

SIMPLE RULES TO LIVE BY FOR STAYING HEALTHY

Think Like a Lakota. Eat Like a Lakota. Ancient foods are the path of health. The health of the Lakota nation is tied genetically to ancient foods, combinations of foods and recipes that were prepared with great knowledge for hundreds and thousands of years. Honor food. Honor meals. Honor family by eating together. Eat buffalo from native grass pastures. Support tribal efforts to restore the buffalo herds and native plant knowledge.

Eat Fresh. Avoid fried and processed foods whenever possible. Avoid preservatives. Avoid refined white flour breads. Frozen is better than canned. Fresh is better than frozen. Locally grown fresh is better than supermarket fresh. Support the restoration of native fruits, berries, and plants. Learn to garden. Fruits and vegetables are essential. Eat green vegetables: broccoli, spinach, beans. Eat apples, grapes, cherries, every day. Eat bananas for potassium. Support efforts to restore chokecherry, buffalo berry and wild plum patches.

Drink Water. Avoid all refined sugar and corn syrup-based soda pop and power drinks. Water is the source of life. Honor it. Learn where native tea can be gathered. Protect the land along creeks where tea grows.

Eat a Balanced Diet. Find balance in all things. Every diet should be made up of protein, carbohydrates and fat. Eat buffalo meat, fruits, vegetables and whole-grain breads every day.

Every Day Has a Rhythm. Create energy for the day by eating a healthy breakfast. Eat smaller as the day progresses. Snack modestly. Avoid big meals after seven o'clock at night.

Plan to Eat. Do not let "fast food" overwhelm you because you have cravings. Plan ahead if you travel. Avoid restaurants. Avoid convenience stores. Avoid packaged snacks.

Slow down to honor food. Take time to appreciate your meals.

Read Labels. Learn to read labels on food packaging. Avoid high levels of sodium, saturated fats and sugar.

No matter how well you eat, you will never find health by sitting on a couch. Exercise. Mix aerobic exercise with weight lifting. Walk the land.



Beau LeBeau (Oglala Lakota) shops for healthy food options.
Image Courtesy of Sam Hurst.