



# EVERY BODY IS DIFFERENT

## A Different Approach to Weight Loss & Wellness

by Anne Mitchell, ND

**H**ave you become a slave to food? Are your time and energy tied up with food and eating? What we eat can control many aspects of existence: how we look and feel, productivity and performance, emotions, staying well or getting sick — even sleep quality and the nature of dreams.

If we don't understand how foods affect us, eating turns into a never-ending struggle. Those who have wrestled with weight issues likely have a history of seeking "the" magic diet. The simple fact is: "one-size-fits-all" diets and products are NOT the answer.

### One diet for everyone? No!

Fad diets don't work because they don't match reality. Humans are every bit as unique in our biochemistry as in our fingerprints — it's called "biochemical individuality." The key to the diet puzzle is that the body's ability to metabolize food is largely governed by genetics. Just as genes define particular looks (height, hair/eye color, facial features), they also affect our unique nutritional requirements.

There are 16 metabolic types. Once a patient knows their type, they can learn which foods are best for

them. This approach to nutrition, a lifestyle more than a diet, is tailor-made for individuals. It teaches what percentage of each person's diet should be carbohydrates, protein, or fat, and what meat, grains, and vegetables to eat or avoid. This does not require calorie counting, measuring, or any shakes and bars. Its goal is long term solution, not short term fix.

Metabolic typing's evolution happened gradually, one advance giving rise to another over the course of the twentieth century.

### Some Research Over the Years

Dr. Weston Price, a 1930's dentist sometimes called the "Charles Darwin of Nutrition," visited diverse global cultures at a time when the western diet was being introduced. He observed physical degeneration in indigenous tribes who had abandoned their nourishing traditional diets in favor of modern convenience foods ([www.ppnf.org](http://www.ppnf.org)).

In 1953, Roger Williams, Ph.D., biochemist, published *Biochemical Individuality*, in which he discussed variations in heredity and the expression of genetic material, with nutrition playing an important role. We now know that how our

genotype (DNA) gets translated into our phenotype (characteristics/traits) is strongly influenced by nutrition, lifestyle, and environment — factors important in determining health patterns.

A March 4, 2010, Wall Street Journal article by Ron Winslow mentions Stanford University researchers reporting at an American Heart Association conference that genetic testing may help people choose which diet works best for them. Christopher Gardner, associate professor of medicine at Stanford and part of a recent collaboration with Interleukin Genetics for this research, said knowing ones genotype for low-carb or low-fat diets can increase weight-loss success. He further suggested that adherence to a diet won't matter if foods are out of synch with the dieter's genetics. The findings are said to be partially based on an earlier Stanford University paper, the A to Z weight-loss study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 2007.

Researchers have also drawn on the works of William Wolcott and Dr. William Kelly who looked at factors governing metabolism that gave clues about nutritional programs appropriate for particular body types. For example, certain foods stimulate and support

the body's "rest-and-digest" system (alkalinizers) while others do this for the "fight-and-flight" system (acidifiers). Some people are "fast cellular oxidizers." Others are "slow cellular oxidizers." To complicate matters, sometimes the effects of certain foods are reversed. That's why nutrition can be complex and confusing! It's not only what you eat that matters, but also the relative proportions of proteins, fats, and carbohydrates. Knowing what factors to consider may help individuals maximize energy, normalize appetite, and sustain a healthy weight.

### So... next steps?

The key to nutritional wellness is to determine your metabolic type and then create a customized nutrition plan. Information can be found in such places as Wolcott's book, *The Metabolic Typing Diet*, and/or by consulting a practitioner for professional guidance. Metabolic typing professionals help design a whole foods plan based on your body's unique metabolism. They may discuss eating habits, emotional eating, portion control, food labels, reducing cravings, shopping healthfully, and preventing and reversing disease. The aim is to learn to choose foods that effectively

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sustain your body's distinctive style of functioning.

A complete weight and wellness program should include: an exercise regimen suitable to your lifestyle; a support plan to stay invested and on track; and, an approach addressing stress and emotional components of eating.

### Effects of a whole foods nutrition plan may include:

- Natural weight loss
- Food converted to energy instead of fat
- Increased energy
- Diminished sweet and starchy food cravings
- Increased resistance to colds, flu, recurrent infections
- Subsiding of digestive problems (indigestion, gas, bloating)
- Reduced irritability, anxiety depression, hyperactivity
- Renewed sense of well-being

*Dr. Anne Mitchell and The Life Center staff offer a medically supervised whole-foods weight loss and wellness program to help clients discover their metabolic uniqueness, reach their ideal weight, and increase wellness. They are committed to helping clients understand how their body works and make healthy nutrition choices. Join their Biggest Loser Challenge this month! Information: 2 Broadway, North Haven, CT, 203.710.6605.*



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