

What is Nutrition?

Nutrition is the science that examines the relationship between diet and health.

When discussing nutrition the diet is the sum of food consumed by an organism. Dietary habits are the decisions an individual or culture makes about choosing what and when to eat. Usually we consider humans to be omnivores, which mean they eat a variety of foods including fruits, vegetables, meats, fish, nuts and grains. However cultural differences, religious preferences and spiritual choices etc. make some foods not appropriate for all. Therefore there is no one correct diet for all to maintain health and wellness.

The World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948 defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” The technical term for health in the allopathic medical tradition is homeostasis. Homeostasis is the property of a living organism to regulate its internal environment so as to maintain a stable, constant condition. In Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) we would use the word homeostasis to indicate balance and therefore health is defined as a state of being in wellness.

Nutrition is the science that examines the relationship between what we ingest on a regular basis and how that affects our quality of life and overall well being.

Adequate nutrition requires the ingestion and absorption of:

- Vitamins
- Minerals
- Fuel, in the form of
 - o Carbohydrates
 - o Proteins
 - o Fats

It is believed that many common diseases and their symptoms can be prevented or alleviated with improved nutrition. The science of nutrition studies and attempts to understand the influence on health of specific dietary aspects. To do so nutritional science investigates metabolic and physiological responses of the body to what it ingests. Metabolic describes the chemical reaction within cells while physiological is a broader look at the human body.

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