

Faculty Walking The Talk: Experiencing The Benefits and Challenges of Plant-Based Nutrition

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Learning Outcomes

- Identify 3 benefits or challenges nurses experienced when implementing plant-based nutrition
- List the 4 components of plant-based nutrition

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Conflict of Interest

- The speaker does not have any conflict of interest to disclose
- She is not funded by any plant based organizations, animal right groups or farms

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Consult Your Health Care Provider

- If you take medication or have serious health concerns, please discuss this change in eating with your health care provider
- A diet change can be very powerful and impact your medication

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Goals of the Project

- Faculty improve their expertise in understanding nutrition
- Faculty be better able to understand and advocate for lifestyle change
- Faculty improve personal awareness of food choices

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Current Statistics

- 69% of Americans are overweight or obese which leads to chronic diseases including coronary artery disease, diabetes, and cancer
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the US and kills 1 out of 3 Americans
- Diabetes impacts 8% of US population and 25% of adults over age 60 have type 2 diabetes
- The most common types of cancer are breast, lung and prostate

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Research

- Overweight people who followed a plant-based diet had more weight loss compared to those who followed a vegetarian and non-vegetarian diet that included dairy, eggs, fish, or meat at two-month and six-month interval
- A review of 27 randomized controlled and observational trials found that plant-based diets reduced blood lipid concentrations
- Following plant-based diet reduced hemoglobin A1c among diabetics

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Research

- Prospective cohort study of 69,120 participants found protection between plant-based diets and overall cancer rates in males and females and among female-specific cancers
- Lung, breast, and ovarian cancer have been linked to intake of dairy foods
- Randomized control study found employees following plant-based diet for 18 weeks reported significant improvements in depression, anxiety, fatigue, emotional well-being, and work productivity

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Kickstart Program with PCRM (Physicians Committee For Responsible Medicine)

- 21 day free, online plant-based program
 - received menus
 - recipes
 - grocery lists
 - cooking demos
 - daily emails with encouragement and education

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Components of the Project

- Watch Forks Over Knives on Netflix or Amazon
- 90 minute presentation – “Will Your Next Prescription Be from The Pharmacy or the Farmacy”
- First webinar – why would you change – health, environment, animal concerns, also discussed food choices, eating out and helping family
- Second webinar – ways to reduce fat and how to continue after 21 days
- Third webinar – shared results of project

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Results of Project

- 64% lost weight without counting calories, monitoring portion size or being rigid with program - average weight loss was 4-4 pounds with one person losing 9 pounds
- 74% decreased their cholesterol – 6 people dropped 45-60 points
- Dramatic improvement in energy - 11% were highly satisfied with energy levels before the diet, whereas 41% were afterward

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Results of Project

- Daily consumption of meat, dairy and other animal food dropped significantly
- 39% followed the entire 21 day program
- All increased their daily consumption of fruit and vegetables

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Challenges

- Were concerned they were not getting enough protein, calcium and iron
- Not enough time to prepare food – had cut down on fast food
- Some family members were not supportive and wanted 2 meals cooked which was difficult
- Were not aware of how much animal food they ate on a daily basis

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Faculty Felt Project Was Beneficial Because

- Able to see change in blood work
- Availability of recipes
- Daily emails from PCRM
- Availability of menus
- Support from program organizers
- Support from program colleagues
- Initial program kickoff with 90 minute presentation

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Healthy Foods

- **Whole Grains** – pasta, rice, corn, whole grain bread, tortilla etc.
- **Vegetables** – dark greens, dark yellows and orange, sweet potato etc.
- **Fruit** – whole fruit is better than juice due to fiber
- **Legumes** – beans, peas, lentils, tofu, soymilk, chick peas etc.

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Foods to Avoid

- Animal foods - all beef, chicken, pork, lamb, fish
- Dairy - milk, eggs, yogurt, cheese, ice cream
- Fats
- Sugar
- Salt

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What Were The Hardest To Give Up On The Plant-Based Program?

➤ Other dairy - ice cream, yogurt, chocolate	59%
➤ Cheese	53%
➤ Fish	35%
➤ Chicken	18%
➤ Beef	6%

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Implications for change

- Nurses are now aware of the correlation between nutrition and chronic disease
- Nurses will ask more detailed questions about nutrition on intakes with patients
- Nurses will decrease their own consumption of animal foods and increase consumption of plant-based foods
- Nursing curriculum needs to increase education on nutrition to prevent or reverse chronic disease rather than focusing heavily on medication

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