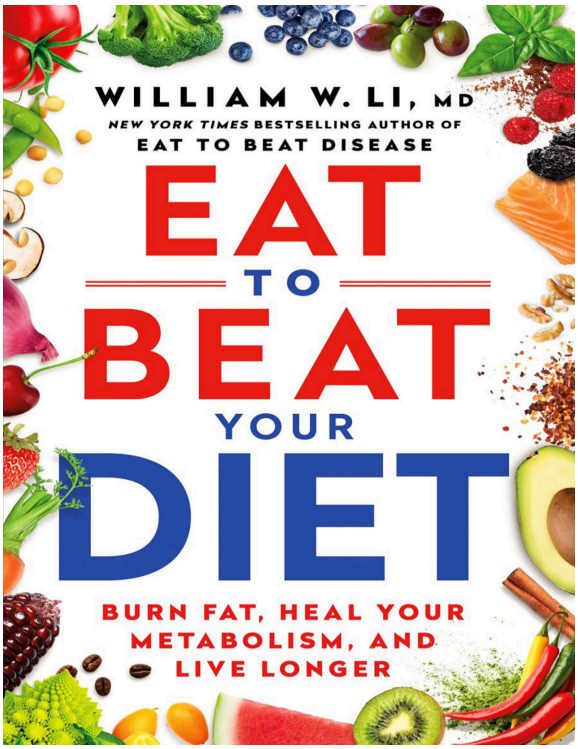


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This book is dedicated to my parents, who guided me early in life to harness both the creative and the scientific as a way to find brighter solutions for the world around us.

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Introduction

am not a fan of diets. Never have been. I dislike fad diets, crash diets, pop diets; i ct, any diet that promises massive weight loss “in no time at all!” Most popul ets are not based on science and don’t address the true basis for health—whic u can’t see in the mirror. I am a physician and scientist, and my focus has alwa een on health, not vanity.

Eat to Beat Your Diet was written to bring you the real science that is missin om all those diet plans. Fighting body fat is vitally important for your health, but n r the reasons you might think. And food is not your enemy. In this book, you w arn through a remarkable set of discoveries backed by validated research studi at the right foods can improve your metabolism and strengthen your body’s natur ealth defenses. By the time you’re done, you’ll understand how to eat these foo your advantage, beat back body fat, and optimize your health—all without ev eeding to go on a “diet,” hence the book’s title.

Most diet books preach deprivation and lay out strict rules that take the fun out ur natural way of eating. Instead, I will tell you what foods to *add* to your life an ow to enjoy them while healing your metabolism and getting you to your next lev health. Along the way, I’ll explain the latest science about how your metabolis ally works (it’s probably not what you’ve been told), what your fat does to *suppo* ur health, how shedding even small amounts of weight can have big healt enefits, and why, regardless of your age, body type, or size, you do not need eprive yourself of the joy of food while you are elevating your fitness and ability t sist and fight disease. This book is about mastering your health throug etabolism while loving food at the same time. But along the way, you’ll also lear ow to lose extra weight and shrink your waistline in meaningful and scienc acked ways.

* * *

at to Beat Your Diet is a sequel to my last book, *Eat to Beat Disease*, in which scussed how your body resists disease through its five health defense systems ngiogenesis, regeneration, microbiome, DNA protection, and immunity—and ho ecific foods can support one, two, or even all five of these systems at once. escribed the evidence showing how more than two hundred foods can activa ese defenses to help us avoid the diseases we fear the most: cancer, hea sease, dementia, diabetes, autoimmune disorders, and more than seventy oth nditions, based on the new science of molecular nutrition. By *adding* thes eneficial foods to your life, you can raise your health shields against disease. M ain message is that some of the most powerful tools for improving your healt xist naturally in the foods you eat; you just have to become aware of the compl ays your body responds to what you feed it. This book takes off from there an xtends the connections between food and your health defenses to yo etabolism and their interplay with body fat.

After *Eat to Beat Disease* was published, I received thousands of emails fro aders telling me they felt more fit and had more energy after eating the foods rote about. They were happier and more confident about their health once th alized they could embrace food and not fear it. They said they felt empowered t ke control of their health using the simple steps I described that they cou plement at home. Some even let me know that they were able to stop taking the escription medications after following the 5 × 5 × 5 plan I proposed in the book.

What caught me completely by surprise was that I also began receivin essages from readers who gleefully told me that they had succeeded in losin eight and slimming down in ways they hadn’t experienced before. They wer ating the foods I recommended, not starving themselves, and shedding poun nyway.

Wait, I thought, *they were not reducing their food intake. How could eating foo wer their body mass and body fat*?

Drawing on my years of research in medicine and physiology, I did a very dee ve into the science of body fat. I looked at the links between metabolism, fat (als lled adipose tissue), and food. What I discovered was mind-opening: most of th eas we accept as fact about metabolism and fat are not true. Even doctors an utritionists were getting it wrong!

For instance, you are not born with a slow metabolism that causes you t ecome fat. It’s the other way around. Having too much body fat slows yo

etabolism. Another common misconception is that you don't need to worry abo xcess fat unless you are overweight or see unsightly bulges in the mirror. Medic search tells us that slim people can grow dangerous amounts of fat packed insid eir bodies.

On the other hand, fat can contribute to good health, because fat is actually a gan. That's right, an organ just like your heart, liver, and lungs. In fact, your f leases hormones that control the normal function of many of your other organ ven your brain. Fat is also an important heat generator in the body. A layer of it n nly provides insulation against the cold; a unique type of fat called "brown fat" ca urn away excess amounts of other fat around your middle and elsewhere. urning fat for energy, brown fat *increases* your metabolism. Of course, fat is also shion, but it is so much more. The goal, then, isn't to rid yourself of all your bod t—you just need to tame it.

* * *

here are moments in everyone's life when a light bulb goes off in their head, an ey hit on an important new insight that can change their world. These are th oments that scientists live for. For me, that moment came when I realized that th ry same food compounds that activate your body's health defenses also trigg llular actions that improve your metabolism and counter body fat. Thes mpounds are called "bioactives," and I realized that they are key to why m aders were slimming down.

Probing even deeper into the science, I discovered there are multiple ways th oactives can cause weight loss. Certain foods stop fat cells from expandin hers cause "bad" fat cells to become "good" fat cells; still other foods can redire fat stem cell, so it can't create more dangerous fat. Some foods even crank u ur brown fat space heater, meaning that you can eat foods to trigger good fat t urn down bad fat. In other words, you can fight fat with fat.

Not all calories are created equal, and my research proves it. Eating the rig ods can help you improve and strengthen your metabolism and strip away exce ody fat, all while improving your health. In this book, you'll learn about how thes scoveries were made and you'll find a unique list of 150 foods I've identified th uly fight fat—all based on evidence from human studies.

* * *

hen you look at my list of true Fat-Fighting Foods, it will be clear to you th ming your body fat doesn't require sacrifice and hardship. Quite the opposite: yo n enjoy your food while eating to improve your metabolism. This might sound lik paradox, but science says it is not. Taming body fat also doesn't have to b xpensive or complicated. Most of the foods on the list are found in your typic ocery store. And when I think about recipes and dishes that can be made wi ese foods, my mouth begins to water. Healing your metabolism can taste great!

I developed my fondness for tasty food growing up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, ty once known mostly for its steel and glass industry but now recognized as ecca of medical innovation (and some great restaurants!). Nestled among thre vers and 446 bridges, Pittsburgh is a place of diverse ethnic communities. When as a kid, there was the annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival that took place in the Civ rena, a now-defunct sports venue that had a retractable domed roof so unusua oking that it was featured as a backdrop in multiple movies.[i]

During the festival, the city's forty-odd nationalities, including Italians, German ungarians, Slovaks, Poles, Greeks, Chinese, and Filipinos, set up colorful side-b de food stalls selling small plates of specialties from their homelands to hung tendees. Enticing smells wafted through the entire venue. I loved sampling tas tes of traditional cooking while listening to the hosts in the stalls describe th hnic traditions behind each dish. Through these experiences and a network mily and community, my childhood was filled with flavors and stories of foods fro ound the world.

Decades later, I still revel in the pleasure of eating. It is something I look forwar every single day, ranking right up there with enjoying good health. What ma eople don't realize is that those two goals—relishing food and enjoying health—ar ne and the same; at least, they should be. Based on my more than three decad scientific research, I know that the right foods can activate the body's power f ealing. And contrary to what you might have heard, the foods that are mo fective at activating health can also deliver the greatest pleasure. Eating for healt n dazzle your taste buds and bring new gustatory delight to your life.

When it comes to eating for both pleasure and health, I look to two parts of th orld I have come to know and love: the Mediterranean and Asia. Both regions ar course, renowned for their delicious and diverse cuisines. The healing power

od is, literally and figuratively, baked into their food cultures. Much of what own as modern Western medicine had its origins in Italy and Greec ippocrates, the father of medicine, was from the Greek island of Kos. H ippocratic Oath" is still recited by every medical student on the day they gradua nd assume the title of physician. The word "physician," in fact, comes from th atin *physica*, meaning "natural," while the word "doctor" comes from the Lati *ocere*, meaning "teacher."

Nutrition was used for healing when Hippocrates lived in ancient Greece, and th uote "Let food be thy medicine, and medicine be thy food" reflects the thinking s time.[ii] Ironically, most physicians today are woefully undereducated abo odern nutrition. Few are knowledgeable enough to share a proper understandin food and health with their patients. Medical school education emphasizes th portance of pharmaceuticals for treating disease over natural solutions aintain health. As a result, generations of doctors have drifted further and furth way from medicine's roots, where nutrition was once a key tool in a doctor olbox.

Food is also central to health in Asian cultures, which have some of the olde edical systems in the world. Chinese medicine dates back more than thre ousand years and is rooted in the concept that your health is the result alanced forces known as yin and yang. These balances are influenced by th operties of different foods. One of the earliest-known medical textbooks w ssembled by Sun Simiao, who was regarded as China's "King of Medicine." H ook *Essential Prescriptions Worth a Thousand Pieces of Gold* was written durin e seventh-century Tang dynasty, a golden era of Chinese culture. Simiao devote n entire section of his textbook to food therapy, including recipes, lists of medicin erbs, and recommendations for modest eating. Today, medicine in China is ogressive blend of traditional healing approaches mixed with modern biomolecul erapies.

The Mediterranean and Asia may seem worlds apart in their traditions, yet tw ousand years ago, a remarkable land route called the Silk Road connected thes o regions and their foods. This passage served as one of the most influenti ading channels in human history, allowing goods, ideas, and ingredients to b xchanged between many different countries and cultures. Established during th an dynasty, the Silk Road was responsible for the movement of many famili ods that we eat today from China to Western countries, and vice versa.