



Food combining - June 2011

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Welcome to this month's newsletter, many clients come to me with digestive problems and sometimes, with just a few changes to their diet we can see drastic improvements.

So our subject this month is - Food Combining. We discuss how it works, and how it may help you with your digestive system, and also to help lose weight.

Food Combining

In the early 20th century a doctor named Dr. William Hay was suffering with his health and he started to experiment with the different food groups and combining them. He did this by eating natural foods and not mixing proteins and starches at the same meals

Dr. Hay's health improved and he spent many years researching the effects of food combining. His theory is that protein and starch foods, even though they are both acid forming in their end products, require different conditions for digestion. Starches are digested in about two hours, proteins in about four hours, but a mixture of protein and starch together can still be digesting for many hours later. Therefore, more food taken on top of existing digesting food, can lead to fermentation and toxic by-products, putting strain on the body's system.

What is food combining?

Food Combining is derived from the biochemistry of our body, which has two different ways of pre-digestion: for carbohydrates and for protein:

Carbohydrate digestion: begins in the mouth with the action of an enzyme called amylase, which is present in saliva and requires an alkaline or neutral medium. Once the food has been chewed and swallowed it enters the stomach, which is an acid environment and the enzymes stop working. Only when it leaves the stomach and enters the small intestines where the environment is more alkaline, can carbohydrate digestion be complete.

Protein digestion: on the other hand is not digested in the mouth but begins in the stomach, where it contains high levels of hydrochloric acid needed to activate the protein-digesting enzyme pepsin, which is secreted in the stomach. This then may remain in the stomach for a number of hours until all the protein has been broken down into much smaller particles. Once these particles of protein leave the stomach digestion continues, until the protein becomes amino acids ready for absorption.

In the small intestines if digestion has not taken place properly this may considerably delay the process of digestion, and lead to a toxic build-up of substances, gases and even constipation.

Therefore, he suggested that proteins and starchy carbohydrates should never be combined.

Hay Diet

Dr. Hay developed and formulated the **Hay Diet**, which has helped millions of people towards better health. He divides food into 3 types:

- 'Alkali forming foods' - fruits and vegetables. Even acid fruits such as lemons leave alkaline salts in our body.
- Proteins such as: - meat, fish, eggs or cheese. These types of foods yield acid sub products in the body.
- Carbohydrates are also acid forming. Grains, potatoes, all foods containing flour, and all foods containing sugars (sucrose), but not the natural sugars, that can be found in fruits.

How does the Hay diet (food combining) work?

Eat natural food and avoid processed, convenience or refined foods

Otherwise you can eat what you want.

Maintain 3 main meals per day, with healthy snacks between meals.

1. You can combine food but never protein and starchy carbohydrate together.
2. You can eat Proteins with neutral foods.
3. You can eat Starchy foods with neutral foods.
4. Fruit should be eaten on its own - between meals or at least ½ hour before a meal
5. All vegetables and salad mix well with protein or starch
6. Allow an interval of at least 4 hours between meals of different types.

Neutral foods - can be eaten with protein or carbohydrates - nuts, fats, butter, cream, egg yolks, oils, all vegetables (green & root, except for potatoes and Jerusalem artichokes), salads.

Food combining may feel like your choices are limited, but once you establish a pattern the diet can fit easily into any lifestyle. Start by introducing an evening meal until you get used to it, then increase to 2 meals - maybe lunch, then breakfast. Remember to eat fruit as a snack or ½hr before your meal.