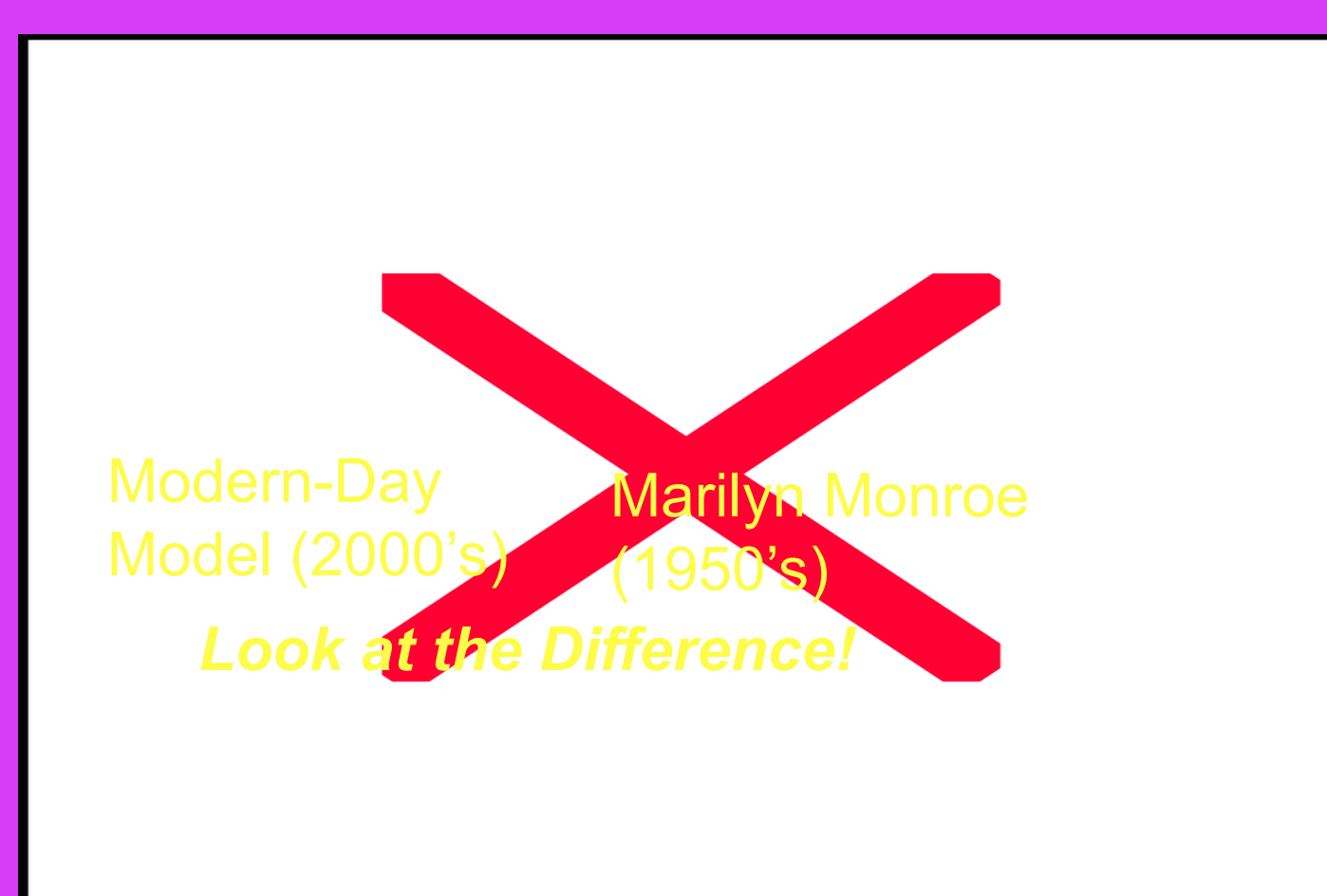


# How Nutrition can help Recovering Anorexics:

## Abstract

The objective of this project is to research the bodily abnormalities of an anorexic and develop a diet that will be appropriate for a female recovering from anorexia. Information is presented on what anorexia does to the body as well as what the body lacks. The body lacks essential nutrients, essential vitamins and fluids when subjected to anorexia. Important bodily fluids are lost when a person is anorexic. Mental health needs to be carefully monitored during recovery. My hypothesis is that a diet comprised of very basic healthy, nutritious foods (as I learned in Nutrition 127 class) will help restore a recovering anorexic's bodily functions. In addition to that, when a person develops anorexia at a young age of about 11 to 14, the body is still developing and there is a tendency for more problems later on in life.



## Introduction

A person with anorexia uses food intake as a way to feel control over life. It is a major problem all over the world mainly due to images in the media of models that are sickly thin (1). People, mostly teenage girls, feel pressure from the media to look a certain way, which is skinny to the point of illness. Because of the media, many develop an eating disorder.

For a recovering anorexic, it is a big step admitting the problem which grows even bigger when the battle of overcoming it begins. When a person is anorexic, the body lacks many important nutrients such as potassium, magnesium and sodium. Anorexia can affect many other parts of the body physically, as well as emotionally. Some other parts of the body that are affected include: brain and nervous function, hair, heart, blood, muscles and joints, kidneys, intestines, hormones and skin.

In addition to mental help through therapy, the body needs help to restore itself to homeostasis as well. In this poster, a compilation of different foods that will help restore bodily functions is presented. An analysis of the different daily values of each food is shown, with how much and how often each food item should be eaten.

All of the information included in this poster is based on my research. It should be not be used to diagnose, treat or cure any type of eating disorder.

## Method

The sources consulted included the Internet, nutrition articles in Nutrition 2004 (ref) and Eat, Drink and Be Healthy (7). I started by doing web searches on anorexia and eating disorders and looking at the results. This is the way that I found most of my sources. Also, I consulted Willett (ref) to get a number of the food options in the diet chart. I trusted the food choices in the menu section of Willett's book for healthy food choices because of his insight into the food pyramid and his creation of the all-new food pyramid.

Here's the Skinny  
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Table 1: The diet

Pick 2 or 3 of the "Foods" and 1 of the "Beverages" for each meal.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Foods	Bran flakes 2 cups	Organic mesclime mix, salad with olive oil and vinegar, small bowl	Roasted vegetables, about 1 cup	3 Pieces of organic chocolate bar
	1 Whole Banana	Raw tuna, small portion	Mixed greens salad with olive oil, small bowl	Peach, pineapple, and apricot slices, small serving
	1/2 Ruby Red grapefruit	1/4 Fresh cantaloupe	Grilled salmon steak	Whole grain crackers, 5
	Whole wheat toast 1 slice with natural peanut butter or fruit spread	5 Fresh strawberries	Steamed whole wheat couscous, 1 cup	Natural peanut butter
	1 Apple, sliced	Grilled chicken patty on whole wheat bun	Green snap beans, about 1/2 cup	Organic trail mix, 1/2 cup
	1 Orange	large apple	Pork tenderloin	Red grapes, 12
	1 Hard Boiled egg with salt and pepper	Lemon and herb marinated chicken breast	Wild rice pilaf, about 1/2 cup	Handful of raw almonds
	1/2 Red Grapes	Wheat noodles with pesto sauce, small portion	Steamed fresh asparagus, 5 spears	Handful of sunflower seeds
	Handful of raw almonds	Organic chicken chili, small bowl	Cinnamon apple sauce	Fruit smoothie, about 2 cups
	Handful of sunflower seeds	1/2 Sliced kiwi with a few blueberries	Spinach, mushroom and onion salad with vinaigrette	
		Carrot sticks, 4	Oven-roasted sea bass	
		Celery sticks, 4	Steamed broccoli, about 1 cup	
		2 Whole radishes	Groupers with lemon and oregano	
		1/2 Grain bread, 1 slice with butter	Steamed brusselsprouts, 4	
		Large Banana		
		Salad made of cucumber, tomato, onion, olive oil, salt and pepper, 1 cup		
Beverages	Green Tea, 1 cup	Sparkling water with lime	Large glass of water	Orange juice with sparkling water
	Fresh squeezed orange juice 4 ounces	Ice tea with lemon	Ice tea with lemon	Large glass of water with lime
	Skim or Soy milk 1 cup	Large glass of water	Fresh fruit juice	Chamomile tea, 1 cup
	Apple Cranberry juice 6 ounces		Fruit Spritzer	

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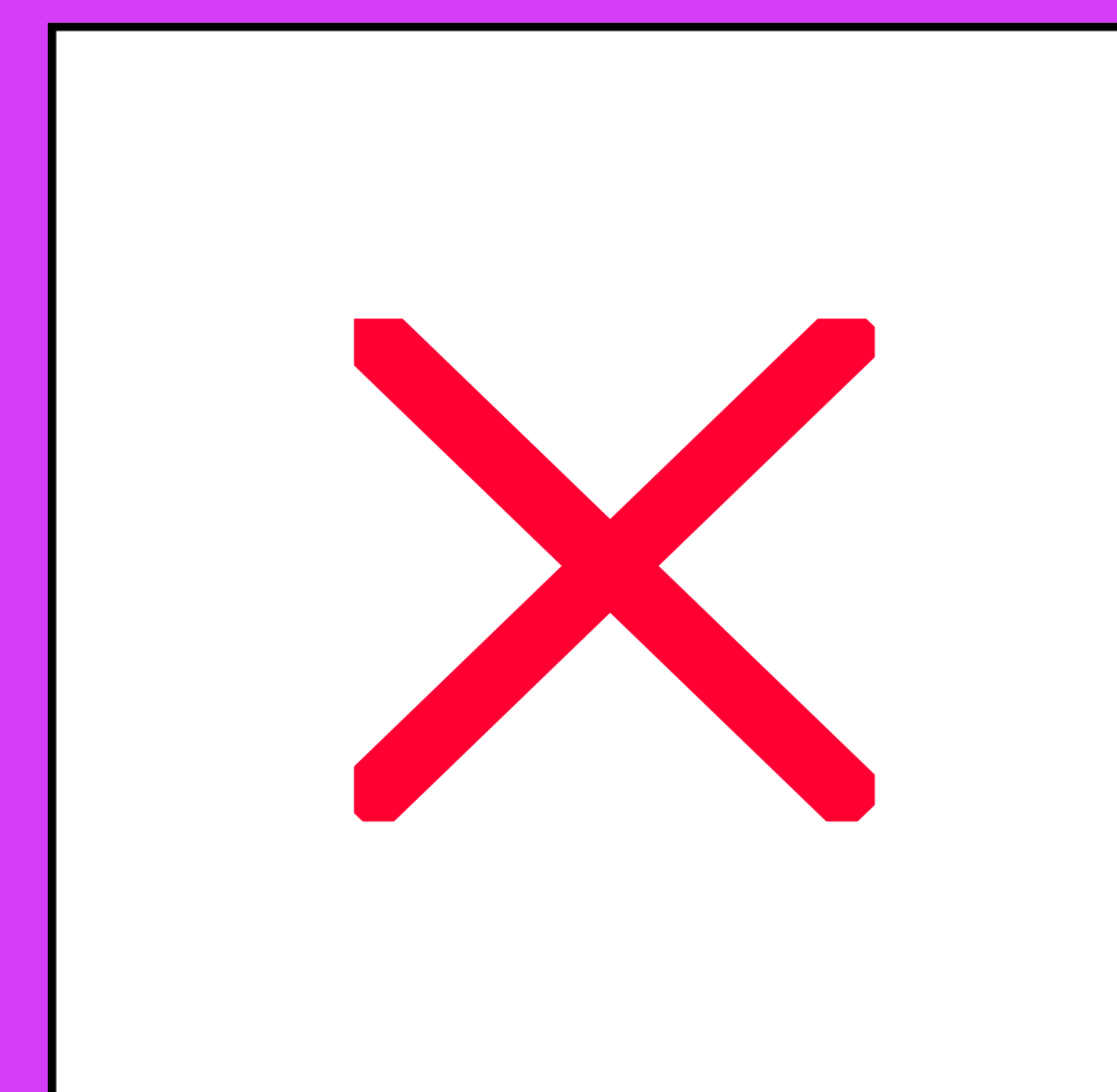
- Roc Ordman
- Elif Alpoge
- Nayani Pramanick

## Discussion

Anorexia is a very topical subject in today's society. The media has distorted peoples' views on many things, body image being one of the biggest. The modern American society has made an unattainable standard for many people, mainly women. The standard is for women to be skinny to the point of using unnatural methods of attaining that goal. One unfortunate consequence is that they often become unhealthy. Because the media usually portrays women only in this light, people get the idea that it is normal and "beautiful" to look this way.

The media's obsession with perfection is one of the largest causes of anorexia in young people. Usually young people are influenced primarily by the media because they tend to be questioning their identity and are very vulnerable. In fact, for products that others can buy, like cigarettes, almost all commercials are targeted specifically at young people who are more vulnerable. The "Fact" section of the anti tobacco campaign's website, "The Truth. COM", states "In 1999, one year after agreeing to stop billboard advertising, tobacco companies increased advertising spending by 33 percent in magazines with more than 15 percent youth readership."<sup>4</sup> Like smoking, the media tends to appeal to whomever it can affect most.

An eating disorder or a problem with food will affect one in four American women at some point in their lives.<sup>5</sup> It is very important to have good methods of dealing with this problem because it is such a large one. As mentioned earlier, mental health is the most important part of the recovery process of an eating disorder, but nutrition is equally important in restoring homeostasis to the body.



This is Walter C. Willett's Healthy Food Pyramid. The above table is based on this new version of the USDA Food Pyramid, which many consider obsolete<sup>6</sup>.

## Conclusion

Many people suffer from anorexia. Overcoming the disease requires a constant and continual process so the treatment will be successful. However, the first step to getting rid of the disease is admitting you have it and asking for help. Something does need to be done to help those with this debilitating disease. The most important thing is mental help. Second to that is nutrition.

Even for those who feel they are not anorexic anymore, the body has still lost some valuable nutrients. One could always use the healthy boost that the diet in this project describes. In addition, one must be aware of our surroundings all of the time, especially with the media, because it is everywhere. Whether one realizes it or not, it can and will affect everyone. It is necessary to let positive things, images, people and foods be supportive at all times. A happy life will follow not far behind.