

Food Combining: The Little-Understood Secret to Optimal Health & Weight Revealed  
by Donna Gates for [www.BodyEcology.com](http://www.BodyEcology.com)

Steak and potatoes, tuna-noodle casserole, scrambled eggs with toast... these classic American meals are also classic examples of why the Standard American Diet is making us fatter and more prone to disease.

After eating one of those traditional American meals, you might experience bloating or feel gassy, dehydrated or tired. No wonder! They violate all the principles of food combining.

Many diet companies, like Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig, tell you to eat less and exercise more, with little regard to *what* you actually combine together in your stomach. What they don't know is that **what happens in your stomach and digestive tract is important AND can be the key to long-term health and weight loss!**

Many years ago, our ancestors worked hard at physical jobs and returned home each day to eat big meals of meat, breads, cheeses, and even sweets with no adverse effects. They had iron stomachs and digested everything. Our ancestors also had healthier inner ecosystems. A healthy inner ecosystem is made up of the friendly microflora (good bacteria) that reside in our intestines and keep us healthy and strong. A healthy inner ecosystem also means more beneficial microflora helping you digest the foods you eat.

Over time, the introduction of antibiotics, pasteurization and processed foods, along with a lifestyle of constant stress, has damaged our inner ecosystems. An unhealthy inner ecosystem can lead to fatigue, poor health and a digestive tract that functions inefficiently.

Today, more than ever, we need to take extra special care of our bodies because they have never been more under-nourished and overstressed.

The good news is that **you can eat your way to better health...** and achieve a naturally slim body at the same time! The Body Ecology system of health and healing teaches that it's more than just **what** you eat; it's also **how** you eat.

The "how" is indeed just as important and Body Ecology provides a roadmap for how to eat your way to health through our **7 Healthy Eating Principles**. In this article, we will cover the principle of food combining in more detail.

**Food combining is the little-known secret to eating that enhances your digestion to give you energy and to help you lose weight and keep it off!**

#### **Food Combining the Body Ecology Way**

The process of digesting each meal takes a great deal of energy so you want to increase your ability to digest or your "digestive fire." But what happens if your digestion is not working properly, like so many Americans today?

The undigested food stays in your digestive tract and putrefies, creating a toxic environment that makes your blood more acidic and allows yeast, viruses, cancer cells and parasites to grow inside you. In essence, your inner ecosystem is damaged and you are more prone to illness. Proper food combining is a system of eating foods that combine together efficiently to assist digestion so that your digestive tract does not have to work so hard to give you the nutrients you need for energy. You can learn the basics with 3 simple guidelines.

#### **#1) Eat Fruits Alone on an Empty Stomach**

For anyone just starting on the Body Ecology program, I recommend avoiding most fruits -- they have a high concentration of natural sugars that encourage the growth of yeast and other pathogens.

The exceptions are sour fruits like **lemons and limes, unsweetened juices from cranberries and black currants, and pomegranates**. These fruits are very low in sugars and are safe to eat, even in the initial, more limited phase of the program.

Once your inner ecosystem is restored (usually within 3 months of remaining on stage one of The Diet), you can introduce other low-sugar fruits like grapefruit and kiwis, as well as pineapple, blueberries, and strawberry. These sour fruits combine best with kefir and yogurt made from milk and sprouted seeds and nuts. Nuts, seeds and dairy foods including cheese are called "protein fats" because they truly are a protein and a fat combined together by nature.

**In the kitchen:** Start your morning with a glass of warm water and lemon juice to hydrate your body and cleanse and tone your digestive system. Lemon and lime juice can be eaten with animal protein for flavor and to enhance digestion.

## #2 Eat Proteins with Non-Starchy Vegetables and/or Ocean Vegetables

When you eat proteins like poultry, fish, meat, and eggs, your stomach secretes hydrochloric acid and the enzyme pepsin to break down the food in a highly acidic environment. When you eat starches like potatoes or bread, your stomach secretes the enzyme ptyalin to create an alkaline condition.

If you eat proteins and starches together, they tend to neutralize each other and inhibit digestion. The poorly-digested food travels through the digestive tract reaching the intestines where it putrefies and causes your blood to become acidic. It also provides a welcome environment for disease-causing pathogens!

To keep this from happening, avoid combining proteins and starches (including grains, like rice, and starchy vegetables, like potatoes) in the same meal. Instead, have **non-starchy vegetables** and **ocean vegetables** with your protein meals to achieve optimal digestion.

**Non-Starchy Vegetables Include:** Leafy greens, broccoli, asparagus, cauliflower, carrots, bok choy, cabbage, celery, lettuces, green beans, garlic, fennel, onions, chives, turnips, sprouts, red radish, yellow squash, zucchini, cucumber, beets

Non-starchy vegetables and ocean vegetables digest well in acid OR alkaline environments, so they go with anything: proteins, oils and butter, grains, starchy vegetables, lemons and limes, and soaked and sprouted nuts and seeds..

Read [Why You Need to Cook Those Vegetables for Maximum Nutrition](#) to learn some important tips for preparing these vegetables for optimum health - and to avoid some risks associated with certain raw vegetables.

**In the kitchen:** Pair poached fish with stir-fried vegetables, roasted chicken with a leafy green salad and/or a non-starchy vegetable soup. Or try a salad that has veggies that are steamed and chilled (broccoli, cauliflower, green beans plus also a variety of raw vegetables (shredded carrots, cucumber, yellow squash) with lightly grilled salmon and a lemon-garlicy dressing.

## #3 Eat Grains and Starchy Vegetables with Non-Starchy and/or Ocean Vegetables

There are four grain-like seeds on The Body Ecology Program: **amaranth, quinoa, buckwheat and millet**. These ancient grains are high in protein, **gluten-free**, rich in B vitamins and feed the beneficial bacteria in your inner ecosystem. Read more about the [risks of consuming conventional grains and how to prepare Body Ecology grains at home](#).

**Starchy Vegetables Include:** Acorn and butternut squash, lima beans, peas, corn, water chestnuts, artichokes and red skinned potatoes (red skinned potatoes are the only potatoes included in the Body Ecology program because they have fewer sugars than other kinds of potatoes).

**In the kitchen:** Make hearty millet casserole with a green leafy salad and yellow squash sautéed in butter. Or try acorn squash stuffed with curried quinoa with the ocean vegetable hijiki and onions. Warming grain soups are also good, especially in winter.

### Food Combining Details

**Fats and Oils** Choose organic, unrefined and extra virgin oils like flax seed, **pumpkin seed**, olive or coconut oils.

o **Combine With:** Vegetables, grains and protein. Avoid large amounts of fat with protein (like the mayonnaise in tuna salad) because it slows digestion. Instead use a small amount of oil to cook and oil free dressings.

**Protein Fats:** Avocado, olives, seeds and nuts (except peanuts and chestnuts, which are starches)

o **Combine With:** Non-starchy and ocean vegetables and sour fruits.

Be sure to soak and sprout your seeds and nuts to ease digestion. Learn more about [How to Eat and Not Eat Almonds](#).

**Dairy:** Cheese and milk, are also protein fats. **Dairy products are not on the initial phase of the Body Ecology program** because the lactose in milk feeds pathogenic yeast and most people don't have enough dairy loving enzymes to digest the milk protein, casein.

After you've established a healthy inner ecosystem, you may be able to benefit from fermented dairy foods and drinks that help populate your digestive tract with plenty of microflora. Some people do well on dairy foods and some simply do not.

o **Combine With:** Fermented dairy products, like **milk kefir**, combine with sour fruits, seeds and nuts and non-starchy vegetables.

**In the kitchen:** Make a Body Ecology kefir dressing with lemon juice and herbs and toss it onto your favorite lettuce with some soaked and sprouted sunflower seeds for a tasty salad. To learn

more about kefir and how to make it at home, read [Baghdad's Ancient Secret That Can Help Improve Your Health](#).

**Dried Peas, Beans, and Soybeans:** These foods are mainly a **starch** combined with a small amount of **protein** and are difficult to digest. This helps explain why many people have problems with gas and bloating immediately after eating them. Because they are so difficult to digest, **they are not part of the initial phase of the Body Ecology program**. Additionally, we only recommend fermented soy foods. To learn more, read: [Soy Lecithin, the Risks if You Choose the Wrong Type, the Benefits if You Choose Right](#)

o **Combine With:** Non-starchy vegetables and **cultured vegetables**.

**Sugar:** Sugar encourages the growth of yeast, suppresses your body's natural immunity and does not combine with anything! Instead of sugar, use Stevia in your tea to satisfy sugar cravings or add it to a glass of lemon water. To learn more about the health benefits of stevia, read: [The One Supplement that Should Be in Everyone's Cooking Cupboard](#).

o **Combine With:** Nothing (if you must eat sugar, it should be eaten alone as in a cup of tea with no other foods).

**Fermented Foods and Drinks:** These are the "stars" of our Body Ecology program because they are packed with vitamins, minerals and healthy microflora that heal your inner ecosystem. Cultured vegetables and Young Coconut Kefir are just two examples of superfoods that help us stay healthy, slim and youthful.

o **Combine With:** Everything, even with fruit (in fact we sometime ferment green apples in our cultured vegetables).

**Weight Loss:** You might find after just a few days of following food combining principles that you have lost weight. Your body will no longer be bloated and you'll rid yourself of toxins. You might also feel hungrier...just eat more frequently. As long as you are combining properly and eating when you are hungry, you will not gain weight!

As your energy increases, you will find you now have more energy to exercise. This then will result in your becoming more slender and well-toned.

#### **Some Final Notes:**

- Wait 3 hours after eating a grain-based meal before you have a protein meal.
- After a protein meal, give yourself 4 hours to fully digest. (You may even want to try all grain meals one day and all protein meals the next.) **Assist enzymes are a must** for helping digest these meals.
- Try not to drink cold water during meals. A cup of warm tea, however, will aid digestion. Avoid ice when you drink water. Stick to room temp water that doesn't shock your body and do not drink for at least 15 minutes before you eat or 1 hour after a meal.

With food combining and the Body Ecology principles, you'll find yourself eating simpler meals that nourish your body. You'll also digest your food better and supply your body with even more nutrients. As your digestion improves, you'll have more energy and vitality, freeing up your body to come into balance, heal and stay naturally slim!

I believe that Body Ecology is the foundation for wellness that can turn around our current health crisis. Try the principle of food combining today and read an overview of the **7 Body Ecology principles** to familiarize yourself with other components of the program. With Body Ecology, you can truly eat and drink to good health!

\*\*\*\*\*