

### 3. START WITH YOUR PANTRY

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A pantry stocked with whole foods is essential to success

- Use the *Shopping List* on page 130.
- Read *Important Ingredients* (page 114).
- **Don't** shop hungry.
- **Prepare** your own food from scratch.
- **READ INGREDIENT LISTS**, *not* nutrition facts panels!

#### **A fresh start: your pantry makeover**

Radical transformation is radically successful if we remove temptation. Clear the fridge, freezer, pantry, and snack stash of anything with an ingredient list that includes white flour (or other refined flour), hydrogenated oil, or added sweeteners (including calorie-free). Get it out of the house. (Need more backbone? Re-read *What to Avoid* on page 59.) Replace it with whole foods that are foundational to the way you want to start eating. See *So What Do We Eat?* on page 35.

#### **Shop intentionally**

A master shopping list (page 130) will remind you of what you need to have on hand for your snacks and recipes. Real-food basics like eggs, cheese, yogurt, milk, fresh meat and fish, vegetables and fruit – carrots, celery, spinach, cabbage, apples, oranges, bananas, and so on can be found in just about any supermarket, but you'll need to shift your focus to the perimeter where the produce, meat, and dairy sections are usually found. You can then make forays into the interior for beans, grains, canned tuna, frozen vegetables, and so on. A bulk food section is an economical resource for anyone new to eating whole grains, beans, and raw nuts and seeds, and a reasonably priced source of herbs and spices, too.

**Don't shop hungry!** Eat a high-protein snack before shopping to keep you from wandering down the wrong aisle to be seduced by thoughts like, "Just this once won't hurt."

#### **Prepare your own food**

The point of a well-stocked pantry is that it makes it simple (especially if you use the recipes in this book) to fix your own food. We rarely see successful lifestyle change in people who habitually eat out. Nobody cares about your health as much as you do; your long-term weight and blood sugar control will be much more successful if you eat at home. If you are new to cooking, choose a handful of simple recipes that you like and make them regularly, experimenting with variations as you become more confident. Even those of you who make it clear that you **DO NOT COOK** won't have to think twice about making a spontaneous meal once you get familiar with a few easy recipes like the incredibly easy *Quick Little Black Bean Chili* on page 213. (For other suggestions see *Meal Planning* starting on page 134. On page 150 are tips on eating out for those times when you have to.)

#### **Get to know your ingredient lists**

**THIS IS KEY!** Read the ingredient list (not the nutrition panel) attached to *everything* you buy. All prepared food is guilty until proven innocent. The list not only tells you what is in the product, but it tells you *about* the product. Remember, the ingredients are listed in the order of their quantity, with the most plentiful ingredients listed first. Often there are several forms of sweetening so that they won't show up as high on the list of ingredients, and in "honey-sweetened" products, honey is often listed *after* two or three forms of refined sugar. Reading ingredient lists will cut down on a lot of foods that you don't want in your house, and you will be delighted at all the extra room in your shopping cart for good food. It is because of sensible choices made by brave and smart people like you that supermarkets now have healthy options in each department.

### Ingredient list tips for weight loss and blood sugar management:

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- ❑ **Compare ingredient lists** within a food category to find the best choice – for example some canned beans and vegetables have added sugar, some don't. It may mean shopping at another store.
- ❑ **Note the order of ingredients** – the most prevalent are listed first. Avoid items with unpronounceable ingredients.
- ❑ **Remember that processing matters** – especially for grains, fats, nuts, dairy, and meats. Choose options that are the least processed – for example, intact grains vs. flour, raw nuts vs. roasted.
- ❑ **Health claims** should not distract us from the ingredient list, and are often a marker of foods to avoid. For example, “organic, non-GMO, gluten-free, plant-based, low glycemic, no trans fats,” etc.
- ❑ **Items without ingredient lists** are usually best: apples, broccoli, oat groats, almonds, eggs, salmon, chicken, beef, etc.
- ❑ **Homemade food made from scratch** is ALWAYS preferable to commercially made options. Better quality ingredients and less processing. (See page 10.)

### Read the ingredient list and avoid products that include these items:

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- ❑ **Sweeteners**, including calorie-free and non-nutritive: evaporated dried cane juice, cane juice crystals, raw sugar, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, glucose, maltose, sorbitol, mannitol, erythritol, high fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, brown rice syrup, malt extract, molasses, fruit juice concentrate, honey, maple syrup, sugar, aspartame, sucralose, stevia, etc.
- ❑ **Highly processed fats and oils:** hydrogenated or partially-hydrogenated oils, margarine, vegetable shortening, and refined vegetable oils – canola, soybean,

sesame, grapeseed, avocado, palm, cottonseed, peanut, and so on.

- ❑ **Rice:** white (and even brown).
- ❑ **Flour** of any type, *even* whole grain.
- ❑ **Other refined grains:** processed whole grains in breads, crackers, cereals, etc. Stick with unprocessed grains in their original state with bran, germ, and endosperm intact, like oat groats, rye and wheat berries, quinoa, and millet.
- ❑ **Highly refined starches** like flours made from brown and white rice, sorghum, tapioca, and corn; potato starch, grits, degerminated corn meal, and polenta, etc.
- ❑ **Added gluten**, often called vital wheat gluten and organic wheat gluten: naturally occurring gluten is okay for most people and won't be found on ingredient lists.
- ❑ **Processed meat:** bacon, ham, deli meats, sausages, rotisserie chicken, and hot dogs.
- ❑ **Commercial food substitutes:** dairy, egg, and meat replacements.
- ❑ **Artificial flavoring and color** are always markers of products to avoid.
- ❑ **Dried fruit** (except prunes).
- ❑ **Nut butter:** peanut, almond, cashew, etc.
- ❑ **Potatoes and corn** (see page 96).

### Avoid these food categories:

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- ❑ **Sweet drinks**, regular *and* calorie-free.
- ❑ **Juice**, even 100% and fresh-squeezed, and **smoothies** (pages 96).
- ❑ **Milk**, as a beverage (see page 98).
- ❑ **Commercial breakfast cereals:** instant oatmeal, boxed cereals, and most granola.
- ❑ **Microwave popcorn**, potato/corn/rice chips, crackers, puffs, and so on.
- ❑ **Prepared foods** and ready-to-eat meals.
- ❑ **Commercial salad dressings, soups, and sauces** – especially fat free!
- ❑ **Fat-free dairy foods.**
- ❑ **Commercially fried foods.**