

Title and Author: Exploring the Benefits of Introducing a Plant-Based Diet into Patient Education in the Primary Care Setting, and the Positive Effects on Combating Common Chronic Illnesses such as Hypertension, Hyperlipidemia, and Diabetes Mellitus Type II by Arielle Ferdinand, MSN, FNP-BC

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Abstract: A plant-based diet focuses on foods from plant sources, limiting or altogether omitting animal products. Some of the most common chronic illnesses seen in primary care are hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and diabetes type II. These common chronic illnesses can often be debilitating, costly, time-consuming, and when left untreated can lead to an early death. Treatment and maintenance of care are also labor intensive for the patient. They are often required to have at least four blood pressure checks yearly, and a hemoglobin A1C checked quarterly.

Though preventative interventions and prevention education should be included in patient visits in the primary care setting, education about dietary interventions, such as a plant-based diet, also yields positive outcomes for patients who already have hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and diabetes mellitus type 2.

Through review of literature, evidence will show that incorporating a plant-based diet results in decreased blood pressure, as well as decreased levels of LDL-C, improved post-prandial glucose levels, and a reduction in HbA1C. It is cost-effective for the patient by generally lower grocery costs and it can either reduce or prevent the need to pay for more office visits and pharmacotherapy. Incorporating this method of dietary changes is an easy intervention during a primary care office visit that would greatly benefit the patient in many ways.