

What Is A Healthy Meal – Good, Better & Best Choices? What About Those Caffeine Drinks, Sodas, Morning Coffee?

Jim Rhoades with Elisabeth Andersen – Nutritional Educators

There are good, better, and best choices you can make for long term health.

The Pillars of Health are what you Do and Do Not put in your body & on your body; exercise; rest; and what you think. You have to do what you can live with, so start change gradually - introduce a few better choices at a time, moving all the time toward best choices. Concentrate on Pure Water and Fresh Foods.

Start Every Day With a Firm Nutritional Foundation

- Eggs, whole grain toast or whole grain cereal, fresh or frozen fruit
 - Plain yogurt with active cultures, fresh or frozen fruit; unsalted raw/dry roasted nuts/sunflower seeds
 - Organic breakfast bar, fresh or frozen fruit
 - Jim Rhoades recommendations for * Best Choices:
 - 1) Organic whey protein low calorie Smoothie, low in sugars, with all 60 essential ionic minerals from an organic source, rich in essential naturally occurring amino acids, vitamins enzymes, and co-factors for absorption. For flavor variety and additional nutrition, as desired add ½ cup fresh or frozen fruit or ½ banana
 - 2) Rich nutritional “tonic” for long-lasting balanced energy, with adaptogens to help the body deal with stress; plus an organic easily absorbed source of iron, antioxidants, silica for better absorption and fulvic to help transport the nutrition into cells and carry wastes away, aiding cell oxygenation.
- * Best Choices are from Health Foods Stores or Jim’s first choice, Isagenix (242+ natural ingredients.)

At Every Lunch and Dinner: Think Pure Water & Fresh Foods. No Microwave.

- **something wholegrain** - Kashi Puffed Seven Grain Cereal - eat like pop corn – or for a 4 pm or evening healthy snack put 1 cup Kashi in ziplock baggie with 1/4 cup raisins and 6 whole raw or dry roasted unsalted almonds. Brown rice or rice cakes (low salt varieties). Beans & rice give you complete protein - the staple in Latin American countries. Whole grain pilaf; or cracked wheat or Bulgur wheat: cooked & used like rice. Genesis brand sprouted whole grain bread, sprouted whole grain tortillas -- found in frozen section at Health Food Stores. Wasa Rye Crackers. **Spreads:** Hummus, Pesto, Better Than Cream Cheese (soy based), refried beans without lard + picante sauce; sliced avocado or Guacamole; almond butter; natural (old fashioned) peanut butter with slices of ripe banana or apple or 100% fruit preserve without corn syrup.
- **something veggie** - best fresh or frozen, eaten raw, lightly steamed, or stir fried at low temp with a little spray olive oil. Dark leafy greens, peppers, yams/sweet potatoes, tomatoes, squash; broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage - all rich in factors that protect health.
- **something protein** - fish, poultry, low fat cheese, tofu, legumes/beans, whey. The palm of your hand size & thickness is about the right size portion protein for your body type. Red meat and pork eat very sparingly – takes a lot of energy & a long time to digest.
- **something fruit - fresh or frozen & unsweetened** - eat a good variety every day. Great for snacks too. Cantaloupe, kiwi, grapefruit, lemons, berries – these have high nutrient levels with low fruit sugar content.
- **something with friendly fats** - avocados, whole raw or dry roasted almonds, flax seed meal/ flax seed oil (add to cooked whole grain cereal or fruit smoothies), salmon. Supplements with marine oil, flax seed oil, borage oil, Evening Primrose oil, organic natural ground hemp seed.
- **Pure Water:** Drink 8 to 10 glasses of filtered/purified water daily – reverse osmosis is the best -- up to ½ your body weight in ounces. Add fresh lemon &/or mild herb teas, light green tea or natural electrolyte powder if it is hard to drink that much water. No black tea. Soda and coffee do NOT count as water!

Read labels: if there are more than 2 "long words you can't pronounce", consider a different option - for better long term health, reduce the amount of chemical additives you consume - help your liver remain healthy and able to process proteins and remove toxins without toxic over-load.

No soda - Carbonated beverages contain dissolved carbon-dioxide gas which slows/stops up-take of calcium in the bones needed for proper T-cell function, a vital part of the immune system.

No NutraSweet, Splenda, concentrated corn syrup - not natural molecules - many people react negatively. Try **Stevia root extract** if you need a sweetener, or add a little frozen 100% fruit juice.

No margarine. Use real butter or Non-GMO Non-Hydrogenated buttery spreads, or olive oil.

No MSG, "Natural Flavors", Hydrolyzed Proteins i.e. the original molecule came from nature but has been chemically altered to make your taste buds extra sensitive and your brain cells fire more often. Result? You crave more and eat more, among other negative effects on the body.

- Most Ranch Dressings & flavored foods. Try vinegar & olive oil dressings: Newman's Own or Brianna
- Includes most Soups & Tuna: READ LABELS - most cans that say "Spring Water" on the front of the can say "vegetable broth" on the back - which is full of hydrolyzed proteins – a close cousin to MSG.

White Diet: "The whiter the bread, the sooner you're dead." Avoid white sugar, white potatoes, white flour, white pasta, pastries, cookies, cakes, Raman noodles. Go lightly on cheeses except low fat cottage cheese. Ask for pizza with 1/2 the cheese (instead of double cheese!) and try throwing on some veggies. The harder the cheese the less the fat, i.e. Parmesan instead of cheddar (one of the most fatty cheeses.) Avoid most crackers, potato chips, French fries -- simple carbohydrates that spike blood sugar, high in fat.

No caffeine. Read this article! *Caffeine and Adenosine: Why do so many people consume so much caffeine? Why does caffeine wake you up? See why people use it so much - and why you shouldn't!*

As adenosine is created in the brain, it binds to adenosine receptors. The binding of adenosine causes drowsiness by slowing down nerve cell activity. In the brain, adenosine binding also causes blood vessels to dilate (presumably to let more oxygen in during sleep). To a nerve cell, caffeine looks like adenosine. Caffeine therefore binds to the adenosine receptor. However, it doesn't slow down the cell's activity like adenosine would. The cell cannot "see" adenosine anymore because caffeine is taking up all the receptors adenosine binds to. So instead of slowing down because of the adenosine level, the cells speed up. You can see that caffeine also causes the brain's blood vessels to constrict, because it blocks adenosine's ability to open them up. This effect is why some headache medicines like Anacin contain caffeine -- if you have a vascular headache, the caffeine will close down the blood vessels and relieve it.

So now you have **increased neuron firing** in the brain. The pituitary gland sees all of the activity and thinks some sort of emergency must be occurring, so it releases hormones that tell the adrenal glands to produce adrenaline (epinephrine). **Adrenaline** is the "fight or flight" hormone, and it has a number of effects on your body: 1) Your pupils dilate. 2) Your breathing tubes open up (this is why people suffering from severe asthma attacks are sometimes injected with epinephrine). 3) Your heart beats faster. 4) Your blood vessels on the surface constrict to slow blood flow from cuts and also to increase blood flow to muscles. 5) Blood pressure rises. 6) Blood flow to the stomach slows. 7) The liver releases sugar into the bloodstream for extra energy. 8) Muscles tighten up, ready for action. This explains why, after consuming a big cup of coffee or a caffeine soda, your hands get cold, your muscles tense up, you feel excited and you can feel your heart beat increasing.

Caffeine also increases dopamine levels in the same way that amphetamines do (heroin and cocaine also manipulate dopamine levels by slowing down the rate of dopamine re-uptake).

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that, in certain parts of the brain, activates the pleasure center. Obviously, caffeine's effect is much lower than heroin's, but it is the same mechanism. It is suspected that the dopamine connection is part of caffeine addiction. So you can see why your body might like caffeine in the short term, especially if you are low on sleep and need to remain active. Caffeine blocks adenosine reception so you feel alert. It injects adrenaline into the system to give you a boost. And it manipulates dopamine production to make you feel good.

The problem with caffeine is the longer-term effects, which tend to spiral. For example, once the adrenaline wears off, you face fatigue and depression. So what are you going to do? You take more caffeine to get the adrenaline going again. As you might imagine, having your body in a state of emergency all day long isn't very healthy, and it also makes you jumpy and irritable.

The most important long-term problem is the effect that caffeine has on **sleep**. Adenosine reception is important to sleep, and especially to deep sleep. The half-life of caffeine in your body is about 6 hours. That means that if you consume a big cup of coffee with 200 mg of caffeine in it at 3:00 PM, by 9:00 PM about 100 mg of that caffeine is still in your system. You may be able to fall asleep, but your body probably will miss out on the benefits of deep sleep. That deficit adds up fast. The next day you feel worse, so you need caffeine as soon as you get out of bed. The cycle continues day after day. **This is why 90% of Americans consume caffeine every day. Once you get in the cycle, you have to keep taking the drug.** Even worse, if you try to stop taking caffeine, you get very tired and depressed and you get a terrible, splitting headache as blood vessels in the brain dilate. These negative effects force you to run back to caffeine even if you want to stop. If you are interested in breaking the caffeine cycle in your life, read the book [Caffeine Blues](#) (especially Chapter 10).

Wishing You Lasting Energy, Vitality & Radiant Health!