

Working miracles with superfoods



BOOSTING IMMUNE SYSTEMS: Beryn and Peter Daniel make guacamole and salsa for a raw food Mexican-themed lunch.

Picture: Sophia Stander

DOMINIQUE HERMAN

LAST week, at Beryn and Peter Daniel's raw foods course, we learned about cutting out the "poisons of the palate" (white refined sugar and flour, dairy, but milk in particular, soft drinks, trans fats, artificial sweeteners, soy and coffee). This week we learned what we're going to replace that with. In one word: superfoods.

"If we're taking things out, we have to fill those gaps with something better," Beryn says. And once these super foods start working their magic, it will start changing what you want to eat.

These foods also enrich our body's capital: our enzyme bank. Enzyme-rich foods, such as raw plant foods, add enzymes to your body's enzyme bank. Whereas eating cooked food requires enzymes to digest it which diminishes our body's enzyme bank. The more quickly our supply of enzymes is depleted, the more rapidly we age.

Although oats has gluten, which is difficult for the body to break down, it is rich in silica which has the "extraordinary ability" of transmuting into calcium. Cooked oats, however, ends up like glue in the digestive system. For the person transitioning, the Daniels strongly advise taking digestive enzyme supplements (available at health stores) with every meal.

Bran should be replaced with ground flax seeds. They are rich in good fat with zero gluten content and act in the same fibrous cleansing way that bran does.

Raw chocolate is another superfood, as if there was any doubt. This is not your Cadbury's or even your 85% dark chocolate Lindt slivers, however. This is the 100% bitter chocolate bean before it's roasted and mixed with milk and sugar to create the products we buy in confectionary stores.

"Raw chocolate is one of the most complex food substances on this planet. There is nothing that comes close to its antioxidant properties," Peter says. "It's almost as if it's not from this planet."

Goji berries: These bright pinky red berries have 50 times more vitamin C than oranges and up to 10 times more antioxidants than blueberries (the only berry found to reverse mental decline). Gojis are chock-full of amino acids, minerals, essential fatty acids and vitamins. It's also a cellulite-busting berry!

Aloe vera or aloe ferox: This succulent desert plant purifies the blood and liver and stimulates collagen production, improving flexibility and the skin.

Brazil nuts: Eat five a day, according to the Daniels. These nuts are the only decent source of selenium, a major mineral that most people are deficient in.

Himalayan crystal rock salt: This clean salt is not the refined table salt found in the supermarket. This contains all the minerals and trace elements of which our bodies are made and is crucial for maintaining vital functions in the body.

Green superfoods are detoxifying, rich in chlorophyll – a source of protein – alkalising minerals and

sun energy. Barley grass and spirulina are recommended (both of which can be sprinkled into smoothies). Spirulina is a type of algae that is 55% protein by weight and a natural appetite suppressant.

MSM is organic sulphur which is lacking in the food chain. It detoxifies, keeps the joints flexible, draws out heavy metals and gives one shiny, lustrous locks.

Hemp protein powder, acerola cherry powder, kelp powder, green tea, blueberries and coconut oil are the other superfoods.

What are antioxidants anyway? Oxidation, or exposure to oxygen, initiates a degenerative process in everything: Wine exposed to oxygen gets degraded, an apple cut open starts to go brown, cars go rusty. Oxidation in our bodies happens from the inside and causes aging, in the best scenario, and disease in the worst. Free radicals are molecules that wreak havoc by destroying cells. Antioxidants keep free radicals in check. Although our bodies produce some of their own antioxidants to mop up the free radicals we produce as part of normal metabolic function, these are not enough to cope with the added bout of free radicals created by the pollutants, pesticides, stress and food abuse associated with modern living.

The "Elements of Health" four-week raw-food prep classes are two-and-a-half hours once weekly followed by a raw, organic two-course meal. Call 021 780 9156 for course and superfood info or

e-mail beryn@soaring-free.com or see www.superfoods.co.za