

Eat the Healthy Way

Eat the Japanese Way

Japanese people have the longest life span in the world. Statistics revealed in 2004, show the average life span of a Japanese female is 85 years of age and 78 for men.

There are many potential factors which have an affect on the average human life span, but one of the overwhelming factors has to be a healthy diet.

For most people when they think of Japanese food they think of sushi, sukiyaki or tempura. Although, Japanese do enjoy these foods occasionally, the traditional home cooked meal is usually much simpler.

Have you ever heard the expression "You are what you eat."? It turns out there is more truth to this statement than was once thought. The reason for the people of Japans long life is exactly that, their diet

Staples of the Japanese Diet

There are main staples of the Japanese diet which can be linked to their long healthy lives.

1. Fish - Seafood is a well known staple of the Japanese diet. It is also a well known fact that seafood is very healthy. The average Japanese diet includes at least one piece of seafood every day. Seafood is naturally low in fat and cholesterol, high in protein and omega 3 fatty acids. It is one of the healthiest meats available today. Fish is consumed at more than 154 pounds per person per year most one-half pound per day. This is about the same amount by weight as rice, but in terms of calories, fish provides a greater amount for most of the Japanese.

Fish is usually eaten fresh but it is also consumed in salted, dried and pickled form. Fresh fish is grilled or baked and also

Life expectancy in Japan is the highest in the world. Japanese men have an average life span of 78 years and women 85 years

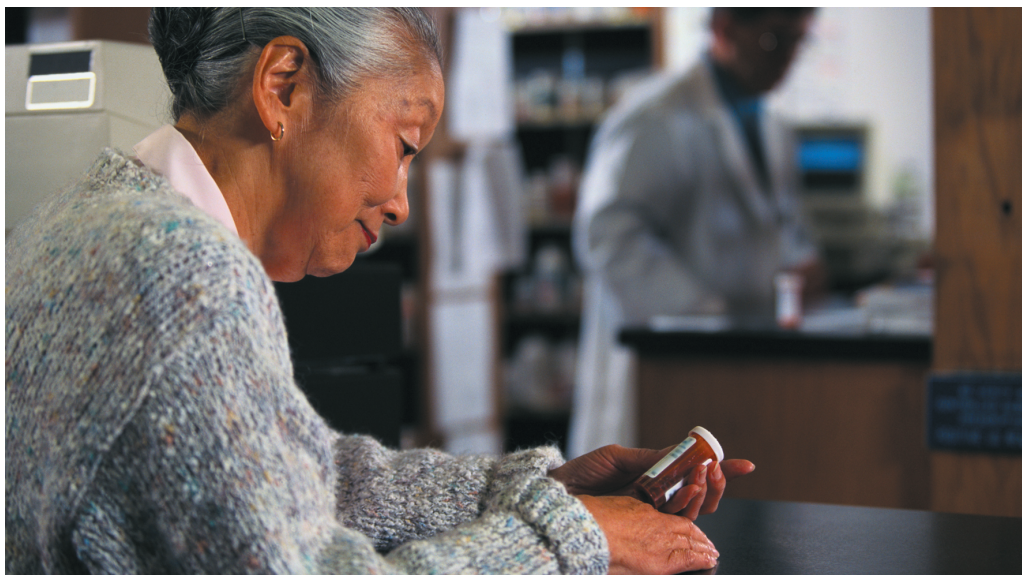


The Japanese diet abounds in seafood: fish, rich in polyunsaturated ("good") fats (in particular, eicosopentaenoic acid, EPA), and the seaweeds Kombu (from warm waters) and Nori (from cold waters). These contain high amounts of iodine as well as minerals and microelements which are both healthy and also impart to Japanese food its inimitable flavor.

eaten raw (sashimi). Generally there are two fish courses at each meal, one of cold fish and one of hot.

2. Rice - The most well known food in Japan has to be rice. It is eaten every day often multiple times a day in Japan. Whether by itself as a meal or in a multitude of other dishes, rice is the foundation of Japanese food. Rice itself is low in fat, a great source of energy, filling, and nutritious. Japan has perfected rice growing and cooking.

The consumption of starches is at a minimum and usually contains no white flour. Japanese noodles are made from wheat flour or buckwheat flour. Both are significantly healthier than enriched white flour. Rice is a staple in the diet but consists of a small bowl at meals.



3. Green tea - The beverage of tea has existed in Japan for a very long time. Japanese green tea, similar to rice and fish, is consumed every day by most Japanese. Green tea is perhaps the most convenient and least expensive way to live a longer healthier life.

4. Soy products - they help reduce heart disease and high blood pressure and are a great source of protein. Tofu and soy products are also staples in the Japanese diet. Soy sauce, tofu, and natto soy beans mixed with raw egg served over rice are a few examples of soy products consumed daily.

Soy beans are a distinguishing feature of the Japanese diet, particularly fermented soy sauce used in most prepared dishes. Almost without exception, Japanese sauces and marinades are based on soy sauce.

Dietary surveys indicate that the Japanese consume an average of about 1/4 cup of soy products per day, including soy sauce. Other soy foods include tofu, a precipitated product, and fermented soy foods such as miso, tempeh.

Smaller portions reduce the opportunity for excessive eating. Traditional Japanese meals are about half the regular portion of western dishes. Even though most dishes are viewed as healthy, portions are still relatively small.

The "seven pillars of Japanese food" - fish, vegetables, rice, soy, noodles, tea, and fruit

5. Cruciferous Vegetables

Not all Japanese food will suit everyone, and it may take some time to get used to the unusual taste. Younger people in Japan are moving to a more western style diet which is bringing the associated western diet problems of diabetes and obesity.

There are many differences between Japanese and American diets that may explain why cancer incidence in Japan is far lower than in the United States. But one difference may be overlooked: The Japanese consume about five times the amount of cruciferous vegetables as Americans do.

The most common cruciferous vegetables are those from the cabbage family: cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Chinese cabbage, cauliflower, kale and watercress. However, even some root veggies, like radishes, parsnips, turnips, fall in this category. Cruciferous vegetables make a unique contribution to good health. They contain natural substances called glucosinolates that break down in the body to form indoles and other compounds that fight cancer development in several different ways.