

21-Day Plant-Powered Jumpstart Program Overview

February 2020

Thank you for your interest in this community-based wellness program hosted by [Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan](#) and organized by [Plant Powered Metro New York](#) (PPMNY).

Please note that the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan does not expressly or exclusively endorse any one nutritional plan for every person. Please speak with your physician before commencing any new nutrition, diet, or exercise program.

The Plant-Powered Jumpstart will welcome 15-25 people who together adopt a whole food, plant-based (WFPB) diet -- the evidence-based eating pattern promoted by the [American College of Lifestyle Medicine](#) to prevent, treat, and sometimes even reverse many common chronic diseases, like heart disease and diabetes. Clinical demonstrations of the power of a healthy plant-based diet have been published in peer-reviewed journals by, among others, Dean Ornish, PhD, and Caldwell Esselstyn, MD, on heart disease, and Neal Barnard, MD, and Joel Fuhrman, MD, on diabetes. Moreover, the landmark book *The China Study* cites ample research showing that a whole food, plant-based diet can reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer, and other major illnesses.

DEFINING A WHOLE-FOOD, PLANT-BASED DIET

To participate in this program, you will commit to living a WFPB lifestyle for 21 days -- and no cheating! Why? Because we want you to experience firsthand what “going all the way” will do for your health. For the purposes of this program, a WFPB diet includes:

- Whole grains, legumes, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds
- No animal products (meat, poultry, dairy, eggs)
- No oils, and very little added salt and sweeteners

Individuals with food allergies and sensitivities are welcome to register. A WFPB diet can be gluten-free and can restrict other plant foods as needed.

TEAM

The JCC’s role is to host and manage the logistics of this program, while the program design and execution of the jumpstart are managed by PPMNY. Our team members are:

- Caroline Kohles, Senior Director of Health & Wellness Programming at JCC Manhattan
- Joelle Evans, Program Manager at JCC Manhattan
- Lianna Levine Reisner, Network Director of PPMNY
- Lynn Diamond, Network Empowerment Coordinator of PPMNY
- Chef Carole Levy & Lilian Correa, MS, MPH, RDN, Culinary Educators for PPMNY

- Besa Martini, Jumpstart Project Assistant for PPMNY. You can contact Besa at jumpstart@ppmny.org if you have questions about the program before we get started. *Please do not call the JCC with program questions.*
- Caroline Hartridge, DO, will serve as the jumpstart's medical coordinator, conducting intake calls and before-and-after biometric exams, and looking out for the general welfare of participants, especially those on medications. Dr. Hartridge runs a private practice in NYC. She has worked under Dr. John McDougall and is a Starch Solution Certified Health Care Provider.

21-DAY PLANT-POWERED JUMPSTART CALENDAR SUMMARY

Unless otherwise noted, events will be held at Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, 334 Amsterdam Avenue, 10023:

- Sunday, February 23, 2020: Biometrics and kickoff day. *Breakfast and lunch will be provided.*
 - 8:30 - 10:00 AM - Pre-program biometric exams, *overnight fasting required.*
 - 10:00 - 3:30 PM - Program overview, WFPB nutrition education, core culinary skills session, grocery shopping tour.
- Wednesday, February 26, 7:00 - 9:00 PM: Cooking demonstration with Lily Correa, RDN
- Sunday, March 1, 5:00 - 6:00 PM: Online nutrition education webinar with plant-based clinician Ron Weiss, MD, of Ethos Health and Ethos Farm
- Saturday, March 7, 8:30 - 9:30 AM: Union Square Farmers' Market tour with Chef Carole Levy, graduate of the February 2019 jumpstart
- Sunday, March 15, 8:30 - 11:00 AM: Post-program biometric exams (*overnight fasting required*), and closing celebration and program over breakfast.

*While we strongly encourage your participation in the webinars, which will provide an opportunity for live Q&A, they will be recorded and shared with participants who cannot attend.

PROGRAM FEE

The cost to participate is \$250. A limited number of discount codes are available for those who cannot pay the full price. Please inquire with Lianna Levine Reisner, lianna@ppmny.org.

LIFESTYLE MENTORSHIP

All participants will be matched with a volunteer Lifestyle Mentor from Plant Powered Metro New York's community who is knowledgeable about and has personal experience eating a healthy plant-based diet. Mentors provide support via phone, text, or email for the duration of the program and may provide support beyond the program by agreement. They can go shopping with you, help you detox your kitchen, attend plant-based nutrition events with you, help you navigate dining out, advise on talking to skeptical family members, and more. We highly recommend that participants be prepared to lean on their assigned mentor throughout the course of the jumpstart.

DETAILED PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The 21 days will run from Sunday, February 23rd through Saturday, March 14th. You will receive clear guidance on what to eat, as well as meal planning ideas, cooking instruction, and nutrition education.

All participants are required to attend a kick-off event on Sunday, February 23rd, at the JCC (334 Amsterdam Avenue). Pre-program biometric exams will take place there starting at 8:30 AM, and the full-group program will run from 10:00 AM - 3:30 PM. A WFPB breakfast and lunch will be provided. At the kick-off, we will review all the information you need to be successful, create space for visioning and goal-setting, take a WFPB tour of Fairway, review basic culinary skills and kitchen practices, work on batch cooking and meal planning skills, and make an agreement for connection and support with your mentor.

Basic biometric exams, conducted by Dr. Caroline Hartridge or a medical assistant she chooses, are included in the program fee and will involve measuring your weight and height (and calculating BMI), blood pressure, waist and hip circumference, a fingerstick to measure your fasting glucose, and a well-being index. Other measurements that you may choose to take independently can include a lipid profile (cholesterol), hemoglobin A1C, and C-reactive protein, all of which are capable of being reduced over a three-week period when following a whole food, plant-based diet, though actual results will vary by individual. Moreover, checking your levels of Vitamin B12 and D may also be helpful.

Participants can measure before-and-after cholesterol levels by paying an additional fee to receive a home labwork kit from LetsGetChecked.com. We will provide a 20% off discount code for admitted participants. Please indicate your interest when you complete PPMNY's online registration form. Let's Get Checked will accept HSA/FSA payments. Shipments will arrive in the USPS mail. You can choose to share your test results with Dr. Hartridge to help us track and report on the impact of a WFPB diet on participants' cholesterol levels.

If you would like to track other biomarkers, you can work with your personal physician to acquire labs through a blood draw outside of this program. Dr. Hartridge can also provide a supplementary lab consultation to those who are interested in more advanced lab testing; please discuss this with Dr. Hartridge during the intake process if you are interested.

During the course of the program, we will provide a series of events, both live at the JCC and via online webinars to help you on your journey. Please plan to attend as many as possible to maximize the value of this experience:

- **Wednesday, February 26 from 7:00 - 9:00 PM:** WFPB kitchen skills and cooking demonstration in the JCC's Culinary Center, presented by Lily Correa, MS, MPH, RDN.
- **Sunday, March 1, from 5:00 - 6:00 PM:** online nutrition education webinar, led by Ron Weiss, MD, a physician and farmer who uses food as medicine in clinical practice, including Q&A on topics most relevant to you. You will also have access to the two webinars recorded for our Fall 2019 jumpstart.
- **To be scheduled:** Pending participant interest and hosting space, we may match up small groups of geographically-close participants for informal conversation and support circles, anticipating two gatherings in the final two weeks of the jumpstart for 6-8 people including 1-2 mentors.

Moreover, JCC Manhattan and/or PPMNY will be hosting other related events during and just after the time of the jumpstart. You must register for these events separately; more details and additional

opportunities will be circulated closer to the date. If possible, we encourage you to attend some of these events with your jumpstart mentor:

- **Tuesday, 2/25: Prevent Heart Disease with Food, 7:00 - 8:30 PM** at Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, featuring Hooman Yaghoobzadeh, MD, FACC, cardiologist with Weill Cornell Medicine. [Register here](#), free.
- **Week of 3/2: Plant Powered Network Night, 7:00 - 8:30 PM**, with a WFPB potluck and networking, hosted in Midtown. *Details TBA in early February.*
- **Thursday, 3/26: Plant-Based Eating for Hormonal Health, 7:00 - 9:00 PM**, at Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, with Laurie Courage, PCRM Food For Life instructor. [Register here](#), \$45/\$35 JCC members.
- **Friday, 3/27: Turn the Tables Shabbat Dinner with Dr. Milton Mills, 7:00 PM service, 8:00 WFPB dinner, and 8:30 program**, hosted at JCC Harlem at 318 West 118th Street, and co-sponsored by Repair the World. *Registration will open on the JCC website in mid-February.*
- **Sunday, 3/29: Public presentation with Dr. Milton Mills** at Bronx House in Pelham Parkway, 12:00 PM, details TBA.

Post-program biometric exams will take place on Sunday morning, March 15th, at the JCC, beginning at 8:30 AM, followed by a celebratory closing breakfast and group discussion. Specific instructions will be made available closer to the date. At this event, we will discuss strategies, tips, and additional motivations for maintaining a lifelong commitment to a WFPB diet, to strive for your best health for many years to come, and provide space for you to reflect on the jumpstart experience and share stories.

Final, aggregated, and anonymous results from biometrics will be reported back to the group when they are available.

PRE-PROGRAM LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

We recommend that individuals interested in or registered for the 21-Day Plant-Powered Jumpstart attend any or all of the following events at the JCC to start learning about the principles and practices of whole food, plant-based nutrition:

- **Monday, 2/3: How to Achieve Your Optimal Brain Health**, with Dean & Ayesha Sherzai, MDs, 6:00 - 8:00 PM, hosted by the Office of Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams: [Register here](#), free.
- **Tuesday, 2/4: Your Body in Balance: The New Science of Food, Hormones, and Health**, with Neal Barnard, MD, FACC, at JCC Manhattan, 7:00 - 9:00 PM: [Register here](#), \$35/\$25 JCC members with discount code **PLANT10**, includes a hardcover copy of Dr. Barnard's new book.
- **Monday, 2/10: Surprising Vegan Desserts You'll Love**, with Chef Carole Levy presenting WFPB desserts free of oil, salt, and sugar, at JCC Manhattan, 7:00 - 9:00 PM: [Register here](#), \$45.
- **Tuesday, 2/18: The Game Changers Documentary Screening: Evidence-Based Nutrition for Optimal Fitness** with post-screening Q&A, at Complete Body FiDi, 10 Hanover Square, 6:00 - 8:45 PM. [Register here](#), free screening and \$10 pre-paid WFPB dinner.

MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Numerous studies have shown that people adopting a WFPB diet can experience significant reductions in blood pressure and cholesterol levels and sometimes eliminate or reduce their need for diabetes and cholesterol medications during this short period. **Participants taking medications for hypertension or diabetes should be prepared to work with their healthcare provider to make adjustments over the course of the jumpstart program. You will be asked to provide a letter from your physician indicating that they are aware of your participation in the jumpstart and are prepared to adjust your medications as needed.**

Any other side effects from the dietary transition tend to be minimal, including some discomfort while the body detoxifies and the composition of the intestinal microbiome shifts (e.g., night sweats, flu-like symptoms, bloating) due to the much higher fiber content of a WFPB diet. Most issues should resolve early on, before the end of the three weeks. In particular, if you do not have many legumes in your diet now, be sure to start with small portions early in the program and increase portion size gradually.

REQUIREMENTS & ELIGIBILITY

To participate in the Plant-Powered Jumpstart, you will be required to sign a few simple forms and a waiver. Note that we intend to take photos at live events; please let Besa know if you have any concerns about being photographed.

To be eligible to participate, you must:

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Fully commit to adhere to a WFPB diet for the duration of the program. If you are traveling or predict that some other circumstance will make it challenging to participate during this period, you may not qualify for admission to this jumpstart.
- Be available to attend the kick-off event and post-program biometric exam and attend as many of the other evening programs offered during the program as possible.
- Agree to participate in biometric exams at the specified times.
- Pay the registration fee through the JCC website.
- Sign all program forms.

Although all are welcome, priority will be given to those who do not already eat a vegan or mostly plant-based diet.

This program will be capped at 25 people, and final participation decisions are made at the discretion of Dr. Hartridge. We will be keeping a wait list. If you are accepted and then determine that you cannot participate, please contact Besa as soon as possible. If you are not accepted into the program, don't let that stop you! [This list of resources](#) can help you get started yourself, and Plant Powered Metro New York provides informal support and community, including lifestyle mentorship. We also invite you to consider virtual programs like PCRM's [21-day vegan kickstart](#), a simple app in English and Spanish that provides daily recipes and educational videos. Note that the program fee will be refunded if, for whatever reason, you are not accepted into the program.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

[Please register on the JCC's website](#) no later than **Tuesday, February 18th**. Once you register, if you meet the eligibility requirements, Besa will connect you with Dr. Hartridge for an intake call, which must take place prior to the kick-off event. Upon acceptance into the program, we will send you a packet of information detailing the dietary guidelines, neighborhood resources, a recommended pantry list, and simple recipes.

PREPARED MEAL OPTIONS

Finally, if you would like to purchase prepared WFPB meals during the program, you may make arrangements on your own through one of the following WFPB companies.

- [Aaya's Table](#) - a local in-home meal provider that can meet the needs of kosher clients; *offering a 20% discount for participants through the duration of the program*
- [Plantable](#) - a local frozen meal company that can work with your allergies and sensitivities
- [Mama Sezz](#) - gluten-free company that delivers fresh meals, not frozen
- [Plant Pure](#) - frozen meals by the family behind the Plant Pure Nation documentary

If you are considering using a different meal delivery service, please contact us to verify if it meets the jumpstart's dietary guidelines.

We hope to welcome you into the program! Get ready for an amazing experience!