

# RAWPOWER

## Why is an alkaline diet such a big deal?

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Disease cannot flourish in an alkaline environment! An alkaline body is the best disease-preventative.

The latest trend in the health industry is alkaline diets. You hear it everywhere; eat alkaline to reduce your body's acidity to keep healthy and living longer or eat alkaline to beat cancer, heal disease etc etc but what does it really mean? And how do you do it?

### The First Steps

The term "alkaline diet" refers to a way of eating that focuses on foods that are more alkalizing in the body, when compared to foods that are acid forming. By reducing the amount of acid forming foods, you give your body the ability to heal itself quicker and more easily.

The first most important step is to gain knowledge about which foods are acid and which are alkaline. There are hundreds of sites (some with conflicting information) with some lovely charts and graphs and images of which foods are the most alkaline, moderately alkaline, least alkaline moving into which are highly acidic, moderately acid and least acidic. A good chart will also show those that are either neutral or moderately neutral. Knowing what foods you can consume in greater amounts and what foods you would be best avoiding or substituting will help you transition into an alkaline diet. Aim to reduce and cut out between 1 - 2 food types each week until you reach a balance of about 80% alkaline foods to 20% acid foods. There are some people that advocate a 100% alkaline diet yet for a majority of people, this is quite challenging to maintain and can place huge stresses upon people to feel they are 'failing' or 'not good enough'. The whole aim of moving to a more alkaline lifestyle is to have more energy, more vitality, feel healthier – not to feel guilty or that you have failed. If that is the case, slow down your transition and work at your own pace. It has to feel right for you.

Alkaline foods are natural and whole; these include most vegetables - especially green leafy vegetables, fruits and fermented foods. Fermented foods include Cabbage rejuvelac (similar to sauerkraut), milk kefir, kombucha, tempeh, tamari sauce, Namu shoyu sauce, natto, kimchi and more. Create a list of alkaline foods you enjoy most as a reminder of what foods to consume regularly. Creating a quick reference for alkaline foods will help keep you on track.

Some very common examples of acid forming foods are: meat, dairy, simple carbohydrates such as breads, muffins, cookies, cakes and alcohol.

To give you an idea on how to start altering your lifestyle to a more alkaline one, you might, for example, in the first week, substitute white bread with a low or no gluten bread alternative or a rice wrap or replace white sugar with a natural sweetener such as stevia, agave nectar, coconut nectar or yacon syrup. A few servings of red meat per week could be replaced with fish or raw nuts such as pecans, cashews or walnuts. Quite often, walnuts are used as meat substitutes in raw tacos, spaghetti, lasagne and pizzas. A nice protein substitute is quinoa grains (always use the tri coloured grains for the full protein spectrum) Remember, the goal is to reduce consumption of acid forming foods.

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## **Alkaline Safety**

Alkaline water is safe for children. Either using a powder or through a water filter with alkalising ability.

When purchasing a water filter, one that also ionises and removes bacteria, fluoride and other heavy metals is best

## **Using Supplements to Help**

Supplements are fantastic to help with the initial challenges many people experience in switching to a healthier lifestyle. Consider natural supplements to help reduce acid forming food cravings. There are some vitamin and mineral supplements that help reduce cravings for white flour products and refined sugar foods. Activated Vitamin B-complex supplements are full of B vitamins that stimulate the metabolism of carbohydrates into glucose in the body, encouraging alkaline sources of carbohydrates to feel more satisfying. Chromium supplements also facilitate the breakdown and use of sugars for energy in the body, reducing sugar cravings though these are best used in short term only. Another easy way to alkalise the body quickly and efficiently is to use an alkalising powder. There are many on the market and not all alkalising powders are the real deal. Having been a Naturopath for 13 years and in the Health Industry for 18 years, I have seen some pretty dubious products come onto the market. The only alkalising powder I use is the Sanum brand. A German isopathic product. Isopathy is similar to homeopathy. Always consult a physician or Natural Health Practitioner before taking dietary supplements to ensure they are right for you.

I use Sanum Alkala Powder a lot for myself and for my clients. I, myself would consume around 500mls of alkalised water every day. I also recommend bringing in water kefir and milk kefir as both are not only fabulous probiotics but they are also quite alkaline forming. Starting the morning with a small glass of filtered ionised water with lemon juice is one of the most alkalising things you can do for your body. Contrary to popular belief, lemons are actually extremely alkalising!

## **Alkaline Fast Facts**

Alkaline water neutralises the acid build up in our bodies, thus balancing our pH levels in our body's cells. When our pH levels are balanced, we feel more energetic and can live fuller lives

by Michelle Ovens, Naturopath

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