

Chapter 1:

Healthy Meal Basics

Synopsis

Ideally small amount of food intake is best but only if these amounts consists of nutritionally balanced and healthy elements.

Exploring the various nutritional basics of each category within the food groups helps the individual to make informed choices regarding the food consumed. Upon gaining this understanding the next step would be to make the changes needed but doing so gradually would better reap positive results as opposed to drastically making the change which the body may accept for a short period of time and then reject in the long run.



The Basics

Finding the foods in simpler and more variety and freshness though still maintaining some of the favorite ingredients helps the body accept the new food intake with less of a shock to the system both body and mind.

Making these changes over a period of time is also necessary if the effort is to remain continuous. Substituting certain unhealthy ingredients with healthier one while still maintain the general recipe is also recommended.

Totally avoiding unhealthy foods is of course ideal but really quite an unrealistic pressure as it causes the individual to feel deprived and stressed, therefore a better alternative would be to wean themselves slowly off the item instead.

Learning to eat in smaller portions also helps the individual start the journey towards healthy eating. For some cutting out certain foods may be such a difficult effort that the next best solution would be to try and cut down the portions. Also developing the habit of avoiding heavier meals towards the end of a day is also wise.

Chapter 2:

How Black Beans Help And A Black Bean Recipe

Synopsis

As more and more people become aware of this particular food called the black bean the interest in it has also become heightened. Originating from Mexico and very much a part of the South American diet, these black beans have been proven to be quite a nutritionally pack food group indeed. Today it is popularly found in most restaurants and homes in various forms such as salads, staples and other delicious dishes.



Black Beans

The black beans consists of high protein and fiber contents and is considered very nourishing as both these essential elements are present within one food item. Fiber and proteins are considered very important to the wholesome function of a healthy body. Besides this it also has flavonoid anti oxidants content which assist the body avoid oxygen related damage. Black beans also consists of omega 3 fatty acids and has a high nutritional value.

Black beans are also very easy to incorporate into most meals as it has a basic flavor of rich smokiness, which gives added character to any dish. The velvet texture, shape and color hold well during cooking and makes for a very interesting looking ingredient indeed.

Black Bean Salad

Ingredients

The Salad - (I try to keep the cuts not too much bigger than the beans & corn - for appearance & to get a little of everything in a spoonful)

2 lbs. black beans (I have a pressure cooker, but go ahead, use 2 15 oz. cans, well-rinsed.)



2 lbs. cooked sweet corn, cut from the cob (OK, you can use 2 - 15 oz. cans of whole kernel corn or 2 lbs. of frozen corn, drained)

8 green onions, diced

2 cloves garlic, large, minced

2-3 jalapeno peppers, cleaned, diced (more if you like)

1 green Bell pepper, cleaned, diced (I also sometimes add a small sweet red pepper, for both sweetness & color)

1 ripe avocado, large, pitted, peeled and diced

1 jar (4 oz) pimentos, drained

3 tomatoes, seeded & diced

1C fresh cilantro, chopped

Sea salt & fresh cracked black pepper to taste

The Dressing

3 T fresh lime juice

2 T fresh orange juice

2-1/2 tsp lime zest

1/2 tsp ground cumin

Sea salt & fresh cracked black pepper to taste

Directions

Combine all the salad ingredients in a large bowl. Season with the salt & pepper. Whisk the dressing vigorously to incorporate. Add the dressing to the salad and gently toss to combine everything. Chill until ready to serve. Lightly toss again prior to serving.

Prepare this salad at least 4 hours prior to serving to let everything - except the avocado - marry joyfully in the bowl.

You do want to let the avocado bathe in the lime juice of the dressing - better presentation that way, and you can store the avocado pieces in a small container. Then, pour the dressing off the avocado and mix the salad with the dressing, then dress the top of the salad with the avocado pieces at service.

Very pretty dish & the absence of any oil seems to make all the veggies sparkle in a light citrus glow. You want this salad well chilled, but if you don't bathe the avocados in the dressing first, they will end up looking like grey lumps of pork as the air hits them.