbohydrates in their diet and can take advantage of low-GI foods for sustained activity.

(In India, main meal of the day in a common family, traditionally, is mixture of multiple varieties of food groups)

Rice plays a strong role in global food problem and security. Being the staple for about 3.5 billion people, it is important to maximize the nutritional value of rice. Low GI rice will have a particularly important role in the diets of people who derive the bulk of their calories from rice and who cannot afford to eat rice with other foods to help keep the GI of their diet low. Low GI rice could help to keep diabetes, overweight/obesity and other noncommunicable diseases; viz Unhealthy Ageing, Cancer, prevalent in these communities, controlled.





Diabetes will become a serious epidemic by 2030; almost 330 million people will be affected by diabetes globally.

In context of India, ***"As per WHO-2012 'in India 11.1% men & 10.8% women are diabetic'. It means approx. every tenth adult is diabetic. Today India has become a diabetic capital of the world. International Diabetes Federation estimates- 61.3 million people in India are diabetic next only to China"***.

Recent study on rice glycemic index by International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the University of Queensland lends a wide smile for the **60-million strong diabetic population in India**, as they can safely include rice in their diet, choosing varieties of rice with low glycemic index that ensure gradual and sustained release of sugar into their blood.

✓ (Always consult you dietician before any diet alteration)

'The research team from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Food Futures Flagship also identified the key gene that determines the GI of rice, an important achievement that offers rice breeders the opportunity to develop varieties with different GI levels to meet consumer needs. Future development of low-GI rice would also enable food manufacturers to develop new, low-GI food products based on rice. Dr. Melissa Fitzgerald, who led the IRRI team, said that GI is a measure of the relative ability of carbohydrates in foods to raise blood sugar levels after eating.'

The findings of the research team, which analyzed 235 types of rice from around the world, is good news because it not only means rice can be part of a healthy diet for the average consumer, but it also means that people with diabetes, or those at risk of diabetes, can select the right rice to help maintain a healthy, low-GI diet.



Dr. Melissa Fitzgerald, who led the IRRI team, said that GI is a measure of the relative ability of carbohydrates in foods to raise blood sugar levels after eating.

The study found that the GI of rice ranges from a low of 48 to a high of 92, with an average of 64.

Further study found that three of the top 10 rice varieties with lowest GI were being grown and consumed by majority of population in India.

"Basmati rice has higher GI than commonly consumed rice varieties in India ie. Swarna and Mahsuri. The basmati showed a GI of between 68 and 74. The other Indian varieties were all below 60. This is good news, especially for non-Basmati consumers, which is the general middle class population," said chief researcher Dr Melissa Fitzgerald.

"Understanding that different types of rice have different GI values allows rice consumers to make informed choices about the sort of rice they want to eat," she said. "Rice varieties such as India's most widely grown rice varieties, Swarna and Mahsuri., have a low GI and varieties such as Doongara from Australia and Basmati have a medium GI."

Chinese rice variety Shen Huang Zhin 2 was found to have the lowest GI (around 45) while a variety in Laos had the highest (92). The main varieties of rice from India and South East Asia



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which were tested includes Swarna, Mahsuri, MTU1010, Yamini and basmati from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and BG92 from Lanka.’ Biogenetic Science fraternity has now revealed that rice isn’t that evil factor for good health or diabetes. It does not cause diabetes. However, this study will help diabetics to select rice wisely.

Of course Rice is high in carbohydrates, which are needed for energy. Those people, who are with high physical activity like sportspersons, laborers, agri laborers need more carbohydrates to meet their quick high energy demand. But if a person lives a sedentary lifestyle, high energy isn’t required and hence rice consumption should be reduced. But **brown rice** is a better option for them.

Brown rice does not have higher carbohydrates content than white rice (polished) and is also not as palatable as white one. However, brown rice has higher vitamin and mineral content. People must consider having brown rice at least once a week.

Another researcher Dr Tony Bird, CSIRO Food Futures Flagship, said that low GI diets offered a range of health benefits. “Low GI diets can reduce the likelihood of developing diabetes and are also useful for helping diabetics better manage their condition,” said Bird.

“This is good news for diabetics and people at risk of diabetes who are trying to control their condition through diet, as it means they can select the right rice to help maintain a healthy, low-GI diet,” he added. Hence low GI varieties Swarna and Mahsuri rice are boon to diabetics and obese persons and are recommended for their consumptions.

✓ **(Always consult you dietician before any diet alteration)**

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Eating for Two? Here's What Your Body — and Ayurveda — Actually Ask For

A Yoga & Ayurveda Perspective by Deepti, Dhairyam Yoga | Written for GT Trust

"The idea that you're eating for two" is most likely the first thing every pregnant woman is told, typically by someone who cares about her. It seems kind and gives the impression of granting permission—meaning you should have twice the food and twice the pleasure. However, that doesn't quite represent what pregnancy demands of you. And the true answer, after you grasp it, is much softer than "eat double."

What Ancient Wisdom Already Knew

Even before calorie counters and nutrition labels were introduced, Ayurveda had arrived at this with remarkable accuracy. According to the Charaka Samhita, Acharya Charaka explained that the rasa—the essential nutrient fluid obtained from digested food—is distributed in a pregnant woman in three specific directions: one towards nourishing her own body, another towards the production of milk for the child yet to come, and the third towards the development of the fetus.

स्त्रिया ह्यपन्नगर्भायास्त्रिधा रसः प्रतिपद्यते-
स्वशरीरपुष्टये, स्तन्याय, गर्भवृद्धये च।

Go through it once more — three directions being supported by a single well-digested meal. Not two plates. Not twice the amount of food. One body, displaying great intelligence in distributing what it takes in. This one concept changes the way we look at everything: pregnancy has never been about how much is consumed, but rather about how efficiently the body converts what you eat into nourishment for all three uses. That is precisely what modern science, using its own terminology, has now arrived at.

What the Research Actually Shows

A survey involving more than 2,100 pregnant women in the UK showed that the majority did not know exactly how many extra calories pregnancy demands — more than one-third thought they needed 300 or more extra calories each day. It is clearly stated by health authorities that no extra calories are required at all during the first six months of pregnancy; it is only in the last trimester that the body needs a small increase, about equal to a few slices of wholegrain toast.

It has also been noted that believing the idea that you should eat for two leads to weight gain during pregnancy, thereby increasing the chances of complications for both the mother and the baby. Therefore, this is not merely an old wives' tale; it is misplaced enthusiasm which, if not controlled, can end up harming the very health it is intended to safeguard. The conclusion should not be to eat less, rather it should be to eat with a great deal more intention.

The Nutrients That Actually Deserve Your Attention

Instead of chasing extra quantity, pregnancy asks you to prioritise density — a handful of nutrients that matter enormously for a growing baby and a mother's own reserves:

- Iron — supports the rise in blood volume and helps prevent anaemia
- Calcium — builds the baby's bones and teeth, protects maternal bone density
- Protein — the essential building block for fetal tissue and placental growth
- Folic acid — critical in early pregnancy for healthy neural development
- Omega-3 fatty acids — support the baby's brain development

Food should always be tried first, and any gaps should be discussed with your doctor rather than being filled in by yourself—this is precisely the area in which a well-designed, whole-food vegetarian plate takes on most of the workload.

Choosing What's on Your Plate — An Ayurvedic Way of Sorting Food

Try to include every day in a generous way foods that are seasonal and fresh such as fruit and vegetables, a bit of lemon juice, raw nuts, legumes that have sprouted, chickpeas, a spoonful of good ghee, coconut, and seeds—sesame seeds, flaxseed, pumpkin seeds and melon seeds—are quietly excellent sources of minerals and healthy fats and Indian kitchens have always been aware of this.

Construct your daily diet on the following items: dals and pulses, milk and milk products such as curd and paneer, well-cooked eggs (if you consume them), and the traditional millets and whole grains—including ragi, khichdi with curd, idli-sambhar, and parboiled rice.

Occasional, not regular, consumption is recommended: refined grains, deep-fried snacks, and sweets—these are suitable for a festival but should not be the everyday choice. As far as is reasonably possible, reduce intake of excessive salt, sugar, refined oils, packaged foods, carbonated drinks, and all items containing preservatives—this is not because indulgence is prohibited, but since during pregnancy your digestive capacity is already working at full capacity for three.

A Trimester-Wise Vegetarian Meal Plan

Daily Meal Plan	First Trimester (Weeks 1–12): Small, Steady, Folate-Rich	Second Trimester (Weeks 13–26): Building, Protein-Forward	Third Trimester (Weeks 27–40): Iron, Fibre, Easy Digestion
Early morning:	Soaked almonds and walnuts with warm water	A small handful of soaked dry fruits	2–3 soaked dates
Breakfast:	Vegetable poha or moong dal chilla	Vegetable-stuffed paratha with curd, or besan cheela	Vegetable daliya or ragi porridge
Mid-morning	A banana or seasonal fruit	Milk or buttermilk with a spoon of roasted seeds	Coconut water or a citrus fruit
Lunch:	2 rotis, dal, a leafy green sabzi (spinach/methi), curd	2 rotis, rajma/chole or paneer sabzi, salad, curd	2 rotis (smaller if heartburn), dal, seasonal sabzi, curd
Evening:	Roasted chana or sprouts chaat with lemon	Fruit chaat or a small handful of mixed nuts	Roasted makhana or a light soup
Dinner:	Khichdi with a spoon of ghee, served with curd	Vegetable pulao with dal, or paneer bhurji with roti	Light khichdi or moong dal soup with one roti
Bedtime:	Warm turmeric milk	Milk with a pinch of nutmeg	Warm milk with a soaked fig or two

How You Eat Matters as Much as What You Eat

Eat at least one meal every week in complete silence, focusing all your attention on the taste, texture and aroma rather than eating while distracted. A calm and slow atmosphere has a positive effect on the way your body digests and absorbs food. Eating while sitting cross-legged on the floor—this being the traditional Indian method—helps to maintain hip and knee mobility, promotes better posture and calms the nervous system, all of which contribute to more efficient digestion. It is also important to chew well: the more thoroughly the food is broken down in the mouth, the less work your digestive fire must do afterwards.

Bringing It All Together

The idea that pregnancy calls for eating for two is wrong; it is instead a chance to eat in order to carry out the three roles your body is already capable of carrying out—nourishing you, preparing your milk, and growing your baby—all from a single thoughtfully selected plate. Ever since centuries ago Ayurveda recognised this rhythm, modern research has simply confirmed it in a different way. Here's hoping your pregnancy is satisfying, slow-paced, and truly your own step by step, with one healthy and mindfully consumed meal at a time.

Deepti — Yogacharya (Masters in Yogashastra), specialising in therapy yoga, women's health and holistic wellbeing. Ready to bring this into your own practice? Join a session with YogwithDeepti — online or offline — for personalised, holistic guidance on prenatal yoga, breathwork, and Garbhasanskar. Reach out to get started – yogwithDeepti@gmail.com

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