

# To Your Health

## Healthy Eating Alternatives: Healing Your Body Through Food

I believe that God desires for His children to be healed emotionally and mentally. However, I also know that as a child of God, my physical body should be healthy so that I may run with the vision that God has given me for my life. For the past two years, I have been inquiring about healthy eating alternatives for my physical well being. I have found that many illnesses such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease may be a result of what we have on our plates at mealtime. As I am learning more about eating better, my co-worker, Ann Pringle, a vegetarian, has been very helpful. She keeps me well informed of healthy cooking, food, herbs, and the dangers of the American diet. Talking to her helped me realize that the fuel I placed in my body was very unhealthy. So, I decided to invite her to share her experience with us.

Ann Pringle has been a vegetarian and a herbalist for 19 years. Ann became a vegetarian because she was always sick. There is a saying in the herbal world: “When you get tired of being sick, you will do something about it.” Ann testified to having cysts in her breasts, fibroid tumors and constant bladder infections. She also confessed to being ignorant of the importance of water in her diet. “Water is the key to life,” she said, “Nothing takes the place of God’s water.”

There are different levels of vegetarianism. “In my opinion VEGANS are the most serious vegetarians of all. They are stricter on digesting animal products and sugar products with animal fat.” Ann believes that juicing is the fastest way to get vitamins and minerals into the blood stream. She also incorporates eating raw food (uncooked fruits, vegetables and nuts which have their full nutritional value) into her diet. “Being a vegetarian is a great challenge”, she claims, “all of this pays off as we live our life in a healthy lifestyle for growing older.”

I know as well as others the importance of seasoning our food. However, there are healthy alternatives to using salt, bacon grease, butter, high fat oil, and sugar. Ann suggests seasoning food with fresh garlic and onion; powder versions of these seasonings are also acceptable. Virgin olive oils along with other healthy oils are better for our bodies. Olive oil is known to be good for the heart while fresh garlic helps with cholesterol. She also insists on using sea salt (table salt is bleached and may result in high blood pressure) and a liquid amino seasoning from *Bragg* which gives the body its required amino acids.

What about sugar? We all love sugar! Ann suggests using Stevia instead of sugar. “*Stevia* is a natural herb sweetener,” she said, “it is sweeter than sugar and healthier.” Ann and her family haven’t used sugar for more than 19 years. Along with Stevia, they rely on fresh fruits to satisfy their sweet tooth.

Two major concerns for the non-vegetarian is the incorporation of calcium and protein into their diet. Clearly, eating meats and drinking dairy is out of the question for Ann so I asked her for their substitutes. “Soy has more protein than steak, including minerals, iron and calcium. Plant protein is healthier than animal protein, which clogs your arteries.” Ann said, “When you really think of it, the biggest animals: giraffes, elephants and cows, are vegetarians. For calcium we should rely on greens (spinach, kale, etc.), nuts, oats, beans, and whole wheat.”

With so many Americans involved in the low carb/high protein diet, I asked Ann what were her views on that particular eating style. “Too much animal protein causes kidney damage...most people don’t watch their cholesterol count, which is fat in the blood stream”.

This is important because cholesterol comes from animal products. Ann suggests using good carbs such as whole wheat, oat grains, and brown rice which is high in complex carbohydrates.

Complex carbohydrates contain sugars that have longer, more complex chains. As a result, the body takes longer to break them down, allowing more time to use them before they turn into fat. Complex carbohydrates include fiber and starches. Fibrous foods retain water and have been known to reduce the risk of colon cancer and lower the level of blood cholesterol thus reducing the risk of heart disease. In addition, high fiber foods ward off hunger which means less eating and fewer calories.

In the African American church, there is a high incidence of diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. Many men and women of God will relate these illnesses to genetics. I always hear people saying, "Well diabetes does run in my family." I had to ask her if our bodies can really be healed by what we eat. Ann emphatically says yes, "God made the body to heal itself, if you feed it the right nutrition."

In Daniel 1:3-20, we see the story of Daniel and the three Hebrew boys who had been chosen by King Nebuchadnezzar because of their skill and wisdom. The King had ordered that they be fed a portion of his meat and wine. However, Daniel and his companions refused to eat the provision but instead consumed "pulse" (raw vegetables). At the end of ten days, Daniel and the Hebrew boys "countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat" (Daniel 1:15 KJV). God knows exactly what our bodies need to remain healthy, vibrant and strong. Why wouldn't He? God Almighty made us! "You can not pray in church and ask God to heal you then go home and eat unhealthy food." Ann said. "Some illness we make by ourselves. We are what we eat. Natural food is important."

For those of you who are interested in this alternative eating lifestyle, Ann has provided helpful hints to start you off in the right direction.

- Drink lots of water.
- Eat bread with fiber (not white bread), brown rice, and lots of fruits and vegetables.
- Drink 100% juices, herb teas, lemon water (this cleanses the liver and also the blood) and try to juice once in awhile.
- Stay away from caffeine and sodas. They are hard on the kidneys, skin and create stress.

"Start by cutting out some meats. You do not need meat three times a day," she said. "Meat stays in the colon 8 to 12 hours or more. Bake your meat and try some soy products, which also fight cancer."

"Remember you do not have to be sick. Educate yourself about food. Ask God to help you open your mind to learn more about healthy food choices." ✨

Suggested reading: *Satan I'm taking Back My Health*, by Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu

For more information on Liquid Amino Seasoning visit [www.bragg.com](http://www.bragg.com).

### **Crunchy Vegetable Wraps**

4 Tbsp. non dairy cream cheese (try Tofutti brand)

4 10-inch flour tortillas

1 cup shredded spinach

¼ cup alfalfa sprouts

½ cup shredded red cabbage

½ cup sliced avocado

¼ cup chopped tomatoes

½ cup diced cucumbers

2 Tbsp. finely diced red onion

Salt (suggested sea salt) and pepper, to taste

Spread 1 tablespoon of cream cheese over each tortilla. Sprinkle an even amount of the remaining ingredients on each wrap and roll up.

*Ann Pringle has been a vegetarian for more than 19 years. She first studied nutrition and vegetarianism on her own and later went to Temple University where she took classes under a vegetarian nutritionist and herbologist. Ann also lectures on health, herbs and has operated her own herbal products company for more than six years.*