

THE PERFECT FORMULA DIET

How to Lose Weight and Get Healthy *Now*
with Six Kinds of Whole Foods

Janice Stanger, Ph.D.



PERFECT PLANET SOLUTIONS

San Diego, California

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The Perfect Formula Diet
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Perfect Planet Solutions
5580 La Jolla Blvd. #459
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.perfectformuladiet.com

Library of Congress Control Number: 2009906534

ISBN: 978-0-9841067-3-8

Printed in the United States of America

*“Our body is a machine for living.
It is organized for that, it is its nature.”*

~ LEO TOLSTOY

“Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.”

~ ALDOUS HUXLEY

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DISCLAIMER

This book contains general information about health and nutrition and is not meant to substitute for medical care, treatment, or advice from a health care professional. If you believe that you, your child, or any other person whom you care for has a health problem, the author and publisher strongly recommend that you obtain the services of a physician or other appropriate health care professional.

The statements in this book have not been evaluated by the FDA, and as such, shall not be construed as medical advice, implied or otherwise. This book is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Information in this book is intended to be and should be used for educational purposes only.

If you, your child, or any other person whom you care for has a health problem you should always consult with a physician before making dietary changes.

Under no circumstances should you, your child, or any other person whom you care for change the dosage or timing of or discontinue any prescription or non-prescription medication that person is using, except under the supervision of and with the consent of a qualified, licensed health care professional.

Reference to specific people, groups, or products in this book does not mean that the author or publisher endorses these entities or that these entities endorse this book.

This book is not intended to be a textbook covering all research in nutrition and health. Considerable effort has been devoted to making this book as accurate as possible. However, there may be typographical errors or other mistakes. This book should therefore be used as a general guide for informed decision making and not as your only source of information on nutrition and health.

You are urged to consult the references and other resources used for this book, as well as conduct supplementary research, and to keep an open, critical, and questioning mind in learning about weight, nutrition, and health. Think about where research is published, who did it, who paid for it, and whether the findings are consistent with other studies, human history, common sense, and your own experience and observations.



P R E F A C E

Perfect Odyssey

Natural Perfection

Your body is a complex marvel of intricate design, with everything you need to be lean, healthy, and energetic already built in. Don't let anyone tell you that you're irreparably overweight, sick, or otherwise "flawed." *You are already naturally perfect.*

The secret—so simple yet so profound—of permanent weight loss and ageless health is to work *with* your body instead of against it. By going with this natural flow, you'll slide to your preferred weight as effortlessly as a plant grows toward the sun.

You have likely been hurt by harmful diets that don't work, that raise and then smash your dreams, leaving you in worse shape than when you started. I want you to succeed with a new, effective set of choices. Throughout this book, I'll be talking with you and sharing what I learned the hard way.

Once I was trapped in the muddle of chronic overweight, multiple health problems, and hopeless disdain for my body. Assisted by my daughters and pioneering researchers, I struggled to Perfect Health and a trim figure.

I want to share the breakthrough formula I discovered with you and see you marvel at the same transformation to the health,

youthful energy, and lean weight you desire and deserve. You shouldn't suffer one day longer than you have to! You don't need to put up with being overweight or obese for years to come!

In the past, you based your diet on information you had at the time. With 21st century knowledge, you are free to make better choices. After all, what will your life be like in 10 years if you don't find a better way to eat and stay healthy now?

I appreciate your confidence in me, and will earn it by sharing hard-to-get information about whole foods that has been hiding in plain sight.

Living To Eat

The story of food is the story of my life. Food was a family obsession. As far back as I can remember, my days centered around meals and snacks. Special events were inseparable from extraordinary meals. The highest compliment for anyone in my family was praise that a meal they cooked or hosted was “delicious.”

I was always planning what to eat next. Amazingly, I was thin—almost skinny—during my growth years in Philadelphia. I had been tall for my age as a child, but stalled at 5 feet 4 inches at age 12. After that, I gained a few pounds and, although still an appropriate size, became obsessed with weight.

I tried different crazy diets popular in the 1960s. Like most kids in my generation, I was indoctrinated early in the supposed importance of “protein.” My favorite food was meat, and I could easily devour a pound of steak, half a chicken, or an entire slab of ribs at one meal.

So it's no surprise I ended up on the animal-based Stillman Diet, the precursor to subsequent “high protein” diets. How clever I thought it was to eat the hamburger and leave the bun. Little did I dream then that several decades later the fallacy of this eating plan would become overwhelming for me.

A Bag Of Cookies, Graham Crackers, And Three Chocolate Bars

The turning point in my ability to control my eating came in the summer between my junior and senior years of high school. I won an award to attend a summer science program in Wisconsin. Feeling isolated from the other students, I took refuge in food—ice cream to be more specific. I began to eat two or three scoops a day, with a side of whatever other junk foods I could dig up the money for.

When I returned home in the fall, I began to eat secretly and obsessively. Any binge eater will understand the cycle. I was disgusted with myself and my growing weight, so I comforted myself with massive amounts of foods such as graham crackers, ice cream, cookies, cake, and candy. A typical eating episode might include a bag of cookies, graham crackers, and three chocolate bars.

However, the eating worked emotionally only if no one else saw it. Since I lived at home and had little money, this limited the number of binges. My weight went from 116 to 128 pounds, which was heavy for my tiny frame but still far from obese.

Once away at college, things went from bad to worse. At least at home we always had vegetables, fresh fruit, and salad. In the college eating halls, the offerings were skimpy and not too appetizing. Except for their banana bread. I began to eat huge amounts of it as well as binge on other junk foods just about every night.

Before I knew what had happened, my weight skyrocketed to 165 and beyond. After 165, I stopped weighing myself, so I can't tell you how much higher it went. To make the situation worse, I had little money for clothes and no fashion sense. I always wore ill-fitting clothes that made me look even heavier than I was.

My obsession with weight and obsession with food fed each other, and my life was totally out of control. Binge eating reduced my stress level, but only temporarily. Then my weight gain and self-disgust fed into a mountain of sadness and despair.

Depression ruled my days. Once I was walking across campus and suddenly felt so hopeless that I sank to the ground and sat there for hours staring into space until a kind student I didn't even know spoke to me in a caring voice and led me back to my dorm.

California Dreaming

After college I hadn't the foggiest clue what I wanted to do. An acquaintance was driving to San Francisco to visit family and invited me along on what was intended to be a quick cross-country road trip.

I'll never forget my first glimpse of the hills of San Francisco. After growing up in flat suburbs, the rise and fall of the streets were profoundly beautiful and mysterious. People smiled. I instantly fell in love with the city and decided to stay. The Bay Area was my home for the next 27 years.

A funny thing happened when we hit San Francisco. My binge eating simply evaporated. A couple of times, out of habit, I tried to down a bag of cookies and a quart of ice cream, but could never eat more than a fraction of the targeted food. So to save money, I stopped buying the binge junk food. Still, although my weight stabilized, it did not decrease until a cross-country road trip several years later when my boyfriend and I didn't have money and were forced into calorie restriction.

My Adulthood Was Not A Health Model

The aim of this Preface is to give you the story of how the Perfect Formula Diet came to be, so I'll stay focused on weight and health with the bare outline of other milestones. Since I loved learning and going to school, I earned an MBA from UC Berkeley and a Ph.D. in Human Development and Aging from UC San Francisco. I got married at 28, had two daughters when I was 30 and 32, and separated from my husband when our kids were only three and five.

Through all of this, my weight fluctuated and averaged about 145 for many years. Overwhelming fatigue and low energy topped

my health care issues. I fell asleep on the bus to work, nodded off in my office, and fought drowsiness on long drives.

Since I had been heavily exposed to tobacco smoke as a child, my respiratory system was my weak link. I suffered from chronic sinus, ear, and bronchial infections. Another painful problem was a burning tongue and mouth. No doctor or dentist could ever tell me the cause. Severe endometriosis and near constant depression—despite taking antidepressants—also made my life miserable.

Intense but sporadic headaches haunted my adult life, as well. I lived in fear of these agonizing episodes, which had no discernable cause. When I hit my forties, the headaches morphed into daily trials. The first thing I did *every* morning was roll out of bed and race to the bathroom for over-the-counter painkillers to allow me to get through the day.

Amazingly, I accepted my weight and health issues. After all, didn't everyone have problems? Physicians seemed relatively unconcerned and were of little or no help, except to prescribe antibiotics for the sinus infections (which always came back). Going to the doctor and taking pills were a normal part of my life. And just about everyone I knew was on a diet or planning the next weight loss attempt.

Out Of The Food Trap

Luckily for me, my strong-willed daughters put me on the road to my Perfect Weight and glowing health. My 13 year old declared she would no longer eat meat, poultry, or fish, and her 11 year old sister followed her lead a couple of weeks later.

I was horrified and convinced my offspring would suffer dangerous malnutrition. After all, I had been raised to believe meat was the premier food, packed with nutrients and the center of any decent meal. My first reaction was to persuade the kids to eat meat and get off their self-imposed diet. Both my children have a strong oppositional-defiant streak, so that strategy backfired big time.

Defeated, but biding my time, in 1995 I began my research into nutrition that continues to this day. Being well trained in

methodology in graduate school, I searched out medical textbooks, prestigious medical journals, physicians, dieticians, and other nutrition researchers. To my total amazement, I learned that people who avoided animal foods were healthier than other people.

The rest of this book shares the secrets learned from analyzing more than a thousand studies and observing what happens when you adopt a whole foods diet.

My energy level is now intense, I no longer fall asleep except at night (and then I sleep soundly), and I haven't had a sinus, bronchial, or ear infection or burning tongue or mouth since starting my current diet. Headaches are exceptionally rare. Best of all, depression and food cravings are distant memories.

At age 57 I'm at my Perfect Weight and in Perfect Health. I take no prescription or over-the-counter meds. I don't have allergies, arthritis, skin problems, digestive problems, circulatory or heart problems, liver, kidney, or gall bladder problems or any eye or autoimmune diseases. I don't have diabetes or cancer and my cholesterol is 145. My blood pressure is typically about 90 something over 60 something.

For the last 10 years or so, I've felt as if I've been aging in reverse. I'm in better health now than I was 30 years ago.

I LOVE the Perfect Formula Diet. This way of eating has taken me to a whole new level not just physically, but also emotionally and spiritually. How often do you hear anyone talk about loving a diet?

Thanks To The Pioneers Of Nutrition Evolution

Dr. Neal Barnard, Dr. John McDougall, Dr. Joel Fuhrman, Dr. Michael Greger, T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., Dr. Dean Ornish, and other trailblazers whose research and writings leave no doubt about the desirability of a whole-foods diet are an inspiration to all seekers of health. This book builds on and aims to weave

together their critical discoveries. Any errors in the process of synthesizing information are mine alone.

Just as important are the numerous leading-edge cooks whose satisfying recipes, generously shared, make a whole-foods diet the tastiest and most appealing on the planet.

I am so grateful for the training from the University of California San Francisco program in Human Development and Aging and my nurturing professors. The requirements to earn my Ph.D. provided a foundation for understanding human health and choices.

Even more importantly, my teachers focused on how to distinguish good research from bad, learn to be critical and question experts, weigh controversial issues, and recognize bias and weak conclusions. These skills and my insatiable curiosity enable me to plow through apparently conflicting studies until I get to the bottom of what's really going on. The University of California San Diego medical library has been my second home for many years.

My editor, Andrea Glass, has worked with me tirelessly and patiently.

This book presents 14 years of solid research, critical thinking, and exploration. Enjoy, question, and draw your own conclusions on this remarkable journey.

This book would still be just an idea without the love and encouragement of my family and friends. May you thrive in Perfect Health.



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