

Q.

I'm so confused...
What does a
healthy diet
look like?

A.

If you're having trouble trying to decide what a healthy diet looks like, you're not alone.

You know...the endless barrage of diets that recommend things like zero carbs, high protein, apple-cider vinegar, or some expensive dietary supplement with mystery ingredients.

About 80 percent of adults find it hard to know what's healthy and what's not.¹

The reason: Too many choices, too much information, and conflicting advice. Sound familiar?

A frenzy of food advice

With a smartphone, you can find tips about diet, weight loss, healthy eating, good foods, and bad foods in seconds. And it's not all good advice. Plus, there's a never-ending stream of new diets, products, and programs that promise health and happiness.

If that wasn't enough, food packages are often labeled with words that claim to be healthy. Some are. Some aren't. And that can lead to more confusion.

In fact, 72 percent of adults say reading food labels can be confusing.²

Beware of healthy eating roadblocks

What happens when you try to make healthy food choices but get conflicting advice? You tire of trying to sort it out, and most likely



go back to your old ways. Been there, done that?

It's like you reach a kind of healthy-eating roadblock. When this happens, a lot of people just give up and adopt an anything-goes diet.

You know...these foods become the norm:

- Fast food
- Sugary drinks
- Treats
- Biggie-sized portions
- Very few fruits and vegetables

And this may be one reason obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic diseases are on the rise.³

But it doesn't have to be this way.

The simple solution to healthy eating

Eating a balanced diet promotes health and prevents many diseases. And it can be pretty simple, says Dr. David Katz, a best-selling author and founder of the Yale Prevention and Research Center.

Eat wholesome foods in sensible combinations. Or to put it in even more practical terms: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."⁴

Forget about all the fad diets, questionable nutrition advice, and confusing food labels.

ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

Here's what a healthy diet includes:

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Whole grains
- Beans
- Lentils
- Nuts
- Seeds

The healthiest people in the world eat various combinations of these foods. They drink plenty of water, too. That's it. No more confusion. Eat this way at least 80 percent of the time, and you'll feel better, be healthier, and live longer.

References

1. One-third of Americans are dieting, including one in 10 who fast... while consumers also hunger for organic, "natural" and sustainable. (2018). Food Insight. From: <https://tinyurl.com/5p3nbc5t>
2. Spoon, G. (2019). 72% of Americans confused by nutrition labels, according to a new study. Vending Marketwatch. From: <https://tinyurl.com/2au53kr8>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Chronic diseases in America. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. From: <https://tinyurl.com/3h564pak>
4. Pollan, M. (2009). *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto*. New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books.