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Food Principles: Macrobiotics

Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo

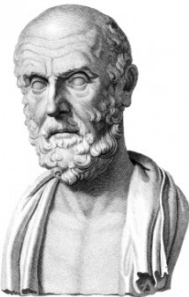
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What Does Macrobiotic Mean?

- ✓ The term “macrobiotics” comes from the Greek
 - ✓ “Macro”
 - Meaning “large” or “long”
 - ✓ “Bios”
 - Meaning “life”
- ✓ First coined by Hippocrates, the father of western medicine



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Macrobiotics: Early History

- ✓ German physician Dr. Hufeland
 - Considered the inventor of the term macrobiotics
 - *Art of Prolonging Life* in 1796
 - Later published in Japanese
 - "My opinion is that more harm than good is done by physicians; and I am convinced, that, had I left my patients to nature, instead of prescribing drugs, more would have been saved."
- ✓ Sagen Ishizuka (1850-1910)
 - Japanese army doctor
 - Believed that human health depended upon the proper balance in the body between the salts of sodium and potassium
 - Man is a natural cereal (whole grain) eater, as 5/8 of our teeth are best suited for chewing grain



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George and Lima Ohsawa

- ✓ George Ohsawa (1893 – 1966)
 - Developed tuberculosis at age 15
 - He based his theory and practice of macrobiotics on Sagen Ishizuka's theory of balancing mineral salts, the early heaven's sequence of the I-Ching, yin and yang, and other ancient Eastern concepts
 - "The only law of Chinese Medicine is explained in four words, Shin do fu ji, which means man is the result of his environment."



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Michio and Aveline Kushi

- ✓ Studied and collaborated with George Ohsawa
- ✓ Founders of the Kushi Institute
- ✓ Founders of Erewhon, a brand of natural foods
- ✓ Founders of East-West Journal and East-West Foundation
- ✓ Introduced macrobiotics to the Western world
- ✓ "Unless people become healthy, and peaceful-minded from the heart, naturally, there is no peace in the world."



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Herman and Cornellia Aihara

- ✓ Studied with George Ohsawa
- ✓ Founded the George Ohsawa Macrobiotic Foundation and the Vega Institute
- ✓ "Macrobiotics amounts to finding our physiological limitations and trying to live within them. This is the cultivation of humbleness. When we think that we can do anything we want, we become arrogant. This arrogance causes sickness."



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Macrobiotic Approach to Diet and Health

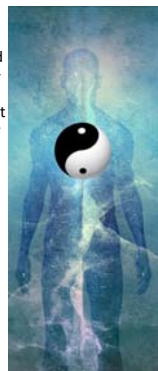
- ✓ Emphasizes whole grains and fresh vegetables
- ✓ For the most part it avoids meat, dairy foods, and processed foods
- ✓ The goal is to provide the body with essential nutrients so that it can function efficiently without loading it with toxins or excesses that must be eliminated or stored
- ✓ Since the body is always adjusting to changes in the environment and in its own aging process, its needs will always change as well
- ✓ The idea is to balance the effects of foods eaten with other influences on the body, largely through diet, and to adjust to changes in a controlled and peaceful manner



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Basic Tenets of Macrobiotic Thinking


- ✓ All things—our bodies, foods, and everything else—are composed of yin and yang energies
- ✓ Yin energies are outward moving, yang energies are inward
- ✓ Every thing has both yin and yang energies, but with either yin or yang in excess
- ✓ Most of the foods that make up the standard American diet have very strong yin or yang characters and also tend to be acid-forming
- ✓ In contrast, macrobiotics emphasizes the two food groups (grains and vegetables) that have the least pronounced yin and yang qualities, making it easier to achieve a more balanced condition within the natural order of life
- ✓ Living within the natural order means eating only what is necessary for one's condition and desires and learning to adjust in a peaceful way to life's changes
- ✓ Learning the effects of different foods allows one to consciously counteract other influences and maintain a dynamically balanced state
- ✓ The resulting freedom from fear and the new sense of control are two of the most important benefits of a macrobiotic practice



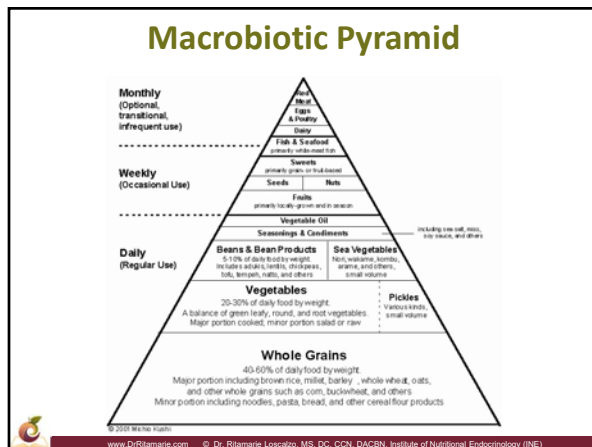
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A Macrobiotic Practice

- ✓ Encourages the body's natural ability to heal itself
- ✓ If the body is not burdened by toxins and excesses, it can function better and thus heal any illness that does occur
- ✓ Anybody who begins a macrobiotic diet goes through a period of healing, beginning with the elimination of accumulated toxins and excesses
- ✓ Those who are already following a macrobiotic diet may also have periodic health problems and can adjust their diets accordingly
- ✓ Of course, there are factors other than diet that affect health; true macrobiotic practice emphasizes balancing extremes in all areas
- ✓ The goal of macrobiotics is not to avoid death, which is part of the cycle of life
- ✓ It seeks to ensure that each person's life is long, healthy, and enjoyable




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Food Categories and General Daily Proportions: Grains


- ✓ **Whole Cereal Grains**
 - 40 – 60% by weight
 - Organically grown, whole grain is recommended, which can be cooked in a variety of ways
 - Grains include: Brown rice, barley, millet, oats, corn, rye, wheat, and buckwheat.
 - While whole grains are recommended, a small portion of the recommended percentage of grains may consist of noodles or pasta, un-yeasted whole grain breads, and other partially processed whole cereal grains



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Food Categories and General Daily Proportions: Vegetables


- ✓ **Vegetables**
 - Local and organically grown vegetables are recommended
 - The majority are cooked in various styles:
 - Lightly steamed or boiled
 - Sautéed with a small amount of unrefined, cold pressed oil
 - A small portion may be used as a fresh salad
 - A very small volume as pickles
 - Vegetables for daily use include: green cabbage, kale, broccoli, cauliflower, collards, pumpkin, watercress, parsley, Chinese cabbage, bok choy, dandelion, mustard greens, daikon greens, scallion, onions, daikon radish, turnips, burdock, carrots, and winter squash such as butternut, buttercup, and acorn squash
 - For occasional use in season (2 to 3 times a week): cucumber, celery, lettuce, herbs such as dill and chives
 - Vegetables not recommended for regular use include: potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, spinach, beets, and zucchini



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Food Categories and General Daily Proportions: Beans & Sea Vegetables


- ✓ Approximately 5 – 10 % by weight
- ✓ The most suitable beans for regular use are azuki beans, chickpeas, and lentils
- ✓ Other beans may be used on occasion
- ✓ Bean products such as tofu, tempeh, and natto can also be used
- ✓ Sea vegetables such as nori, wakame, kombu, hiziki, arame, dulse, and agar-agar are an important part of the macrobiotic diet as they provide many vitamins and minerals



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Food Categories: Soup

- ✓ Soups may be made with:
 - Vegetables
 - Sea vegetables
 - Grains
 - Beans
- ✓ Seasonings include:
 - Miso
 - Tamari or shoyu (soy sauce)
 - Sea salt



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Food Categories: Beverages

✓ Recommended beverages include:

- Roasted kukicha twig tea
- Stem tea
- Roasted brown rice tea
- Roasted barley tea
- Dandelion root tea
- Cereal grain coffee



- Any traditional tea that does not have an aromatic fragrance or a stimulating effect can also be used

✓ When drinking water, spring or good quality well water is recommended, without ice



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Food Categories: Occasional Foods - Fish

✓ Recommended fish include:

➤ Fresh white-meat fish:

- Flounder
- Sole
- Cod
- Carp
- Halibut
- Trout



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Food Categories: Occasional Foods - Fruit

✓ May be served two or three times a week

✓ Made from fresh or dried fruit

✓ Local and organically grown fruits are preferred

✓ If you live in a temperate climate, avoid tropical and semitropical fruit

- Eat temperate climate fruits such as apples, pears, plums, peaches, apricots, berries and melons


✓ Frequent use of fruit juice is not advisable



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Food Categories:
Occasional Foods - Nuts and Seeds

- ✓ Lightly roasted
 - Pumpkin
 - Sesame
 - Sunflower seeds
- ✓ Occasional snack
 - Peanuts
 - Walnuts
 - Pecans



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Food Categories:
Occasional Foods - Sweeteners

- ✓ Rice syrup
- ✓ Barley malt
- ✓ Amasake
- ✓ Mirin



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Food Categories:
Occasional Foods - Sour Taste

- ✓ Brown rice vinegar
- ✓ Umeboshi vinegar



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Recommended Condiments

- ✓ Gomashio
- ✓ Seaweed powder
 - Kelp
 - Kombu
 - Wakame
 - Other sea vegetables
- ✓ Sesame seaweed powder
- ✓ Umeboshi plums
- ✓ Tekka
- ✓ Pickles and sauerkraut made using sea salt
- ✓ Miso
- ✓ Tamari/shoyu (soy sauce)



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Additional Dietary Suggestions

- ✓ Cooking oil should be vegetable quality only
 - To improve your health, it is preferable to use only unrefined sesame or corn oil in moderate amounts
- ✓ Salt should be naturally processed sea salt
- ✓ Traditional, non-chemicalized shoyu or tamari soy sauce and miso may also be used as seasonings



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Foods to Eliminate

- ✓ Meat
- ✓ Animal fat
- ✓ Eggs
- ✓ Poultry
- ✓ Dairy products (including butter, yogurt, ice cream, milk and cheese)
- ✓ Refined sugars
- ✓ Chocolate
- ✓ Vanilla
- ✓ Molasses
- ✓ Honey



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More Foods to Eliminate

- ✓ Tropical or semi-tropical fruits and fruit juices
- ✓ Soda
- ✓ Artificial drinks and beverages
- ✓ Coffee
- ✓ Colored tea
- ✓ Aromatic stimulating teas such as mint or peppermint



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Even More Foods to Eliminate

- ✓ All artificially colored, preserved, sprayed, or chemically treated foods
- ✓ All refined and polished grains, flours, and their derivatives
- ✓ Mass-produced industrialized food
 - Canned
 - Frozen
 - Irradiated foods



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The Last of the Foods to Eliminate

- ✓ Hot spices
- ✓ Any aromatic stimulating food
- ✓ Artificial vinegar
- ✓ Strong alcoholic beverages



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Macrobiotic Lifestyle Suggestions - 1

- ✓ Eat only when hungry
- ✓ Proper chewing
 - Around 50 times or more per mouthful
 - Important for good digestion and assimilation of nutrients
- ✓ Eat in an orderly and relaxed manner
 - Sit with a good posture
 - Take a moment to express gratitude for the food
- ✓ Eat regularly: 2-3 times/day
 - As much as you want
 - The proportion is generally correct and each mouthful is thoroughly chewed
 - It is best to leave the table satisfied but not full



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Macrobiotic Lifestyle Suggestions - 2

- ✓ Drink liquids moderately, only when thirsty
- ✓ For the deepest and most restful sleep
 - Retire before midnight
 - Avoid eating at least 2 to 3 hours before sleeping
- ✓ Wash as needed
 - Avoid long hot baths or showers which deplete the body of minerals
- ✓ Use cosmetics and cleaning products that are made from natural, non-toxic ingredients
 - Avoid chemically-perfumed products
 - For care of the teeth, brush with natural toothpaste



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Macrobiotic Lifestyle Suggestions - 3

- ✓ As much as possible, wear cotton clothing
 - Especially for undergarments
 - Avoid wearing synthetic or woolen clothing directly on the skin
 - Avoid wearing excessive accessories
- ✓ Spend time outdoors if strength permits
 - Walk on the grass, beach, or soil for at least one half hour every day
 - Spend some time in direct sunlight daily
- ✓ Exercise regularly
 - Activities may include walking, yoga, martial arts, dance, etc.



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Macrobiotic Lifestyle Suggestions - 4

- ✓ Include some large green plants in the home to freshen and enrich the oxygen content of the air
 - Open windows daily to permit fresh air to circulate, even in cold weather
- ✓ Keep your home in good order, especially the areas where food is prepared and served
- ✓ To increase circulation and elimination of toxins, scrub the entire body with a hot, damp towel every morning or every night
 - If that is not possible, at least scrub the hands, feet, fingers, and toes



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Macrobiotic Lifestyle Suggestions - 5

- ✓ Avoid using electric cooking devices (ovens and ranges) or microwave ovens
 - The use of a gas or wood stove is preferred
- ✓ Use earthenware, cast iron, or stainless steel cookware rather than aluminum or Teflon-coated pots
- ✓ Minimize the frequent use of television and computers
 - When using a computer, protect yourself from potentially harmful electromagnetic fields with a protective shield over the screen or other safety devices




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Most Important Lifestyle Suggestion Sing a Happy Song Daily!




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Resources



- ✓ *The Book Of Macrobiotics* by Michio Kushi
<http://www.drRitamarie.com/go/BookOfMacrobiotics>
- ✓ *Art Of Prolonging Life* by Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland
<http://www.drRitamarie.com/go/ArtOfProlongingLife>
- ✓ *Macrobiotics: The Way of Healing* by George Ohsawa
<http://www.drRitamarie.com/go/MacrobioticsTheWayOfHealing>
- ✓ *Ancient Medicine* by Ludwig Edelstein
<http://www.drRitamarie.com/go/AncientMedicineSelectedPapers>
- ✓ *The Yellow Emperor's Classic Of Internal Medicine* translated by Ilza Veith
<http://www.drRitamarie.com/go/TheYellowEmperor>
- ✓ *Macrobiotics: Yesterday and Today* by Ronald Kotzsch
<http://www.drRitamarie.com/go/MacrobioticsYesterdayAndToday>



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