

**Q.** How can I eat well with so many different opinions on healthy eating?

**A.** If you're having trouble trying to decide what a healthy diet looks like, you're not alone.

Four out of 5 people find it hard to know what's healthy and what's not.<sup>1</sup> The reason: Too many choices, too much information, and conflicting advice.

**A frenzy of food advice**

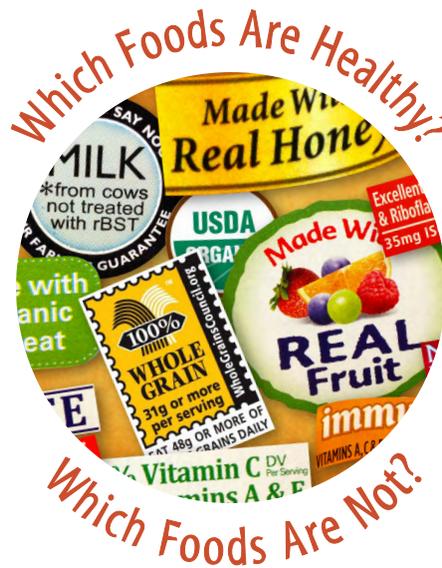
With a smartphone, you can find tips about diet, weight loss, healthy eating, good foods, and bad foods in seconds. And it's not all good advice. Then there are all the new diets, products, and programs that promise health and happiness.

If that wasn't enough, food packages are often labeled with words that claim to be healthy. Some are. Some aren't. And that can lead to more confusion.

**Beware of healthy eating roadblocks**

What happens when you try to have a healthy diet but get conflicting advice? You tire of trying to sort it out. I call this a "healthy eating roadblock."

When this happens, a lot of people just give up and adopt an anything-goes diet. Fast food, sugary drinks, treats, and biggie-sized portions mixed in with some fruits and vegetables become the norm.



And that may be one reason obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic diseases are on the rise.<sup>2</sup>

But it doesn't have to be that way.

**The simple solution to healthy eating**

Eating a balanced diet promotes health and prevents many diseases. And it can be pretty simple, says Dr. David Katz, a best-selling author and director of the Yale Prevention and Research Center. Eat wholesome foods in sensible combinations. Or to put it another way *Eat Food, Not Too Much, Mostly Plants*.<sup>3</sup>

Forget about all the fad diets, questionable nutrition advice, and confusing food labels. Here's what a healthy diet includes:

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Whole grains
- Beans
- Lentils
- Nuts
- Seeds

The healthiest people in the world eat various combinations of these foods. They drink plenty of water, too. That's it. No more confusion. Eat this way at least 80 percent of the time, and you'll feel better, be healthier, and live longer.

*References*

1. International Food Information Council Foundation. (2017). *2017 Food and Health Survey: "A Healthy Perspective: Understanding American Food Values."* Accessed on May 17, 2017, from <http://tinyurl.com/kqne65y>.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *Chronic disease overview.* Accessed on May 15, 2017, from <http://tinyurl.com/kp4gy2b>.
3. Pollan, A. (2009). *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto.* New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books.

