

Introduction

The approach to eating in this book is simple. *Choose good food. Food is medicine.* On the following pages we discuss what good food is and how it is such an effective tool to improve your health. This new edition features the impressive evidence that supports choosing whole foods, minimizing processed foods, eating out less, moving more, and getting enough sleep – using everyday resources like a kitchen, the perimeter of a grocery store, and a pair of walking shoes. We have seen these simple lifestyle choices radically transform lives again and again over the past 20 years of taking care of patients, and have included some real-life success stories that have inspired us.

Miles and I grew up eating good food – in fact, many of the recipes in this book are straight out of our childhood. Our mother always understood the importance of whole food, and was cooking Mediterranean-style decades before it was a household word – we didn’t realize then how ahead of the curve she was but we sure ate well. She taught herself to cook after she married and began raising seven children, using common sense and a love of reading, and cheerfully tackled challenges like learning how to cook with a wood stove when we moved to Western Australia in the 1960s. We went on to develop a country inn and restaurant (with a massive wood-burning range in the kitchen!) as a family business in a lovely little town on the Southern Ocean. A fisherman brought us tubs of just-caught fish; a local lady would take our compostable food scraps and sell us her fresh-picked vegetables; the bakery sent over a tray of still-hot bread each morning; and we bought grass-fed meat from a butcher shop owned by the same family who raised the meat on their farm.

Our food-related focus continued with natural food stores in Pennsylvania, Seattle, Portland, and Cottesloe, Western Australia.

After Miles finished medical school and residency we began working together in his internal medicine practice, and once again food came to the forefront. Miles would poke his head out of an exam room and say, “Hey, Mea, we need some brown rice recipes in here,” or, “I need the *Goop* recipe.” Thus *Good Food, Great Medicine* was born.

As the book reaches more people, questions keep coming: where do I get good bread? Which yogurt should I buy? Should I eat wheat? What about meat? Eggs? Dairy? Is this sugar better than that sugar? Can I really reverse my type 2 diabetes? How can I get off my blood pressure drugs? In *Advice for Everyone* and *Solutions* (Sections 1 and 2) we tackle these questions and lay out a 14-step *Risk Reduction Action Plan* to prevent or reverse type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, lose weight, improve cholesterol and blood pressure, and reverse insulin resistance, a factor in so many diseases including cancer.

As for the actual business of cooking, we don’t assume you are in the kitchen because you love to cook or have plenty of disposable time. The first two sections of the book explain *why* you are standing in your kitchen with a knife in one hand and an onion in the other, and the next two sections, *Practical Eating* and *Into the Kitchen*, suggest what to do with the knife and onion once you’re there – a sort of kitchen starter kit. The 185 recipes reflect the Mediterranean philosophy we grew up with – and for those of you who have asked, we haven’t deleted any, but have updated them and added about 30 new favorites (see page 277). They also reflect the principles presented in the first part of this book: keep it simple, make it taste good, and double the vegetables.

Mea Hassell

