



THE SALMON AND SALAD DIET

by Ronald Hoffman, M.D., CNS

There are only three key groups in the Salad and Salmon Diet: the foods to emphasize, the foods to enjoy in limited moderation, and the foods to avoid.

Emphasize Healthful Protein

Sources include:

Fish (especially fresh salmon, trout, tuna, and mackerel) which are good also for their content of omega-3 oils.

You can eat any reasonable quantity, every day if you like, preferably cooked by broiling, poaching, baking, stir-fry or grilling. If you like, cook with a small quantity of olive oil. Experiment with the creative use of herbal marinades made with garlic, thyme, or Cajun spices. Beer makes a good marinade for fish. Try sautéing fish in wine; the alcohol will evaporate and the fragrance of wine will be sealed in. Avoid breaded fish, since the fat retention and starch content add unnecessary calories. Sushi can be an excellent way to eat mackerel, salmon, and tuna in their healthiest uncooked form. American-style sushi restaurants are opening all across the nation.

Beware mayonnaise-laden tuna, shrimp, or lobster salad. If you do make it at home, use sparing amounts mayonnaise. Better yet, make your own version with a little olive oil, some chopped scallions and celery, and some minced hard-boiled egg white.

Canned tuna, salmon, sardines, and mackerel are popular and okay for convenience, but look for water-packed varieties or those made with natural olive oil. Avoid smoked fish in which the beneficial essential fatty acids have been damaged by the smoking process; salt or other preservatives are usually added. Properly done, freezing does little to deplete the nutritional benefits of fish and hence is acceptable, especially where it's difficult to find fresh fish. Farm-raised fish like catfish or "domesticated" trout may seem like the fish equivalent of organic meats, but actually they may concentrate more pollutants in their flesh than free-swimming ocean varieties. This is because acid rain and runoff from adjacent soils may pollute the artificial ponds in which they are raised. They are also given antibiotics and are fed unnatural feeds such as grains, which may affect their nutrient composition.

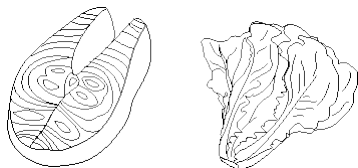
The key idea is to diversify your fish menu—don't eat all of one kind or from one source.

Shellfish, shrimp, lobster: Try these with a simple garnish of olive oil and lightly seared garlic. Raw shellfish can be chancy because of the risk of bacterial contamination and of hepatitis and other viral diseases. Cooking is better unless you know the source is safe. Hot sauce on raw shellfish can actually partially protect you from bacterial contamination, as can a glass of wine. Despite their cholesterol content, shrimp and shellfish do not increase your blood cholesterol levels.

Chicken or turkey; beef, lamb, pork or game meat: For meats, use the same methods of broiling, baking, stir-frying, or grilling that you use for fish. Try marinades using rosemary, sage, or garlic, perhaps with a little vinegar. Beefalo and game meat are tough, so tenderize with a mallet or marinades. I support the concept of using meat as a condiment or side dish or as one element among many in a stir fry. Asians and Latin Americans often use small amounts of meat to add flavor or an accent to dishes that are primarily vegetarian.

Tofu, beans, lentils, split peas, other legumes: A recent survey showed tofu to be America's most-despised food, but many have learned to enjoy creative products such as tofu hot dogs, soy burgers, and even tofu bacon and cheeses. Firm tofu is probably most popular as a meat substitute in a stir-fry.

Beans are a good source of protein at any meal, even for breakfast, when a nutritious bowl of lentil or split pea soup is a preferable alternative to sugarladen granola with milk



and fruit. Eat as much as you like -- it's hard to overdose on beans. Use canned kidney beans, black beans, or chick peas as a garnish for your chef's salad. Dehydrated bean soups make a good snack.

Eight ounces of plain yogurt flavored with ginger, cinnamon, or fresh spices instead of stewed fruits and sugar.

Eggs (poached, hard-boiled, or scrambled). Omelettes are a wonderful opportunity to stretch the nutritive value of eggs, as you can include other less calorie-dense foods. Avoid using cheese, but try sautéing greens, onions, green peppers, tomatoes, or spinach until they wilt, using one of your tablespoons of olive oil (see below).

Emphasize fresh vegetables and greens

Sources include:

Green leafy vegetables, salads, sprouts: Eat daily, as much as you want, and use olive oil with lemon juice, garlic, or vinegar as dressing. Avoid the highly processed bottled dressings, which are chock-full of sugar, additives, and hydrogenated oils. Try tahini dressing made from sesame paste for a Middle Eastern flavor. Blend with tofu in the blender for a creamy dressing. Sprouts are another good protein source, in addition to containing valuable vegetable nutrients.

Avocados, while relatively high in calories, have minimal carbohydrate content and don't induce carbo cravings. Half an avocado daily can be an enjoyable snack.

Cabbage-family vegetables, including broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts: These are best cooked lightly. Forget the soggy, overcooked, heavily buttered or creamed styles of our youth. Try them lightly sautéed, stir-fried, steamed, or uncooked with a yogurt dip. A little shredded purple cabbage is a surprisingly sprightly addition to a salad or a stir-fry.

Emphasize healthful drinks

Drink eight glasses of mineral or spring water per day, flavored with a dash of lemon or a squeeze of lime, if you like. Carbonated seltzer water is fine. Make use of flavorful herbal teas for taste -- warm in winter, iced in summer.

Fresh vegetable juice, such as carrot or beet juice made with a juicer. Consider healthful green drinks. These are powder mixes of freeze-dried high-chlorophyll plants, like barley greens, spirulina, and bluegreen algae. ProGreens, from Nutricology, is one such product. These are a good source of phytonutrients, concentrated plant nutrients for immune support and cancer prevention.

Enjoy in healthful moderation

Four ounces of whole grains per day, such as brown rice, millet, bulgur wheat, buckwheat, quinoa, amaranth, barley, rolled oats.

Here we have to limit the quantity, because these are carbohydrate sources, and we should limit the form to whole grains rather than breads and pasta to keep the glycemic index low.

There are several fiber-rich grains in kernel form that cook up like variants on rice. They make good side dishes, topped with a little olive oil and fresh spices rather than butter. You can also mix them with vegetables, fish, poultry, or beans in casseroles. Many delicious traditional dishes are based on whole or cracked grains, such as the Middle Eastern tabouli, made from bulgur wheat, or the Eastern European kasha, made from buckwheat.

Rolled oats are all right for an occasional quick breakfast, but with routine use you might use up all your carbohydrates at breakfast, limiting your options later in the day. Remember, starting the day with starchy food tends to kindle carbo craving. Eating a poached egg or two with a small portion of rolled oats will slow the delivery of the carbohydrate calories.



Enjoy in healthful moderation (continued)

*Two rice cakes per day as an alternative to bread. Garnish with hummus, bean paté, a slice of turkey or chicken breast, a little light tuna or shrimp salad, or a dollop of low-fat yogurt flavored with dip mix.

*Olive or flaxseed oil. These are the "good oils," but try to limit your intake to two tablespoons a day.

*Sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, walnuts, hazelnuts, and almonds make a good snack food. Use them unsalted, raw, or roasted — 2 ounces a day.

*One apple, pear, or orange or half a grapefruit per day; fruit intake should be limited.

Eat no more than once or twice per week

*Corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash, carrots, and beets because of their high carbohydrate content.

*Other fruits, jams, jellies, fruit juice, and dried fruit because of their high sugar content.

Avoid

*Commercially raised beef, veal, pork, lamb, organ meats, luncheon meats, sausages.

*Alcoholic beverages, sweet sodas.

*White rice and all flour products: breads, muffins, cookies, noodles, pasta, cakes, crackers, matzoh, breakfast cereals (except Wheatena, oatmeal, or oat bran).

*Margarine and other vegetable oils.

*All other dairy products, frozen or flavored yogurt, soy-based or ricebased frozen deserts.

*Ketchup, mayonnaise, commercial salad dressing (these have high oil, sodium, and sugar content and are often laden with preservatives, colorings, and artificial ingredients.)

*Breaded or fried foods.

*Refined or unrefined sugar, artificial sweeteners, honey, barley malt, maple syrup, rice syrup, and other natural sweeteners.

Dr. Ronald Hoffman is in private practice in New York City and host of Intelligent Medicine, a syndicated radio program heard nationally on Saturdays.

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