

► The New Medicine Chest

When looking to treat, prevent or reverse illness, the best place to start is in the kitchen

By Christine M. Okezie, CHHC

WE LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE THERE ARE MORE OBESE or overweight people than those suffering from hunger. In America alone, an estimated 900,000 people will die each year due to preventable lifestyle disease, with obesity being the leading cause of preventable death.

The U.S. is forecast to spend an estimated \$47 trillion over the next 20 years dealing with chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, pre-diabetes and high blood pressure — all of which are primarily “food-borne” illnesses. Indeed, we

have eaten ourselves into this mess, and now we need to eat ourselves out of it.

The solution to this epidemic of disease does not come in a pill, as the drug industry would have you believe with their seductive messaging. It can be found at the end of our fork. Food is more than a substitute for medicine — it simply is the best medicine.

Our bodies evolved to thrive on whole, fresh, real foods, which contain powerful healing properties to support the body’s natural ability to restore balance and promote recovery. Eating the right foods can treat, prevent and reverse many conditions including diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Food really is the best intervention we have in chronic disease.



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What we eat is one of the few things we can actually control every day. Every time you have a meal or snack, you have the ability to change your health. It's time to begin looking to the kitchen instead of the pharmacy to boost health and cure what ails us. And here's a great bonus — there are no dangerous side effects.

Here are my Top 10 Foods to Stock in Your Kitchen Medicine Chest:

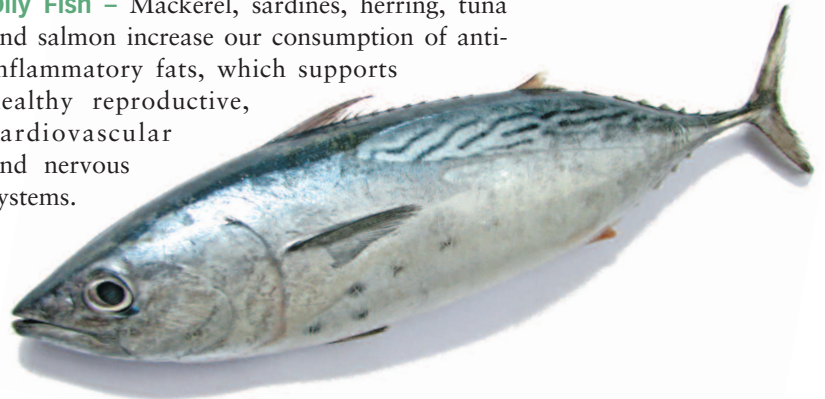
■ **Green Vegetables** – Packed with calcium, magnesium, iron, vitamins A, C, E, fiber and chlorophyll, green vegetables like kale, spinach, collared greens and broccoli are protective against cancer, depression, digestive disorders, respiratory problems and autoimmune disease.

■ **Beans** – High in B vitamins and fiber, beans are a powerful ally in managing blood sugar and insulin regulation, reducing our risk for obesity and diabetes.



■ **Garlic** – Recognized since ancient times as a medicinal food, garlic is an essential tool to boost our natural immunity. This common food protects against cancer and infections, and can aid in digestive function.

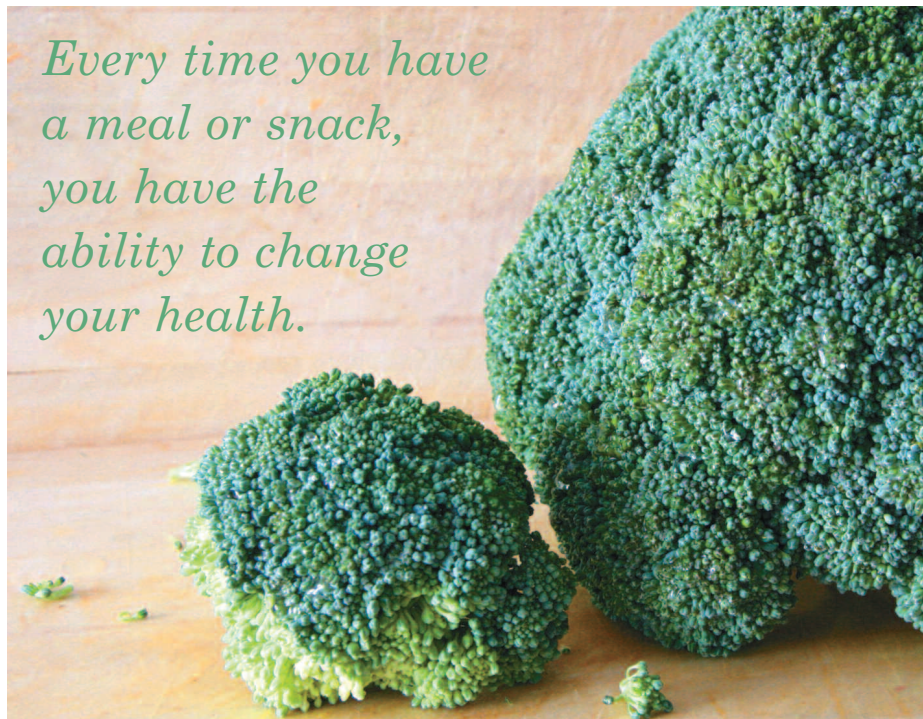
■ **Oily Fish** – Mackerel, sardines, herring, tuna and salmon increase our consumption of anti-inflammatory fats, which supports healthy reproductive, cardiovascular and nervous systems.



■ **Ginger** – A staple in the Kitchen Medicine Chest, ginger has time-tested digestion-friendly properties, is a potent cold and flu remedy, and reduces chronic joint and muscle pain.

■ **Green Tea** – Super rich in antioxidants, green tea can help prevent or slow the development of many cancers. It also lowers LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, helps heal inflammatory diseases like arthritis, prevents liver disease and reduces the progression of Type 1 diabetes.

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■ **Blueberries** – Loaded with amazing antioxidant properties, blueberries help prevent degenerative diseases like cancer, memory loss and heart disease.

■ **Walnuts** – Adding walnuts to our daily food reduces the risk for heart disease, fights cancer, reduces LDL cholesterol and increases HDL cholesterol, protects against Alzheimer’s disease and improves weight loss efforts.

■ **Spices** – Turmeric, cinnamon, oregano, cumin, thyme and capsaicin offer anti-inflammatory, anti-fungal and anti-bacterial powers that help prevent and treat many cancers, digestive disorders, infection and chronic pain conditions.

■ **Raw Cacao** – Unlike processed chocolate, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals are preserved in raw cacao. Packed with magnesium and chromium, raw cacao helps balance blood sugar, aids in weight loss, supports healthy bowel function, dissolves plaque buildup in arteries and naturally lowers blood pressure.



Recipe:

Creamy Curried Bean Dip with Turmeric

Yields: approx. 2 cups

Ingredients:

- 1 15-ounce can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 medium garlic clove, chopped
- ½ teaspoon curry spice (Garam Masala)
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon cumin
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Cilantro, finely chopped

Procedure:

1. In a food processor, puree beans, spices, lemon juice and garlic. Slowly drizzle olive oil until creamy in texture.
2. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Transfer dip to small bowl. Garnish with cilantro.

ABOUT CHRISTINE M. OKEZIE

Christine M. Okezie is a graduate of the Natural Gourmet Institute for Health and Culinary Arts in New York, and the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. She founded her company, Your Delicious Balance, where she counsels individuals to heal themselves through real food and positive lifestyle choices. Her healing strategies are based on whole foods nutrition, and she guides her clients to adopt a plant-centered way of eating that offers anti-inflammatory and detoxifying benefits to the body. For more information, visit her Web site at www.yourdeliciousbalance.com or call (201) 889-5001.

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