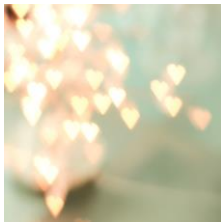


Primary Food Defined

What is Primary Food?

What we consider nutrition today is really just a secondary source of energy.



Think back to a time when you were passionately in love. Everything was exciting. Colors were vivid. You were floating on air. You forgot about food and were high on life.

Or remember a time when you were deeply involved in an exciting project. You believed in what you were doing and felt confident and stimulated. Time seemed to stop. The outside world faded away. You didn't need to eat. Someone had to come by and remind you.

Or, what about children playing outside with friends. It's dinner time, and the mother cries out, "Time to come in and eat." "No, Mommy, we're not hungry yet," they respond. Once at the table, the mother feels her role is to enforce the rules of "good nutrition" and yells at the children to eat their food. Eventually, the child forces down the minimum acceptable requirement and rushes out again to play.



Finally, at the end of the day, the child comes in exhausted and goes to sleep without thinking about food at all.

Children live on primary food. The fun, excitement, and love of their daily life feeds them, so that nutrition is secondary.

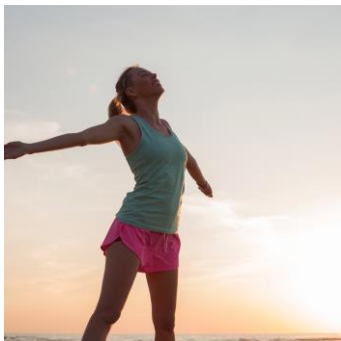


On the other hand, think of a time when you were depressed, or your self-esteem was at a low. You were starving for primary food. No amount of secondary food would do. Eat as much as you want, and you'll never feel satisfied. Even in good times, we come home at night and look into the refrigerator for something to eat, when all we really want is a hug or someone to talk to.

Primary food feeds us, but it doesn't come on a plate.

Things like a spiritual practice you feel connected to; a career that inspires you; physical activity that makes you want to move; and honest and open relationships feed your soul and your hunger for living.

It is our opinion that the more primary food we receive, the less we will be dependent on secondary foods and the more our physical health will improve. It's scientifically proven that when we engage in these activities and experience pleasure, we release chemicals such as endorphins and oxytocin, and both have very positive health effects.



Both endorphins and oxytocin decrease circulating levels of cortisol, a stress hormone that drives the fight-or-flight response. Since many of us are living under stressful conditions that cause cortisol to be chronically elevated, anything that can reduce cortisol levels will probably be beneficial for health.

Endorphins also enhance immune function and oxytocin (give someone a hug every day), can lower blood pressure, and improve response to stressful events.

The opposite is also true. The more we fill ourselves with secondary foods, the less we are able to receive the primary food of life.

That is why every spiritual tradition encourages people to fast – to have times during the year when we reduce our intake of secondary foods, so that we are more able to be aware of the primary foods in our lives. You will have this opportunity during the program during the 4-Day Fast.

We encourage you to explore your primary foods as you journey through this program and to make a list below of simple things that feed you OTHER than food that you can incorporate regularly into your life.



PRIMARY FOODS LIST

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Adapted from Joshua Rosenthal, founder and director of [Institute for Integrative Nutrition®](#), reprinted with permission. ®