



CREATE DELICIOUS HEALTH

Science-Based Strategies to Lose Weight
and Achieve Your Diet Goals

DR. P.K. NEWBY

What is "Healthy Hedonism"?

health·y • he·don·ism

/'helTHē/ /'hēdə,nizəm/

1. **health:** a state of complete physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being
2. **hedonism:** the pursuit of pleasure; sensual self-indulgence
3. **healthy hedonism:** a plant-based, globally-inspired diet that promotes health, prevents disease, and protects the planet, one delicious bite at a time; the #pkway



The Power of Prevention: Your Health Is In Your Own Hands

There's so much we can't control in our lives, including our family health history passed along to us through genetic factors and childhood experiences. These factors, in concert, shape who we are, including how we eat. But change *is* possible. And there are plenty of reasons to take a hard look at what and how you eat. Because the simple fact is that what we eat matters, from farm to fork, and a plant-based diet is at the center of health, longevity, and sustainability.

Yet there are many different foods and beverages at the heart of a health-giving, disease-preventing diet, and one size definitely doesn't fit all. (All of this is covered in depth in [Food & Nutrition: What Everyone Needs to Know](#), my newest book.) Still, while nutrition knowledge is empowering—and I'm talking about what science has shown, not what celebrities and food bloggers proclaim—knowing what one *should* do is rarely adequate to facilitate behavior change, let alone sustain long-lasting transformation. Plus, most readers live in food- abundant areas with ubiquitous temptations. Who *doesn't* want a fourth third slice of piping hot slice of NYC cheese pizza? (I'm talking about myself here.)

Change is hard. But it is possible to transform how you eat, and science shows how. And guess what? You're the creator of the diet that works best for your life—and occasional indulgences are encouraged, and should be thoroughly enjoyed. My science-based philosophy is "Healthy Hedonism" which keeps pleasure at the center of a life-affirming plate. And I hope this short guide puts you on the right path to meeting your diet goals, whatever they are.

Did you know that as much as eighty percent—80%!—of chronic diseases are preventable through modifiable lifestyle changes such as diet?

Let's do this.

Let's Start at the Very Beginning (It's a Very Good Place to Start)

Leaping into action, particularly extremes like going on a very-low-calorie weight loss diet on your own or becoming a vegan overnight, works for some people. Yet even those who jump right in will benefit from taking a breath and contemplating the following questions, which will help orient where you are now, where you want to go, and how you'll get there.

It's time to do a little dietary soul searching.

- ?** **What is your ultimate diet and health goal, and why?** Weight loss? More energy to play with kids? Looking fabulous? (And why not?) Be specific, write down your answers, and return to the list often when motivation wanes.
- ?** **What does your diet actually look like?** (*No, really; this is a judgment-free zone.*) There are many ways to measure your diet—including the what, when, how, and where—but the key is being honest with yourself to learn where your challenges lie.
- ?** **What drives your everyday food choices?** Hunger, sure; and taste, cost, and convenience are common factors. But are you eating because you're bored? Depressed? Or just because it's *there*? Think about it.
- ?** **What is your strategy for obtaining your dietary goals?** There are tons of resources and online apps to assist you, just make sure they're science-based and not bunk. Having a specific plan is important.
- ?** **How will you sustain dietary changes?** Will friends and family help, or do you need to find an in-person or online community? And it's okay to reach out to health professionals like nutritionists and therapists, too, for a helping hand; that's why they're there.
- ?** **How will you reward yourself for achieving your goal(s)?** Choose something meaningful and of value, something that makes you happy. You deserve it!





Science-Based Strategies to Create Delicious Health: Changing Your Diet is Possible

1

Detox Your Diet

Nope, not *that* kind of detox. Forget fad diets and commercial programs touting specific foods and concoctions that cleanse your system. Sure, some foods do have detoxifying actions: the human body is a wondrous machine, with organs and systems to rid it of noxious substances. But it's the whole diet that matters most. Your *kitchen* may benefit from a hearty detox, however, Removing all tempting foods from your home environment can have significant effects on your health and weight: You can't eat what you don't have. So don't make things harder than it needs to be: Ice cream, cookies, potato chips, and the like—whatever your diet vices and triggers may be—should not live in your home. And definitely not at arm's length, whether on a kitchen counter or office desk drawer. Enjoying treats is fine, in moderation, but keeping them around all the time often leads to over-consumption.

2

Find Support



Support can take many shapes and forms, and encouragement from spouses, family, and friends is helpful. Finding communities of like-minds is also effective. This is why group meetings are part of so many weight-loss programs—and meetings don't need to happen in person. There is a rich online universe to meet the needs of every personality type, from chat rooms to websites to apps. One study, for instance, found that improving social support led to a healthier diet and greater weight loss after 16 months. The landscape of online programs and apps focused on healthy eating and weight loss is vast, though, and not all are science-based—or effective. Research is emerging but can't keep abreast of this fast-moving field, so find one that has some evidence of working; there are online consumer forums and surveys showing results from the more popular platforms and apps. And if your goal is to eat more sustainably, more humanely, prolong your life through caloric restriction, or the like—there's a community for that, too. There's also a minefield of online communities filled with bogus diet fads: check the science credentials and promise of miracle cures and quackery, use common sense, and avoid those: Your health is too important.

3

Monitor Progress



Support is helpful but can only take you so far if you're not tracking progress: You need to help you, so self-monitoring is essential. A scale, for example, is an extremely useful tool for weight loss, as well as weight maintenance. There are some who believe that constant weighing can lead to obsessive eating behavior and dieting—and it can, for the tiny percentage of those predisposed to eating disorders and similar conditions. But, for everyone else, it simply makes sense. And many studies show that that people who weigh themselves daily, or frequently, lose more weight and are more likely to keep weight off over time. (My scale is an essential tool in my own health repertoire.) Measuring waist circumference and how your clothes fit are additional ways to monitor weight loss. Blood sugar can and should be measured regularly for those with diabetes or pre-diabetes, an instant indicator of how what you're eating affects your health. Self-monitoring some goals is more difficult at home, like lowering blood pressure or LDL cholesterol, but can be achieved with regular follow-up with a health professional.

Don't go it alone: find individuals or a community in-person or online to support your diet and health goals—and stay motivated by tracking your improvement.

There's an app for that.

4

Limit Mealtime Choices

Variety is the spice of life, indeed, and it's also a central tenet of nutrition: eating a rich array of whole plant foods (they're all discussed in [Food & Nutrition](#)) contributes to health and longevity. But numerous studies show that offering lots of different dishes at mealtime leads to more calories, contributing to weight gain. (Just think about Thanksgiving.) It's easy to see how too many tasty choices offered with huge plates encourage overeating, just like keeping a scrumptious assortment of snacks in the pantry. These are the same reasons to steer clear of buffets, particularly those abounding with options and unlimited portions; the bargain for your wallet just isn't worth the health cost for your body. Sadly, the endless bread bowl is not your friend. In fact, portion size is consistently associated with greater energy intake, and restaurants with large serving sizes can facilitate over-eating just as much as buffets. For many, limiting away from home eating at restaurants and the like is thus a good idea. Keep overflowing tables with all kinds of delectable dishes for the holidays and special occasions, not everyday eating. And, as much as I love eating in restaurants, especially sitting at the bar, and supporting my local take-out joint--I recently discovered amazing Chinese food, Thai, and NYC-style pizza in my new neighborhood--my motto is generally "When in doubt, don't eat out." (Tip: try and limit yourself to takeout no more than once weekly.)



5

Indulge! (Sometimes)



Food is truly one of life's great pleasures and should be enjoyed, thoroughly. (Who's with me on this?) Forget denial: Research shows it doesn't work, leading to cravings and subsequent overeating that undermine progress. On the other hand, studies indicate that restricting foods during weight loss—restriction, not total denial—will lead to decreased cravings for those same foods over time. The key, of course, is moderation. Moderation is difficult to quantify—When is it okay to indulge, by how much, and how often?—and may look different from person to person. You need to develop "flexible dietary restraint," a very useful albeit wordy concept that rings true. Scientifically speaking, each time you hunger is an opportunity to initiate or inhibit eating the foods around you, and knowing what to do and when what requires dietary wisdom. (Think: Should I have ice cream tonight, or should I hold off as I just ate some last night? Maybe I'll have an orange instead.) With time and experience, you will achieve that elusive balance of incorporating indulgences into your life without compromising weight, health, and longevity. Self-monitoring (#3) is imperative to achieve success.

6 Eat Mindfully

Mindful eating involves bringing attentiveness to physical and emotional sensations connected with dining or being in a food environment. It adapts the concept of mindfulness, a non-judgmental awareness of the present moment employed in some spiritual and therapeutic practices. This is a newer research area, but six randomized controlled trials showed that mindfulness was associated with weight loss. Another eighteen observational studies found that mindfulness programs were helpful for emotional eating, as well as eating disorders. Mindfulness can be learned by considering such questions as "How does this meal smell, and taste? How important is it for me to eat healthfully? What passes through my mind when eating this meal?" (Writing answers down is key.) Meditation and self-compassion are part of some mindful eating programs and have been shown to be particularly helpful for those on a weight loss diet by decreasing negative thoughts. ("This sucks!"). But formal meditation isn't required, if it's not your thing—though it has myriad benefits beyond physical health, as do mindfulness practices.



7

Keep on Trying & Give It Time

Rome wasn't built in a day; good things come to those who wait; life's a marathon, not a sprint . . . Whatever adage you prefer, the same sentiment holds true for achieving your dietary goals. For one thing, you need to "try, try again" when retraining your palate to prefer healthier foods. Repeated exposures, over time, are the key. (Studies suggest 7-10 tries, not once or twice.) Good health doesn't happen overnight, and some goals take longer to achieve than others. Be patient. There are scores of tools, techniques, and tips spanning the social and behavioral sciences that can support your health journey, many of which are literally at your fingertips. Consulting a behavioral nutritionist or diet counselor or qualified health coach in an individual or group setting can help you develop additional skills to get you—and keep you—on the right track, as will returning to the strategies discussed herein, again and again. Health and wellness is a lifelong journey, and I'm right there with you, every day. Creating and maintaining a health-giving, disease-preventing, longevity-producing, planet-saving diet will have ups and downs, successes and failures. Change is possible, but patience and perseverance are paramount.

Through all things, keep focused, be kind to yourself always, and . . .



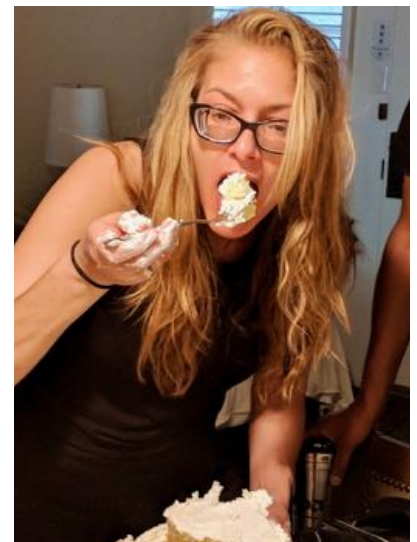


**NEVER,
NEVER,
NEVER
GIVE UP**

~ Winston Churchill



Dr. P.K. Newby aka, "The Nutrition Doctor", is a scientist, author, and science communicator whose work focuses on all things food, farm to fork. In 2012, she left the Ivory Tower to bring science to today's critical food and nutrition conversations and challenges through writing and other media—and fight junk-science in all the ways she can. She founded her second company, [Food Matters Multimedia, LLC](#), in 2019. She is an inspiring thought leader who speaks locally, nationally, and internationally, and her newest book is *Food and Nutrition: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford University Press, 2018), now translated into Chinese. Other works include *Superfoods* (National Geographic, 2016); two e-books on employee health and wellness (Virgin Pulse, 2015); and *Foods for Health: Choose and Use the Very Best Foods for Your Family and Our Planet* (National Geographic, 2014). Dr. Newby also communicates with the public through her blog, articles, and free e-books such as *How to Eat: Plant-Based Recipes to Save Your Life and Our Planet* (2020). She consults regularly and serves as a science advisor to or on the boards of several companies. Dr. Newby's passion for nutrition stems from a life-long love affair with food, from cooking, baking, and gardening as a kid to working in the restaurant industry. She was one of the "best undiscovered cooks on *The Taste* (2014-15), where she created globally-inspired, plant-based cuisine showcasing her unique Healthy Hedonism™ philosophy—and was the last woman standing with domestic goddess Nigella Lawson. She holds a doctorate from Harvard and two master's degrees from Columbia. A recovering academic, she left her Associate Professor position after serving on the faculties at Tufts, Boston University, and Harvard, where she was an award-winning educator and researcher. She has a thing for buttercream.



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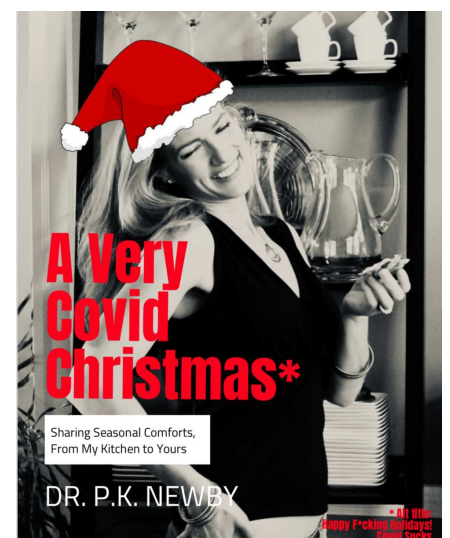
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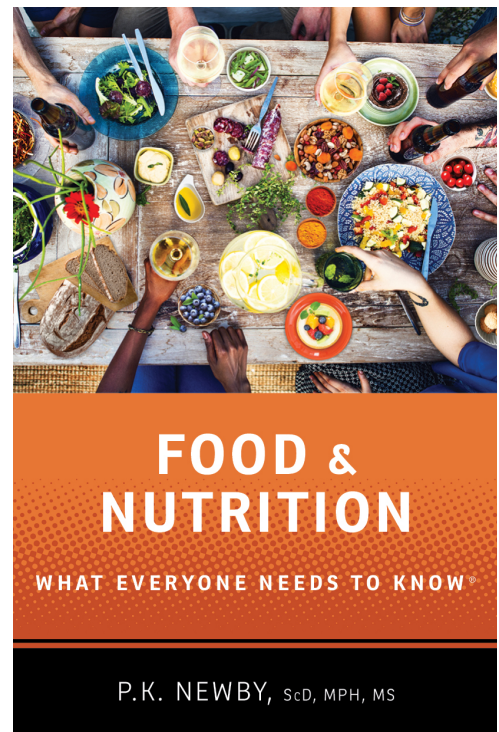
Alt title:
Happy F*cking Holidays

My Latest Book

Are you sometimes confused about what to eat for your health, or our environment? Do you feel like nutritionists are always changing their minds? Do you want science-based information but don't know what to believe? Or do you want many more science-based strategies to change your diet beyond this beginner's guide?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you're not alone. And it's why I wrote *Food & Nutrition: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Say goodbye to fake nutrition news: In 134 Q & A, *Food & Nutrition* debunks food myths and junk-science that lie at the heart of nutrition confusion. You'll hear what science says about popular diets—keto to clean eating, GMOs to grass-fed beef, and beyond—and learn the truth about why what we eat matters, from farm to fork. And the best part? When it comes to a health-giving, disease-preventing diet, planet-saving diet, one size doesn't fit all.

Nutrition confusion ends here.



Support your local bookstore or buy the book from [Indiebound](#) or [Amazon](#) or [OUP](#).



If you're reading this book considering how to lose weight or improve your diet, you are far more fortunate than many others right now. **Each day, 1 in 8 Americans—and as many as 1 in 5 in communities of color—do not have enough to eat.** Please join me in giving generously to Feeding America to help raise \$50,000 to bring food to hungry families. Our neighbors need us.

Times are hard for everyone during the coronavirus pandemic—but they are even more difficult for those who have lost their jobs and are facing hunger, possibly for the first time in their lives. Feeding America estimates a **\$1.4 BILLION shortage to feed hungry families.** Please, give as generously as you are able, and share this free e-book and my campaign widely to provide meals to those in need.

Click on the button below to go directly to Feeding America and make a fully tax-deductible charitable donation.

**YES! I will help
feed hungry families.**

Get Out of the Goop & Get Your Science On (i.e., selected scientific references)



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