

Nutrition

Going Back to Eating Basics, Raw Style

By: Anne Wainscott-Sargent



It's a new year, and everyone is thinking about New Year's resolutions to lose weight by making better food choices and exercising more.

For Jackie Graff, R.N., B.S.N., healthful eating is all about going back to food basics. The Roswell registered nurse happens to be one of the nation's leading raw food chefs. Raw food -organic, uncooked fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds - is coming into the mainstream with both Hollywood celebrities and well known authors such as Deepak Chopra espousing the benefits of a raw food diet as a way to regain vitality and health.

Jackie says that when foods are cooked at over 105 to 110 degrees, food enzymes disappear, which makes your body work harder.

"More energy is required to digest cooked food," says Jackie. "Also, cooking food damages many of the essential minerals and destroys most vitamins. That's why people have trouble losing weight. The body is hungry for nutrients - and it prompts you to eat more. When you eat raw foods, you begin to eat less food because your body is not crying out for nutrients."

She and her husband, Gideon, own Sprout Raw Foods Inc. (www.sproutrawfood.org), which educates people interested in the raw food lifestyle, including recipe/food preparation classes, and coaching. The company also operates a wholesale food business, Sprout Raw Food Creations, which includes a complement of all-raw salads, entrees, deserts, and crack-

ers, available at in-town stores, Return to Eden and Sevananda, and at Natural Marketplace in Cobb County, Nuts and Berries in Brookhaven, and Rainbow Grocery in Decatur.

Simple Changes

Even if you aren't ready to go raw, you can make simple changes to your diet that can have an immediate, positive impact on your health, says Jackie.

"Eat plenty of whole vegetables, whole fruit and whole grains. Avoid sugar and coffee while reducing the amount of animal proteins you consume," says Jackie, who suggests that you replace red meat with rice and beans. Instead of sugar, use stevia. Instead of white flour and white rice, eat whole-wheat flour and brown rice.