

10 Commandments of Clean Eating

1. **More than 3**, let it be (if the item has more than 3 ingredients, don't buy it)
2. Do you **know what all those ingredients are** in that label? If not, don't eat it.
3. **No whites** (flour, sugar, etc. Check those labels- this means juices, sodas, cookies)
4. Drink **LOTS of water** (like half your bodyweight in ounces)
5. **No processed food**
6. Load up on **lean protein** (i.e. chicken, fish, steak, beans, legumes)
7. **Plan & Prep** your meals ahead of time
8. **BYOS**: Bring your own **snacks**. Pack snacks every time you leave the house
9. Don't be scared of **healthy fats** (nuts, avocado, eggs)
10. Limit **dairy**

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The holiday season usually ends with resolutions to live a healthier year. Even though these resolutions don't usually begin until January, the Hollywood Clinic got a head start with the Clean Eating 21 Day Challenge to prepare people for healthier lifestyles.



(Courtesy image)

The challenge started the week of Oct. 30 and ended Nov. 21, right before Thanksgiving. Throughout its course, participants were encouraged to give up carbonated drinks, refined sugar, artificial sweeteners and colors, and processed foods. Instead, Hollywood dietitians, including Karen Two Shoes, recommended they eat more fruits and veggies, organic lean proteins, omega-3 fatty acids and water.

"We're challenging tribal members and community members do clean up their plates," Two Shoes said of the challenge. "We're talking about getting rid of the processed foods and chemicals in their diet and trying to eat a whole food diet. Basically, eat stuff that doesn't come with a nutrition facts label and ingredients list."

The rule of thumb to effectively participate is to "stick to the perimeter of the grocery store." Unlike a regular diet where people generally purchase artificial products claiming to be low-fat, low-sodium, low-carb or of the like for quick results, Two Shoes explained that this challenge emphasizes making healthy eating a lifestyle change rather than a temporary diet.

Upon entering the challenge, participants received the "10 Commandments of Clean Eating," which includes tips such as avoid purchasing foods with more than three ingredients, stock up on lean protein, including chicken, fish and legumes, and plan and prepare meals ahead of time to avoid mindless eating. They also received spice packs, such as cinnamon, ginger and turmeric to incorporate in meals. For those who may not know where to start in making 'clean' products, the challenge also came with recipes, such as overnight cinnamon oats and a mango ginger smoothie. to learn the simplicity in making 'clean' products.

“We were just trying to figure out ways to introduce people to clean up their plates,” Two Shoes explained. “We have so many people in here, especially with diabetes and heart disease. ... We get a lot of people coming in saying, ‘What can I do to clean up my diet,’ and this is in response to what people have been asking for.”

Even though the challenge itself only lasts three weeks, Two Shoes and other Hollywood dieticians hope that people will carry what they learned into the holiday season. Once people integrate their goals into their lifestyle, Two Shoes says that clean eating becomes effortless. Even making healthier choices during holiday meals and family gatherings gets easier by the day.

“It sounds really daunting going into a diet, but once you get into it and keep your goals in mind...you might be able to roll into the holidays with your clean eating. You can maybe eat your mashed sweet potatoes, but without adding additional sugar to them.”

Two Shoes said more participants got involved in the challenge than they anticipated. They only expected around 25 people to join, but 46 people from Tampa, Immokalee, Hollywood, Brighton and Big Cypress went through the challenge, and many told Two Shoes that the skills they learned were invaluable.

“A lot of people had goals of losing weight, which I think is just a goal for many people, but the biggest takeaway was that people picked up skills they didn’t have before. They also became more aware of what they were eating,” Two Shoes said. “Losing weight might be point Z and there’s so many ways to get there, such as label reading, being aware, and getting rid of processed foods.”

Participants also learned how to utilize better portion sizes in their meals and how to prepare healthy food at home.

“It’s a lot easier to go out and eat, and that’s one of the things that people said was the hardest to do: stay home and eat,” she said.

Two Shoes plans on taking feedback from participants and revamping the program to get more people involved in more challenges. Possible integrations include weekly check-ins and cooking classes to make it a more interactive initiative.

More information about upcoming challenges can be found at health clinics on the reservations.

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