

Imagine:

a whole

Different Kind of Medical Care



Dr. Tina Marcantel

Naturopathic
Physician

with Peter Marcantel, M.Ed

Includes
Healthy Eating
tips, fun facts,
and recipes!

Imagine:

a whole

*Different
Kind of*

Medical Care

Dr. Tina Marcantel

Naturopathic Physician

with Peter Marcantel, M.Ed.

WME BOOKS

a division of

Windsor Media Enterprises, Inc.

Frederick, Colorado

USA

Imagine: a whole Different Kind of Medical Care

Copyright © 2012 by Dr. Tina Marcantel
All rights reserved. Printed in USA.

ISBN-10: 1-934229-35-0
ISBN-13: 978-1-934229-35-4

Editor: Yvonne DiVita
Illustrations: Joel Marcantel
Cover Design / Page Layout: Tom Collins

Published by:
WME Books
Windsor Media Enterprises, Inc.
Frederick, Colorado
USA

Available online at: www.WMEBooks.com
as well as other booksellers and distributors worldwide.

Special Sales:

This and other WME Books titles are available at special discounts for bulk purchases, for use in sales promotions, or as premiums. Special editions, including co-branded covers, excerpts of existing books, and corporate imprints, can be created in large quantities for special needs or projects.

For more information, please contact:

Special Book Orders
Windsor Media Enterprises, Inc.
5412 Wolf Street
Frederick, CO 80504
Phone Toll-free: 1-877-947-BOOK (2665)

Liability Disclaimer:

The information provided in this book is not intended as a substitute for the advice provided by your own physician or healthcare provider, and of course, cannot take your individual health situation into account. All information provided here is presented for general informational purposes only. It should not be considered complete or exhaustive and does not cover all disorders or conditions or their treatment. The author and the publisher assume no liability or responsibility for any adverse reactions allegedly arising directly or indirectly from the use of any information contained in this book.

Table of Contents

Dedication	i
Acknowledgments	iii
Introduction	1
Ch. 1 - Why I Became a Naturopathic Doctor	5
Ch. 2 - The River of Health	11
Ch. 3 - The Patient/Doctor Relationship	17
Ch. 4 - Preventive Care	31
Ch. 5 - Nutrition: The Cornerstone of Good Health	43
Ch. 6 - The Digestive System	65
Ch. 7 - Balancing Hormones for a Healthier Life	77
Ch. 8 - Understanding Your Changing Body	99
Ch. 9 - Testing and Treatment for Hormonal Imbalances	111
Ch. 10 - Hypothyroidism: Often Overlooked and Under-Diagnosed	123
Ch. 11 - Adrenal Fatigue: How Stress May Be Affecting Your Health	135
Ch. 12 - Fibromyalgia: Getting to the Root of the Problem	147
Ch. 13 - Preventable Epidemics	155
Ch. 14 - Alternative Therapies	165
Ch. 15 - The Mind-Body Connection: What's Stopping Your Healing?	185
Ch. 16 - Imagine: Possibilities	199
Healthy Recipes	203
Glossary	225
About Naturopathic Medicine	231
About the Authors	233

Introduction

There is a paradigm shift taking place in healthcare in the United States. The alternative and complementary healthcare movement championed for the last three decades by people like Dr. Andrew Weil has moved from the fringes to mainstream. The term “integrative medicine” has become more commonplace, with many traditional medical institutions incorporating therapies like acupuncture, meditation training, and the uses of dietary supplements and botanicals as part of the care they offer. The more progressive health insurance companies are even starting to offer plans with broader coverage to include their customers’ demands for wellness care and treatment that are outside the “norm” of traditional medical procedures.

So what’s behind this change in thinking about how our healthcare is delivered? You are.

The sleeping giant that is the American healthcare consumer is awakening. People just like you – millions of them – have become disenchanted with the managed care model that only allows for 10-minute doctor visits – visits that always seem to end with a new prescription and, “See me again in six months.” These patients are becoming

much more proactive in educating and empowering themselves about medical matters, as evidenced by the rise in popularity of television shows such as *Dr. Oz* and *The Doctors*, and the growing interest in holistic doctors and authors like Dr. Christiane Northrup and Dr. Mona Lisa Schulz, as well as countless websites offering patient education.

This new awareness means changes in the traditional doctor/patient relationship. Patients are asking more questions and they're not necessarily ready to accept another drug that may be just a temporary fix for their symptoms. They want to get to the root causes of their problems and they're willing to look outside of the traditional medical bag (or pharmacy) to find them. As they become more aware of their bodies, people also realize there is much more to healthy living than managing specific symptoms. They are beginning to ask, "What do I need to do to get healthier, not only in my body but in my mind and my emotions and my spirit? I'm a whole being and I've got different facets of myself that need to be healed."

I've been a healthcare provider for over thirty years. I believe these changes are an exciting and vital new direction to seeing a healthier population in our nation. Doctors who allow patients to become participating partners in their own health plans become more effective as the patients provide the clues we need to assist them in the healing process. And, as patients experience these changes they become educated, they begin to understand their own bodies, and they are then able to help other people in need.

This book is for you – I know you are part of that waking giant. You have chosen to learn more about taking an active role in your own healing and overall wellness plan and you're ready to learn how a naturopathic or integrative approach can help you accomplish better overall health.

This book is not designed to be a comprehensive medical textbook, but rather an introduction to a philosophy of care. It's my personal philosophy of care, but I know it's shared by many of my colleagues in the medical field. It includes some of the clinical treatments I have used with success in my practice, although I've changed the names and some of the circumstances to protect the privacy of my patients. My intention in writing it is to help you become empowered in taking responsibility for your personal health on all levels.

My wish for you is that this book becomes another tool for you to use along your personal journey to a healthy, happy, and rewarding life.

Chapter 1

Why I Became a Naturopathic Doctor

Since I was a young girl, I've been fascinated with how the human body works. One of my favorite childhood games was "Operation," and even though learning how to remove a "bread basket" or a "funny bone" didn't help much in my later anatomy classes it did help pique my interest in the healing arts.

After completing nursing school I served in a number of clinical settings from a hospital oncology unit to a public health clinic to an adolescent mental health facility. The last nine years of my nursing career were spent as a home health nurse.

Throughout my twenty-year career as a nurse I witnessed ever-increasing cases of diabetes, heart disease, and cancer that could be largely attributed to patients' poor nutritional habits and lifestyles. I also saw an increase in toxicity among people as a result of the growing overuse of synthetic drugs, causing multiple adverse reactions and thus compromising the quality of these patients' lives. I saw the harmful effects of emotional disorders, as well. Stress, bitterness, or depression can lead to a variety of physical problems. Conversely, I've seen

patients' health improve when they have made the choice to change diet, lifestyle, and even their attitudes.

I've always taken a holistic approach to healing. I've seen firsthand how helpful prayer and counseling are in promoting physical healing in my patients. I have also emphasized proper nutrition and exercise for recovery as well as for preventive measures. As an example, I cared for many diabetic patients as a home health nurse and I would see people with amputations or on dialysis due to complications from the disease. I started talking with my patients about alternatives like eating a better diet or exercising regularly to reduce blood sugars instead of constantly taking more insulin and other medications. Implementing these changes would often result in the blood sugars going down naturally.

At the same time, I would watch in frustration as the patients under my care were sometimes harmed as much as they were helped by synthetic drugs that were at times over-prescribed. I am certainly not opposed to the use of prescription medications when used in the proper conditions. Modern pharmacology has given us many helpful – often lifesaving – interventions. But problems arise when we (both doctors and patients) become too dependent on the use of drugs to mask the symptoms or effects of a disease process rather than trying to discover and deal with the root causes.

A good example of this is the rise in the popularity of statins to treat high cholesterol. While statins can be effective and necessary when dealing with extremely elevated cholesterol numbers for the short term, it's critical for the patient to address the causes of high cholesterol (chiefly poor diet and lack of exercise) to achieve good

long-term health results. On top of that, statins can have side effects such as muscle pain and muscle weakness that add to the physical complaints of patients. This can lead to more drugs – either prescribed or over-the-counter – to offset the pain. Many of my patients have presented me with long lists of medications, including those they are taking to offset the side effects of the others! This problem is compounded by the fact that people (especially older patients) are often seeing several different specialists who may not always be aware of recent medications recommended by other doctors.

It's important to remember that all these synthetic drugs are actually seen as toxins by our bodies. Because they are not recognized as "natural," the body's filtration system, including the liver, kidneys, lymph system, and intestinal tract, are all working overtime to flush them. In the end, the toxic buildup of these drugs in the system can actually cause greater problems than they were first prescribed to address.

As a nurse I wanted to provide the best possible care for my patients. While I recognized the problems of overmedication, my training didn't provide me with satisfactory answers and alternative treatments. When two of my friends were diagnosed with breast cancer I started studying the power of food and how it affects our bodies. Through good nutrition and a proper lifestyle of exercise, rest and pure air, our cells can be regenerated into healthy structures that work in our bodies to fight off sickness and maintain health. Our whole body changes – our cellular make-up changes – according to what we put into it. The old phrase "you are what you eat" took on a whole new meaning for me as I learned what the power of food could

really do. Even after thirty years of practicing medicine that idea still gets me excited.

The more I studied and learned about alternative therapies, the more I wanted to know. That's what led me back to school at forty-three years of age. During my four-year medical training at Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine in Tempe, Arizona, we learned conventional medicine like the pathophysiology of disease processes, biochemistry, and anatomy and physiology, but we also learned about alternative therapies: acupuncture, homeopathy, proper nutrition, herbal remedies, and other complementary treatment modalities. Knowing that I could use effective natural therapies in conjunction with "traditional" treatments made me feel more empowered as a healthcare provider.

Because naturopathic doctors are fully licensed and enjoy a wide scope of practice in the state of Arizona, I am able to take a truly integrative approach to treatment protocols. Sometimes conventional medical treatments for problems are necessary (prescription drugs, for example) and I can prescribe those as needed, but my preferred method is a conservative and natural approach that seeks to identify and address the root causes of medical complaints. It's also important to note that naturopathy is not intended to take the place of all other types of medical care. It is simply one more resource – in my mind, a basic and essential one – in the overall healthcare plan for people who are serious about living a healthy lifestyle.

Hippocrates wrote that it is the tendency of nature "though untaught and uninstructed ... to preserve a perfect equilibrium ... to reestablish order and harmony." He taught that it is the duty of the physician

to merely assist this tendency of the body to achieve its own equilibrium, harmony, and health – a state today’s physicians sometimes refer to as “homeostasis.” This idea – that, given the proper support, the body has an innate ability to heal itself through natural means – is as true today as it was 2400 years ago. It is also one of the guiding principles of naturopathic medicine.

As a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine, it’s my goal to teach people to assume personal responsibility for wellness, thus becoming a part of their own medical team to promote self-healing. This is something I truly believe in. I have practiced the principles of good nutrition, exercise, prayer and meditation, and alternative healing therapies in my own life for many years and I feel privileged to be able to share my experiences with my patients.

My childhood fascination with the human body has not diminished. In fact, the more I learn, the more I’m amazed at the body’s capacity for healing. In offering my patients an integrative and holistic approach in my practice and by taking the time to educate them about how they can help themselves, I feel I’m giving my best as a healthcare provider. I love hearing a patient say, “Thank you, Dr. Marcantel. Now that I really understand what’s going on with my health I feel that there’s hope I can get better.”

Chapter 2

The River of Health

Imagine a river.

Start at the headwaters: a clean, clear, fast-moving mountain stream. The banks are verdant and lush; sparkling sunlight shimmers on the surface like thousands of tiny diamonds as dark flashes reveal trout swimming in the deeper, quieter pools. On a hot day, the waters invite you to plunge into their icy freshness, to scoop up handfuls to quench your thirst, to feel the cooling dampness on your cheek.

Following the riverbank downstream, the river begins to widen and the volume of water increases as tributaries add to the flow.

As you move down river, signs of “civilization” appear. The clear, fresh waters begin to get murkier. Industrial waste and agricultural runoff, along with trash cast off from careless passers-by, become more evident.

When you finally reach a stopping spot in the river, after passing through several cities, you can barely recognize the clear mountain stream. The banks are littered with broken bottles and dead fish, the dark, oily waters look ominous, and you can only grimly shake your

head at the superfluous sign that reads, “No Swimming By Order of the Health Department.”

Now think of this place as your “River of Health.” Just as the mountain stream becomes toxic from the pollutants that are added to it as it flows toward its destination, your own health can suffer from countless outside influences.



Most of us are fortunate to be born with fairly healthy bodies. We enjoy our youth in the cool waters of the mountain stream, rarely even considering what a precious gift good health is.

As life goes on it's easy to go with the flow as we are often unconsciously pulled downstream. We may be unaware of some pollutants that enter our health stream, like the environmental toxins in the air we breathe, the cleaning products we use, or the additives and preservatives in the food we eat daily. Lifestyle choices we

make also have a huge impact, such as smoking, alcohol abuse, lack of exercise, and most common of all, poor dietary choices.

Add to these the routine use of prescription drugs, stress from work, family problems and the busy-ness of life and we may well realize that we are bobbing around in the oily waters of the “No Swimming” zone.

So how do we get back to the headwaters of health?

That’s what naturopathic care is all about. The goal of healthcare must go beyond simply treating the symptoms of whatever current health challenge we are facing. It should help us progress toward a vibrant, health-oriented lifestyle. How that is done is based on some simple, often overlooked principles.

First Principle:

**We are what we eat
(and drink and do).**

Suppose we were given the task of cleaning up a polluted stream. How would we go about it?

The obvious first step would be to stop the source of the pollution. By the same token, if our goal is a healthy body, we must acknowledge that there are many things within our control that either enhance or detract from our health. We can educate ourselves about those things and commit to making the necessary changes to move toward better physical health.

Some examples of this are obvious, like stopping smoking or cutting back on alcohol consumption. There are other “pollutants,” though, that may not be

as evident but may be just as harmful, such as certain foods that contribute to high cholesterol, or processed carbohydrates that can contribute to high blood sugars, or even constant stress that is at the root of a wide variety of health problems.

The more we learn about how our bodies operate, the better choices we can make.

Second Principle:

**We can't *remove* sickness
from the body; we can
only *add health*.**

Now that we've stopped the source of pollution, how do we clean up the waters? While we could skim out a few pieces of floating garbage, the truth is that we would be hard-pressed to filter out the real pollutants.

What's needed is fresh flowing water to wash away and replace the impurities in the river. In the same way, it is only in rare circumstances that we can actually remove sickness from the body. Most of the pharmaceutical drugs we take are designed to mask problems, not eliminate them. The real goal must be to add health that supports our immune systems so our bodies can fight off disease and resist future problems.

Which brings us to our third point ...

Third Principle:

**Ultimately, the body
heals itself. Our job is to
help it do its work.**

A clean stream is an amazingly balanced ecosystem that is self-sustaining, but the human body is even more amazing. Our organ systems work overtime every day to keep our bodies balanced and running efficiently. The restorative powers of the body are a wonder!

Even so, the mental, emotional, and physical stresses we place on ourselves can push our organs beyond the capacity to function properly, leading to heart disease, adrenal problems, thyroid problems, diabetes, and a host of other health challenges. While modern medical advancements can be a great help, they can never replace the human body's natural ability to heal itself; that is why we must provide our own bodies with every advantage we can by eating well, taking nutritional and hormonal supplements when necessary, exercising regularly, doing meditation or taking mental breaks throughout the day, and following a comprehensive plan to improve our overall health.

As you can probably tell, naturopathic care is not about seeking a quick fix to health problems. It is a long-term commitment to yourself, to learn about and incorporate healthy lifestyle choices that will have lifelong benefits. You learn to work as a team with your naturopathic doctor along with all your other healthcare providers with a goal of reaching optimal health.

Swimming upstream against the negative health influences in our lives isn't always easy, but think of the rewards that will come with finding yourself back in those crystal-clear headwaters of good health.

Chapter 3

The Patient/Doctor Relationship

Consider a typical visit to the office of a general practitioner who is working within the managed care (HMO or PPO) system:

After arriving on time for your 2:00 p.m. appointment, you are asked to take a seat in the waiting room. Thirty minutes to an hour later (if you're lucky) you'll be brought back to an examination room where the nurse will ask a few questions and take your weight and your vital signs. You wait another fifteen to twenty minutes for your doctor to enter. Once he enters, after a brief greeting, it's time to get right down to business to determine why you are there. You can expect to spend about 10-15 minutes in a face-to-face conference, according to national averages, so you know you have to make the most of each minute.

You begin to explain your symptoms as the doctor does a routine physical exam. "Lately I just seem to be so emotional; I blow up at my husband and my kids, or I'll suddenly burst into tears for no real reason. Also, I'm having bad hot flashes at night and I don't know the last time I got a good night's sleep. I know this isn't just mental – I just don't feel right physically. What's going on with me?"

The doctor nods and smiles sympathetically. “You’re getting older. Menopause is coming on. I can give you a prescription for an antidepressant to help you calm down.” For good measure, he also writes a prescription for a sleep aid before he rises to leave. As you watch him go you think of all the other questions you meant to ask and the symptoms you forgot to explain. Never mind – you’ll buy the drugs and hope they mask the problems until something changes.

Although the specific symptoms and medical issues described in the scenario vary, the end result is all too familiar. Every day, patients leave their doctors’ offices feeling frustrated and helpless to deal with their own medical conditions.

I remember once, during my days as a registered nurse working in the home health field, when a patient I was visiting was having some ongoing physical problems that didn’t seem to be getting any better with her existing care plan. We made an appointment with Maria’s doctor (the names of patients have been changed throughout the book) and I sat down with her to make a list of specific questions and issues she wanted to address when she went for her visit. When I saw her next, I asked how the appointment went and whether she had received satisfactory answers to our questions. Maria replied that, “The doctor seemed to me to be in such a rush that I didn’t feel like he had time for my questions.”

Because of her perception that the doctor was “too busy,” my patient missed her chance to discuss important details about her ongoing healthcare. I explained to her that she was paying for her doctor’s services and that she had the right to ask questions. I told her that, “It’s important for you to speak up and be proactive!”

Still, Maria's attitude is typical of many patients seeking help in the managed care system. They understand that their doctors are busy and don't want to "bother" them with questions. They are also often ready to accept a quick, short-term fix that's offered rather than press their doctors for the long-term answers they really need.

Now imagine a whole different kind of medical care. One where you work with your doctor to find solutions that are truly unique to your individual needs. A whole new kind of medical care that empowers you with education for long-term health along with your short-term needs. A care that is more focused on keeping you healthy than on treating you when you're sick. That's the goal of naturopathic medicine and a standard I strive to achieve with each of my patients.

How can we provide "a whole different kind of medical care"?

It's simple ... physicians need to go back to the old-fashioned idea of getting to know *you*, the patient. Through a combination of listening, interviewing, counseling, physical examinations, and testing we need to work with our patients to diagnose and treat not just their symptoms, but the root causes of their symptoms. By spending the necessary amount of time with you, your doctor can work with you toward the goal of restoring the body to a place of health so it can function on its own (without pharmaceutical help) as much as possible.

My patients teach me a lot of things by sharing the stories of who they are. The more you can tell me about what's going on with your body – your symptomology – the more I can help you. I always tell my patients, "You

will help me to help you by giving me the information that your body is providing." I depend on that input because you live in your body and I don't.

Every person is an individual and every body has characteristics that are different from others so I treat each person as a unique patient. If I'm trying to get to the root of problems, it's important that the patient and I dig down and gather all the facts before I suggest a long-term treatment protocol. Symptomology is critical, of course, but the patient's family history is also helpful. A physical exam and laboratory testing provide more pieces to the puzzle as I seek to get a clear picture of the patient's physical state.

Your emotional condition can be just as important; what you think and how you feel – positive or negative – and how you react to stressors can be critical data in making connections to how your body is functioning. Once I have all the information, I can be much more effective in helping you reach your long-term health goals.

In my practice, the patient and I actually list those goals. On the first or second visit, after I've done the intake and I receive lab results, the patient and I will sit down together to make a plan. "This is what we want to see: Increased energy, better sleep, higher progesterone levels." This concrete goal setting gives both the patient and me a better way to track how successful the overall treatment plan is.

I also have an email address that's open to my patients. That way, patients can contact my office with updates on their conditions and I can make adjustments to treatment plans as their conditions change so I can ensure proper follow-up care.

Treat the Person, Not Just the Symptoms

If a person comes into my clinic and they're depressed and really not feeling well – say they're having difficulty getting up in the morning or have feelings of hopelessness – I may prescribe an antidepressant. I have nothing against that, but I'm going to try to figure out why they're depressed.

What are they depleted of or what do they have too much of? What is going on—is it maybe neurotransmitters or hormonal imbalances or is it something going on in their lifestyle? Is it stress? Stress can play a big role in draining us of our energy and thus affecting our hormones and our neurotransmitters, as well, as they try to supply the energy we need.

The important consideration is, “What does this particular patient need at this particular time in his life?”

I have no problem prescribing an antihypertensive if he has high blood pressure and we need to get it down quickly. Thank goodness we have modern medications to help deal with these symptoms, but I want to find out what's causing the high blood pressure and possibly other health issues that haven't surfaced yet.

A lot of times people are put into what I call a “diagnosis bucket”; they're thrown into a category based on symptomology. For instance, things like ADD, ADHD, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia – all of these conditions are really symptoms of a combination of things, but those of us in the medical field sometimes look for concise and handy labels.

Healthy Recipes

Healthy eating is for everyone, so whether you're watching your blood sugars, trimming your weight, or just want to do your body a favor, here are some great ideas for eating.

I love to cook and experiment with recipes and all of the following are either my creations or "variations on a theme" I've done to make a good meal a bit healthier. Along with the recipes we've thrown in some health tips and fun facts about good eating.

You'll also find these and many more recipes like them in printable form on our website at:

www.DrMarcantel.com

Enjoy!

Crunchy Tomato Soup

A quick and easy recipe that contains the antioxidant lycopene in the tomatoes, protein in the almond milk and chicken, and anti-microbials in the garlic and onions. It also tastes good!

*1 baked or roasted chicken,
deboned and chopped*

*1 tablespoon chopped
fresh basil*

1/2 cup chopped onion

*low-fat sour cream
(dollop as topping)*

1 large can tomato purée

1 cup chopped cucumber

2-3 cloves chopped garlic

*Tony Chachere's Creole
Seasoning*

*1 cup unsweetened
almond milk*

1 cup pecan or walnut pieces

In blender mix tomato purée, almond milk, fresh basil, cucumber, onion, garlic, Tony's seasoning to taste. Blend until smooth. Remove from blender and stir in nuts and chopped chicken. Serve in individual bowls with a dollop of sour cream. May be served warm or cold.



Here's an interesting **FOOD FACT** from Wikipedia.com:

“Unlike other fruits and vegetables, where nutritional content such as vitamin C is diminished upon cooking, processing of tomatoes increases the concentration of bioavailable lycopene. Lycopene in tomato paste is four times more bioavailable than in fresh tomatoes. Thus processed tomato products such as pasteurized tomato juice, soup, sauce, and ketchup contain the highest concentrations of bioavailable lycopene. Because lycopene is so insoluble in water and is so tightly bound to vegetable fiber, the bioavailability of lycopene is increased by food processing.”

Crispy Turkey Salad

<i>5 ounces thin sliced cooked turkey</i>	<i>1/2 Asian pear chopped (very crispy and sweet)</i>
<i>several chopped olives with pimentos</i>	<i>1/4 cup chopped walnuts</i>
<i>1 small sliced roma tomato</i>	<i>1 tablespoon raspberry vinaigrette</i>

Mix all ingredients and place on a bed of romaine lettuce.

APPETIZERS AND SNACKS

Blood sugar balancing tip:

Eating a protein along with fruit helps keep the blood sugars balanced. When blood sugars spike and then drop it signals the body that it's hungry, so try to avoid those high sugar levels!

Apple Protein Snack

This is a yummy, high-energy snack that provides protein and fiber.

4 gala apples sliced

*1/2 cup melted chunky
peanut butter*

ground cinnamon

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

1 cup shredded cheese

stevia to taste

*(Stevia is a great
natural sweetener
that comes in liquid
or powder form.*

*See chapter 5 for more
details!)*



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place apples on baking sheet and sprinkle cinnamon and stevia and walnuts on top of apples. Cook until apples are tender. Remove from oven. Heat peanut butter in microwave for a few seconds until liquid. Drizzle peanut butter over apple mixture and sprinkle shredded cheese over mixture. Place back in oven until melted. Remove from oven and let cool. Divide into individual portions and use as snack. Keeps up to 1 week in fridge.

SMOOTHIES

Smoothies are a great breakfast drink to start your day and a perfect energy snack between meals. They're a fast and easy way to get a good amount of antioxidants and phytonutrients in one delicious drink! It's fun to make up your own recipes, and the variety of flavors you can have is as unlimited as your imagination.

Coconut–Pineapple Smoothie

<i>3/4 cup light coconut milk</i>	<i>1/2 dropper of stevia (optional)</i>
<i>3/4 cup frozen pineapple</i>	<i>1/2 of a frozen banana</i>

Place all ingredients in blender. Add water to achieve desired consistency. Blend.

Cherry–Vanilla Smoothie

<i>2 tablespoons vanilla protein powder</i>	<i>a few drops of stevia sweetener (optional)</i>
<i>1 cup of unsweetened vanilla almond milk</i>	<i>1/2 cup frozen cherries</i>

Place ingredients in blender, add water, and blend.

MAIN DISHES

Lentil Tomato Sauce Over Spaghetti Squash

A Vegetable Feast!

Spaghetti squash is an excellent substitute for pasta. It's low in carbs and calories and has a deliciously crunchy consistency. Lentils are a great source of fiber, vitamins, and protein. Bell peppers are a good source of vitamin C. Garlic has properties that are good for the cardiovascular system. This recipe is high in protein and low in cholesterol and can be used as a main dish. And, best of all, it tastes wonderful!

<i>1 lb cooked black lentils (I get mine at Trader Joe's – already steamed)</i>	<i>3-4 Roma tomatoes raw</i>
<i>1 yellow bell pepper – chopped</i>	<i>2 medium onions—chopped</i>
<i>2 large cans of low sodium tomato sauce</i>	<i>16 oz fresh sliced mushrooms (I use baby portabellas)</i>
<i>2 garlic pods – chopped</i>	<i>1 medium spaghetti squash</i>
	<i>1-2 cups of water (depending upon desired consistency)</i>

Preparation of spaghetti squash:

Slice lengthwise and place exposed pulp of squash down in Pyrex dish in shallow water. Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 45 minutes. Let cool, then remove pulp by dragging a fork through it—it will come out looking like small strands of spaghetti!