

**WOMEN and NUTRITION** – by Mitra Rash, M.A., CN.

A woman's body is an amazing, magical creation that goes through many stages. During these stages, not only the demands **ON** our body change, but if we learn how to listen, the demands **OF** our body will be heard. We have been given an incredible potential -- intuition. Listening to our body is one of those intuitive tools. Every culture has its unique understanding of how to use this gift. In most, women are the ones to whom this knowledge, especially concerning food and health, is passed down and disseminated. For example, how to combat simple illnesses and disorders through food, how to use 'hot' / 'cold' foods (not temperature), when to use healing herbs, and how to understand the meaning and importance of ceremonious foods are mostly used by women and indigenous healers. The root of their success lies in learning how to 'listen' and 'see' what the body is 'saying'. This ability is still available to us.

Tapping our intuitive potential can be done in many ways: through yoga, breathing, meditation, Chi Qong, and other similar practices.

At times, we have all asked ourselves how we can best pursue health during the seven stages of our or our family members life:

- infancy and childhood
- the teens and twenties
- pregnancy and lactation times
- the vital thirties and forties
- menopause
- the golden years

Often, these are times of physical and mental challenges. How we can increase our natural resistance to infection and protect ourselves against life-threatening or disabling diseases? How we can keep our youthful appearance and vitality?

Follow these basic tips:<sup>1</sup>

Eat a varied diet of as many different foods as possible

Eat regular meals, make sure that you create the environment to enjoy and digest them properly.

Eat plenty of fresh fruit, salad, and vegetables, particularly the green leafy and yellow ones

Get most of your protein from fish, poultry, and legumes, eat less meat

Bread, pasta, rice, and potatoes are healthy in moderation, but be careful with adding cream sauces, or frying, and using excessive salt

Try to take one third of your daily diet as fresh and raw foods. For the other two-thirds, learn to love cooking. There few things as rewarding to your body and your mind as creatively prepared wholesome food.

For women, the advantages and benefits of "vitality eating" are immense. . Not only they will show in healthy shiny hair, clear skin, bright eyes, strong nails which are the outer signs, but also they build a strong heart and a sound digestion. The connection between being a woman and understanding our body and food goes a long way. Let's use it.

Every woman's nutritional and health needs are different and will, of course, be discussed in great detail and an appropriate plan of action recommended when she visits with the nutritionist.