

The
**Healing
Foods**

The Ultimate Authority
on the Curative Power
of Nutrition

By Patricia Hausman &
Judith Benn Hurley

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NOTICE

This book is intended as a reference volume only, not as a medical manual or guide to self-treatment. If you suspect that you have a medical problem, we urge you to seek competent medical help. Keep in mind that nutritional needs vary from person to person, depending on age, sex, health status, and total diet. The information here is intended to help you make informed decisions about your diet, not as a substitute for any treatment that may have been prescribed by your physician.

For Betsy and for Patrick

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Patricia Hausman
Judith Benn Hurley

INTRODUCTION

Accentuate the Positive

We could not be happier with where nutrition is taking us these days. A new era has dawned. We call it a renaissance—a renewed interest in the healing potential of food. And as you will see, it's a return to *positive* messages about the important role that these healing foods can play in helping to keep us healthy and well.

In the coming years, we know you will be hearing more and more about these friendly foods and nutrients. Among the current favorites are:

- Fish that provide “the good fat” friendly to our hearts.
- High-fiber foods that help maintain better levels of both blood sugar and blood cholesterol.
- Great sources of calcium and vitamin D that provide the right stuff to our bones.
- Foods rich in carotene, vitamin C, fiber, and selenium—all important cancer-fighting nutrients.

And these are just the best-known examples. As you will discover in *The Healing Foods*, lots of other foods also show health-boosting potential. If this carries a ring of “boring diet,” allay your fears—immediately! We, too, have had our fill of rigid diets. This book is designed to give you choices. The key is *flexibility*.

A Prime Example

How can healing foods benefit you? Well, perhaps your blood cholesterol level is too high. Lowering it would do much for your health. But the standard cholesterol-lowering diet, with strict limits on meat and milk fats, may not appeal to your palate at all. If so, rest assured that you are not alone. For as much as we realize that cutting back on meat and milk fats does lower cholesterol, we also know that this method is often an unpopular one.

The Healing Foods offers you a more positive strategy for reducing a high cholesterol level—one that emphasizes foods with cholesterol-lowering power. This gives most cholesterol watchers greater freedom in making food choices. It can also greatly simplify life because a single healing food—oat bran—can make a big difference. Taken in the right amounts, it can lower cholesterol dramatically.

Of course, oat bran alone won't accomplish everything. Probably no food or supplement can completely counteract the hazards posed by risky habits. As long as we realize that an alternative such as oat bran *reduces but does not eliminate* the risk posed by diets high in saturated fat and cholesterol, we think that the news here is good. And needless to say, if you avoid troublesome foods in addition to eating the healthful ones that are featured here, you'll be living for maximum good health.

By the way, the news doesn't stop with oat bran. There are other options. Other foods also contain the cholesterol-lowering substance found in oat bran. So the chances are good that you can find some appealing foods from the choices we'll give you.

The Supplement Option

Supplements are as much a part of the flexible approach to nutrition as is food. Sometimes none of the food choices are appealing or practical. The meat-and-potatoes lover, for instance, often eats few vegetables rich in carotene—the plant form of vitamin A that shows much promise for preventing cancer.

The solution, obviously, is to consider a supplement. If your diet doesn't contain much of an important nutrient, it's better to take a supplement than to miss out on its special benefits. It is simply a better option than attempting to eat foods you don't like, because in our experience, this approach usually fails before long.

A Personalized Approach

There are too many recommendations. Too many diets. Too many foods to avoid; too many others to remember to include every day. Too many noes; too many nevers. If you've ever had the feeling that "there's nothing left to eat," or that following all the advice you hear requires a graduate degree in nutrition,

we can understand. Trying to do what's good for you can be downright confusing!

One day, for instance, nutritionists advocate Swiss cheese as a good source of bone-building calcium. The next day they warn against its cholesterol-raising effects. There has to be a better way. In our book, there is.

Our solution is a more personalized approach, carefully tailored to your needs. Do you have a problem with gallstones? Angina? We'll show you how to eat to alleviate your problem. Or maybe your interest is just in giving your digestive tract or heart more healthful security. We'll show you how to do that, too.

Keeping nutrition simple is as important to us as keeping track of the latest research findings. We've made this book as simple as possible without sacrificing results.

Use this book in whatever way best serves you. Within these pages you'll find:

- All the foods that have been scientifically shown to enhance healthful living.
- The special conditions that can be helped by eating certain foods.
- The specific roles that vitamins and minerals play in keeping you healthy.

The entries are organized in alphabetical order for easy access, beginning with acerola and ending with yogurt. In the food entries, you will find nutritional profiles of the best foods, along with recipes and information about selection, storage, and cooking. Each special condition section explains the causes and symptoms of some of our most common health problems and offers nutritional strategies for preventing and treating them. Some also contain seven-day meal plans—all low to moderate in calories and high in vitamins and minerals—to guide you along. Finally, in the Appendix, you'll find a complete listing of all the foods high in the essential vitamins and minerals.

We hope that within these pages you will find a positive, personalized, flexible approach that makes better nutrition a pleasure instead of a burden. It's the best way we've found to accentuate the positive—and make good nutrition something that can be practiced for a lifetime.

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ACEROLA

Good Things in a Small Package

2 calories per fruit

Is it a berry or is it a cherry? Actually, it's both. The tart and exotic acerola berry is also known as the West Indian cherry. Nutritionists know it for its vitamin C, with a single berry packing a generous 81 milligrams. That's 25 percent more than the official recommended allowance in each tiny fruit. You can't get this much of your daily vitamin C allowance from just a bite or two of an orange!

The acerola's distinction as a powerhouse of vitamin C has obscured an equally important fact: Acerola berries are low in calories, weighing in at only about 2 apiece. But unless you love lemons, you will find the acerola so tart that you must add sweetening. Instead of sugar, try thawed apple juice concentrate, remembering that this, too, will add calories. Even with the added sweetener, however, you'll still have a winner as far as fat, cholesterol, and sodium are concerned.

At the Market: In the United States, most acerola is marketed dried. To test for freshness, shake the package. Do you hear a rattle? If you do, the acerola should be good.

Kitchen Tips: Once you have it home, store acerola in a tightly covered glass jar. Keep it in a cool place and out of the light. Every now and then, inspect the jar for moldy berries and discard any that you find.

Accent on Enjoyment: To prepare acerola, you can use your imagination or try some of our favorites.

- Crush the acerola into tiny pieces with a rolling pin and use like raisins. Allow for its extra tartness by adding more sweetener to the recipe.
- Steep the crushed, dried fruit in boiling water and enjoy as tea. Of course, the heat will affect vitamin C, but the flavor will still be there.
- Add acerola to conserves, preserves, and fruit butters or use the acerola tea in making jelly.
- Give a new tart flavor to fruit pies, punches, hot-mulled beverages, relishes, and marinades for pork or game by seasoning with acerola.

We have to hand it to the Alaskans, by the way, for coming up with the most unique use of acerola that we know of. They collect fresh berries, simmer them, and dry the puree in the sun or oven. The dried puree is then crushed into a powder with a rolling pin and used to fortify bread doughs and pancake and waffle batters with extra nutritional value.



Mulled Apple Juice

Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan. Simmer over medium heat for about 5 minutes, then strain and serve hot.

Makes 4 servings

- 1 tablespoon dried,
minced acerola
- 2 teaspoons dried, minced
lemongrass
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 teaspoons dried, minced
orange peel
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups apple juice