What is Whole-Food Plant-Based (WFPB)?

Eat a variety of whole foods, as close to their natural state as possible, from the Power Plate put forth by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, pcrm.org: grains, vegetables, fruits and legumes (beans, peas and lentils).

BASIC SHOPPING LIST

To go plant-based, you can easily adapt your usual grocery list.

—Move toward whole grains. Look for bread made from 100% whole grain flour and pasta made from whole wheat or brown rice. Choose brown rice instead of white rice and try whole grains like quinoa ("keen wah"), barley, buckwheat/kasha, millet, oat groats, farro, spelt berries and wheat berries.

—Try rolled oats or steel-cut oats for oatmeal breakfast. Steel-cut takes longer to cook and is best soaked overnight before cooking.

—Try Ezekiel bread found in the refrigerator or freezer case. It’s made from 100% sprouted grains and legumes.

—Canned or dried beans. Drain and rinse canned beans before using. See package for directions on how to cook dried beans from scratch.

—Canned tomato products (whole, diced, crushed, purée, paste) are versatile. Choose no- or low-salt varieties. Make your own spaghetti sauce with no-oil canned tomato sauce.

—Vegetables: fresh, frozen and/or canned (rinse canned veggies to lower salt)

—Fruits: fresh or frozen

—Nuts and seeds: choose no-oil added varieties. Eat in moderation (no more than small handful daily).

Some items to make your meals special:
—Roasted red peppers in a jar or frozen (no oil)
—Canned artichoke hearts (not the jarred variety, which has an oil-based marinade)
—Bagged sun-dried tomatoes (not the jarred variety, which are packed in oil); reconstitute in hot water before using.
—Fresh lemon juice squeezed on veggies, steamed greens, just about anything.
—All kinds of vinegars. Balsamic vinegar and rice vinegar are mild and good on salad all by themselves.
—Herbs (fresh and dried) are great sources of flavor and are packed with phytonutrients and antioxidants. Use them freely to add different ethnic flavor profiles to basic dishes like Red Beans and Rice (see recipe below). Mrs. Dash line of herb and spice mixes are salt free.

Some new items to add to your pantry:
—Nutritional yeast (available in bulk, or in bag or jar on the shelf under Bob’s Red Mill, Bragg’s or Red Star brands); adds a delicious cheesy flavor to grains, veggies, popcorn
—Ground Flaxseed (Bob’s Red Mill, or grind your own); good source of healthy fats

Breakfast Ideas

OVERNIGHT OATS

½ cup of dry oatmeal (rolled or old-fashioned)
1 medium banana or ½ cup fresh or frozen blueberries (or a combination)
1 tbsp flax meal
¼ tsp cinnamon (optional)
½ cup water or plant milk

Cut or mash the fruit and place in a 16 oz. sealable jar or container. Add the oatmeal, flax meal, cinnamon and liquid and mix for an even consistency. Store in the refrigerator overnight. Eat cold or warmed. Optionally add up to 1 tbsp of maple syrup or agave.

Lunch and Salad Ideas

EASY HUMMUS

1 can chickpeas, drained (reserve liquid)
2/3 cup roasted red peppers (from a jar is fine) (optional)
1 garlic clove, chopped
2-3 tbsp fresh lemon juice
¼ cup chickpea liquid or more as needed
1 tsp soy sauce or ½ tsp salt

Combine all ingredients in a food processor. Add more chickpea liquid if it’s too thick, or if you want to thin it down to use as a salad dressing. Good served with veggies or whole grain crackers that are whole-grain and oil-free. Here are some good brands:
—Edward and Sons Unsalted Brown Rice Crackers
—Finn Crisps
—Ryvita Crispbread
—Wasa Crispbread
Easy Plant-Based Recipes

AZTEC SALAD (adapted from Jennifer Raymond, The Peaceful Palate)

2 cans black or red beans, rinsed and drained
2 cups frozen corn, thawed
1 red or green bell pepper, finely chopped
1 tomato, diced
½ cup finely chopped red or Vidalia onion (optional)

Dressing: 2 tbsp cider vinegar, juice of 1 lime or lemon, 1 garlic clove, minced or ½ tsp garlic powder, 1 tsp ground cumin, ½ tsp ground coriander, ¼ tsp ground cumin, ½ tsp dried oregano, ½ tsp salt, cayenne powder (opt.)

Combine salad ingredients in large bowl. Whisk together dressing ingredients and add to salad, stirring to mix.

JANE’S DANCING DRESSING

(Jane Esselstyn, from The Engine 2 Seven-Day Rescue Diet) (Make about ½ cup)

“Go ahead, give this dressing a go. I bet you will keep dancing right back to it.”

3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp mustard
1 tbsp pure maple syrup*
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
Chopped fresh dill (optional)

Combine ingredients except dill in a bowl and whisk until uniformly mixed. Add dill if using. *If you don’t like things too sweet, use less maple syrup.

Serve over a green salad or cooked greens.

Soup Ideas

LENTIL OR SPLIT PEA SOUP

Start with 2 cups dried lentils or split peas, any color. Sort through for stones; rinse in colander; place in large pot and add 10 cups water, chopped onions and garlic and veggies (diced carrots, celery, bell pepper) along with herbs of choice (dried basil, oregano, thyme, etc.). Bring to a boil; reduce heat, partially cover and simmer until done, about 1 hour (less time for red lentils), checking frequently and adding water as necessary to prevent sticking or burning. Don’t add salt till the lentils or peas are fully cooked. If you would like to add diced potatoes, or greens like spinach, cabbage or kale, wait till final half hour of cooking. Add ¼ to ½ tsp. salt just before serving.

BUSY DAY SOUP (Kathy Pollard, sustainablediet.com)

1 cup Busy Day Soup Mix*
1 onion, chopped
2 or 3 cloves garlic, chopped or pressed
3 ribs celery, sliced
3 carrots, peeled and sliced
½ green or red bell pepper, diced
½ cup mushrooms (optional), sliced
1 tomato (optional), diced
1 tbsp all purpose seasoning, or oregano
½ cup soy sauce
1 tsp pepper
6 cups water or veg broth

Put everything in a pot. Bring to boil on medium heat. Lower heat and simmer for 1½ - 2 hours, or until beans are tender. Stir every once-in-a-while and add a bit more water if needed.

OPTIONS: Instead of using dry beans, choose a mix of canned beans. Use 3 cans of rinsed beans and reduce cooking time to 30 - 45 minutes.

*Busy Day Soup Mix
Make a dry mix of equal parts of the following and store in a jar:
•Green split peas
•Yellow split peas
•Green or brown lentils
•Red lentils
•Hulled barley

Dinner Ideas

BUILDING A BOWL

Start with a grain or a starchy vegetable such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, or winter squash. Add beans. Add vegetables (any kind, but aim to eat lots of dark, leafy greens over the course of the day). Add oil free condiments and flavorings. These can include mild vinegars, such as balsamic vinegar (either white or red), rice vinegar, mustard, ketchup, soy sauce, salsa and hot sauce. Finish your meal with a piece of fruit.
Sample Big Bowl: Start with cooked brown rice (follow recipe on package) Open a can of black beans or kidney beans, rinse and drain. Pile beans on rice. Add some cooked frozen corn or cooked frozen mixed vegetables. Add your favorite salsa and/or hot sauce. Choose the level of heat that you like, mild to hot. Have a green salad on the side or on top.

DR VEGGIE’S FAVORITE MEAL

2 to 4 sweet potatoes
1 large head of broccoli

Cut the broccoli into small florets. Don’t discard the stem, although you can trim it somewhat if you like, as it’s delicious and nutritious. Let the florets sit at room temperature for 30 to 60 min.; this allows a beneficial phytochemical, sulforaphane, to develop.

Poke holes in the sweet potatoes with a fork. Place the sweet potatoes on a cookie sheet or baking pan. Bake at 400 degrees for about 45 minutes. Towards the end of the baking time, steam the broccoli in a small amount of water for 4 to 5 minutes or to the desired degree of doneness. Serve the veggies hot; if desired, sprinkle some soy sauce and rice vinegar, and some garlic or onion powder, on the broccoli.

RED BEANS AND BROWN RICE

1 medium onion, any color
3 cloves fresh garlic
1 14.5 oz can diced tomatoes (no or low salt preferred)
1½ cups chopped spinach
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
¼ tsp cayenne pepper (or less if you don’t like “heat”)
1½ cups or 1 can kidney beans (drained and rinsed)
1½ cups cooked brown rice

Sauté onion and add crushed garlic as the onions are cooked. (Use med-low heat with liquid in any pan or high-heat dry sauté in stainless steel). Add the diced tomatoes, spinach, nutritional yeast and cayenne pepper. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add the beans and bring to a slow simmer. Serve over rice.

PASTA FAGIOLI

1 large onion, any color
3 cloves fresh garlic
1 14.5 oz. can diced tomatoes (no or low salt preferred)
½ tsp dried oregano
½ tsp dried basil
3 cups, chopped broccoli
1 cup chopped kale
1½ cups or 1 can cannellini or pinto beans (drained & rinsed)
2 cups cooked whole wheat spaghetti noodles

Sauté onion and add crushed garlic as the onions are cooked. (Use med-low heat with liquid in any pan or high-heat dry sauté in stainless steel). Add the diced tomatoes and herbs. Simmer 5 min. Add broccoli, kale and beans. Simmer 5 more min. Serve with spaghetti.

LENTIL ARTICHOKE STEW

(Serves 6) (kickstart.pcrm.org; photo by Kathy Patalsky, happyhealthylife.com)

½ cup vegetable broth
1 onion, chopped
2 large garlic cloves, minced
2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
1½ cups dry (uncooked) red lentils (4½ cups cooked)
1 bay leaf
2 cups water
Juice of 1 lemon
2 24-oz cans chopped tomatoes, pref. fire-roasted, undrained, or 6 cups chopped fresh tomatoes plus 1 cup tomato juice
1½ cups quartered artichoke hearts (one 9-oz frozen package or one 15-oz can)
¼ tsp crushed red pepper (opt.)
¼ tsp salt, or to taste
¼ tsp black pepper, or to taste

Heat broth in a large saucepan. Add onion and sauté on medium heat for about 5 minutes, until golden. Add garlic, cumin, and coriander and cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Add dried lentils, bay leaf, and water to pan and bring to a boil. Lower heat and add lemon juice, tomatoes and their liquid, artichokes, and crushed red pepper, if using.
Simmer for about 20 minutes, until the lentils are tender. Remove and discard the bay leaf. Add salt and black pepper, or to taste. Good served alone or over brown rice or pasta.

Note: Using fire-roasted tomatoes is not essential, but they will give the stew a delicious smoky flavor.

ANY COOKED VEGETABLE (greens, cauliflower, green beans, broccoli, zucchini, etc.)

Steam the chopped fresh vegetable in about 1 inch of boiling water to the desired degree of doneness, or if using frozen veggies, follow package directions. Add the following:

—1 tsp to 1 tbsp soy sauce or Bragg’s Liquid Aminos
—1 tsp to 1 tbsp rice vinegar (regular or seasoned: seasoned is slightly sweet)
—Sprinkle of garlic powder or onion powder

NO OIL BAKED FRIES (Evelisse Capó) (The following recipe was reprinted with permission from the T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies (nutritionstudies.org)

4 medium-large Yukon gold potatoes
½ tsp garlic powder
Sea salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Cut the potatoes in wedges or regular French fry shape about ½ to ¾ inch thick. Place the potatoes in a deep saucepan, cover with water and bring to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes. Drain well and place in a mixing bowl.

Add the seasonings and toss the potatoes so they are evenly coated. Place in a baking dish lined with a silicone liner or parchment paper. Avoid stacking them so they cook evenly. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until crisp.

Tips: These make delicious “home fries” as well! Just cut them in cubes instead of wedges.

BANANA “NICE” CREAM

Start with 2 very ripe bananas (the outside should be spotted, even black is okay). Peel them, cut the bananas in coins and freeze in a labeled container. Freeze at least 12 hours; they last in the freezer indefinitely once frozen. (This is a good use for any over-ripe bananas.)

Bring the bananas out of the freezer and let them soften 1-2 minutes before making the ice cream. Blend in a food processor with 1 cup of frozen fruit, any type (blueberries or mixed berries are nice). You may need to add ¼ cup or so of plant milk to make it the right consistency. Serve right away or spoon it into a container and freeze.

Variation: Use 1 to 2 tbsp cocoa powder and a dash of vanilla extract, instead of the frozen fruit. ♦

Many of these recipes are taken from the Jumpstart Guide included in the 15-Day Whole-Food Plant-Based Jumpstart. For more information, go to roclifemed.org and click on “Program Info”!