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# Healing Cuisine

## “Healthy Aging”

- by Meredith McCarty, Holistic Nutritionist (DC, NE)



## Biography



Meredith McCarty is a holistic nutritionist (Diet Counselor and Nutrition Educator), author and speaker. Through her business, Healing Cuisine, she helps people come into balance in their eating habits in order to enhance well-being, or to prevent and recover from disease.

Meredith has taught and lectured internationally since 1977. She has authored three cookbooks including Sweet and Natural, winner of the Versailles World Cookbook Award. She is a former associate editor of *Natural Health* magazine and director of the East West Center for Macrobiotics for 19 years. She has a Senior Certificate in The Art of Cooking

from the East West Foundation in Boston, Massachusetts.

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Please visit her website, [www.healingcuisine.com](http://www.healingcuisine.com), for information regarding:

- Nutrition Counseling in person or by phone
- Cooking Classes
- Speaking Engagements
- Cooking Essentials
- Cookbooks
- Upcoming Events
- Diet and Health Issues
- Resources
- Recipes
- Signing Up for the Free Monthly E-Card
- Signing Up for the Health E-Club



## “Healthy Aging”

Diet plays a crucial role in healthy aging from ensuring bone health to mental acuity.

Vegetables, especially dark green vegetables, as well as legumes (beans and lentils), whole grains, nuts and seeds, are the best sources of magnesium, greater intake of which is significantly related to higher bone mineral density and strength, reducing osteoporotic fractures.

The number of people with dementia around the world is predicted to double every 20 years. Dietary approaches can help prevent or slow the onset of the most common form of dementia, Alzheimer’s disease. B vitamins, found in whole grains, lower homocystine levels that are linked to Alzheimer’s. Other beneficial foods include vegetables and fruits, and their juices (not supplements). Orange vegetables such as carrots, winter squash and yams (high in beta-carotene) are associated with a 89% reduction in risk by protecting against oxidative stress. Eating two apples a day provides the antioxidants (polyphenols) that increase the production of the essential neurotransmitter acetylcholine in the brain, resulting in improved memory. Also beneficial are walnuts or flax seeds, rich sources of Omega-3 fats.

### **Longest-lived population on the planet consumes fewer calories, but eats more.**

Okinawa, Japan is home to the longest-lived, disability-free population in the world. The Okinawa Centenarian Study was established in 1976 to uncover the secrets of the elders' successful aging. The elders share an important dietary factor, the only one shown to consistently increase life span in multiple species: caloric restriction. They consume fewer calories over the span of their lifetime than other populations, a good part of how they have managed to slow the aging process and why so many of them look half their age and are able to function like younger people. The biomarkers of longevity include stiffness of arteries, blood pressure levels, cholesterol levels, hormonal levels, blood sugar and insulin levels. The theory is that there is a reduction in the production of cell-damaging free radicals which are generated by metabolizing food for energy. Americans eat too many calories at 2500 per day compared to the Okinawans' 1800 calories, but the Okinawans' food weighed 2.5 pounds or 1/2 pound more than Americans' daily food intake. The foods the Okinawans choose are nutrient-rich, but low in calories: a plant-based diet centered on vegetables, unprocessed grains, soy foods and fish.

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Sources: Healthy at 100, How you can—at any age—dramatically increase your life span and your health span, The scientifically proven secrets of the world’s healthiest and longest-lived peoples, by John Robbins, 2006; The Okinawa Diet Plan...the only diet with 100 years of living proof by Bradley Willcox, MD, Craig Willcox, PhD and Makoto Suzuki, MD, 2004; and also *Lancet*, Dec. 2005, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, Nov. 2005, *Journal of Endocrinology and Metabolism*, 2006, *Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease*, 2006; *Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences* and *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 2006, as reported in Nutrition Hints by Dr. Betty Kamen, PhD, [www.bettykamen.com](http://www.bettykamen.com)