



## Fact sheet: Food combining

Dr. Hay, an American physician in the late 19th century, was the first person to realise the concept of eating compatible foods when he became ill with Bright's disease (kidney disease), with high blood pressure and a dilated heart. There was no cure for the latter condition, and he assumed his career was over. His disenchantment with the way the medical profession seemed to deal with the end results of disease rather than looking for the cause, brought him to the conclusion that if we create the conditions for health, our body's own natural healing powers will do the rest.



His theory, which he put into practice on himself and then countless of his patients, was that we should eat foods that are whole and unprocessed, and that proteins, carbohydrates and acid fruits should not be eaten at the same meal. At the end of three months, his symptoms had disappeared, and he felt fitter and stronger than he had done for many years. He was able to run long distances, and at the same time his weight reduced from 100 kg to 77 kg.

Eating the 'Hay' way concentrates on long term health and longevity, rather than just losing weight. A truly healthy person is not overweight.

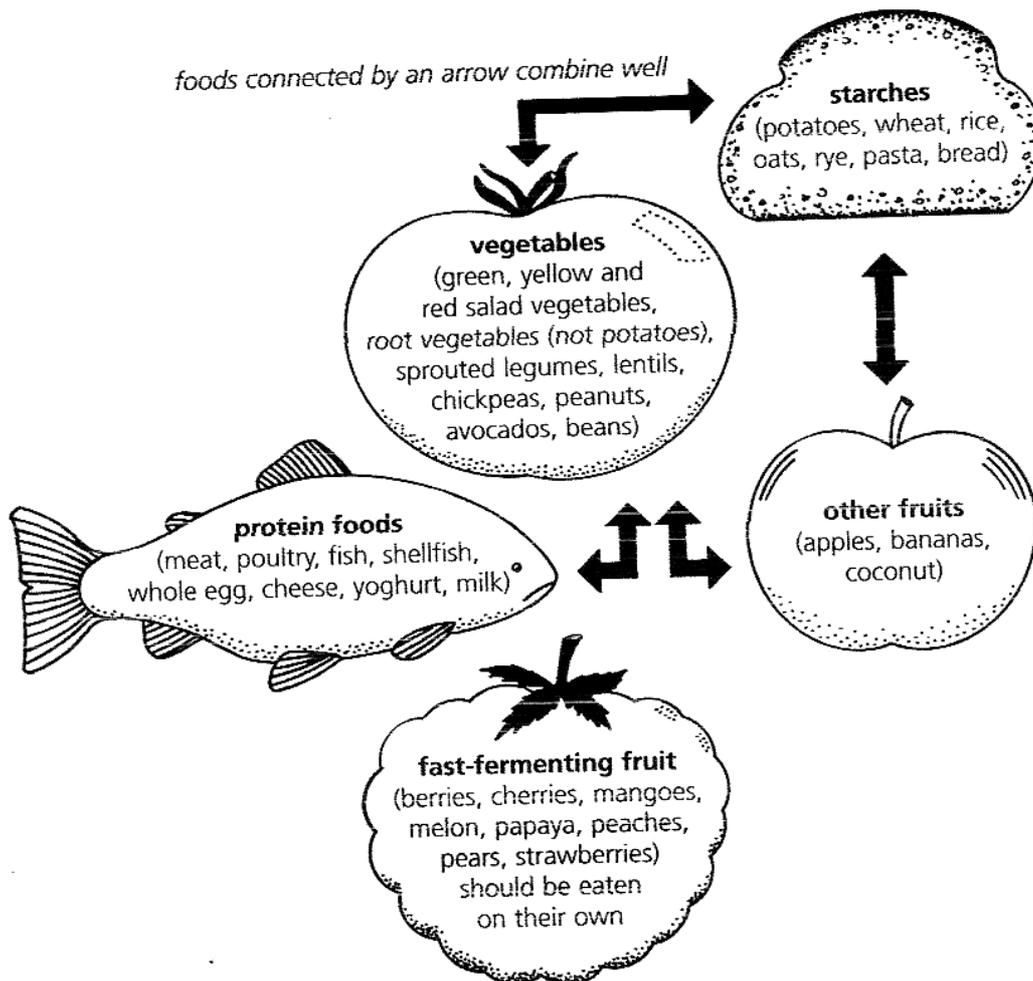
### The Hay system consists of five basic rules:

1. Concentrated carbohydrate foods (pasta, bread, cereals, rice, potatoes, flour) should not be eaten with concentrated protein foods (meat, fish, cheese, eggs) and acid fruits at the same meal. In practice, this means no meat and potatoes, cheese on toast, spaghetti bolognese, and most of the combinations we are used to eating.
  2. Vegetables, salads, and fruits should account for around 60% of the diet. Proteins, carbohydrates and oils should account for the other 40%.
  3. Avoid foods made with refined white flour, sugars and fats. Avoid highly processed fats like margarine and hydrogenated vegetable oils. Eat only whole grains, e.g. brown rice, wholemeal pasta and breads.
  4. Allow four to four and a half hours between meals of different character.
  5. Eat fast-fermenting and acid fruits on their own as snacks, i.e. between, or twenty minutes before meals to avoid fermentation and gas. Most soft fruits, including peaches, plums, mangoes, papayas, strawberries and melons ferment quickly. High acid fruits (although alkaline forming) may also inhibit digestion of carbohydrate: they include oranges, lemons, grapefruit, and pineapple. Fruits that do not ferment easily, such as bananas, apples and coconut can be combined with cereals like oats and millet.
- ▶ Pulses (dried beans) cannot be categorised as either protein or carbohydrate as they contain both. But this is not the reason that they cause fermentation and gas. This is usually due to proteins such as lectins which cannot be easily digested by the enzymes in our digestive system. Eaten well cooked, and added slowly to the diet, they have important benefits in the form of fibre, proteins, vitamins, minerals and complex carbohydrate. They are even better tolerated when they are sprouted as the starches and proteins they contain become compatible. Sprouting also increases the vitamin C and B content of pulses.
  - ▶ Nuts, seeds and mushrooms combine well with all foods and are good sources of protein for vegetarians.

## Why eat this way?

There are sound biochemical reasons for compatible eating. Digestion of carbohydrates takes place in the mouth and intestines. Digestion of proteins takes place mainly in the stomach. Fruits digest in an empty stomach in twenty minutes. If they hang around waiting for other foods to digest at the same meal, then fermentation and gas formation can occur, with unpleasant results! Therefore digestion is more efficient and the possibility of the production of toxic by-products resulting from improperly digested foods is reduced. Dr. Hay's theory suggests that it is the acidity of these biochemical toxic by-products which cause auto-intoxication and ill health.

The following diagram is taken from Patrick Holford's Optimum Nutrition Bible.



## Food combinations – do's and don'ts