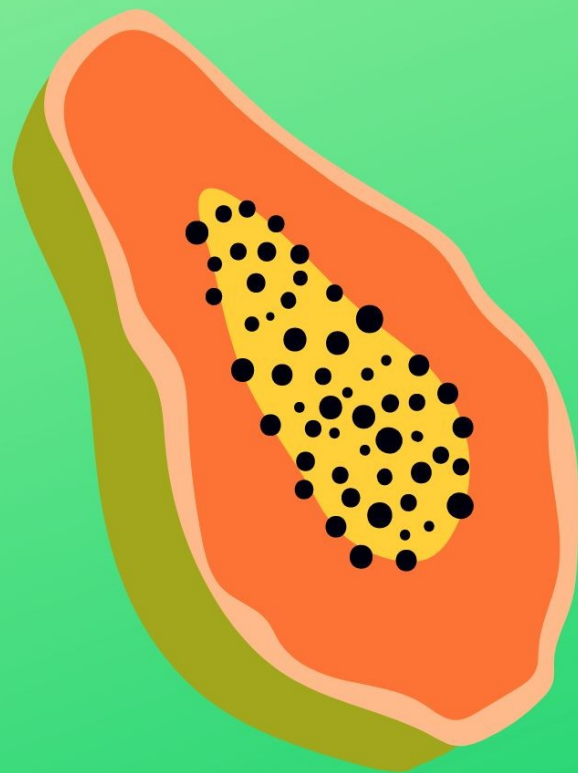


The Quick Start Guide To A Raw Vegan Diet



by Ronnie Smith

**The Quick
Start Guide To
Success On A
Raw Vegan
Diet**

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Introduction

The raw vegan lifestyle is an adventure.

Like any adventure, there is a long journey ahead with many steps to take. There are also many paths you will be encouraged to follow and sadly it is easy to get lost in multiple directions.

Many people fail to complete the path. They struggle to see the way forward and find comfort in going back to where they started.

Others get lost for years in the wilderness, never quite finding the right way. They remain confused and lost, sometimes for a lifetime and never quite reach their target.

The lucky few are able to find the right information, the right mentorship and the right inspiration to take them to success on the raw vegan lifestyle in a short space of time.

This quick start guide is aimed at trying to help set you on the right direction while helping you to avoid the pit falls and not take the wrong paths.

Ronnie Smith

Is A Raw Vegan Diet Suitable For Everyone?

Have you ever heard someone say:

"your diet may work for you, but it would not work for me"

It's frustrating when people buy in to the notion that there is a unique diet for each person.

Yet they never seem to realise:

- we are all best off consuming mother's milk as a baby
- we all like roughly the same temperature
- we all breathe the same air
- we all get hydrated from water
- our eyes react the same way to light
- we all tan and eventually burn in the sun
- we all sleep at night (mostly)

....and millions of other things that we share in common as we are after all the same species.

So why do people like to think they need a separate diet for themselves?

Forgive me for saying this but I think this has more to do with a person's ego than with a genuine need for a separate diet. We should not mistakenly connect our genuine uniqueness of experience and personality with an idea that we have a unique set of requirements when it comes to nutrition.

A number of diet books have been written based on this idea. The most famous being the Blood Type Diet. This book suggests that your blood type suggests what type of diet you should eat. Of course this book has been debunked as being false. Not only is the idea untested (and goes against the basic ideas on nutrition), but it makes very little sense. Animals have many different blood types but all eat according to their species specific diet.

Which brings us to the ultimate question. What is our species specific diet?

Comparative anatomy suggests that we closely resemble our frugivorous primate cousins. Though this may not suggest a strict diet of fruit it does suggest that the bulk of our diet coming from fruit is what our anatomy suggests is correct.

Add to this the enormous preponderance of science showing how vital fruit is for our health. The Global Burden of Disease study suggested that "not eating enough fruit" was the number 1 dietary risk factor increasing a person's chances of developing

disease, disability or dying prematurely.

Though a fruit diet is right for everyone, not everyone is necessarily ready for a fruit diet. This could be for many reasons but these are mostly psychological in nature and not physical.

What Exactly Do We Mean By Raw Foods?

Years ago Frederic Patenaude released a funny video following the exploits of a brand new raw foodist.

In the video, his character wandered around a grocery store picking up random items and asking "Is THIS Raw???"

When we tell people we are doing a raw food diet they often want to ask what do we eat? They can't even imagine how anyone could eat such a diet! What even is there to eat that is not cooked?

Technically, a raw food is simply put a food that is uncooked. But raw food diets and raw food products often don't reflect this exactly.

It is easy to apply the raw term to fresh and unprocessed fruits and vegetables, it is clear these are raw. But what if we juice them up or make a smoothie out of them? Are they still raw? What if we dry them or if they are dried in the sun?

To answer some of these questions we may wish to ask why do we make the distinction between raw and cooked foods?

For us, eating a food in it's raw form is the best way to ensure that the food has the maximum amount of nutrition still available to us. It also means that no harmful substances have been created in the food as a result of the cooking process.

Raw ensures that we eat food of the highest quality and at it's peak. Not only are we loving the food but we the food is loving us back!

When we cook a food we are by definition causing damage to the food. We reduce the nutrition available to us and at the same time we create harmful and carcinogenic substances in the process.

This is why it is important to eat food as raw as possible. But does all processing and heating cause harm?

There was a well known distinction that as long as food was not heated to an internal temperature of 104 degrees fahrenheit, or 41 degrees celsius then it was still classed as a "living food". There are even some raw food restaurants around the world with the name "42 Degrees" to signify that they heat nothing beyond this temperature.

What exactly this temperature applies to is often not fully explained but often it has been suggested that this relates to a temperature at which the enzymes in the food as well as other vitamins and proteins start to either be damaged or destroyed.

But there are a number of scenarios worth thinking about

- what temperature does your smoothie get to in a blender if blended too long?
- what temperature is fruit exposed to when it is heat treated?
- what about pasteurisation of juices and smoothies?
- what about foods that are dried? Some fruits even dry in natural sunlight
- what about nuts that are dried commercially? What temperatures are they exposed to?

It can be hard to draw the line as to what is truly raw and what is borderline. But we can always know that to truly stay in line with the idea of a raw food diet we should build our diet mostly on fruits and vegetables. We can always know that these are truly raw foods.

How Much Should You Eat On A Raw Vegan Diet?

One of the most controversial questions in the raw vegan world is "how much should we eat on a raw vegan diet"? There are a number of differing opinions on this topic so it can be very confusing for a beginner. You may also wonder whether you can simply follow your body's own hunger cues. Unfortunately, this can be confusing on a raw diet as the body responds differently than to a cooked diet. In this message I hope to go over some of the issues surrounding this question and give, hopefully, some very common sense guidance.

First off, we can perhaps throw out some ideas. For example some people claim that we should eat a particular weight of food. So they recommend you eat 2 pounds of food per day as long as it is raw.

This is too vague an answer. Different foods vary a lot in terms of the level of nutrition and calories so it just doesn't make sense to use weight as a reliable measurement. 2 pounds of nuts is a lot different to 2 pounds of lettuce.

The most reliable way to know if you are eating enough is to track your weight. If you are losing weight (and this is not your intention) then you know you need to eat more. If you are gaining weight (and it is not your intention) then it is a good indication you are eating too much.

But exactly what are we eating too much of?

The most accurate way to measure the value of food in terms of the energy that it provides us is to measure the calories in a food. There is some debate as to how accurate this process is, but it is the most accurate method we have.

If we can work out how many calories we need to maintain our weight and stay healthy then we could work out how much food we require and translate to what is available to us on a raw vegan diet.

A method for determining how many calories we require comes from Dr Doug Graham's book, the 80/10/10 Diet.

He states that we first work out our Basal Metabolic Rate. This is the energy we use if we are just to sit in bed and do nothing all day. In the case of a 150 pound person their BMR would be 1500 calories. We figure this out simply by multiplying the weight of the individual in pounds by 10.

Once we have done this we must add on how many calories we use up in our day to day activities and exercise.

The average for a woman is around 1800 calories and for a man is around 2500.

If we translate that to raw food we have a few options. We can certainly make up these calories easily by eating nuts seeds or oils as these substances are very dense in calories.

However, to maintain a raw vegan diet longterm it is important to feel good. When we eat a lot of fat we reduce our bodies ability to supply nutrients such as oxygen and sugar to the blood cells.

The ideal ratio of macronutrients in our diet is signified by the 80/10/10 proportion. At least 80% of our calories should therefore come from carbohydrates.

This matches the ratio that is inherent in most fruits.

This is one of the many reasons that basing our raw food diet on fruit rather than fat is a better option.

Therefore, we simply now have to look at how many calories we require on a daily basis and aim to get most of those from fruit with a smaller percentage gained from vegetables, nuts and seeds.

For example, a woman requiring 1800 calories per day could make up her diet with 18 bananas. This would roughly be what she would require.

If she preferred more variety she could have 8 bananas (800 calories) , 6 large mangoes (approx 800 calories) and a large salad (approximately 200 calories).

Someone looking at these quantities of food may start to think that it is "too much". They are reacting to the volume of the food.

With raw food we must eat a greater volume of food to get the same calories as we did from cooked food.

If we do not, then we will struggle to maintain our weight and struggle to avoid the temptations of other foods.

When you are satisfied from eating enough fruit you are much less likely to be tempted by less healthy foods.

In conclusion:

1. Find out how much you weight in pounds and multiply by 10, this gives your BMR
2. Add on an amount of calories which matches your average daily activity level

3. Become familiar with the amount of calories in all of the common fruits and other raw foods that you eat.

4. Eat enough fruit to satisfy the majority of your calorie needs and make up the rest with vegetables, salads and nuts and seeds.

5. Track your weight to see if you are eating too little or too much.

That's about it.

You may wonder why you need to put this work in. Surely, if this is a more natural diet then our body should tell us all we need to know.

The problem with this is we simply don't live in our natural environment and we were not brought up on our best diet. We have not learned from experience how much we need to eat to feel good.

What is the best way to transition to a raw vegan diet?

Think about how you have made changes to your lifestyle over the years. Have you found a way that works for you?

Some people have told me that they transitioned to a 100% raw diet overnight. They heard about it, it made complete sense to them, they knew immediately it was what they were looking for and they woke up the next day and never ate cooked food again.

To me, these stories are quite unlikely and exceptionally rare. It is rare for anyone to give anything up overnight and never slip up or look back. Especially with a change as radical as going raw.

If you believe that this is what you should do or how it should be, then you may be setting an unnecessarily high level of expectation for yourself. When we set impossible goals or have unreasonably high expectations there will inevitably be a fall back.

Why do we do this? Often when we get enthusiastic in the moment, it does feel like we have made a clear decision and it can feel like our desire for those previous habits has disappeared for good. Little do we realise that those cravings have not disappeared, they are just in temporary hibernation and will come back as soon as you are vulnerable.

Something that can add to the problem is that when we have made such a big decision to change our life, we often have a desire to tell the world. We want to announce it to everyone and often we get a lot of praise and positive attention from others when we are affirming that we are making a change (perhaps one that others have wanted us to make for years).

And when we do inevitable fall off the path, we can experience some negative and painful emotions as a result. Shame, guilt, embarrassment and a feeling of being a failure or a fraud to our self. We may lose a sense of trust with ourselves also. But if we persevere and try again, when we are ready again to do so, we will no longer make that mistake.

Other mistakes, though, are likely. It is almost as if we are in a battle against our mind and our mind is able to use all of our emotions, our weaknesses, our vulnerabilities to win that battle.

Our only hope is just to keep going, eventually we will build momentum in our new habits and that snowball effect will catapult us towards the life of tremendous health and energy that we deserve.

What are you missing out on right now through not being in tremendous, vibrant health? What have you already lost out on in life through not being the healthiest, fittest version of yourself?

And what stole that away from you? Bad habits, bad information, bad advice all take us in the wrong direction and years down the line we realise we are not at the destination we want to be at.

How To Eat Enough On A Raw Vegan Diet

One of the most controversial questions in the raw vegan world is "how much should we eat on a raw vegan diet"?

There are a number of differing opinions on this topic so it can be very confusing for a beginner.

You may also wonder whether you can simply follow your body's own hunger cues. Unfortunately, this can be confusing on a raw diet as the body responds differently to a raw diet than to a cooked diet.

In this message I hope to go over some of the issues surrounding this question and give, hopefully, some very common sense guidance.

First off, we can perhaps throw out some ideas. For example some people claim that we should eat a particular weight of food. So they recommend you eat 2 pounds of food per day as long as it is raw.

This is too vague an answer. Different foods vary a lot in terms of the level of nutrition and calories so it just doesn't make sense to use weight as a reliable measurement. 2 pounds of nuts is a lot different to 2 pounds of lettuce.

The most reliable way to know if you are eating enough is to track your weight. If you are losing weight (and this is not your intention) then you know you need to eat more. If you are gaining weight (and it is not your intention) then it is a good indication you are eating too much.

But exactly what are we eating too much of?

The most accurate way to measure the value of food in terms of the energy that it provides us is to measure the calories in a food. Some people may suggest that this is different when it comes to a raw food diet but there is little reason for anyone to believe it is different. There is some debate as to how accurate this process is, but it is the most accurate method we have.

If we can work out how many calories we need to maintain our weight and stay healthy then we could work out how much food we require and translate this to what is available to us on a raw vegan diet.

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we were just to sit in bed and do nothing all day. In the case of a 150 pound person, their BMR would be 1500 calories. We figure this out simply by multiplying the weight of the individual in pounds by 10.

Once we have done this we must add on how many calories we use up in our day to day activities and exercise.

To get a more accurate reading you can use the Harris- Benedict equation for working out BMR and then multiplying this by an activity factor.

The average for a woman is around 1800 calories and for a man is around 2500 (per day).

If we translate that to raw food we have a few options. We can certainly make up these calories easily by eating nuts, seeds or oils as these substances are very dense in calories (mostly from fat).

However, to maintain a raw vegan diet long term it is important to feel good. When we eat a high proportion of our calories as fat we reduce our body's ability to supply nutrients such as oxygen and sugar to the blood cells as efficiently as possible.

The ideal ratio of macronutrients in our diet is signified by the 80/10/10 proportion. At least 80% of our calories should therefore come from carbohydrates.

This matches the ratio that is inherent in most fruits. This is one of the many reasons that basing our raw food diet on fruit rather than fat is a better option.

Therefore, we simply now have to look at how many calories we require on a daily basis and aim to get most of those from fruit with a smaller percentage gained from vegetables, nuts and seeds.

For example, a woman requiring 1800 calories per day could make up her diet with 18 bananas. This would roughly be what she would require.

If she preferred more variety she could have 8 bananas (800 calories) , 6 large mangoes (approx 800 calories) and a large salad with some avocado (approximately 200 calories).

Someone looking at these quantities of food may start to think that this is "too much". They are reacting to the volume of the food. With raw food we must eat a greater volume of food to get the same calories as we did from cooked food.

If we do not, then we will struggle to maintain our weight and struggle to avoid the temptations of other foods. When you are satisfied from eating enough fruit you are much less likely to be tempted by less healthy foods.

BEWARE: Not eating ENOUGH is by far the biggest reason people struggle to feel good on this lifestyle long term or remain successful on it.

It is also the reason we hear about "emaciated" raw vegans. Almost all of the time, people were simply not eating enough.

In conclusion:

1. Calories: Work out your daily calorie needs.
 2. Fruits: Become familiar with the amount of calories in all of the common fruits and other raw foods that you eat.
 3. Eat Enough fruit to satisfy the majority of your calorie needs and make up the rest with vegetables, salads and nuts and seeds (at first this will seem like A LOT of food. You will get used to this over time and enjoy the real feeling of satisfaction that comes with this)
 4. Track Your Weight to see if you are eating too little or too much.
- That's about it.

You may wonder why you need to put this work in. Surely, if this is a more "natural diet" then our body should tell us all we need to know?

The problem with this is we simply don't live in our natural environment and we were not brought up on our best diet. We have not learned from experience how much we need to eat to feel good.

What Times Should You Eat On A Raw Vegan Diet?

Have you seen all of the hullabaloo about when is the best time to eat?

Or how restricted your eating "window" should be?

Perhaps you should not eat in the morning, or not eat at night, or only eat when the sun is up?

There is a lot of confusion out there about when to eat but a lot of this comes back to problems created by how poorly most people eat.

Think about it:

If you are eating a BAD diet, of course you are better off restricting how much you eat! And it is probably best not to eat hard to digest, junk foods late at night as it could interrupt sleep.

But what about the healthiest foods?

As fruit is what our body is designed to digest it is very easy for our body to digest and takes very little energy compared to other foods. Fruit does not stay in our system for day after day continuing to rot and cause gas and other issues.

Should we be worried about restricting our eating window when it comes to fruit?

I had a friend who told me it was very bad to eat fruit after 6pm. What I have found over the years is that people share these ideas with often no evidence for why this is a bad thing apart from perhaps their own interpretation of their own personal experience.

What about not eating in the morning?

I don't have any problems personally with eating fruit in the morning though I tend not to eat first thing. I think it is good to give your body a little time to wake up and also best to eat a little slower first thing.

If it works for you then do what works. But I would suggest not worrying too much about your eating window.

You are far more likely to under eat if you do this and under eating is already a big problem when it comes to a raw lifestyle.

Eat up and fruit up through out the day!

As the phrase "fruitarian" becomes more popular many people question whether we need to eat greens at all and are focused on a strict fruitarian diet.

Just to explain:

For some people the word "fruitarian" means only FRUIT. But fruit can include many foods often thought of as vegetables such as tomatoes, cucumbers, courgettes, squashes, pumpkins and so on.

For most though, they use the word fruitarian to suggest that they mostly eat fruit. Sometimes it is used to discriminate between raw fooders that eat mostly fruit and those who eat a raw diet that limits fruit.

Many who use the word fruitarian in casual conversation would, if pressed, use the phrase "raw vegan" as they may wish to make sure that people realise that they still include other foods in their diet.

When I started off, I was not attracted to vegetables at all. I was told that I would develop a taste for vegetables, especially as I weaned myself away from salt.

However, I still find that vegetables can be bitter and unappealing to the palate when not eaten in combination with other things. Personally, I rarely eat greens alone as I find few greens edible that way (with the exception of Lamb's lettuce and very little else)

Many are concerned that they would not get enough minerals if they did not eat greens. There is basically no evidence for us to go on apart from people's personal accounts which are always unreliable.

How about our closest ape relatives? None of these apes eat an exclusively fruit diet, though it could be said that they would if they were able to. Whether they must eat leaves and other vegetation to be completely healthy is debatable but it is clear that even the most frugivorous apes like bonobos and orangutans still eat seeds, nuts and vegetation.

You may find it funny when people talk about the dangers or deficiencies of an exclusively fruit diet. There is no evidence or studies on such a diet over time and few people have stuck to it long term.

One who I know quite well is Anne Osborne. It appears that she has no problems eating an exclusively fruit diet and has never run in to any deficiency. She did take B12 during her pregnancy but this was on the advice of her doctor and not because she was experiencing deficiency symptoms.

The jury is still out on whether we MUST eat greens but certainly we would suggest

that whatever diet you choose, never be dogmatic and always be prepared to test or seek medical advice if you believe you require it.

But also be aware that many people who have suggested they have had issues with any particular diet have diagnosed themselves rather than finding real answers.

Don't fear fruit! And don't expect vegetables to have something that fruit does not have as they do not.

How Much Fat Should You Eat On A Raw Vegan Diet?

You might be perplexed by this question:

"how much fat should you eat on a raw vegan diet"

Surely, you may say, as long as it is RAW then it is HEALTHY!

Or you may think to yourself "as long as I eat raw, my body will be able to tell me how much to eat"

Unfortunately, a healthy raw diet is not as simple as "as long as it is raw it is healthy"

Especially as many foods are labelled "raw" but in reality they have been dried, processed or dehydrated in some way which has changed the nature of the food completely.

Ever eaten truly RAW nuts? They are not as moreish and hard to put stop eating as those in a bag.

Let's get back to diets in general.

When we look for clues as to how we should design our diet we could do much worse than look at the diets of the "blue zones". These are the areas in the world that are renowned for producing the highest proportion of centenarians and healthy older people per capita.

The researchers have looked at the similarities between these populations and have found a few things in common. When it comes to diet they all consume a mostly plant-based diet.

And what was also remarkable was that carbohydrates made up the vast majority of the diet, 70% and upwards for each population with no exceptions.

When we look into the science of nutrition and of sports performance we find that carbohydrates are the bodies preferred source for fuel. Top athletes maintain a high carbohydrate diet when they wish to perform at their highest level.

But perhaps this equation is different for a raw diet?

The work of Dr Douglas Graham would suggest not. With over 35 years of experience working with people who were eating raw diets he almost always found that people were consuming as much as 50% or more of their diet from fat.

Often this was in the form of processed fat like oils, nut butters, seed spreads and

tahini...which quickly add up to a LOT of calories as FAT as over double the calories of carbohydrate sources.

Do we have long term studies on a high fat raw diet versus a low fat raw diet? Sadly not.

We have to assume the same rules apply regardless of whether the diet is raw or not. We should head towards a diet made primarily of fruit to make sure we will feel and perform our best on a raw diet.

Can You Be An Athlete On A Raw Vegan Diet?

Can you be an athlete on a raw vegan diet?

You may wish to turn the question around: "how can you be an athlete and NOT eat a raw vegan diet!"

It is amazing how poorly some athletes eat. Bodybuilders and weight lifters appear to be the worst and the most likely to throw aside all conventional dietary information. They have often bought into the idea that in order to build size and strength they must consume high quantities of what they call "high quality protein"

From eating multiple eggs for breakfast to McDonalds each lunch, body builders are well known for eating heart attack inducing diets. Then we mistakenly blame the steroids and other performance enhancing drugs they use for causing their early deaths.

Other athletes don't fair much better. More and more professional athletes are being put on healthier diets but historically few have cared. There are many stories of professional athletes who smoked and drank alcohol regularly so it should be no suprise that athletes have shown little regard to diet.

Dr Douglas Graham has worked with many professional athletes and put them on a raw vegan diet. The effect was often that it allowed them to lengthen the duration of their career. Martina Navratilova is well known to have had one of the longest career at the highest level in all of professional sports and used a raw vegan diet as part of that success.

Dr Graham also worked with NBA basketball player Ronnie Grandison as well as Olympic sprinter Dougie Dickinson. It is clear that high level athletes can perform well on a raw vegan diet.

When it comes to endurance events Michael Arnstein has won multiple Ultra marathons as a 100% raw vegan while Tim Van Orden won the US Masters Champion of the year award as a raw vegan runner.

Could it be that just some people perform well on a raw vegan diet? We have yet to test this thoroughly but if people can eat a terribly unhealthy diet and continue to perform well...then why should a healthy diet not work?

9 Signs You Are Under Eating On A Raw Vegan Diet

For most people, eating TOO MUCH is a problem. Many people struggle to control their eating habits and over their lifetime inevitably gain weight. Even people that are active and fit, struggle not to gain additional excess weight over the years.

However, when people change to a healthier diet, sometimes the problem can be that they don't eat enough. This is particularly the case on the raw vegan diet.

Going raw is a completely different experience of eating and we have to learn to listen to different signals from our body. If you do not eat enough, you will predictably experience certain symptoms.

Have you ever wondered if you were eating enough on a raw vegan diet?

It is very easy on a raw vegan diet to think you are eating TONNES of food and yet still actually be eating less calories than you need. Under eating over time can lead to a number of symptoms that lead people to think they are undergoing a health problem.

Here is a brief overview of these 9 symptoms:

1. Low energy – you don't feel like being active and find yourself resting more and more.
2. Hair loss – this is rare but can happen with long term under eating.
3. Constant hunger – even if you don't feel like eating, if you can't stop thinking about food this is sign you may need to eat more.
4. Inability to get pregnant – This is also connected to a woman being at a low bodyweight. This can pause the menstrual cycle until a healthy weight returns.
5. Sleep issues – when we have not eaten enough it is common that we stay awake longer. This may be an evolutionary adaptation making us staying awake to eat more.
6. Irritability – A common trait of people on a diet.
7. Feeling cold – many people complain of feeling cold on a diet. This is a common sign of under eating.
8. Constipation
9. Anxiety

You are probably thinking the same thing as me. You have heard many people who left the raw vegan diet, or even a vegan diet, complain of some or even ALL of these symptoms.

It's likely that instead of them experiencing a nutrient deficiency, they were really experiencing a caloric deficiency....under eating consistently over an extended period of time.

You may ask...why did they not lose weight? Well, some did lose weight though they may not have been tracking it accurately. Others, however, would not have lost weight due to a binge/purge type of cycle.

This is where someone under eats and then binges on a recurring cycle. In this situation a person may end up gaining weight. It's the worst of both worlds as they feel the negative side effects of the under eating phase and also feel the negative side effects of bingeing and weight gain.

To truly embrace health, we must eat sufficient calories of healthy foods to maintain optimal digestion, mental health and well-being all round. Make sure you are eating enough!