THE STARCH SOLUTION: The Low Fat Whole Foods Plant Based Diet

A widely tested successful vegan diet has been long advocated by Dr. John McDougall, in the new “The Starch Solution,” and many other prior books and free videos on diet and health. He has used a low fat whole foods plant based diet with great success in reversing major health problems in over 5000 patients, many now with 30 or 40 year followups.

Unlike high protein diet fads, from Atkins to Paleo, the caloric basis of this diet comes, like most diets around the world prior to modern chronic obesity and disease from the complex natural carbohydrates in whole grains, potatoes, squash, yams and legumes. Patients’ results have been nothing less than spectacular, permanently reversing obesity, diabetes, heart disease, inflammatory arthritis and a host of autoimmune diseases.

The new book, “Rethink Food: 101 Doctors Can’t Be Wrong” also presents a broad array of other physicians supporting this approach. The same diet is advocated in the modern classic, “Forks Over Knives” (book and film) and by Dr. T Colin Campbell as a result of his analysis of the largest nutritional study ever conducted (“The China Study”). Also see videos and books by: Drs. Neal Barnard, Caldwell Esselstyn, Michael Klaper, Dean Ornish, Joel Fuhrman, William Harris and Richard Oppenlander. plus Brenda Davis, RD. These experts all agree that too much protein and fat is dangerous to long term health and consider a primate type diet of 10% protein as ideal, easily supplied by whole plant foods. It’s easy to lose a steady pound a week on this diet and never yoyo back up, as this is a way of eating that is satisfying long term. If hungry an hour after eating, have some more.

THE PROGRAM:

- **Center each meal around a starch, eating all you like:** whole grains, potatoes, yams, winter squash, legumes. Minimize processed forms, and choose whole grain forms (pasta, bread, etc.). Many eat potatoes daily, which has plenty of vitamin C and protein.
- **Eat plenty of fresh raw or steamed colorful veggies and fruits.** Green leafies like kale are supply lots of calcium as well as protein. Greens pack more nutrition than fruits. Minimize dried fruits and fruit juices.
- **Eliminate: all animal foods, processed and refined foods, and all added oils and fats.** Eat limited amounts of nuts, seeds, coconuts & avocados as occasional treats.
- **Avoid processed soy products,** like soy protein isolate, soy burgers, fake soy meats or lecithin. A limited amount of tofu, soymilk, edamame and tempeh are OK. Organic only.
- **Condiments. Sauces and Dressings should be low fat, can have some salt and sugar,** Substitute flavorful herbs, dashes of lemon, tamari, nutritional yeast, tahini, ketchup, salsa, tofu mayo or sour cream, etc. A dash of lemon juice can be a good salad dressing. A little added salt and sugar is OK and goes the furthest if sprinkled on top, not mixed in.
- **Supplement with Vit. B12** as methylcobalamin, an avg. of 5 mcg./day or 500/week. Try to get Vit. D from sun; otherwise limit to 200iu/day. Isolated vitamins are not recommended by McDougall, based on recent studies finding harm. Whole foods best. Brenda Davis, RD, advises 600iu D, 150 mcg iodine, and 200 mg Omega 3 2-3x/wk.

MORE INFO: See recipes in The Starch Solution or online at drmcdougall.com (free).
Note on GRAIN SENSITIVITIES and DIGESTIVE DISORDERS

Some people considering the “starch solution” are concerned about a high-carb diet or believe they are sensitive to grains, or that grains are not good for them. Very few people actually have celiac disease, a serious condition, which is generally quite obvious and disabling. Gluten sensitivity (gas, bloat, maybe diarrhea) may stem from the artificially high gluten content of today’s wheat, plus a curable gut dysbiosis problem.

Vegan Dr. Michael Klaper (doctorklaper.com) describes this in his DVD, “Sense and Nonsense in Nutrition,” where he explains that a multitude of factors of modern life are killing off our beneficial gut bacteria: chlorinated tap water, pesticides (think Roundup in GMO soy, corn and canola), phosphorus in sodas, antibiotics, alcohol, coffee, black tea, mint tea and more. The good guys normally crowd out the bad guys. With the good guys beaten down, we then glug down tons of sugar and get an explosion of harmful candida and other pathogens.

This weakens the villi in the small intestine where nutrients are absorbed, creating gaps that allow foreign proteins and toxins into the blood, called “Leaky Gut.” This leads to autoimmune conditions of every stripe. It can be tested with the Intestinal Permeability Test. The good news is that he says it can be healed in a month or two, because the intestinal surface is renewed every three weeks.

Dr. Klaper’s 6 Week Gut-Healing Protocol: Follow for six weeks:

Avoid all assaults on your good bacteria,
Eat only organic.
Eliminate all coffee-tea-sugar-sodas-antibiotics, plus dairy & wheat (the most allergenic foods).

Twice a day take:
1000 mg. Quercetin.
1000 mg. Glutamine
A good diverse probiotic with 5-10 billion live units, between meals. Test to see if still active by seeing if the powder in 3-4 capsules curdles milk or soymilk overnight. (Dr. Mercola’s seems like one of the best ones. _SP)