



# What is the Healthiest Diet on the Planet?

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*Excerpted from "The Healthiest Diet on the Planet" by Dr. John McDougall and Mary McDougall.*

The Healthiest Diet on the Planet offers a scientifically based alternative that immediately helps you lose weight, feel better, protects you against life-threatening disease, and even reverses most common chronic diseases. This is a simple and proven formula that I have been sharing with my patients for four decades, one that always yields life-changing results. These are the very foods that we as humans are designed to eat, these are the foods we crave, these are the foods that unbiased studies have proved to be the most health promoting.

Although human beings can survive on many different varieties of food, in order to function, feel, and look our best, we must lean heavily on our biological design as herbivores, plant eaters. But not just any plants. We are [starch eaters](#), also referred to as starchivores or starchitarians. Starches are plant parts that store an abundance of energy, otherwise known as carbohydrates, to power our rocket-building brains and to sustain muscles that can run for days without stopping. That special fuel is sugar, which is stored as long chains in starchy plant parts often referred to as complex carbohydrates.

Starches that grow underground, such as potatoes and sweet potatoes, are so nutritionally complete that a person can live in excellent health on these foods alone. Starches provide an abundance of protein, vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber, with just enough essential fat to meet all of our dietary needs. Grains and legumes, however, need a little help from fruits, like oranges, and green or yellow vegetables, like broccoli, in order to provide adequate vitamin A and C.

The most important evidence supporting my claim that the natural human diet is based on starches is a simple observation that you can easily validate for yourself: all [large populations](#) of trim, healthy, athletic, war-fighting people, throughout verifiable human history, have

obtained the bulk of their calories from starch. Examples of once-thriving people include Japanese, Chinese, and other Asians, who ate sweet potatoes, buckwheat, and/or rice; Incas, in South America, who ate potatoes; Mayans and Aztecs, in Central America, who ate corn; and Egyptians, in the Middle East, who ate wheat.

There have been only a few small isolated populations of people, such as the [Arctic Inuit Eskimos](#), living at the extremes of the environment who have eaten otherwise. Therefore, scientific written documentation of what people have eaten over the past thirteen thousand years convincingly supports my claim. Archaeological evidence shows we have been starch eaters for more than a hundred thousand years. [Evidence](#) of pre-Homo sapiens dates plant eating to 2.6 million years ago for humanoids.

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