

# **Healthy Food, Happy Family!**

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# Introduction Letter from The College Greens

Hi! :)

We're "The College Greens," a group of three college students who are passionate about spreading education and awareness of the profound health benefits that come from eating a plant-based diet. Our goal is to make healthy eating simple, tasty, and fun for you and your family! And in doing so, we hope to help create a nation of happier, healthier people.

The first step is understanding what is healthy, what is not, and why. These days, there are so many mixed messages about health and nutrition. We will cut through this overwhelming blanket of information and uncover the truth about which foods truly provide optimal health. The current scientific data overwhelmingly points to a plant-based diet (one heavily based in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes) as being the nutritional goldmine. Eating a plant-based diet will enable your body to work at its prime efficiency and unleash your superhero self-potential.

The book opens with a section just for you, the caregiver. We are here to help provide you with an overview of why a plant-based diet is optimal. There are six major articles covering a variety of topics. We offer an in-depth look at the science behind each topic, as well as some tips for how to "put it into practice." For those who just want to know the basics, we preview each section with a bullet-pointed list of the main take-home points, or "the bare necessities."

But we don't just give you the *why*, we also give you the *how*. To be successful, eating this way has to be sustainable. We address picky eaters, sharing some insight about how to begin introducing new foods to your child's diet. Then we top it all off with some tips for how to keep things simple. Stress is not part of a healthy lifestyle either, and we're here to help you minimize effort and maximize ease!

The next section is for the kids. We compiled a variety of worksheets that help to introduce the basics of nutrition in a fun, informal way that fosters a happy relationship with healthy habits. We want to help kids fall in love with the foods that love them back, creating a foundation for lifelong health. These worksheets include things like word searches, grocery store scavenger hunts, and fun food challenges. Your involvement in these activities will vary depending on your child's abilities and your family dynamic.

The final section of the book, however, is where you really work together with your children. This section is a collection of delicious, nutritious, kid-friendly recipes to cook and share with the whole family. We have included breakfast, lunch, and dinner recipes, as well as snacks and some special treats! We hope that you will enjoy exploring this new lifestyle together, and we think that your taste buds will enjoy it too!

We know that life can get pretty crazy, especially with kids. And we want you to know that we are not asking for or expecting perfection. Rather, we simply hope to help you maximize the good and minimize the bad. Every positive change makes a difference and brings you one step closer to approaching the optimal. Just implement what you can at the pace that suits you and

your family. We are here to offer some guidance to get you headed in the right direction and outline the map for a journey of empowerment that will provide the tools to bring life-long health to you and your family. Where you decide to go with it is up to you!

So let's get started!! Wahoooo, get pumped! Because you are about to embark on the fun-filled family adventure of a lifetime!!! :)

Plant-passion and positive energy,  
Tara, Jenna, and Craig

## Part I. The Facts

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# Whole Grains: The Whole Story

## The Bare Necessities

- Refined and processed carbohydrates have been stripped of nutrients and fiber and cause a sharp spike in blood sugar levels. Eat sparingly, if at all.
- Whole grains and starches are nutrient- and fiber-rich and provide sustainable energy. Eat as much as you want!!

## Carbs Are Your Friends

Yes, seriously. Carbohydrates have gotten a lot of criticism recently, but in fact, they are the body's preferred source of energy! However, there is some merit to the critique; some carbohydrates can be mean and unfaithful. So let us help you see the true colors and find authentic friendships with your carbs.

When we think of carbohydrates, they are often divided into two categories: simple and complex. However, this dichotomy doesn't really tell the whole story about which types of carbohydrates are health promoting, because while most simple carbohydrates are not any good for us, others, such as fresh fruits, are. The two categories that you should focus on, then, are refined/processed carbohydrates and unrefined/unprocessed carbohydrates. Specifically, we'd like to talk grains. Because while things like fruits, vegetables, and beans can also be classified as carbohydrates, the grains are where we often go astray.

## Refined and Processed Grains (The “bad guys”)

The refined grains are the ones that don't do us any good—they are stripped of the fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients that are found in their original unrefined states. These include things like white rice, wheat (white) flour, white pasta, fruit juice, and most cereal products and crackers found on grocery store shelves these days. Refined grains are digested quickly by the body, which causes a sharp spike in blood sugar levels. It is this aspect that makes them dangerous. When blood sugar spikes, the pancreas pumps out insulin to transport and deliver glucose to cells throughout the body, providing them with energy. This quick spike-to-crash of blood sugar and insulin levels leaves you feeling fatigued and hungry. Plus, because processed grains are digested so quickly, they are much more likely to leave your body with leftover, unused sugar, which is converted into fat.

## Whole Grains (The “good guys”)

Whole grains, on the other hand, are an entirely different source of fuel. These include things like brown rice, whole wheat flour, millet, quinoa, whole grain breads and pastas, and rolled (“old fashioned”) oats. Because they are in their whole, natural, unprocessed form, these foods are loaded with fiber, vitamins, and minerals. They are bursting with nutrients to benefit you and your body. Unlike refined grains, whole grains cause a slower, balanced release of sugar into your system over time. Since your body receives the sugar over a longer time span, it is better able to use the carbohydrates as they are released. This way, you not only enjoy more consistent energy throughout the day, but fewer carbs are left unused which reduces the chance of weight gain as well! Double bonus!

### **But What About Low-Carb or Gluten-Free Diets?**

Low-carb diets, as can be determined by the name, restrict carbohydrate intake. The diet is then comprised of mainly protein and fat. But as we have explained, carbohydrates are the body's preferred source of energy, and thus should be the main source of one's calorie intake. In addition, limiting the amount of carbohydrates one consumes also limits the amount of plant-based foods that can be consumed (and thus promotes higher intake of animal-based foods). In general, higher intake of plant-based foods has been shown to increase overall health, whereas higher intake of animal-based foods has been shown to decrease overall health. In addition, the low-carb diet often works on the principle of calorie restriction. This is not only unpleasant but also unsustainable. A number of doctors, such as Dr. John McDougall in particular, have reversed disease and ailment in their patients through implementing a carbohydrate-heavy diet. Carbohydrates, when in their whole, unrefined form, provide more than sufficient amounts of protein, fiber, essential fats, and minerals to meet our daily dietary needs. They are a food to hail, not hide from.

Gluten-free diets are a more recent development in the dietary world. These days, many people are beginning to associate the term "gluten-free" with "healthy." However, this is not the case. There is a small percentage of people in the world who are truly gluten-intolerant. Gluten intolerance, or Celiac Disease, means a genetic mutation exists that prevents a person's intestines from being able to process gluten (found in wheat, barley, and rye). This minority of the population is the only group that needs to strictly avoid gluten. However, some have found that they have mild reactions to gluten or simply feel better when it is removed from the diet, and such people are said to be "gluten sensitive." For anyone in this category, avoiding gluten is a personal preference, not a medical prescription. People can achieve optimal health with or without the inclusion of gluten in their diet, as long as they are consuming whatever carbohydrates they choose to eat in their whole, unrefined state.

### **Carbs Are Good. Eat Them Whole. The End :)**

As you can see, there is a huge difference between eating refined, processed grains and whole grains. While the refined grains have negative effects on the body and your personal well-being, whole grains offer immense benefits! So don't worry about avoiding carbs in general, just make sure that they are from whole, unrefined sources! Now *that* is the whole story :)

### **Put it into practice:**

- When shopping, always look for the word "whole" listed in the ingredients. (Never believe what you read on the front of the package! Always check the ingredient listing).
- Try out something new! If you have a local health food store, the bulk section is a good place to go. Try quinoa, spelt berries, hulled barley, buckwheat groats, millet, or amaranth! Explore and expand your palate :)



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# Sugar: Not as Sweet as it Seems

## The Bare Necessities

- Sugars are a form of carbohydrate that happens to taste sweet. Although our taste buds crave this sweetness, excess sugar consumption is linked to numerous health risks.
- Refined sugars are extracted from whole food sources in a process that strips the product of all nutrients. For this reason, processed foods such as pastries, candies, soft drinks and numerous other sugar-laden packaged goods should be avoided.
- While you need not worry about most whole, unprocessed foods, a few such foods are concentrated in natural sugars and should be eaten only occasionally. These include fruit juices and natural sweeteners such as maple syrup, agave nectar, and honey.

Sugar. You know and love it – the most innocent tasting instigator of America’s diet-related ailments. And between the sugar-loaded breakfast cereals, candies, school snacks, soda pops, desserts, and even infant formulas, our kids just can’t seem to keep away from it. But that’s not to say that adults are all that much better at managing their sweet cravings. So why are we all so set on sugar, and at what point does our sweet tooth begin to lead us astray?

## What is sugar?

Let’s start with the basics. Fundamentally, a sugar is simply a type of carbohydrate, the body’s most readily usable form of energy, that happens to taste sweet. Like all carbohydrates, sugars are made by plants and occur naturally in plant-based foods. Sugars come in many forms, such as glucose, sucrose, fructose, maltose, galactose and lactose, which vary slightly in chemical structure, but the majority of these are converted to glucose upon ingestion. In fact, despite some differences in the way different sugars are metabolized, the effects of consuming sugar are essentially the same, regardless if you’re getting it in the form of table sugar (sucrose), naturally occurring sugars, or even high fructose corn syrup.

## Hooked on Sweets

Yet if sugar is a natural component of healthy, plant-based foods, why is it so problematic? Much like fat, our bodies have evolved to recognize sugar as a marker for energy-rich foods, fine-tuning our pleasure systems to light up at the taste of sweets. The issue, then, comes with our modern food system that provides us with sugary foods that are more accessible and more concentrated than ever before. Figures from the Department of Health and Human Services estimate that 200 years ago, the average American ate 2 pounds of sugar per year; this number has risen to almost 152 pounds of sugar each year, or 3 pounds of sugar each week! With excessive sugar consumption being linked to a host of health problems including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, Alzheimer’s, macular degeneration, allergies and tooth decay, the outcomes of our sugar habit are certainly not as sweet as they seem.

## Refined Sugars

The primary culprit for America’s increased sugar intake is refined sugars. These sugars are extracted from plants (largely from sugar cane and sugar beet) and are stripped of all nutritional value; once the vitamins, minerals, protein, fiber, and water have been removed, these sugars are added as a primary ingredient of candies, pastries, soft drinks, and many other processed foods.

Research has shown that these refined sugars are appetite stimulants, which explains the difficulty of eating only one or two cookies, as well as why fast-food customers drink well beyond their thirst to finish excessively large 16- and 32-ounce sodas. For this reason, it is recommended to remove these unnecessary, refined sugars from your diet entirely, rather than attempt to consume them in small amounts.

### **Natural Sugars**

While refined and added sugars account for a majority of America's excessive sugar consumption, natural sugars are not free from blame. Our bodies do not distinguish between foods that are artificially sweetened and those that are naturally sweet. Whether we are considering a soft drink that has been sweetened with high fructose corn syrup, a fruit juice without added sugars, or all-natural sweeteners such as pure maple syrup or agave nectar, these are all still concentrated sources of sugar that our bodies are not equipped to process in large amounts.

Most whole, unprocessed foods are not a concern. The sugars in fruits, vegetables and whole grains are naturally packaged alongside large amounts of fiber and water that moderate the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream. Yet a few unprocessed foods are naturally high in sugar; these include dried fruits such as dates, figs and raisins, which can be up to 5 or 6 times as concentrated in sugar as most other fruits. Natural sweeteners such as maple syrup, honey and agave nectar, which are highly concentrated and, as such, should only be used in small amounts. Even pure fruit juice is an overly concentrated source of sugar, as it too lacks the fiber and water that whole fruit provides.

### **How Much is Too Much?**

Yet if too much sugar is unhealthy, how much is allowable? Generally, less than 5% of calories should come from added sugars. Previous recommendations by the Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) state that one can safely consume up to 25% of calories from added sugars; this recommendation, however, was established in spite of strong evidence that such high amounts of sugar intake are associated with obesity and diabetes, among other health issues, and the recommendation was determined with substantial input from a food industry that profits from public consumption of sugar-rich foods. The World Health Organization (WHO) offers a more appropriate recommendation of less than 10% of calories from added sugars, although this too is perhaps more lenient than it should be. At 5% or less of calories from added sugars, studies show no evidence of harm to health. As a measure of reference, 10% of calories from added sugars amount to 13.3 teaspoons of sugar each day (assuming a 2000 calorie diet); recent averages have estimated daily sugar intake at 42.5 teaspoons.

However, we do not recommend counting calories as a means of tracking sugar consumption. Rather, by eliminating sources of refined sugars from your diet, as well as minimizing naturally sugar-concentrated foods, you'll stay below the 5% recommendation and be free from the harmful effects of excess sugar. Pretty soon you'll kick your sugar cravings and get all the sweetness you need from whole, healthy foods!

### Put it into practice:

- Keep the sweets out of the house! Clear your kitchen of soft drinks, sport drinks, juices, candy, cake, cookies, and ice cream. Also beware of large amounts of added sugars in breakfast cereals, granola bars, applesauce, pasta sauce and condiments such as barbecue sauce and honey mustard.
- Reorient your palette: by removing sweets from your diet, you'll also be removing your body's tendency to crave these sugary foods. Your taste buds regenerate every ten days, so give it some time and you'll soon have a new appreciation for the natural sweetness in foods (and you won't miss the added sugars you're leaving behind). Kids develop taste preferences throughout childhood, and even in the womb. Practice nutritional excellence during pregnancy, avoid baby foods and infant formulas that encourage feeding through added sugars, and stock your kitchen with healthy snacks to discourage your kids from forming a dependence on sweets.
- Always read the ingredients! Refined sugar can show up in many forms other than the typical white sugar, brown sugar, turbinado sugar, etc. Look out for these ingredients that manufacturers sneak into processed foods, because they're really nothing more than sugar: high fructose corn syrup, evaporated cane juice, brown rice syrup, barley malt extract, fruit juice concentrate, agave nectar, maple syrup, honey, molasses, sorghum syrup, cane sugar, sucrose, fructose, dextrin, dextrose, maltodextrin, glucose, lactose, maltose, saccharose, xylose, and others.
- Don't be fooled by artificial sweeteners! These chemical substitutes for sugar are no more healthy, and possibly worse, for you to consume.

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# Fat: Separating Fact from Fiction

## The Bare Necessities

- Fat is an essential part of a healthy diet, as long as you're eating it in reasonable amounts from whole, plant-based sources.
- There are three types of fat:
  - unsaturated- generally comes from plant-based sources, this is where you want your fat intake to come from.
  - saturated- generally comes from animal-based sources; not good for you, avoid this as much as possible.
  - trans (hydrogenated)- generally comes from processed foods, meat, and dairy; really bad for you, completely unnecessary.

Fat. The three-letter “f” word everyone fears. But with a little knowledge, this little word need not cause any anxiety. The truth of the matter is that fat is an essential nutrient we need to consume. And it is found in nearly all foods. But a little bit goes a long way, and more is not better. So here is what you need to know about separating fact from fiction about fat.

## What Is Fat?

When people say the word “fat”, many things may come to mind. But what is fat itself? It is a macronutrient made up of fatty acids. Fat is a rich energy source, with over twice the amount of calories per gram (9cal/g) than both carbohydrates and protein (4cal/g each), but it is not the preferred or ideal energy source for the body (rather, carbohydrates are the ideal energy source). Fat plays an important role in the body by helping with the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals, and serving as a building block for important hormones.

## The Essential Fatty Acids

The amazing human body can make all but two of the fatty acids needed to sustain life. These two fatty acids, omega-3 (alpha-linolenic) fatty acid and omega-6 (linoleic) fatty acid, are essential to the body and must be consumed in the diet. They are required for cellular communication, skin function, growth, and reproduction. These are the only two fatty acids that you need to consume through diet, but they are found in many foods and you only need a few grams each day, so if you are eating a diet of primarily whole, plant-based foods, you have little to worry about. The one thing that is important to pay attention to, however, is the ratio between your omega-3 and omega-6 intake. Omega-3 fatty acids help prevent inflammation and disease, but over consumption of omega-6 fatty acids *promotes* inflammation and disease. Furthermore, omega-6 fatty acids compete with omega-3 fatty acids for use in the body, so if your ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids gets too high, then the inflammatory properties of the omega-6's will overpower the positive effects of the omega-3's. Omega-6 fatty acids are found in most foods (and most people are actually consuming too much), so in order to balance out the ratio, it is extremely important to consume a good source of omega-3 fatty acids every day. Some examples include walnuts, hemp seeds, chia seeds, flax seeds (must be ground to be digested), and leafy green vegetables.

Fish (and fish oil) is often advertised as a good source of essential fatty acids. However, the high amounts of fat and cholesterol and the lack of fiber make fish a poor choice. Fish also often contains high levels of contaminants such as mercury, heavy metals, and other environmental toxins that are carcinogenic. Fish and fish oil should not be included in an optimal diet.

### **Fat Intake**

While it is important to consume these essential fatty acids, only a small amount of fat is necessary for the body. More commonly though, fat is extremely over-consumed. Research confirms that a diet high in fat promotes excess weight, obesity, and chronic disease. It is also associated with higher blood cholesterol levels, breast and bowel cancer rates, and heart disease. However, research is beginning to show that the *amount* of fat is not as important as the *source* of fat. Fat from animal products and processed vegetable oils is strongly associated with chronic disease, whereas fat from whole plant-based foods is either neutral or health-protective. This doesn't mean you can eat all the plant-based fats you want; rather it is important to consume the proper amount of fat your body needs from whole food, plant-based sources only.

### **Types and Sources of Fat**

Like we said, fat is pretty much found in all foods. But there are several different types of fatty acids: unsaturated fatty acids, saturated fatty acids, and trans fatty acids and they all have different effects on the body. Unsaturated fatty acids are typically liquid at room temperature and found in plant-based sources. They are further described as monounsaturated fatty acids (found in olives, peanuts, avocados, pecans, and almonds) and polyunsaturated fatty acids (including the essential omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, and found in walnuts, ground flaxseed, chia seeds, and hemp seeds). Polyunsaturated fatty acids found in their natural state from whole, plant-based sources are thought to protect against coronary heart disease, certain cancers, and other inflammatory diseases. Overall, these unsaturated fatty acids are the sources you want your fat intake to come from.

Saturated fatty acids are typically solid at room temperature and are primarily found in animal products (the only plants are tropical sources like coconut, cacao butter, and palm oil). Saturated fatty acids are known to raise blood cholesterol and promote heart disease (this is in addition to the cholesterol you will be consuming from the animal product itself). They also increase the risk of chronic diseases such as some cancers, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes, and gallstones. Saturated fatty acids are unnecessary to be consumed and are very unhealthy for the body, so they should be avoided as much as possible.

Trans fatty acids are found in nature only in animal fat and can also be man-made in a laboratory through a chemical process called hydrogenation (used to solidify a product and extend its shelf life). These trans fatty acids are found in meat and dairy products and also in processed, fried, and fast foods. These are the most harmful type of fat that can be consumed. Trans fatty acids are known to increase heart disease risk, interfere with liver function, interrupt essential fatty acid metabolism, and worsen insulin resistance. But if you stick to eating whole, plant foods in their natural form you won't ever have to worry about these pesky trans fatty acids.

## **Stick To Plant-Based Sources of Fat in Their Natural State**

While it may seem complex and confusing that there are so many different types of fat, the take-home message from this all is to eat a diet rich in whole, plant-based foods and you won't have to worry about these specific nutrients. Nature has packaged up all the nutrients we need along with the wonderfully beneficial micronutrients such as vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, antioxidants, and fiber, together in wholesome and delicious plants.

On the other hand, processed and packaged foods are high in calories but stripped of these important micronutrients. A prime example of this is greasy, fried, fast-food "happy meals". They are calorie- and fat-rich but completely devoid of nutrients and they certainly do not make our bodies happy. Another example of this, in regards to fat specifically, is oil. Oil itself is not a health-promoting food. It is 100% fat, the most calorie-dense food available, and devoid of any other nutrients. A recent study concluded that adding oil to one's diet will significantly increase the amount of calories being consumed without providing any nutrients or other health benefits. It is not necessary to consume oil and should be avoided when possible (this means ALL oils should be avoided, even the ever-popular olive oil and coconut oil).

As the childhood obesity epidemic grows and type 2 diabetes becomes more prevalent in children, it is now, more than ever, becoming obvious that we need to make the health, diet, and lifestyles of our children a priority. Beyond the overt obesity crisis, there is evidence that our youth already have early signs of heart disease. In autopsies done on Vietnam and Korean war soldiers, even the soldiers who were in their late teens and early twenties already had visible signs of atherosclerosis in their arteries. This is largely due to diets high in fat from animal products but can be easily prevented and reversed with a low fat, whole food plant-based diet.

High-fat, plant-based foods (such as nuts, seeds, olives, and avocado), while healthy choices, are still calorie dense. One in three children today is overweight, and this is something that we must be conscious of. For most children though, caloric density is not something to worry too much about. Children's growing bodies have high caloric needs in order to ensure adequate energy intake---but remember, not all fat calories are the same and it is very important to keep in mind where they are coming from. Foods such as cheese or ice-cream may have the same fat content as almond butter or avocado, but they wreak havoc within the body. The bottom line: Unless your child(ren) are overweight or obese, these high-fat, plant-based foods can be healthfully incorporated into snacks such as whole grain trail mix, apples and peanut butter, or avocado smeared on whole grain crackers or toast; or used as a topping for meals.

Despite all the different types of fats and their effects on the body, it is essential to remember that the focus should be on whole foods in their natural state, rather than on any one specific nutrient. By eating whole, plant-based foods you will supply your body with adequate amounts of essential fatty acids, along with many other important vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.



**Put It Into Practice:**

- Try to consume a good source of omega-3 fatty acids every day. Top your morning meal with ground flaxseed, chia seeds, chopped walnuts, or hemp seeds. And, as always, fill your day with leafy greens!
- Some simple tips for cooking with no oil: use water or low-sodium vegetable broth to sauté things; use applesauce or mashed banana in baked goods; try balsamic vinegar, salsa, hummus, or fresh squeezed lemon juice as dressing on salad.

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# Dairy: Unveiling the Truth

## The Bare Necessities

- The Dairy Industry has put billions of dollars towards marketing dairy products as healthy, but science (that which has not been funded and carried out by the dairy industry itself) tells us otherwise.
- Dairy intake has been found to increase the risk of Type-1 Diabetes in children.
- Calcium can be found in similar, and often higher, concentrations in many foods other than dairy products. Contrary to popular belief, higher intake of dairy products has been linked to higher rates of osteoporosis (which is thought to be due to dairy's acid-producing effects within the body), and thus it is best to seek calcium intake from other sources.
- Casein, the protein in dairy products, is a proven and potent carcinogen (cancer-causing agent).
- Even though it has become a commonality for humans, when you look at the rest of the animal world, drinking the breast milk of another species is unnatural in principle.

## We've All Been Fooled

The dairy industry spends over \$160 million in advertising costs each year. The industry's primary vehicle for transmitting its messages is the public school system. In a 2003 Unified Marketing Plan designed to help increase dairy demand, the industry listed initiatives and strategies "to guide school-age children to become life-long consumers of dairy products." These strategies included conducting and publicizing research favorable to their own products. It's really quite brilliant, actually. We don't even think twice about the fact that milk is required in school lunches, or question who is running the "Got Milk?" campaign. It's not scientists or nutritionists who are running the campaign and promoting dairy products, it's the dairy industry itself! When explaining these programs to the public, the industry refers to it as nutrition education, but in their industry press-releases or official reports to Congress, they rightly describe all school-related activities as marketing activities. But the dairy industry doesn't target only children. It also spends \$4-5 million a year to fund research projects aiming to find something healthy to talk about regarding their products. This "science" is what they target towards adults; this is where the information in commercials or advertisements touting the health benefits of dairy come from.

Don't feel bad, it's not your fault. The industry is really good at promoting their product, making dairy seem like a health food. We've all been fooled. But now we hope to unveil the truth and give you accurate information regarding dairy products to help you become informed consumers.

## For Your Kids

Dairy has been found to increase susceptibility to type-1 diabetes in children. In a study comparing the incidence of type-1 diabetes in children in different countries with their level of milk consumption, there is an undeniable relationship showing that the higher the level of dairy milk intake, the higher the prevalence of type-1 diabetes. What studies have discovered is that there is an amino acid sequence in cows milk that the body fights back against, creating antibodies against these amino acids. Unfortunately, the amino acid sequence is found on the cells of the pancreas (which is where insulin is produced). Thus, the antibodies now programmed

to target this amino acid sequence of the foreign intruder (milk) end up attacking their own body and leaving the child unable to produce insulin for the rest of their lives. It is now known that this happens primarily in children who are already susceptible either by genetics or through exposure to certain viruses. Regardless, there are many dangers to dairy beyond this one, and thus feeding children dairy is simply not worth the risks.

The main reason that we're told dairy is important is for calcium. We want to build strong bones, right? Well, the dairy industry is really good at advertisement. Clinical research in numerous studies has actually found that milk consumption does not bring bone protection benefits. Calcium is important for bone health, but there are a variety of other, healthier food choices from which you can obtain it. These include broccoli, kale, collard greens and other leafy green vegetables, and beans. Furthermore, some studies have found that dairy actually has *negative* effects on bone health. For example, in a study looking at the relationship between diet and stress fractures among female adolescents, those who consumed the most calcium (the majority of which came from dairy products) had more than double the risk of getting a stress fracture. And countries with the highest rates of dairy consumption also have the highest rates of osteoporosis! This has been attributed to the acidic nature of the protein in animal products. When consumed, animal products create an acidic environment in the bloodstream. In response, the body leaches calcium from the bones in order to neutralize the acid. Consumption of dairy products, especially those which are low- or non-fat (meaning they have a higher percentage of protein), can actually lead to lower levels of calcium in the body.

Dairy products are also extremely high in fat. The number one source of saturated fat in the diet of most Americans is dairy products. This, paired with the high amounts of cholesterol found in these products as well, leads to increased risk of obesity, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

### **For Their (and your) Future**

Prostate and breast cancers, in particular, have been linked to dairy intake. Cow's milk contains Insulin-like Growth Factor 1 (IGF-1), higher levels of which have been found to increase prostate cancer risk. Milk also contains nutrients that increase levels of IGF-1 in the body, further exacerbating the problem. A study researching this connection showed that men with the highest levels of IGF-1 had double the risk of developing prostate cancer than men with the lowest levels. In addition, dairy products account for approximately 65% of estrogens consumed. Estrogens have the ability to increase cell proliferation, and thus increased levels lead to increased risk of breast, ovarian, and prostate cancers. For breast cancer specifically, the single most effective way to decrease risk is to reduce intake of fatty foods. With dairy being the number one source of saturated fat, eliminating it from the diet is critical for prevention. Also note that higher IGF-1 levels in the body also cause acne. Though not nearly as detrimental to physical health, it is something that highly affects people's mental health in terms of personal perceptions and self-confidence.

In addition, casein (the protein in dairy products) has been proven in experimental settings to promote cancer growth. These experiments were done using levels of casein that were practical and/or typical of American consumption patterns. Further experimentation showed that heavily

reducing or stopping consumption of casein halted and *reversed* the growth of cancer cells. (The information regarding these studies is vast and in-depth. To read more about this radical research, pick up a copy of *The China Study* by Dr. T. Colin Campbell)

### **It May Be Cheesy, But It Isn't Funny**

Ever feel addicted to cheese? If so, you probably are. Seriously. Dairy products contain traces of morphine, a highly addictive opiate. It seems that the opiates in milk may be present for biological means—further securing the mother-child relationship and responsible for the calming effect that nursing has on infants. In addition, as mentioned above, milk contains the protein casein. During digestion, casein is broken down and releases casomorphins, which also have an opiate-like effect, into the body. While all dairy products contain casein, it is most highly concentrated in cheese. (It takes ten pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese). The good news is, cheese addictions are relatively easy to break. Though it may be tough at first, if you go about three weeks without cheese, your taste buds will adjust and you will no longer crave it. Cheese is, on average, 70% fat, and pound for pound has more cholesterol than steak—not health-promoting in the least. So do yourself a favor and break your cheese addiction. Just push past the initial hump and you'll be good to go!

### **Some Final Food for Thought**

And finally, let's just think rationally about the concept of consuming dairy products. Cow's milk is, for cows, the equivalent to breast milk for humans. It is what a mother cow produces for her babies, which nature has derived to be the perfect combination and ratio of nutrients for newborn calves. Cows milk helps calves to grow from their 60-80 pound birth weight to a 1,000 pound cow in a year. (Hence dairy being a major contributor to America's obesity problem...) Humans are the only species to drink the milk of another species. No wonder so many people are lactose intolerant! This milk was not made for us! (Not to mention, today the industry pumps tons of chemicals and hormones into the cows, which most definitely are not natural or good for us to be consuming). Nature provided us with our own milk to help give us a healthy start in the world, but after our first two years of life there is simply no need to drink our own milk anymore, let alone that of an entirely different animal.

So does milk *really* do a body good? Unfortunately, no; the dairy industry has led you, as well as the majority of the population, astray. Do yourself and your family a favor and ditch the dairy. Your bodies will thank you.

### **Put It Into Practice:**

- There are tons of alternative “milk” options out there these days. Almond milk, Rice milk, Soy milk, Oat milk, Hazelnut milk, Flax milk, and Hemp milk are some of the most common varieties. Next time you're at the store, take your taste buds on an exciting adventure and pick out a new non-dairy milk to try! :)
- Looking for some cheese alternatives as well? Spread some oil-free hummus or avocado on your bread in the place of cheese to keep your sandwich hearty. Buy some nutritional yeast to sprinkle over pasta, popcorn, or cheeseless pizzas. You can also buy a delicious parmesan cheese substitute called Parma! (which can be found at [www.eatparma.com](http://www.eatparma.com))—or

make it yourself by putting walnuts, nutritional yeast, and a pinch of salt into the food processor—to sprinkle over spaghetti or casseroles.

- Making banana “ice-cream” is super simple! Just peel and freeze a few bananas, and then later put the frozen bananas in a food processor or blender. They will take on the creamy consistency of ice-cream, taste just as sweet, and it’s 100% healthy!! A perfect dessert for you and your kids. And if you want to switch things up and get creative, you can blend in other frozen fruits as well!

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# Protein: Its Proper Place in Nutrition

## The Bare Necessities

- Plant-based foods have more than enough protein to meet your body's needs. Although meat and dairy products are generally regarded as the "ideal" source of protein, animal-based proteins have actually been linked to negative health effects. As such, plant-based foods (including vegetables, grains and legumes) should be the main source of protein intake in your diet.
- More protein is not better. Excess protein consumption is linked to several health risks. For this reason, protein bars, protein powders and other protein-rich processed foods should be avoided.

Mankind has a history of celebrating protein. Just take the word, "protein," for instance – it comes from a Greek word, *proteios*, meaning "of prime importance." Ever since its discovery in 1839, scientists have strived to understand the importance of protein in the body's growth and functioning, and for good reason! Proteins are the principle components of our cells' basic structure and functions, and are indeed vital pieces of our lives in many, many ways.

Yet as beloved as it is, never has a nutrient been as misunderstood as protein. Ironically, dietary protein has also been one of the most heavily studied topics of nutrition science. Nearly two centuries of Western tradition has secured protein's place on a pedestal and allowed us to let many findings on protein fall through the cracks - particularly those that don't fall in line with the high protein diet encouraged by the meat and dairy industries. Nevertheless, the facts on protein are out there and it is clear that the evidence does not match up with America's perception of protein, nor the dietary practices that result.

### **Misconception #1: Protein means meat.**

The notion that protein comes primarily or even entirely from animal products is commonplace, but is completely untrue. While it is true that animal foods are concentrated in protein, all natural foods contain protein in varying amounts. Many plant-based foods, such as beans, lentils and leafy greens, are excellent sources of protein that spare you the saturated fat and cholesterol of high protein animal foods. As a percentage of calories, brown rice is 9% protein, potatoes are 11%, black beans are 26%, and spinach is 51%! Considering that the World Health Organization recommends consuming only about 5% of calories from protein (or 6% during pregnancy), it's clear that everyday plant-based foods contain more than enough. More commonly, however, Americans consume an average of 15-20% of calories from protein. But what's so bad about that, you may ask?

### **Misconception #2: More is better.**

In a study of 42 college athletes, two-thirds of the athletes surveyed didn't know how much protein they should be getting, while the other one-third surveyed thought they should be getting far greater amounts than the Recommended Daily Intake – 26 times as much! The average American tends to be no different – not knowing how much is enough and not knowing how much he actually gets, yet still worrying that he isn't getting enough.

Interestingly, it turns out that protein deficiency is virtually nonexistent in any individual consuming enough calories. Even in the absence of concentrated protein sources such as animal foods, nuts and legumes, a calorie-sufficient diet of fruits, vegetables and whole grains will be more than enough to meet your body's protein needs. But while protein deficiency isn't an issue, excess protein consumption certainly is.

Unlike carbohydrates and fats, your body isn't capable of storing excess protein, so any dietary protein that you don't use must be processed by your body as waste. Over time, large excesses of protein can put strain on your kidneys, your liver, and even your bones. Because animal proteins are acid forming, calcium is leached from your bones to neutralize these acids, which can lead to osteoporosis. Excess protein levels also correspond to increased levels of a hormone called IGF-1 that can promote cancer cell growth. In fact, the predominant protein of cow's milk, casein, is considered a highly relevant carcinogen (cancer-causing substance) under the traditional criteria used to define chemical carcinogens. In addition to kidney disease, osteoporosis, and numerous types of cancer, excessive protein intake is associated with a host of autoimmune diseases and allergic responses.

So while it's true that animal products are a "good" source of protein in the sense that they contain it in extremely high amounts, we are misled into thinking that these "good" sources of protein are indeed good for us. Even worse, many of us have been further misled into believing that healthy plant-based sources of protein aren't good enough.

### **Misconception #3: The "incomplete" protein.**

Amino acids are the building blocks of protein. Out of the twenty amino acids that we need, our body can make twelve of them, and has to get the other eight from the foods we eat; these eight are referred to as the "essential amino acids." There is a standing misconception that care must be taken to consume "complete" proteins, which contain all eight essential amino acids, from either animal-based sources or carefully proportioned vegetarian meals. This belief is passed down from research that is now a century old, and has since been disproven, although the misinformation still lingers. Modern studies show that the body is capable of recycling these essential amino acids, such that any wholesome meal, whether it contains plant or animal protein, is sufficient to provide a complete amino acid profile and meet our body's total protein needs. In other words, plant-based foods are completely satisfactory as your primary source of protein.

### **The Bottom Line**

America has been sold on protein as the wonder nutrient, only to turn a blind eye on the consequences of our high-protein habit. Nevertheless, a level-headed look at the evidence makes it easy to see that there are considerable problems associated with eating excessive amounts of protein, and especially with eating it in the form of animal protein. Luckily for us, it's also easy to see a simple solution: fill your plate with fruits, vegetables (including starchy vegetables), whole grains and legumes, and you'll be giving your body all the protein it needs, with no harm done.

### **Put It Into Practice:**

- Many products are advertised as being high in protein. While it may be true, don't be fooled into thinking this is healthy!
- Skim milk and low-fat dairy products reduce the fat content at the expense of increasing the percentage of animal protein, and are therefore still not healthy options.
- Protein powders, protein bars and amino acid supplements provide excessive amounts of protein that are taxing on the body as opposed to beneficial. Even endurance athletes and weight-lifters can easily meet their protein needs by eating an adequate amount of calories according to their level of activity in the form of whole, natural foods.
- Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes throughout the day, avoid animal products and other protein-packed processed foods, and don't give a second thought to your protein intake. Simply by eating a varied, plant-based diet, you can be assured that you're giving your body plenty of protein without overdoing it.

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# Puberty: The Causes and Dangers of Early Onset

## The Bare Necessities

- Early onset of puberty is associated with many negative health effects, such as hormone-related cancers, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, and a shorter lifespan overall.
- The *most* important and consistent factor associated with premature puberty is animal protein consumption (due to the higher hormone levels, IGF-1 levels, and endocrine-disrupting chemicals found in meat and dairy).
- Plant-based protein has been shown to have the opposite effect - higher intake of plants and lower intake of animal products can bring about a delayed onset of puberty, reduce risk of disease, and extend life expectancy.

Lately, there has been a growing trend of children starting puberty and sexual development earlier and earlier - and this is no trivial matter. There are serious health implications associated with early onset of puberty, including a number of adulthood diseases such as hormone-related cancers, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, and a shorter lifespan overall.

Much talk about early puberty has centered around our nation's youth being heavier and fatter than ever. However, as important as this growing childhood obesity trend is, this may not be the *most* important factor in the onset of puberty. There is evidence of European children becoming heavier as well, yet there has not been a steady decline in the age of puberty onset there. The most important factor to discuss is not how much our children are eating, but rather *what* our children are eating.

## The Animal Protein Link

The most consistent link between diet and premature puberty is animal protein consumption. It has been found that even a very small intake of animal protein has a very large impact on a girl's risk for early menarche (first period). The age of a girl's first period is very much of concern because earlier age of menarche leads to a higher risk for breast cancer. Furthermore, consumption of animal-based foods throughout the reproductive years can lead to higher levels of hormones in the blood and delay menopause. Studies have shown that this increase in reproductive life along with elevated hormone-levels is associated with a significantly increased breast cancer risk.

Children who eat lots of animal protein (meat, eggs, and dairy) from a young age have been found to start puberty a year earlier than children who eat lots of plant protein. Early puberty means, on average, a shorter overall lifespan. On the other hand, plant protein has been shown to have the opposite effect. Children with the highest intake of plant-based protein (legumes, whole grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds) experienced puberty later than average. Soy seems to have the most protective benefits due to its high levels of phytonutrients.

Why the connection between animal protein and early onset of puberty? Specifically of concern are milk and dairy products, which are produced from cows who are perpetually impregnated and have higher hormone (estrogen and progesterone) levels. A study showed that within one hour of drinking milk, male subjects' estrogen levels increased significantly (more than tripled) and their testosterone levels significantly decreased. These elevated hormone levels (estrogen)

are thought to have adverse effects on the development of hormone-dependent cancers. Meat is also known to increase the level of IGF-1 (insulin-like growth factor 1), which is associated with early onset of puberty.

Of additional concern is the fact that animal protein may be a vehicle for endocrine-disrupting chemicals that build up the food chain and concentrate in animal-based products. Significant associations have been found between exposure to environmental pollutants and early sexual maturation (for example, flame retardant chemicals found in poultry and fish are linked with early puberty).

### **The Plant-Based Solution**

The good news is that beneficial dietary habits (higher intake of plants and lower intake of animal products) can bring about a delayed response in the onset of puberty. And this later age of puberty onset is associated with a reduced risk of breast cancer and a longer lifespan. A delay in the onset of puberty by approximately 7-8 months (which is realistically achievable through simple and easy dietary modifications) is thought to translate to at least a 6% reduction in breast cancer risk and up to a 3% decrease in total mortality.

### **Put It Into Practice:**

- Fill your kitchen with vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds.
- Try to limit all animal products (meat, dairy, eggs) as much as possible. Experiment with meat alternatives: try lentil tacos, black bean burgers, or marinated portobello mushroom wraps. Test out one of the many non-dairy milk options available. Have fun and be creative!

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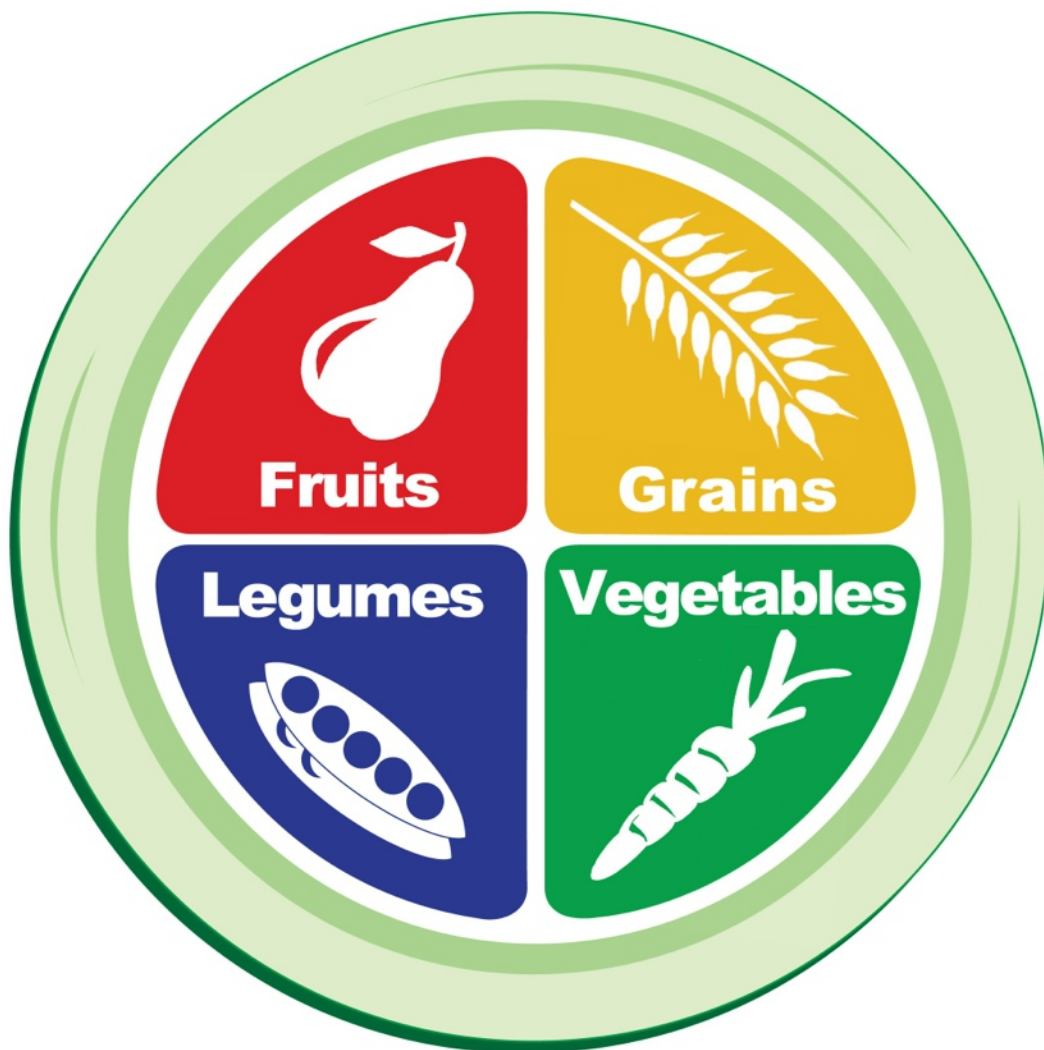
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## PCRM Power Plate

PCRM, The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, is a non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. The organization includes 15,000 healthcare professionals and concerned citizens, who advocate for preventative medicine (especially good nutrition), conduct clinical research, and advocate for ethical standards in research.

Leading the way for federal nutrition policy reforms, the group has created its own “Power Plate” graphic to demonstrate the basis of optimal nutrition (shown below). According to PCRM, these four food groups provide all the nutrients your body needs (with the exception of B12, which can be acquired through a daily supplement). They say that there is no need for animal-derived products in the diet, and that we are better off without them. Thus, these are the four groups around which you should base your family’s meals.



## ***The Four Food Groups:***

**Fruits-** Fruits come in a wide variety of sizes, shapes, and colors. Their colors are not only fun, but also signify the rich antioxidants that fruits provide. Fruits are also excellent sources of a wide range of vitamins and other nutrients, as well as fiber. Fruit can be eaten by itself as a sweet snack, mixed into oatmeal or cereal, on top of salads, or any other way that you prefer! Try to eat at least 3 servings each day.

**Whole Grains-** Whole grains and starches include unrefined grains and starches like rice, quinoa, barley, potatoes, corn, and buckwheat groats, as well as minimally refined whole grain products such as whole grain breads, pastas, cereals, polenta, and tortillas. Whole grains are often rich in fiber, protein, B vitamins, and zinc. Build each of your meals around a hearty grain dish, including at least 5 servings each day.

**Vegetables-** Like fruits, vegetables come in a fun variety of shapes, sizes, and colors (antioxidants, woo!). They tend to be less sweet than fruit, but just as crisp and refreshing. Vegetables are the nutrient powerhouse of foods, loaded with tons of vitamins, minerals, and nutrients such as vitamin C, beta-carotene, fiber, iron, and calcium. Dark, leafy greens are especially nutrient dense. Eat at least 4 servings of vegetables every day, and try to include them in as many snacks and meals as possible.

**Legumes-** This group includes beans, peas, and lentils, as well as minimally processed legume-based foods such as tofu or tempeh. These are all great sources of fiber, protein, iron, calcium, zinc, and B vitamins. Try to consume at least 2 servings of legumes each day.

\*Foods such as nuts, seeds, and plant-based milks/yogurts also have their place in a healthy diet, but are not considered to be chief components.

Science supports a low-fat, plant-based diet for optimal health. The American Dietetic Association (ADA), the nation's largest organization of nutrition experts, states that "vegetarian diets, including total vegetarian or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well-planned vegetarian diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the lifecycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and for athletes."

Source:

"The Power Plate." *PCRM*. The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine Label Reading Tips

# Label Reading 101

While in general it is best to avoid packaged foods, the reality is that they are often difficult to completely avoid. And, for the record, not *all* packaged foods are bad! To help you navigate the grocery store and determine which packaged foods are healthy choices, we've outlined some guidelines for label reading. In the kids' section of the workbook, there is a brief label reading worksheet for the youngsters as well. Together, you and your family can become label reading pros and eliminate some shopping trip stress!

Jeff Novick, MS, RD, is a nutrition expert at the forefront of the lifestyle medicine movement. One of his mantras for grocery shopping is to “Never, ever believe anything on the front of the package, ever!” For the most part, companies are allowed to say whatever they want on the front of their package. And we have to remember, these companies are interested in selling their product and will advertise whatever they think will make people buy it. Furthermore, buzz words such as “fat-free,” “all natural,” “high protein,” “gluten-free,” and “no high fructose corn syrup” do not necessarily mean that the product is actually healthy. The following guidelines for label reading are guided by the wisdom and teachings of Jeff Novick.

When shopping, always turn the product over and look at the back of the package. This is where the real and valuable information lies.

## *Steps for label reading:*

- 1. Check the serving size (and servings per package)**—Companies can be really tricky with this. There is often more than one serving in a single serving-size product, such as drinks or individually sized packages. And these amounts are usually smaller than what a typical person would consider to be a serving. One classic example is with cooking spray. One serving of oil spray is .25 grams (1/120<sup>th</sup> of an ounce, or ¼ second spray), far less than anyone would, or probably could, spray on a pan. Another example is soda. One 20oz bottle of soda technically has 2.5 servings in it, but for most people, this is a “single serving” that they do not plan to share with others.
- 2. Check the calories from fat**—Try to keep the fat content at 20% or less of total calories. This can be found one of two ways. First, by dividing the number of calories from fat by the total calories and multiplying by 100 (i.e. 150 total calories and 50 calories from fat would be 33% of calories from fat). You can also determine this by looking at the grams of fat (there should be only 2g of fat for every 100 calories). Obviously there are some cases in which healthy foods can have more than 20% of calories from fat, such as with raw nuts, seeds, and avocado. But because we want our daily fat intake to fall somewhere around 20% of total calorie intake, this is a good rule to keep in mind.

- 3. Check the sodium content**—Our sodium intake should not exceed 1,500mg per day. Don't pay attention to the percentage of Daily Value (DV) column, for sodium or for any other category on the label. These values are often not guided by true standards of health. A good and simple guideline to follow for sodium is to keep the mg of sodium equal to or less than the number of calories per serving.

\*\*The most important thing to pay attention to on a food label is the ingredient list. The following guidelines apply to reading the list of ingredients below the nutrition facts.

- 4. Can you understand the ingredients?**—If there are a bunch of long, weird, complicated words that leave you scratching your head, this your first indication this food is probably not a great choice. The most wholesome, healthy ingredients are things that can be found in nature, not chemical combinations made my scientists in laboratories.
- 5. Check the types of fat**—Look at what sources of fat, if any, are in the product. Make sure that there are no saturated fats, hydrogenated fats, or tropical oils (such as lard, butter, margarine, coconut oil, palm oil, cocoa butter, and whole/part-skim dairy products). Oils are calorie dense and nutrient deficient, and ideally you should choose oil-free products. Ingredient lists are organized in descending order of weight—the closer an ingredient is to the beginning of the list, the bigger that component is in the whole of the product, and vice versa. So if you cannot find foods that are completely oil-free, make sure that oil is one of the last few ingredients.
- 6. Check the added sugar**—Don't be concerned with naturally occurring sugars, but rather with extra sweeteners that are added to the product. In the sugar section on the nutrition facts chart, only the total amount of sugar is listed and you cannot tell how much is added versus how much is naturally occurring. Therefore, the best place to check for sugar is the list of ingredients. Look at the ingredient listing and check for sugar/sweeteners (\*There are MANY different names that are basically synonymous with sugar. For a comprehensive list, see the sugar article on page 12.) Again, we know that the ingredient list is organized in descending order of weight. Try not to purchase products with sugar as one of the first three ingredients. However, some companies try to trick us. They know that listing sugar as the first ingredient does not look good to the new generation of health-conscious shoppers. They have started listing sugar multiple times in different ways so that each sweetener can be placed lower in the list (For example, corn syrup, evaporated cane juice, and barley malt extract may all be listed in different places in an ingredient list—if these were all lumped together and just called “sugar”, for that is what they all essentially are, then sugar may be listed as the first or second ingredient). For this reason, we would also recommend that you try not to purchase products with three or more “sugar” ingredients.
- 7. Check the grains**—If it doesn't say “whole” in front of the grain, it isn't! Wheat flour is not the same as whole wheat. Actually, wheat flour is the same as white flour; it is highly refined and processed. The difference in the way that the grain affects (helps vs. harms)

your body is huge, as explained in the Whole Grains article on page 7. Make sure that you are eating products made with whole grains.

- 8. Check for animal products**—We want most of what we eat to come from plant-based foods. Check to see if products include ingredients such as butter, milk, cheese, eggs, or meat. Animal products are high in cholesterol (whereas plant-based foods contain no cholesterol), contain no fiber (whereas plant-based foods are high in fiber), lack antioxidants (whereas antioxidants are abundant in plant-based foods), and generate damaging effects within the body. Thus, we should be conscious of our intake levels and try to limit the amount of animal products that we include in our diet.

During your first few trips to the store, it will probably take longer than usual for you to do your grocery shopping. Give yourself time to read labels and evaluate products. In time, you will learn which foods are healthy choices, as well as become a label-reading pro, and your shopping trips will become efficient and effortless. Please don't be discouraged by the initial hump you may encounter—as Jeff Novick would say, (and we agree!!!), “Your health is worth it!”

\*Here is a list of healthy packaged foods. While it is not comprehensive, it will at least give you some suggestions and options of products to look for.

- Frozen Vegetables
- Frozen Fruit
- Canned Beans—look for low-/no-sodium
- Canned Tomatoes—look for low-/no-sodium
- POMI Tomatoes
- Salsa—look for low sodium
- Muir Glen Organic Portobello Mushroom Pasta Sauce
- Whole Grain Pastas
- Quick-Cooking Brown Rice
- Dried Fruit
- Raw Nuts/Seeds—look for unsalted
- Nut/Seed Butters—look for ones with no added oils and/or sugars
- Soy Yogurt—look for unsweetened
- Amande Almondmilk Yogurt—look for unsweetened
- Non-dairy Milks—look for unsweetened
- Cereals
  - Nature's Path cereals
  - Ezekiel cereal
  - Shredded Wheat (original unfrosted)
  - Rolled Oats
- Ezekiel Breads (found in the frozen section)
- Ezekiel Tortillas (both sprouted grain and sprouted corn)
- Manna Bread

- “Mary’s Gone Crackers” Crackers and Pretzels
- WASA Whole Grain Crackers
- Cava Mezze Roasted Red Pepper Hummus
- Luna Burger Veggie Burgers
- Sunshine Burger Veggie Burgers
- Engine 2 Diet food products
- Dr. McDougall food products

For a more extensive inventory of healthy packaged food options, you can visit <http://www.drmcDougall.com/packaged.html>.

Source:

Novick, Jeff. “Understanding Food Labels.” *The Pritkin Perspective*, 3 (15 Feb 2005).



# Hydration Tips

Water plays an important role in the body-- helping cells function properly, allowing nutrients to be transported throughout the body, providing moisture for tissues and lubrication for joints, regulating body temperature through perspiration, and more. More than 60% of the human body is made up of water! And it is essential to our survival.

It is important to drink enough fluids each day, but there is no need to measure and count how much liquid you consume. A simple guideline is this: when you are thirsty... drink some water! Water is what our body is made up of, so it is the best thing to replenish our body with. It is pure and refreshing, with no calories or anything added. Simply sip on some water throughout the day and you'll be sure to stay hydrated all day long! Also, the high water content of fresh fruits and vegetables contributes to your daily hydration, so eating these foods can also help.

To fuel your body for a healthy lifestyle, it is best to kick all those sugary sodas, sports drinks, and fruity beverages out of your diet. These drinks are highly processed, laden with artificial ingredients, high in calories, and completely devoid of nutrients. They are not good for your body and it is best to avoid these at all times.

As an occasional treat, one fun way to enjoy some hydration and incorporate more fruits and vegetables into your (and your kids') day is with a smoothie! Blend up some fresh or frozen fruit, vegetables, leafy greens and some water and enjoy. Especially if your kids are picky about eating at first, smoothies are a delicious way to include a variety of fruits and vegetables into their diets. Experiment with different combinations and enjoy your tasty and nutritious creations!

## Put It Into Practice:

- Pick out fun reusable water bottles for you and each of your kids to use every day. Try to sip from your water bottle all day long to keep hydrated throughout the day.
- If you want a little extra flavor beyond plain water, try adding a squeeze of fresh lemon or lime juice or even toss in a few cubes of fresh cut fruit into your water!
- Decaffeinated herbal tea is another really great way to enjoy some fluids that keep you hydrated. There are endless of varieties to choose from and can be enjoyed either hot or with some ice.

Sources:

"Water Facts." *The Water Information Program*. Southwestern Water Conservation District, n.d. Web. 27 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.waterinfo.org/resources/water-facts>>.

"Functions of Water in the Body." *Mayo Clinic*. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, n.d. Web. 27 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/medical/IM00594>>

# Dealing with Picky Eaters

Fact of life: Kids can be picky. But this shouldn't deter you from making healthy diet changes for your family! Here are a few tips for dealing with your picky eaters:

1. **Involve your children.** This is the single most important and effective thing that you can do. When you involve them in the process, it gives them some control (which kids love) and also makes things fun! At the grocery store, let your kids pick out fruits and vegetables. Brainstorm meals together (pasta, tacos, pancakes, etc). And if possible, give them a role in the cooking process as well. The more children are involved, the more invested they will be in the food, and the more likely they will be to eat it!
2. **Make changes over time.** If you have younger children, you may be able to make big changes relatively quickly. With older children, however, it is probably better to change things over time. Be patient—your children may be resistant at first. But if you slowly switch things out over time, it may make the process easier on them. Swap whole wheat breads and pastas for white pastas, do one meatless dinner per week (then two, then three, etc), add one new vegetable or fruit at a time. This will give your children a chance to have a transition period and adjust more easily.
3. **Give them a choice.** As we mentioned above, kids like having control. So before lunch, give them choices to pick between. You don't have to go crazy—just two or three will work. And make it two or three things that you actually want them to eat. A PBJ or a Hummus sandwich? Just being able to choose what they eat gives them a sense of power.
4. **Pair the new with the old.** When introducing new foods, build the meal around things that your children already like. If they like hummus, put some thinly sliced cucumber on their next hummus sandwich. If they like tomato soup, blend some greens with it. Or if they like salsa, throw in some black beans. You get the idea. But over time, they will become more familiar with the new foods and become more open to eating them.
5. **Less can be more.** It's okay if your children only like a few healthy foods. Adults often enjoy a wide variety of different foods, but children tend to be more selective with what they will eat. Don't get hung up on making sure your children are eating a wide range of foods, find a few healthy foods that they do like and go with it! (It may be monotonous for you to set out carrot sticks at snack time everyday and cook broccoli every night, but who cares! Your child is eating carrots and broccoli every day!!) Still introduce new foods from time to time, but don't worry too much if your children are eating a lot of the same foods—as long as they are wholesome and health-promoting (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans/legumes). It is better for your child to eat a smaller variety of healthy options than to increase variety by including unhealthy options.

**Bonus Tip:** Here is a fun activity for getting your children to try new foods! Make a “Muffin Tin Meal”: Find a muffin tin and place a different food in each individual muffin spot. Encourage your child to at least try a bite from each spot. (Use positive instead of negative words. For example, say “After you try it, you can have some more or wait until another time” instead of “At least try it before deciding that you don’t like it.”) You can put stickers at the bottom of each spot to make things more fun. And if you want, you can turn the activity into a fun game, with prizes (non-food related) for trying new foods!

# Tips for Keeping Things Simple

## **Plan Ahead**

Sticky situations are bound to happen from time to time, but thankfully, with a little planning ahead of time, you can avoid or easily navigate them when they do pop up. Things like always keeping snacks in the car (fruit travels well, Engine 2 crisp breads or baked potatoes are also solid options, etc) or packing your lunch the night before can help keep you prepared for the day's events.

## **Cook in Bulk**

We live in a busy world. Many of us don't have the time to cook up a full meal each night when we get home. However, this doesn't mean that you aren't able to have a home-cooked meal every night—You can!! And bulk-cooking helps make this happen. Pick one night (Sunday is often a good choice) that you will cook for the week. Make one or two entrees. (They don't have to be elaborate or in-depth!) Divide the food up into storage containers and keep them in the freezer. During the week, you can pull them out and reheat whenever you're ready for dinner!! And, of course, lunch can be leftovers as well if you want! You can also cook up big batches of single items like potatoes or rice, and use them in various ways throughout the week to switch things up. Have a stir-fry over rice one night, and the next night use the rice in home-made veggie burgers! Cook in bulk, and be creative :)

## **Get Into a Routine**

When you have a routine, you reduce the amount of mental exertion that has to go into things. Establish a pattern of cooking and eating that fits your lifestyle and minimizes stress (planning ahead and cooking in bulk can help make this happen). It might take a little extra effort at first, but once you have a routine in place, eating this way will become second nature. Your auto-pilot settings will keep you on track without any struggle, making things run smoothly.

## **Always Have Snacks On Hand**

Let's face it, kids are snackers. But they don't always get hungry at the most convenient times. To avoid having to use vending machines or fast food restaurants to provide snacks, it is helpful to always have food on hand. Lucky for you, there are tons of plant-strong snacks that are easy to pack or have around. Some ideas include fresh fruits, veggies, hummus, PBJs, baked potatoes, tortilla/pita pizzas, or homemade trail mix.

## **Not All Packaged Foods are Bad!**

Packaged foods are lumped into one big, "bad" category. But some packaged foods are actually wholesome options! Just be sure to read the label first!!! Plus, they can often make your life a lot easier. Things like frozen veggies or canned beans can save you valuable time in the kitchen! Check out our list of some healthy packaged food options on page 31. And if you have access to a Whole Foods Market, Engine 2 has a new food line of delicious and nutritious plant-based products like hummus, crisp breads, tortillas, cereal, almond milk, frozen grain medleys, and more!

**Stick to the Basics**

Don't underestimate the scrumptious taste of a no-recipe meal. Pick a bean, a green, and a grain (or starch!) and you're good to go! Top with salsa, mustard, a little Bragg's liquid aminos, some balsamic vinegar, or spices. Things don't need to be intricate to taste delicious! Also, be resourceful; use what you have. You might be surprised to find out that atypical combinations of foods actually pair well together! Stick to the basics as the foundation for your meals, and you'll save time without sacrificing taste!

**Befriend a Rice Cooker or Crock Pot**

These simple kitchen gadgets just may become your new best friends. While it is called a rice cooker, it really is so versatile (it just as easily and effectively cooks all grains and even beans and lentils too), and always cooks to perfection. A crock pot may also help simplify your life. Both appliances allow you to make dinner ahead of time, and require much less attention. You can prepare the ingredients, press a button, and return later to a complete meal, all ready to go!

## Part II. The Fun

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# Create a Food Face!

This activity is both a snack and an art project. Fun and flavor all in one! :)



Have an adult wash and chop up some raw fruits and vegetables for you. Try to have a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. At first, these will be your art supplies. Using a big plate or baking sheet as your workspace, arrange the fruits and vegetables to make a face out of food! Maybe some grape eyes, mushroom ears, and a celery smile? Have fun with it! And don't feel limited to just faces—you can make whatever you want! Pirate ships, flowers, fish, or trains! This is one time where you CAN play with your food!!

When you're done creating your food masterpiece, then it is time to feast!! (But take a picture first, if you want to save the artwork!).

Dig in, and enjoy! Yum :)

# Warm-Colored Foods Word Search

What are your favorite red, orange, and yellow fruits and vegetables? How many can you find in the word search below?! Ask for one fruit or vegetable of each color on your next grocery store trip!

T O R R A C G M D W E S B S Z W E R Q B  
W N D K K L R T A Q L N V Y E V G H H E  
T V D V H E V T I A P N I H R M N U C I  
M T S W P P E H P I P C S R V L A B A Z  
R I G P I R S P W A A L S U A J R A E L  
Q Y E R M Y L N O M E L T A O T O R P K  
Q P R E A E C N D Q N J R Y P K C B X D  
W E L R V P R Q R G I N A P H W G E B Z  
T O G E E O E K H L P J W Q U F D A N Y  
N D Z I C H N F E K Q B B O T M N M R G  
R A D I S H C X R G T P E Q O A P R J I  
T V C H T Q T O R U P B R K N G E K Z I  
C A N T A L O U P E I H R A S B N A I U  
L Q B N A B M R I S N T Y Q P Q M A H N  
A Y P B L M A N Z E E B Q S K D U N M S  
D E U R E T T J M M T A A Z T V G A C H  
A P N Z K I O Q R F N R S V X D G X S M  
D A P R I C O T F H A U F Y D V U U D H  
Q E J N K E N T Q Y D M G F I G E S E W  
Y R R E B N A R C D X S I Q V X V E O E

APPLE  
APRICOT  
BANANA  
CANTALOUPE  
CARROT  
CHERRY  
CORN  
CRANBERRY

GRAPEFRUIT  
LEMON  
MANGO  
NECTARINE  
ORANGE  
PEACH  
PEPPER  
PINEAPPLE

PUMPKIN  
RADISH  
RASPBERRY  
RHUBARB  
SQUASH  
STRAWBERRY  
TOMATO  
WATERMELON



# Label Reading!

Packaged foods have nutrition labels that give us information about what we are eating and how healthy they are for us. The most important part of the nutrition label is the ingredient list. Just like when making recipes, the ingredients are the different foods that are combined to make a new food.

Looking at ingredient lists is kind of like being a detective! You are searching for clues to help you solve the mystery of whether or not the food is a healthy choice.

Here is a checklist to use when you're being a food label detective:

1. Make sure that sugar is not listed as one of the first few ingredients. Be careful, sugar has lots of nicknames that it can be called! (Your caregiver can help you learn some of these nicknames to look out for—such as corn syrup, fructose, or cane juice.)
2. Make sure that salt is not listed as one of the first few ingredients.
3. Are there a lot of weird words that you can't pronounce? These weird words are usually things that are not found in nature, but are created by scientists in laboratories. Most of the time, these are not good for our bodies and are not healthy for us to eat.
4. Is it made with whole grains? Whole grains are great sources of energy to keep us feeling strong and energized all day long. Look for the word "whole" in front of the name of the grain to make sure that you're getting the very best source of power for your body!
5. Is there oil in it? It is best not to eat foods that have oil in them.
6. Does it have any animal ingredients? Is there any milk, cheese, butter, eggs, or meat? We want most of what we eat to come from plant-based foods.

Hooray! Now you're ready to be a detective! Next time you're at the store, read the ingredient lists on the packaged foods—only take home foods that you have investigated with the checklist and found to be healthy options!

# Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt!

Next time you're at the grocery store, try to find these foods! If you are allowed, pick one you've never tried before to take home and try out!

1. Kale
2. Cucumber
3. Eggplant
4. Kiwi
5. Mango
6. Walnuts
7. Lentils
8. Chickpeas (Garbanzo Beans)
9. Quinoa
10. Millet
11. "Old Fashioned" Rolled Oats
12. Almond Milk



# Green Challenge!

**Mission:** To eat as many green fruits and vegetables as possible this week.



Green foods are full of vitamins, minerals, and nutrients to fuel our bodies and keep us healthy and strong. Let's see how many green fruits and vegetables you can eat this week!

Each night, write down the green foods that you ate that day in the chart below. At the end of the week, count to see how many you ate in total!

There are lots of different yummy green fruits and vegetables! But in case you need some ideas, here is a list of examples to get you started:

Green Grapes, Kiwi, Limes, Granny Smith Apples, Spinach, Kale, Collard Greens, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, String Beans, Zucchini, Snap Peas...



Have fun, and good luck!!

-----'s List of Green Foods

What Green Fruits and Vegetables Did I Eat This Week?

<b>Monday</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	
<b>Thursday</b>	
<b>Friday</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	

How many green fruits and vegetables  
did I eat this week?

TOTAL\_\_\_\_\_

# Create Your Own Salad!

Fill the salad bowl with your favorite ingredients! Include leafy greens and fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as any beans, grains, nuts, or seeds you enjoy.

(Try to include foods of at least 4 different colors!)



# Exercise & Fitness Word Search

What are your favorite ways to move your body and exercise? How many can you find in the word search below?! It is really important (and fun!!) to move your body. Try to incorporate at least one or more of these activities into your life everyday! Get out there, move your body, and have fun :)

S Q F K F F A B D J L J Z G F B O K C R  
M C C O W X I N A K L T A G R A T A P D  
O B I A O C A G N V A K S O W S E C A R  
N Z G T Y T G Q C K B G L F B E R V A E  
I O P C S F B Y E A Y L W T R B I F O K  
Y X L D W A E A X T E N N I S A P T Q M  
D E N T E K N E L R L X Y I O L T L Z H  
N A O P C E R M B L L G U P L L X O P R  
H H P O U J B L Y S O G N I W S J U M P  
R I H U O S A S Q G V H O P S C O T C H  
E K L W T D H U I C Z N R I I G Y Z G I  
C E Q O E I A U A R X U O K A I G C X B  
C X R B J T S Y P A F R S W Q I H S E Q  
O A X T T L O P G B U S N O M E R V W W  
S G F O O L G U X L K C B D D V I Y F M  
C Y K O C I E M U B K P V D C Q W X J J  
L L A B T E K S A B L S M A N R L Y Q T  
D I N N Y U R R U A A J W O E A A B S J  
F C W I E R A W Y B W Y U I A J V T E W  
S I G N F U H C T E R T S L M U N T T B

BASEBALL  
BASKETBALL  
BICYCLE  
DANCE  
FOOTBALL  
FRISBEE  
GYMNASTICS  
HANDSTAND  
HIKE  
HOCKEY

HOPSCOTCH  
JUMP  
MOVE  
PLAY  
PUSHUP  
RACE  
ROLLERBLADE  
RUN  
SITUP  
SKI

SOCCER  
SQUAT  
STRETCH  
SWIM  
SWING  
TAG  
TENNIS  
VOLLEYBALL  
WALK  
YOGA

# Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt!

Next time you're at the grocery store, try to find these foods! If you are allowed, pick one you've never tried before to take home and try out!

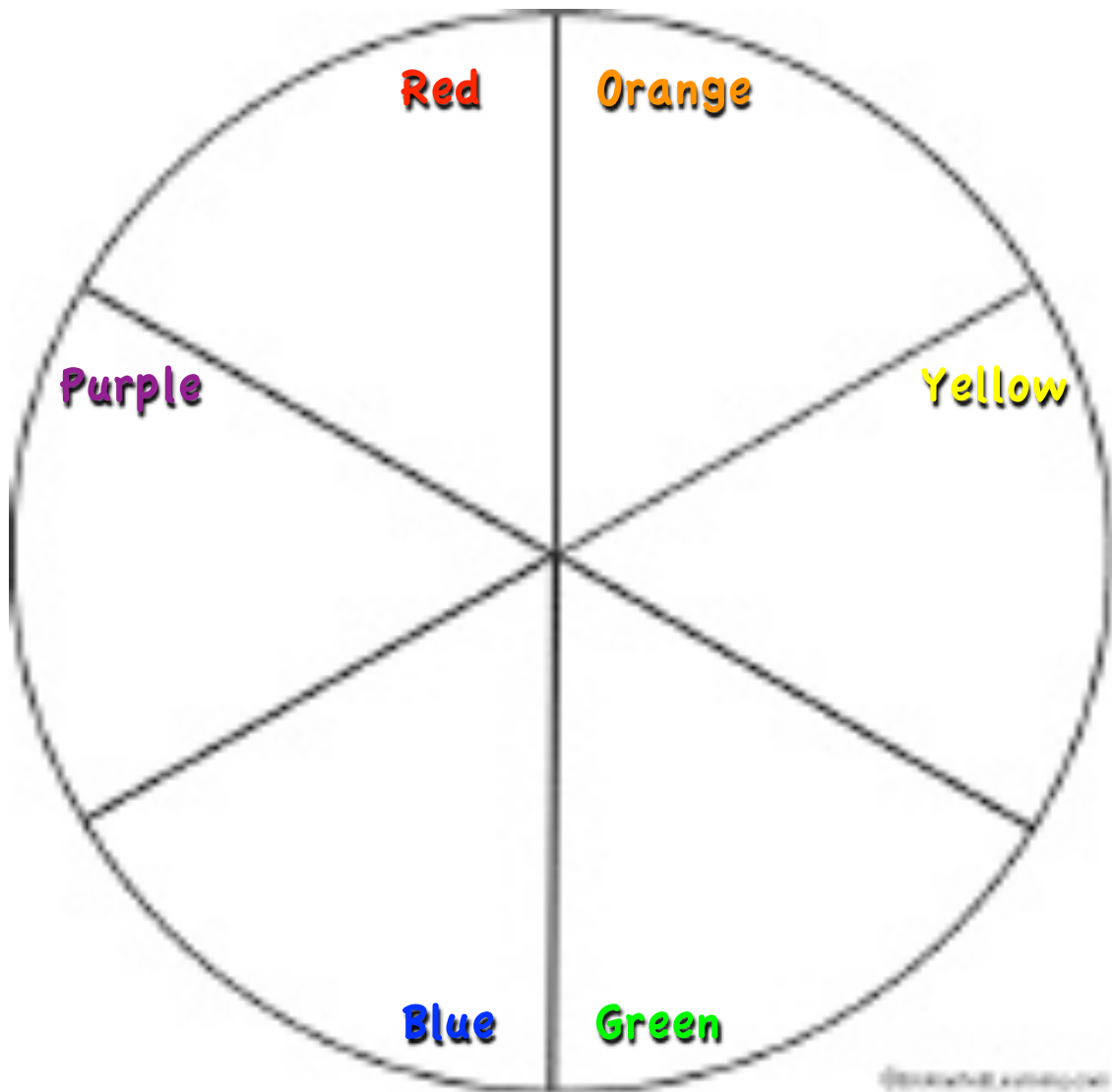
1. Cilantro
2. Arugula
3. Spaghetti Squash
4. Mushrooms
5. Yams
6. Tempeh
7. Pumpkin Seeds
8. Kidney Beans
9. Barley
10. Chia Seeds
11. Frozen Peas
12. "Ezekiel" Cereal or Bread





# Rainbow of Food!

Write the names (or draw pictures) of fruits and vegetables for each color.





# And a Rainbow of Nutrients!



A brightly colored rainbow of food is not only pretty to look at, but great for your body too! Fruits and vegetables get their fun colors from things called “phytonutrients” that are made inside of these foods. When we eat these foods, we also eat their phytonutrients, vitamins, and antioxidants. Phytonutrients make you a superhero! They help your body function at its best - keeping you healthy, strong, and in tip-top shape! (Plus, they help keep the cooties away and prevent disease in the future).

The more color and variety of fruits and vegetables you eat each day, the better! It is important to remember to get these bright colors from their naturally occurring sources of plants rather than artificially colored snacks, candies, sodas, and other processed foods. Fake colors don't have the phytonutrients to make you a superhero like the real colors of fruits and veggies do. They are like villains that harm your body, and as a superhero you want to keep out the bad guys to help your body stay as healthy as possible.

By eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables every day, you will reach a pot of gold - of a healthy, happy, yummy, and fantastic life :)

Using this chart, learn about some of the specific nutrients found in each color of fruits and vegetables. Next, grab some crayons/markers/colored pencils and draw examples of your favorite brightly colored fruits and vegetables and what parts of the body they are good for! (For example: I like carrots. Carrots are orange. Orange colored foods have beta-carotene, which is good for my eyes. So using an orange crayon, I will draw a carrot and an eye and write the word beta-carotene!)

Color	Examples	Nutrients	Good For The Body
red	apple, cherry, red cabbage, pomegranate, raspberry, red onion, red pepper, strawberry, watermelon	folate, flavonoids, lycopene, quercetin, vitamin C	heart, joints, memory (the brain)
orange/yellow	butternut squash, cantaloupe, carrots, lemons, mango, oranges, peaches, pineapple, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, yellow peppers	beta-carotene, lutein, vitamin A, vitamin C	digestion, eyes, growth & development, heart, immune system, skin
green	asparagus, avocado, broccoli, cabbage, collards, cucumbers, grapes, green beans, green peppers, honeydew, kale, kiwi, spinach	carotenoids, chlorophyll, isoflavones, indoles, lutein, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin K	bones, cell health, eyes, immune system, lungs, liver function, teeth
blue/purple	beets, blueberries, blackberries, eggplant, figs, plums	anthocyanin, flavonoids, resveratrol, phenolics	arteries, bones, healthy aging, heart, memory (the brain)
white	cauliflower, garlic, ginger, jicama, mushrooms, onions	allicin, flavanoids, glucosinolates, indoles, quercetin	bones, circulatory system, heart

**Sources:**

"Benefits of Eating a Rainbow." *Today I Ate a Rainbow*. Rainbow Innovations Group, n.d. Web. 28 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.todayiatearainbow.com/about/benefits-of-eating-a-rainbow/>>.

"Eat a Rainbow!" *Whole Kids Foundation*. Whole Foods Market, n.d. Web. 28 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/pdfs/20130419WKF-Better-Bites-Rainbow-Color.pdf>>.

Steinbrinck, Ashley. "5 Colors of Phytonutrients You Should Eat Every Day [Infographic]." *Natural Healthy Concepts*. Healthy Concepts with a Nutrition Bias, 16 Apr. 2013. Web. 28 Apr. 2013. <<http://blog.naturalhealthyconcepts.com/2013/04/16/5-colors-of-phytonutrients-you-should-eat-every-day-infographic/>>.

# Legume Challenge!



**Mission:** To eat a different kind of bean or lentil each day this week.

Legumes, the family name of beans and lentils, are loaded with lots of nutrients (especially carbohydrates and protein). They will help you grow strong and healthy, and are super delicious too!

There are countless different types of legumes - so many shapes, sizes, colors, textures, and flavors all waiting to be discovered! Let's see what variety you can try this week!

Make a list of all the beans and lentils you want to try this week. Find recipes for each legume OR create your own recipes based on your legume of the day!

Each night, record what legume you had that day. Tell us a little about the bean or lentil - describe its color, shape, texture, smell, taste, and whatever else you can think about!

The variety of legumes is endless, but here are some ideas to get you started:



Black beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, chickpeas (aka garbanzo beans), navy beans, cannellini beans, red beans, black-eyed peas, adzuki beans, fava beans, pink beans, green lentils, red lentils, brown lentils, French lentils, yellow lentils, black lentils.

-----'s Legume of the Day

Describe all the different beans and lentils  
you ate this week!

<b>Monday</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	
<b>Thursday</b>	
<b>Friday</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	

What was your favorite legume that  
you tried this week?!

My favorite:-----

# Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt!

Next time you're at the grocery store, try to find these foods!  
If you are allowed, pick one you've never tried before to take home and try out!

1. Red Cabbage
2. Yellow Pepper
3. Asparagus
4. Romaine Lettuce
5. Zucchini
6. Cherries
7. Apricots
8. Avocado
9. Pistachios
10. Pinto Beans
11. Black Beans
12. Ground Flax Seed



# Healthy Food Around the World

Healthy foods are so natural that they're international! Healthy foods grow everywhere you go. In fact, people from all over the globe are cooking up healthy and delicious meals at this very moment!

Luckily, you can give your taste buds a first class trip to anywhere in the world, whenever you'd like! Start by picking a country on the map and try to find out what foods they eat there (ask an adult to help you do some research if you need to). Chances are you can find many of these ingredients at your local grocery store! Here are a few meal ideas to get you started:

## Mexican

Create-Your-Own Lentil Taco Bar (recipe on page 96)

## Japanese

Make-Your-Own Sushi (recipe on page 97)

## Middle Eastern

Falafel (recipe on page 86)

Red Lentil and Spinach Dal (recipe on page 93)

## African

Kale & Yam Soup (recipe on page 81)

## European

Crêpes (recipe on page 74)

German Lentil Soup (recipe on page 81)

# Food So Good For Your Body, It Even Looks Like It!



So you've been learning how fruits and vegetables are healthy for your body and help you grow strong. They are bursting with nutrients that help your body function at its best. Most fruits and vegetables contain several different vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and phytonutrients that are healthy for lots of different body parts, processes, and functions. But did you know that some fruits and vegetables are super healthy for specific parts of your body? Mother Nature was looking out for us when all of these yummy and healthy fruits and vegetables were created - some of them even look like the body parts they are healthy for! It's no wonder why fruits and vegetables (and legumes and whole grains) are the foods that humans in all parts of the world have been eating for thousands of years!

Can you think of any fruits and vegetables that look like a body part? Using the list on the next page, match the food with the body part that it looks like and is healthy for! When you're done, check your answers on the following page and learn why these foods are healthy for that body part!

**Source:**

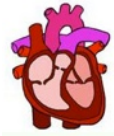
El, Dr. Akilah. "Foods That Look Like Body Parts They're Good For." *Celestial Healing Wellness Center*. N.p., 18 June 2012. Web. 29 Apr. 2013. <<http://docakilah.wordpress.com/2012/06/18/foods-that-look-like-body-parts-theyre-good-for/>>

# Match the Food with the Body Part!

1. carrot (sliced)



A. chambers of the heart



2. walnut



B. kidney



3. celery/rhubarb/bok choy



C. pancreas



4. tomato (cut open)



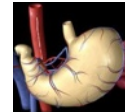
D. smile (happiness)



5. ginger root



E. stomach



6. sweet potato



F. brain



7. grapes



G. ear



8. kidney beans



H. alveoli  
(bunches of air sacs in lungs)



9. banana



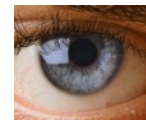
I. bones



10. mushroom (sliced)



J. eye





# Check Your Answers!

1. carrot (sliced)



k. eye  
(beta-carotene for vision)

2. walnut



f. brain  
(omega 3s for memory and development)

3. celery/rhubarb/  
bok choy



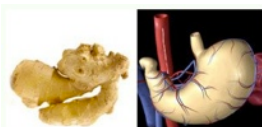
j. bones  
(silicon for bone strength)

4. tomato (cut open)



a. chambers of the heart  
(lycopene for heart function)

5. ginger root



e. stomach  
(gingerol prevents nausea and vomiting)

6. sweet potato



c. pancreas  
(antioxidants promote healthy function)

7. grapes



h. alveoli- bunches of air sacs in lungs  
(proanthocyanidin reduces asthma, allergies, lung cancer and emphysema)

8. kidney beans



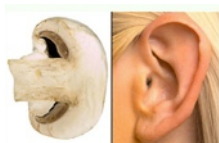
b. kidney  
(vitamins & minerals promote healthy function)

9. banana



d. smile- happiness  
(tryptophan gets converted to a mood regulating chemical (serotonin) in the brain)

10. mushroom (sliced)



g. ear  
(vitamin D healthy for bones of the ear that transmit sound)

# Gardening Challenge!

**Mission:** To grow your own tomato plant.



Did you know that you can grow your own fresh tomatoes right on your windowsill? Growing your own food is easy and fun, and even more delicious than buying the same foods at the grocery store! If you don't have a garden, you can still grow some of your favorite vegetables right inside your house. Here's how!

**Step 1:** Prepare a small to medium sized pot with some compost or potting soil.

**Step 2:** Buy your seeds. Choose a small variety of tomato plant, such as plum or cherry tomatoes, which grow well indoors.

**Step 3:** Plant your seeds about a quarter-inch into the soil and water to keep soil moist.

**Step 4:** If the weather is on the chilly side, put your pot in a clear plastic bag to achieve a "greenhouse effect" and place on a windowsill that gets a lot of sun. Keep it in the bag until the plant outgrows the bag, gets transplanted to the outdoors, or the weather gets warm enough.

**Step 5: Water once every few days to keep soil moist and rotate the pot occasionally to make sure the whole plant is getting its share of sunshine.**

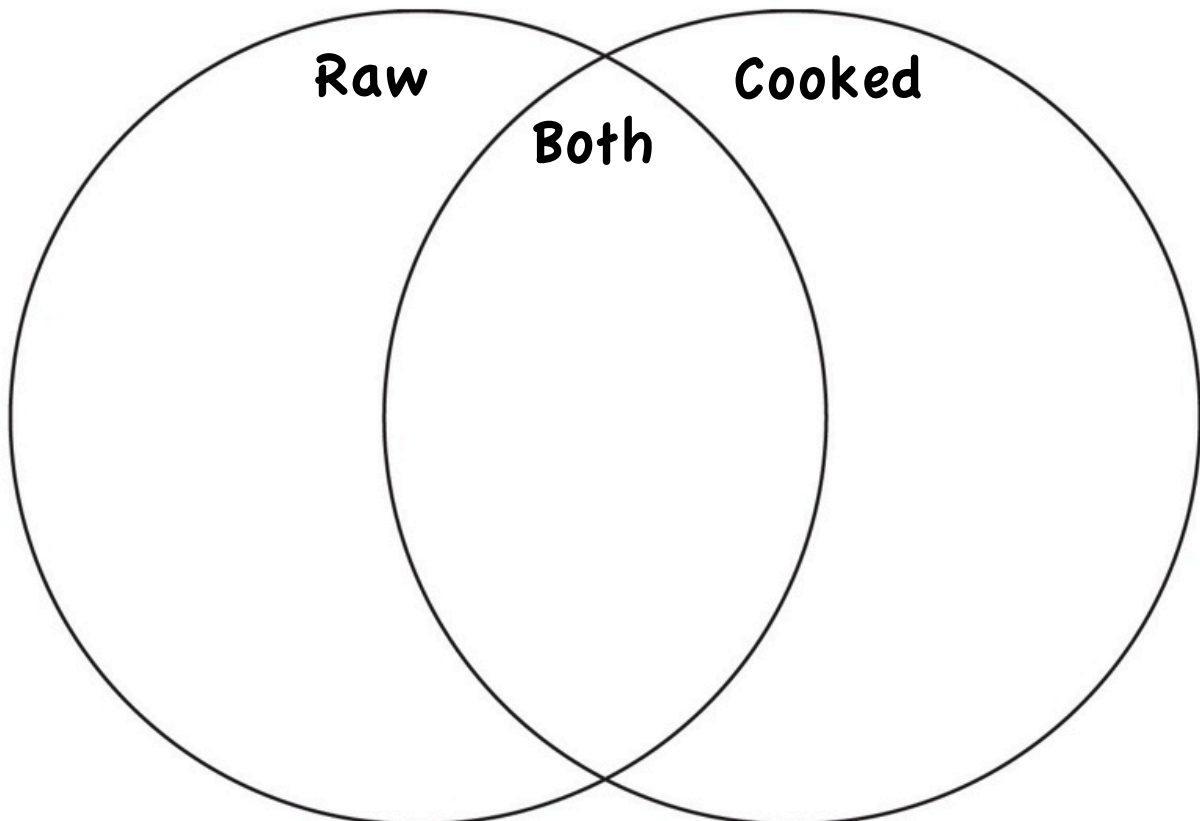
**Step 6: Watch your tomato plant grow! Care for your plant patiently and in two or three months, you'll be enjoying your own homegrown, fresh, ripe tomatoes!**

**By the way... If you don't like tomatoes, you can try one of several other foods that can be grown indoors: mushrooms, beans, peas, carrots, peppers, eggplant and potatoes.**

# Raw vs. Cooked Activity

When you find food in nature (like apples on trees or corn in a garden), it is “raw,” meaning that it hasn’t been cooked in any way. Sometimes fruits and vegetables are eaten raw, just as if they were freshly picked. When you eat a salad, carrot sticks, or strawberries, these foods are raw. Other times, fruits and vegetables are eaten after being cooked. When you have stir-frys, steamed broccoli, or vegetable soup, these foods are cooked. Foods can have different tastes and textures depending on whether they are eaten raw or cooked. So if you don’t like cooked carrots, maybe you like them raw! Or if you don’t like raw broccoli, maybe you like it cooked! But either way, fruits and vegetables are healthy and fun to eat! Find what you like best and try to eat lots of fruits and vegetables every day!

What fruits and vegetables do you like to eat better raw or better cooked? Are there some foods that you like to eat both ways? List some of your favorites here!!



For a fun taste-testing activity, pick one or two of your favorite fruits and vegetables. With the help of a caregiver, prepare separate bowls (small) for each food, one raw and the other cooked. Using your senses of sight, smell, taste, and touch, describe the differences and similarities between the raw food and the cooked food. Which do you like better? Can you think of some ways you can incorporate both these raw and cooked foods into a meal?

Some suggestions for taste-testing (but the possibilities are endless!):

- broccoli
- carrots
- cauliflower
- mushrooms
- onion
- pepper
- tomato
- apple
- banana
- berries
- peach
- pear

**Raw**



**Cooked**



**\*\*BONUS:** also try some frozen, dried, or dehydrated fruits and vegetables to discover their tastes and textures too!

# Whole Grain Challenge!

**Mission:** To eat at least 3 whole grains/healthy starches each day this week.



Whole grains and healthy starches are full of carbohydrates - your body's favorite source of fuel! These whole grains and starches will fill you up and give you lots of energy for a fun-filled day. They are also loaded with lots of fiber and minerals to keep you strong.

Make sure to choose only "whole" grains. Those that don't have the word "whole" in front of the name have all the good stuff (fiber, nutrients, etc.) removed! They are processed and will leave you feeling sluggish instead of energized.

This week let's have some whole grains/starches at least three times a day. There are lots to choose from - be adventurous and try something new. Maybe you'll find a new favorite :)

Each night, write down the whole grains/starches that you ate that day in the chart below. At the end of the week, count to see how many different whole grains/starches you ate in total!

In case you need some ideas, here is a list of examples to get you started: Quinoa, Brown Rice, Wild Rice, Millet, Barley, Amaranth, Buckwheat, Oats, Spelt, Rye, Kamut, Teff, Bulgur, Wheat Berries, Whole Wheat Pasta, Corn Pasta, Quinoa Pasta, Brown Rice Pasta, Polenta, Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes...

Have fun, and good luck!!

-----'s List of Whole Grains

What Whole Grains and Starches Did I Eat This Week?

<b>Monday</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	
<b>Thursday</b>	
<b>Friday</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	

How many different whole grains and starches  
did I eat this week?

TOTAL\_\_\_\_\_

# Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt!

Next time you're at the grocery store, try to find these foods! If you are allowed, pick one you've never tried before to take home and try out!

1. Spinach
2. Parsley
3. Limes
4. Red Onion
5. Cherry Tomatoes
6. Cauliflower
7. Brussels Sprouts
8. Almond Butter
9. Whole Wheat Cous-Cous
10. Brown Rice Spaghetti
11. Frozen Blueberries
12. Frozen Corn





# Cool-Colored Foods Word Search

What are your favorite green, blue, and purple fruits and vegetables? How many can you find in the word search below?! Ask for one fruit or vegetable of each color on your next grocery store trip!

Y B D B Q Z A G O D M Z N P J V G Y U J  
M R E S B M C I R K U W U U V L S W B S  
F O R N X Y N A E S L J S C E Z X J W H  
B C W E U O L L K J P G K M C X C Y C P  
P C S A B L J A Y W C R P Q A H P B Z D  
E O Y Q O K L A V O C A D O N B I F G C  
P L G C A E C H S W O D Y Q I A Z N U R  
T I K E Z J Y A C Y D I I W I K X C I V  
G T P S I I R E L A R C G Y E H U T M R  
X U W H Y P R C U B N G N C V M E P J L  
C W V Q G N E Q I B O I S O B T H O O S  
E W Y L H R B A X Z S U P E V V Q Q S U  
E M A Q U C E S J I G C R S N R D P K J  
J B I W Q V U E C A H Z E M D N M T E E  
B C P L Z Z L R R E G G P L A N T R G E  
O N O H E F B A D N M J T X E B O A A O  
P B R B V F P X R J X G K U U R E I B C  
N K J S O S D W E D Y E N O H Z Y S B U  
Y K Z K A G F W H G Q M Y A B C N I A F  
E A I M N Y E I B C N D J G D I Q N C B

ASPARAGUS  
AVOCADO  
BLACKBERRY  
BLUEBERRY  
BROCCOLI  
CABBAGE  
CELERY

COLLARD  
CUCUMBER  
EGGPLANT  
HONEYDEW  
KALE  
KIWI

LIME  
PEA  
PLUM  
RAISIN  
SPINACH  
ZUCCHINI

# Get Moving Challenge!

**Mission: To try a different activity to get moving each day this week.**

Morning, noon, or night--any time of day is the perfect time to get up and get moving! It's fun and it feels good to move and use your body every day. And moving your body helps you grow strong and healthy.

What are your favorite ways to get moving every day? There are so many different things to do and try. This week let's be adventurous and try a different activity each day to move your body.

In the chart below, list what activity (or activities - you can do more than one a day!) you do that moves your body each day. Pick some of your favorites and try some new activities. There are countless fun and exciting activities to keep you moving every day! And maybe you'll find a new activity you like best!

And remember, have fun!! :) Some fun activity ideas include: walking, jump rope, basketball, running, tag, hula hooping, baseball, hopscotch, soccer, dancing, football, swimming, yoga, hockey, bicycling, hide and seek, volleyball, frisbee, hiking, tennis, gymnastics, roller skating...

**\*\*BONUS:** Check out some of these famous professional athletes that fuel up for competition with lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains!!

Rich Roll - Ultratriathlete  
Scott Jurek - Ultramarathoner  
Georges Laraque - NHL Hockey Player  
Brendan Brazier - Ironman Triathlete  
Venus Williams - Professional Tennis Player  
Serena Williams - Professional Tennis Player  
Arian Foster - NFL Football Player  
Carl Lewis - Olympic Track and Field Athlete  
Rip Esselstyn - Triathlete

# -----'s Activity of the Day

Describe all the different activities you tried this week  
that got your body moving!

<b>Monday</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	
<b>Thursday</b>	
<b>Friday</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	

What was your favorite activity that  
you tried this week?!

My favorite:-----

# Create Your Own Recipe!

You get to be the chef today! Use the following chart to choose foods from each of the groups. Combine them however you like, designing your own unique recipe creation!

<b>Grain/Starch</b> (Pick one or two)	Brown Rice, Quinoa, Millet, Barley, Polenta, Spelt Berries, Wheat Berries, Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes/Yams, Buckwheat, Whole Grain Pasta, Other_____
<b>Bean/Legume/Tofu</b> (Pick one or two)	Black Beans, Garbanzo Beans/Chickpeas, Kidney Beans, Adzuki Beans, Red Lentils, Green/Brown Lentils, Cannellini Beans, Black Eyed Peas, Edamame, Tofu, Tempeh, Other_____
<b>Vegetables</b> (Pick 3-5, and make at least one a leafy green!)	<u>Leafy Greens:</u> Kale, Spinach, Lettuce, Collard Greens, Swiss Chard, Arugula, Mustard Greens, Turnip Greens, Cabbage <u>Other Vegetables:</u> Broccoli, Cauliflower, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Beets, Peas, Asparagus, Peppers, Onion, Artichoke, Cucumber, Squash, Zucchini, Eggplant, Tomato, Celery, Pumpkin, Other_____
<b>Sauce/Spice</b> (Pick one or two)	<u>"Sauces":</u> Tomato Sauce, Salsa, Mustard, Barbeque Sauce, Low-sodium Tamari, Teriyaki Sauce, Balsamic Vinegar, Lemon Juice, Lime Juice, Other_____ <u>Spices:</u> Basil, Oregano, Garlic, Curry, Italian Seasoning, Rosemary, Thyme, Cumin, Cinnamon, Dill, Other_____
<b>Other ingredients?</b> (Look at what you have so far... is there anything else you'd like to add? List any fruits, nuts, seeds, etc, here!)	

## Part III. The Food

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# Breakfast Recipes

**Breakfast, or as we like to call it: “breakFEAST” :), is the most important meal of the day and the best and most delicious thing to wake up to. These recipes are sure to get you and your kids energized, ready for the day, and moving out the door in no time!**

## **Oatmeal Waffles** (makes 4-6 waffles)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

1 cup rolled oats (quick or regular)  
¼ cup flax seeds  
¼ cup raw cashews or walnuts  
2 cups water and/or non-dairy milk  
2 tbsp apple juice concentrate or 4 dates, pitted  
¼ cup cornmeal  
2 tbsp arrowroot or cornstarch  
1 tsp cinnamon

Blend the oats, flax seeds and nuts in a Vitamix or coffee/nut-seed grinder until ground. Add the remaining ingredients and blend for 1 minute in the Vitamix or blender. Let sit for 10 minutes to incorporate.

Spoon batter onto a hot waffle iron that has a non-stick surface and cook until brown and crispy. (This recipe works in regular and Belgium waffle makers.)

To make your own date syrup, blend 4-5 pitted dates with some water in your Vitamix or food processor until smooth. You can also add in some fresh or frozen strawberries, blueberries or other fruit.

Notes: Use a non-stick waffle iron to avoid using oil. / As the batter sits between cooking waffles, it will thicken up so feel free to add a bit of water as needed.

Preparation: 15 minutes      Cooking: 5 minutes each waffle

### **Blueberry Pancakes** (makes 6 large pancakes)

\*Courtesy of Gena Hamshaw at ChoosingRaw.com!

2/3 cup spelt OR whole wheat pastry flour OR Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free all purpose flour mix  
2 tsp baking powder  
1 tbsp flax seed dissolved in 1 1/2 tbsp water (this is what vegan bakers call a "flax egg")  
2 tsp agave nectar  
3/4 cup rice, soy, or almond milk (Gena likes rice milk in this recipe)  
1/4 cup blueberries

Mix all ingredients but the blueberries together until wet and incorporated, but not over mixed. If you're a perfectionist, you might want to add the blueberries to the tops of your pancakes as soon as they hit the griddle. If you're not, add them once the mix is mixed.

Heat a nonstick griddle over a medium flame. Drop the batter in 1/4 cup blobs onto the griddle.

The key to making perfect pancakes — or at least, pancakes that aren't a giant mess — is to really try hard not to touch them for a bit once they hit the griddle. As soon as you see lots of air bubbles rising to the tops of the side that's facing you, you can test the edges. If they feel solid, carefully pry your spatula underneath the pancake, and flip!

Leave it on side #2 till the pancake is obviously cooked through, and continue till batter is used up. You should have six large pancakes.

### **French Toast** (makes 2 servings)

\*Courtesy of *The Engine 2 Diet* Book!

1 banana, mashed  
1/2 cup non-dairy milk of choice  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
4-6 slices whole grain bread

Combine the banana, non-dairy milk, vanilla, and cinnamon in a shallow bowl. Dip the bread slices in the mixture and cook in a nonstick skillet on medium heat for 2 minutes on each side, or until lightly browned.



## **Creamy Breakfast Rice Pudding** (makes 2-3 servings)

\*Courtesy of Dreena Burton at [PlantPoweredKitchen.com](http://PlantPoweredKitchen.com)!

2 cups cooked brown rice, loosely packed (reserve 1/2 cup)

3/4 - 1 cup non-dairy milk (your choice, see note)

1 ripe banana (about 1/2 - 3/4 cup, sliced) (optional, see note) OR 1-2 tbsp pure maple syrup, coconut sugar, or chopped dried fruits

1/4 - 1/2 tsp cinnamon

few pinches nutmeg

grated orange or lemon zest (optional)

optional: 1-2 tbsp cocoa powder (see note)

In a small saucepan, add 1 1/2 cups of the cooked rice (rough measure), and the remaining ingredients starting with 3/4 cup of milk (omit banana if you prefer, see note - and except the zest). Puree the mixture using a hand blender (alternatively, you can puree in a blender before adding to the saucepan, but I find the hand blender is quicker and easier for clean-up)! Add the remaining 1/2 cup of rice, and turn heat to medium-low. Let the mixture thicken and warm for several minutes. Add the remaining milk if desired to thin. Taste, and adjust with sweetener and orange/lemon zest if desired, and stirring through add-ins if you like! Serve.

**Banana and Sweetener Note:** The banana adds natural sweetness, and so if using it, you may not need the maple syrup or coconut sugar- it's up to you. However, also note that if adding the banana, the mixture will turn a darker color with the banana oxidizing and being cooked - so it's best to eat straight away rather than save leftovers. If you don't use the banana, try adding a touch of pure maple syrup or coconut sugar. Or, you can add chopped dates or other dried fruits to sweeten.

**Milk note:** If using a vanilla non-dairy milk, you may not need any additional sweetener. If using an unsweetened variety, you will probably want to bump up the sweetness with the pureed banana or other options.

**Chocolate version:** Make this pudding chocolate-y with the addition of 1-2 tbsp of cocoa powder. You will need extra sweetener to balance the bitterness of the cocoa, so adjust to taste.

**Add-in's:** To add some variety and extra nutrition to this pudding, try adding in a few tablespoons of hemp seeds, a tablespoon of ground chia, 1-2 tablespoons of nut or seed butter (ex: cashew, almond, pistachio, sunflower), 2-3 tablespoons almond meal, a sprinkle of dried fruit (ex: chopped dates, goji berries, raisins, dried blueberries, etc), or some fresh fruit (ex: chopped apples/pears in the winter, fresh berries in spring/summer).

## **Crêpes** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Lindsay Nixon in *Happy Herbivore Abroad!*

Crêpes are thin French pancakes, and they are exceptionally popular throughout France. Crêpes can be served savory or sweet with any filling combination you can think of.

1 cup nondairy milk, divided  
2 tbsp pure maple syrup  
1/3 cup water (approximate)  
1/4 tsp baking powder  
1 cup chickpea flour  
filling for crêpes

In a 2-cup glass measuring cup, pour in 2/3 cup nondairy milk, maple syrup, plus enough water so that the mixture levels off at the 1-cup mark. Whisk in baking powder and chickpea flour. Add another 1/3 cup nondairy milk and whisk again. If the batter is really thick, you can add another 1-3 tbsp water, but you don't want it too runny or watery. Crêpe batter needs to be able to move around in the pan with ease when you swirl, but it should not be runny like water. Set batter aside temporarily and get your nonstick skillet hot. You'll know it's ready when a drop of water fizzes. Reduce heat to medium, pull skillet off burner, and pour in batter, enough to create a thin lining, swirling the batter around the skillet. Place the skillet back on the burner for about 30 seconds. Once a nonstick spatula goes under it easily, flip it over. The other side does not take long to cook, just a few seconds. Press down with the spatula, flip over to check it, then set it aside and make the rest of the crêpes. Add prepared fillings to the center of your crêpes and roll up like a burrito.

Sweet filling ideas: fresh or dried fruit, nuts/seeds, homemade granola, nut/seed butter, cacao nibs, pumpkin purée, mashed sweet potato, spices to taste, etc.

Savory filling ideas: steamed or water-sautéed veggies, greens, beans, tofu, tempeh, salsa, avocado, onion and mushrooms, kale pesto, fresh herbs, spices to taste, nutritional yeast, etc.

## **Tofu Scramble** (makes 2 servings)

\*Courtesy of Lindsay Nixon at HappyHerbivore.com!

This is a basic tofu scramble recipe. If you want to add veggies or mushrooms to it, sauté the veggies in water or broth first until tender and the cooking liquid has totally absorbed. Then add tofu and follow the directions as written. If you prefer softer eggs, use firm tofu instead of extra-firm. Soft or silken tofu (such as Mori-Nu) may not be substituted.

1 pound extra-firm tofu  
3 tbsp nutritional yeast  
1 tbsp Dijon mustard  
1 tsp garlic powder  
1 tsp onion powder  
½ tsp turmeric  
½ tsp cumin

Drain excess water off of tofu and place it in the center of a non-stick or greased skillet. Using a spatula, break tofu up into thick cubes. Cook over medium-high heat for 3-4 minutes, until the tofu releases its water. Add remaining ingredients, stirring to combine. Continue to cook and stir for another 5-10 minutes, breaking tofu chunks into smaller pieces so the consistency resembles scrambled eggs. Add a splash of non-dairy milk or lemon juice if the tofu starts to dry out or stick to the skillet. Once the tofu has the right consistency, is yellow in color and is thoroughly warm, add pepper to taste and serve.

## **Migas Especiales** (makes 2 servings)

\*Courtesy of *The Engine 2 Diet* Book!

1 onion, chopped  
8oz mushrooms, sliced  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
1 pound firm tofu, drained, pressed with a cloth, and mashed  
1 tsp turmeric  
7 corn tortillas, 3 cut into 1-inch squares and 4 to make little tacos (or enjoy like toast)  
salsa  
1 can fat-free vegetarian refried beans, warmed in a nonstick skillet  
1 cup fresh fruit

Sauté the onion in a nonstick skillet on medium heat for 3 minutes or until translucent. Add the mushrooms and tomatoes. Cook for 7 minutes or until most of their juices have been cooked away. Add the tofu, turmeric, and tortilla squares. Cook for a few minutes, or until the mixture is warmed through. Place a generous spoonful of migas on a plate and top with salsa. Serve with a side of beans, tortillas, and fresh fruit.

### **Overnight Oats** (makes 1 serving)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

As the name suggests, prepare this in a bowl the night before and breakfast is ready in the morning with a simple stir!

3/4 cup rolled oats

1 banana, mashed (optional)

1/4 cup dried fruit (We like raisins and goji berries best! But any dried fruit will work)

1 tbsp ground flaxseed or chia seed

spices, to taste (cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, vanilla extract, cacao powder, etc.)

3/4 - 1 cup non-dairy milk (unsweetened) of your choice

toppings (fresh fruit, nuts, seeds, Ezekiel cereal, cacao nibs, etc.)

In a bowl (one that you normally eat your breakfast in), mash a banana (optional - but this adds some sweetness and creaminess), add the oats, dried fruit, ground flaxseed/chia seed, and spices. Mix well. Pour in non-dairy milk and mix well, making sure everything is wet. Place in the fridge overnight and let soak, allowing all the yummy flavors to marinate.

In the morning, mix well and add more non-dairy milk if it is too dry. Then top with your favorite toppings. No need to heat it, simply enjoy this cold!

Variations: Try using 1/2 cup canned 100% pumpkin in place of (or in addition to) the banana. Add pumpkin pie spice and enjoy!

### **Oatmeal** (makes 1 serving)

1 cup rolled oats

1 1/2 cups water

1 banana, sliced or cubed

1 tbsp ground flaxseed or chia seed

spices, to taste (cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, vanilla extract etc.)

Mix together all ingredients in a small pot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer until oats are soft and desired consistency (just a few minutes). Alternately, mix together ingredients in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave for 2 minutes. Serve with a splash of non-dairy milk, fresh fruit, and/or nuts sprinkled on top.

## **Carrot Cake Raw Buckwheat Porridge** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Angela Liddon of OhSheGlows.com!

2 cups raw buckwheat groats, (note: this is not the same as Kasha or toasted buckwheat) soaked in water for minimum of 1 hour or overnight

1 cup finely grated carrot (~ 2 medium)

1-1.25 cups non-dairy milk, or more to achieve desired consistency

2 tbsp chia seeds

4-5 tbsp liquid sweetener (use agave nectar if you want it raw. Angela uses maple syrup), adjust to taste

1-2 tsp pure vanilla extract (Angela uses 2)

2 tsp cinnamon

3/4 tsp ground ginger

1/2 tsp ground nutmeg

1/4 cup – 1/3 cup raisins

1/4 cup – 1/3 cup chopped walnuts

Note: Angela likes to make this at night and then it's ready when she comes down for breakfast!

In a bowl, pour 2 cups of raw buckwheat groats (not Kasha, but RAW groats) and 4-5 cups of water. Soak for at least 1 hour or overnight. After soaking, rinse well in a strainer several times. Grate carrot and set aside.

Place buckwheat groats (reserving 1 cup) in food processor or blender, along with the almond milk, chia seeds, and vanilla. Process until combined and slightly smooth. Now add in the sweetener and spices to taste (Angela has found 1/4 cup of sweetener to be enough, but others might like a bit more or less than that). Transfer to a bowl and stir in the grated cup of carrots and the reserved buckwheat. Adjust sweetness to taste.

Scoop into bowls or parfait glasses and add your desired toppings & mix-ins. Serve immediately cold. Place leftovers into fridge and enjoy for the next few days. Makes 3.5-4 cups depending on how much milk you use.

## **Breakfast Whole Grain Bowl** (makes 1 serving)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

This is a simple and great way to add variety to your breakfast routine!

1 cup cooked grain (buckwheat, quinoa, millet, kamut, brown rice, etc.)  
1 tbsp ground flaxseed or chia seed  
1/2 cup fresh or frozen fruit  
spices, to taste (cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, vanilla extract etc.)  
splash of non-dairy milk  
handful of homemade granola or nuts

Combine all ingredients together in a bowl and enjoy!

Notes: Simply use any grains leftover from dinner, heated up in the microwave or enjoyed cold. Also, if you have a rice cooker, cook up some grains while you get in a morning workout or do chores around the house.

## **Rip's Big Bowl** (let your appetite be your guide as to the size of your bowl)

\*Courtesy of *The Engine 2 Diet* Book!

1/4 cup old-fashioned oats  
1/4 cup Ezekiel cereal  
1/4 cup bite-size shredded wheat (plain)  
1/4 cup Uncle Sam Cereal  
1 tbsp ground flaxseed meal  
2 tbsp raisins  
1/2 handful of walnuts  
1 banana, sliced  
1 kiwi, sliced  
1 grapefruit  
3/4 cup non-dairy milk of choice

Toss all ingredients except the grapefruit and non-dairy milk into a bowl. After cutting the grapefruit in half, use a small, sharp knife to remove the segments. Add the segments to the top of the bowl and squeeze in the juice. Top the bowl with non-dairy milk.

Variations: In a pinch, simply add water (the fruits blend with the water and give it a sweet taste). Add any fresh or frozen fruit, such as peaches, cherries, mangoes, blueberries, or red grapes.

**Create-Your-Own Big Bowl!** (let your appetite be your guide as to the size of your bowl)

- rolled oats
- a few of your favorite whole grain, low sugar cereals (Ezekiel, plain shredded wheat, puffed whole grains, Uncle Sam cereal, Nature's Path whole grain cereals, etc.)
- ground flaxseed and/or chia seed
- dried, fresh, and/or frozen (and thawed) fruit (raisins, goji berries, cherries, banana, kiwi, mango, berries, grapes, peaches, etc.)
- handful of nuts/seeds (walnuts, almonds, pecans, cashews, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.)
- spices, to taste (cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, vanilla extract, etc.)
- non-dairy milk (unsweetened) of your choice

Mix together all your favorite ingredients (except for the non-dairy milk) in a bowl. Top with non-dairy milk of your choice. Enjoy!

# Lunch Recipes

The lunch and dinner recipes are really interchangeable, but some quick meals and specific lunch box ideas are included here!

## **Black Bean and Salsa Soup** (makes 2 servings)

\*Courtesy of Lindsay Nixon at [HappyHerbivore.com](http://HappyHerbivore.com)!

1 cup frozen corn, thawed  
1 cup salsa  
1½ cups vegetable broth  
½ tsp cumin  
a dash of hot sauce  
15 ounces black beans, drained and rinsed

Place 1 cup beans, salsa, broth and cumin in a blender and puree until smooth. Transfer to a medium saucepan and add remaining ingredients. Stir to combine and heat thoroughly over low. Once warmed, serve and garnish with corn tortillas.

## **Quick and Easy Potato Soup** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Susan Voisin at [blog.FatFreeVegan.com](http://blog.FatFreeVegan.com)!

3 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, cooked  
1/2 small onion  
1 cup vegetable broth  
1/4 tsp rosemary  
1/8 – 1/4 tsp white pepper (using more will make it spicy)  
1 tbsp raw cashews or 1/2 tbsp. cashew butter (optional)  
1 tbsp nutritional yeast  
1 1/2 cups low-fat soymilk or other non-dairy milk

High-Powered Blender Users: Place two of the potatoes along with the remaining ingredients into the blender in the order given. Start machine on low speed and increase to highest setting. Blend for about 4 minutes, until steaming hot. Dice remaining potato and divide it among 4 bowls. Pour the soup over the potatoes and serve hot.

Regular Blender/Stovetop Users: Chop the onion and sauté it until soft in a medium-sized saucepan. Cut the potatoes into cubes and add 2/3 of them to the pan, along with the broth, rosemary, and white pepper. Simmer, covered, for about 15 minutes. Pour into blender along with cashew butter, soymilk, and nutritional yeast. Blend until smooth. Return to pan, add remaining potatoes, and cook, stirring often, over low heat until hot.



## **African Kale & Yam Soup** (makes 2 servings)

\*Courtesy of Lindsay Nixon at [HappyHerbivore.com](http://HappyHerbivore.com)!

1 whole red onion, small  
2 cups vegetable broth  
1 whole yam, diced  
5 cups kale, chopped  
2 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp cumin  
1 tsp garlic powder  
¼ tsp red pepper flakes  
1 tsp mild curry powder  
1 tbsp yellow miso paste  
¼ tsp cinnamon

Slice red onion into thin slices. Line a medium pot with 1/4 cup of water and cook onions over high heat until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add broth, yam, 3/4 cup water and bring to a boil. Once boiling, reduce to medium and cook until potatoes are almost fork tender, about 3 minutes. Immediately add kale and remaining ingredients and cook, stirring frequently, until kale is dark green and soft, about 3 more minutes. Set aside for 5-10 minutes, allowing flavors to merge.

## **German Lentil Soup** (makes 3 servings)

\*Courtesy of Lindsay Nixon at [HappyHerbivore.com](http://HappyHerbivore.com)!

1 small onion, diced  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1/2 tsp ground cumin  
1 1/2 tsp ground coriander, divided  
2 carrots, sliced  
1 cup lentils  
1 potato, diced  
3 cups vegetable broth (low/no-sodium), divided  
lemon zest  
parsley (garnish)

Line a medium pot with a thin layer of water (or broth) and sauté onions and garlic over high heat until onions are translucent, about 2 minutes. Add cumin and 1/2 tsp coriander, then stir to combine. Add carrots, plus another splash of water if necessary, and cook for a minute. Then add lentils, diced potato, and 2 cups broth. Cover, bring to a boil, and simmer until lentils are soft and liquid has evaporated - about 40 minutes. Stir in remaining 1 tsp coriander and a pinch or two lemon zest. Then add up to an additional 1 cup broth so it's more stew-like and not just a pot of lentils and vegetables. Add more coriander if desired. Garnish with parsley.

## **Black Bean Veggie Burgers** (makes 8 burgers)

\*Courtesy of *The Engine 2 Diet Book!*

1 can black beans, rinsed and drained  
1 can tomatoes with zesty mild chilies, drained  
1 garlic clove, minced (or 1 teaspoon garlic powder)  
1 teaspoon onion powder  
2 green onions, chopped  
1 cup carrots, chopped  
1 cup parsley or cilantro  
2 cups quick rolled oats  
8 whole grain buns  
fresh veggie toppings

Preheat oven to 450° F. Process the first seven ingredients using an immersion or regular blender or food processor. Remove contents into a large bowl and stir in the oats. Form into patties, place on a baking sheet, and bake for 8 minutes. Turn oven up to broil and cook 2 more minutes, until the tops are nicely browned. Toast the buns and pile on your favorite toppings. (Instead of using the oven, you can also sauté the burgers on medium heat in a nonstick skillet for 5 minutes on each side, until both sides are browned.)

## **Chickpea, Quinoa, & Sweet Potato Moroccan Burgers** (makes 8-10 burgers)

\*Courtesy of Jeff Novick!

1 can no salt added kidney beans (drained & rinsed)  
1 can no salt added garbanzo beans (drained & rinsed)  
1 cup rolled oats (dry)  
1/2 cup cooked quinoa  
1/2 cup cooked mashed sweet potato  
4 tbsp pomegranate seeds (or other no salt added tomatoes)  
1/4 cup chopped dried figs (or raisins)

1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1 tsp ground ginger  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1/4 tsp ground pepper  
1 tsp ground coriander  
1 tsp paprika (smoked is preferable)  
minced or ground garlic (equivalent of 3 cloves)  
1/16 - 1/8 tsp cayenne (depending on how hot you like it)

Mash beans. Add in tomatoes, oats, quinoa, sweet potato, figs & mix well. Add in all spices & mix well. Make 8-10 burgers from the mix. Grill or broil a few minutes on each side till golden brown. Serve with baked sweet potato fries & some greens.

## **Salt-free Ketchup & Baked French Fries** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

1 6-oz. can no-salt-added tomato paste  
1 half of an apple diced (with or without skin)  
1/3 cup water  
1 tbsp lemon juice  
1/4 tsp garlic powder  
1/4 tsp dried oregano

3-4 potatoes washed and unpeeled; any variety (russet, Yukon Gold, sweet potato, or yam), cut into 1/4-inch x 1/4-inch lengths

Ketchup: Combine all ingredients in a blender or Vitamix until smooth.

Fries: Place cut potatoes on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. Take out and flip the fries over and bake for another 15 minutes, or until they are golden brown and puffed up a little. Serve immediately with ketchup and/or mustard.

Notes: For the ketchup: 1/3 cup apple juice may be substituted for the apple and water. / 1 tablespoon vinegar may be substituted for the lemon juice. / For the fries: add some flavor by placing the cut potatoes into a plastic bag with 1/2-1 teaspoon garlic powder (or other ground herb/spice) and shaking to coat the potatoes before baking.

Tip: When opening your small can of tomato paste, open both ends with your can opener; discard one end and push the remaining end all the way through the can to retrieve every last bit of paste.

Ketchup:  
Preparation: 5 minutes  
Makes: 1 cup

Fries:  
Preparation: 10 minutes  
Cooking time: 30 minutes

## **Hummus Veggie Pizza** (makes 4 individual pizzas)

\*Courtesy of the Engine 2 Diet!

1/2 cup low-sodium vegetable broth  
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
1 1/2 cup Engine 2 Plant-Strong™ Roasted Red Pepper Hummus, divided  
2 portobello mushroom caps, gills removed, caps cut into 1-inch-wide strips  
1 yellow squash, sliced lengthwise into 1/3-inch planks  
1 zucchini, sliced lengthwise into 1/3-inch-thick planks  
4 Engine 2 Plant-Strong™ Tortillas (Sprouted Ancient Grains or Brown Rice)  
8 ounces baby spinach, lightly steamed and gently squeezed to remove excess liquid (about 1 packed cup)  
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil  
1/4 cup pine nuts  
freshly cracked black pepper

In a large bowl, whisk together broth, balsamic vinegar and 1/2 cup hummus. Add mushrooms and toss very gently to coat; remove from bowl with a slotted spoon. Add yellow squash and zucchini to the bowl and toss to coat. Return mushrooms to the bowl and allow vegetables to marinate for at least 10 minutes and up to 1 hour. Prepare a grill or grill pan for medium heat cooking. Grill vegetables until browned and tender, 3 to 4 minutes on each side. Set aside.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Place tortillas on 2 nonstick sheet pans or regular sheet pans covered with parchment paper. Spread each with 1/4 cup of the remaining hummus. Top with spinach, basil and grilled vegetables. You can place the vegetable slices on the pizzas whole for a rustic look, or chop them first for neater cutting. Sprinkle pizzas with pine nuts and black pepper to taste. Bake until edges of tortillas are browned and crisp and pine nuts are golden, about 15 minutes. Slice and serve.

(If you don't have access to a Whole Foods that sells Engine 2 Plant-Strong™ products, feel free to substitute any hummus (or try homemade!) and whole wheat/corn tortillas of your choice)

## **Make-Your-Own Mexican Pizza**

\*Courtesy of Jeff Novick!

- corn tortillas (Ezekiel brand sprouted corn tortilla's are my favorite)
- mashed pinto beans
- fresh salsa
- diced tomatoes, red onions, red peppers, yellow peppers, green onions
- black beans

Spread a thin layer of mashed pinto beans onto a corn tortilla. Top with a layer of fresh salsa. Cover with diced veggies and black beans. Bake 10-15 minutes. Enjoy!

## **Ridiculously Easy Lunchbox Enchilada Casserole** (makes 1 serving)

\*Courtesy of Susan Voisin at [blog.FatFreeVegan.com](http://blog.FatFreeVegan.com)!

The amount of ingredients you need for this will depend on the size of the container you're making it in. The ingredients listed below are just approximations based on one serving—you may find you need more or less.

1/2 cup salsa

2-3 corn tortillas, cut into quarters

2/3 cup fat-free refried beans or chili beans (or a combination of the 2)

1/4 cup frozen corn kernels

handful washed baby spinach

2-3 jumbo black olives, sliced

Choose a 1-serving dish that can be safely microwaved. Spread a couple of tablespoons of salsa in the bottom of the dish. Next place a layer of tortillas over the salsa, trying to cover most of the dish's bottom—a little overlapping is okay. Spread the tortilla with half of the beans and top with the spinach. Add another layer of tortillas. Spread with the rest of the beans, sprinkle with the corn, and spoon a little salsa over the corn. Top with a final layer of tortillas. Spread the tortillas with a good layer of salsa, and put the olives on the top. (Or, hold the olives and add them after cooking.)

Cover the top loosely with waxed paper, and put the dish into the microwave. Cook on high power until heated all the way through, 2 to 3 minutes.

Microwaves vary, so check to make sure that the inside is warm by inserting a knife into the middle and checking a sample. If serving right away, heat it until it's very hot and then let it sit for a few minutes to cool.

Preparation time: 5 minutes | Cooking time: 5 minutes

## **Falafel** (makes approximately 25 falafel)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

- 1 cup oats, finely ground
- 1 tbsp cumin (more or less, to taste)
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 2 cans chickpeas (low/no sodium), drained and rinsed
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp tahini
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2-4 tbsp water (more or less, as needed)
- 1/3 cup cilantro, chopped (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°. Finely grind oats in a food processor, transfer to a large bowl. Combine with cumin and nutritional yeast. In a food processor, combine chickpeas, garlic, tahini, and lemon juice until smooth (add water if necessary to get things moving). Add chickpea mixture to dry mixture and stir well until combined. Add more water if too dry; add more oats if too sticky (mixture should be thick and hold together well). Fold in optional cilantro. Form falafel into small flattened balls. Place falafel on baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for a total of 20 minutes, flipping the falafel half-way through cooking. Serve warm on a bed of greens with some hummus and raw, cut veggies (carrots, bell peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.).

Variation: For a nice twist, try adding sweet potato. Cube 2 large sweet potatoes and cook until very tender. Add sweet potato to the chickpea mixture in the food processor, mixing until smooth. Add more spices to taste.

## **Collard Green Wraps** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

- 8 collard green leaves, raw or lightly steamed
- 1 cup hummus (preferably oil-free)
- 2 cups whole grain of your choice, cooked (brown rice, quinoa, buckwheat, millet, etc.)
- 2 cans beans (low/no sodium) of your choice, drained and rinsed
- fresh veggies, diced (peppers, cucumber, carrots, red onion, tomatoes, zucchini, corn, etc.)
- 1 avocado, diced
- salsa (optional)

Wash collard greens and cut off the thickest part of the stem. Lightly steam the leaves, if desired. Grab a collard leaf and thinly spread on a layer of hummus. Add some whole grains, beans and fresh chopped veggies (be careful not to fill it too full or it will fall apart - better to have two or three smaller wraps than one giant wrap that completely falls apart). Top with some avocado and salsa (optional). Wrap up burrito-style (or however you prefer) and enjoy! It may get a little messy, but it sure is tasty and filling!

## **Baked Potato with Choose-Your-Own Toppings** (makes 1 serving)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

- 2 potatoes (regular or sweet potatoes)
- steamed or fresh veggies, chopped (broccoli, cauliflower, carrot, onion, mushroom, eggplant, zucchini, bell pepper, tomato, Brussels sprouts, asparagus, cabbage, celery, corn)
- handful of greens of choice
- 2/3 cup beans (low/no sodium) of choice, drained and rinsed (optional)
- “sauce” of choice (hummus, balsamic vinegar, marinara sauce, hot sauce, salsa, dijon mustard, low-sodium soy sauce, pesto, lemon/lime juice, etc. or top with soup/stew, veggie chili, crumbled veggie burger, any leftovers)
- spices and/or fresh herbs, to taste
- avocado or nuts/seeds (optional)

Wash and bake potatoes (at 400° for about an hour, or until a knife is easily inserted to the center). Remove from the oven and cut a lengthwise slit in the top of each potato (about half deep into the potato). Use a fork to loosen and fluff the potato flesh in the center.

Load each potato with fresh and/or steamed veggies, greens, beans, “sauce,” and spices/herbs, to taste. Use whatever you have on hand, or experiment with different combinations. The possibilities are endless!

## **Banana “Hot Dog”** (makes 1 serving)

- 1 banana, ripe
- nut/seed butter of choice; low/no salt, no added oil, no added sugar (peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, sunflower seed butter, etc.)
- 1 whole wheat hot dog bun (or a slice of whole wheat bread will work too)

Peel banana and place in bun (or place inside a slice of bread folded in half). Drizzle with some nut/seed butter of choice (you could also spread the nut/seed butter on the bun/bread first, and then add the banana). Enjoy!

Notes: The above recipe is very quick and simple. If you have more time and want to get creative with your kids, you can go to town with a tasty and fresh take on the typical hot dog, fixings, and fries. Blend some fresh or frozen strawberries and drizzle on like “ketchup” (or use a no sugar added strawberry jam/jelly). Dice some kiwi and add on top like “relish”. Try slicing mango into thin strips to serve as “french fries” on the side.

## **Simple Hummus and Veggie Sandwich** (makes 1 sandwich)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

2 slices 100% whole grain bread  
1/3 cup hummus (preferably oil-free)  
1/2 apple, sliced  
thinly sliced fresh veggies (peppers, cucumber, carrots, red onion, tomatoes, zucchini, etc.)  
handful of greens of choice  
1/2 avocado, sliced  
handful of raisins (optional)  
mustard (optional)

Spread a layer of hummus on each slice of bread. Top one slice with the apple slices and as many fresh veggies you can pile on. Add greens and avocado on top of the veggies. Add raisins and mustard, if you'd like. Place the second slice of bread on top and gently press down. Slice in half and enjoy! (Alternatively, you can pile veggies on both slices of hummus-spread bread and enjoy open-face style with a fork and knife.)

## **Mock Tuna Salad** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Lindsay Nixon at HappyHerbivore.com!

15 ounces chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
2 whole celery stalks  
2 tbsp relish (dill pickle)  
½ tsp onion flakes  
2 tsp nutritional yeast  
1 tbsp low sodium soy sauce  
2 tbsp vegan mayo (fat-free)  
½ tsp kelp

In a large mixing bowl, mash chickpeas with a fork until coarse and no whole beans are left. Alternatively, pulse beans in a food processor a few times -- careful not to puree, and transfer to a mixing bowl. Shred celery with a cheese grater or pulse a few times in a food processor. Transfer to the mixing bowl and add remaining ingredients, stirring to combine. Add more vegan mayo and/or kelp as necessary or desired and black pepper to taste.

Use Nasoya's fat-free vegan mayo or use the fat-free homemade mayo recipe in the Happy Herbivore cookbook. Many low fat mayos, such as Trader Joe's brand, are also accidentally vegan but not fat-free. Chef's notes: 1 small dill pickle may be shredded or minced and used in place of the relish. You can also add a light squirt of lemon juice for added flavor.



## **Simple Guide to Plant-Based Burgers** (makes 8-10 smaller burgers)

\*Courtesy of the Engine 2 Diet!

If it comes out a disaster, it can be a great ‘meat’ crumble for a burrito, on top of a salad, etc! You just can’t go wrong.

Pick your bean/lentil/peas - 2 cups cooked (black beans, white beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils (any color), split peas - we’re sure any kind of bean you can dream up would work just fine)

Pick your starch - 1 cup (dry whole wheat bread crumbs or whole grain gluten free bread crumbs, uncooked quick oats, cooked quinoa, cooked millet, cooked amaranth, cooked buckwheat, cooked brown/wild rice)

Pick a few veggies, diced - 1 cup (celery, carrots, onion, mushrooms, peppers, zucchini, corn)

**SPICE!** Go to town with spices. Sprinkle on as much as you’d like, taste-testing as needed (garlic, basil, oregano, cayenne, thyme, cumin, rosemary, nutritional yeast (which will give it a more cheese-like flavor), black pepper, curry powder, turmeric, etc.) Any spice you like will do just fine – get creative! Italian burgers? Mexican burgers? Jamaican-jerk burgers? Whatever you can dream up!

Liquid - 1/4 cup to 1/2 cup start with, 1/4 more as needed (low sodium vegetable broth, liquid from home-cooked beans, non-dairy unsweetened milk. Or for a different taste you can try 1/4 cup of pumpkin puree, mashed sweet potato, or butternut squash puree - if you opt to add a puree you may need to use less liquid overall)

Combine 2 tbsp of ground flax seed with 3 tbsp of warm water. Set aside and let it gel a little.

To make your burgers: Pre-heat oven to 350°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Put cooked beans in a big mixing bowl. Mash them up – however you get the job done is the right way, personally we just use our hands. Add your starch. You will want to mix the starch and the bean really well – we also use our hands for this. Add your diced vegetables (you can steam or water sauté them first if you like). Add spices. Add liquid. Add flax mixture. Mix everything together – you can use a spoon, but we just use our hands, because it’s just easier that way. Form into patties (see you were going to have to use your hands anyway). Put patties on parchment paper lined baking sheet. Stick in oven for 15-20 minutes or until they are looking slightly crispy on the top. We generally like flipping them half way through. Do a happy dance around your house while you are waiting for plant-strong burgers to cook. This step is absolutely necessary. Take out, bask in your greatness for a minute. Serve on a nice whole grain bun with all of your favorite burger accessories (grilled onions, grilled mushrooms, tomato, hummus, ketchup, mustard, really just go wild). You can also serve it on a nice bed of leafy greens. Also, serve with baked sweet potato fries, it will make for an even happier experience. You can freeze them as well. \*Tips: Too crumbly? Add more liquid. Too watery? Add more starch.

# Dinner Recipes

**Easy, quick, and delicious, these dinner recipes are sure to please your whole family!**

## **Marinara with Zucchini Noodles** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

1/4 cup water  
1 yellow onion, diced  
1 medium red bell pepper, diced  
1 medium yellow bell pepper, diced  
8-10 cremini mushrooms, sliced  
1 box Pomi brand crushed tomatoes (26 oz.) or 2 cans diced (or crushed) no-salt tomatoes (14.5 oz. each)  
1 small (6 oz.) can tomato paste  
1 tsp garlic powder (or 1-2 cloves minced)  
1 ½ tsp dried Italian spice mix  
6 medium zucchinis, cut finely into “noodles” (see step 2)  
1/2 cup chopped fresh basil

Sauté the onion in the water on medium-high heat until soft, about 2-3 minutes. Add the bell pepper and mushrooms, and sauté 5 minutes on medium heat to soften (adding water as needed to prevent sticking). Add the crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, garlic powder and spices, and turn down to simmer for 20 to 30 minutes.

While the sauce is simmering, make your zucchini noodles. Cut the ends off the zucchini first. Using a mandolin slicer, use the appropriate blade insert to create thin strings (like long matchsticks) of zucchini “noodles.” For short noodles, cut the zucchini in half before slicing. The zucchini cooks down, so make a bunch. Place noodles into a pot of boiling water and cook for about 5 to 10 minutes until zucchini is softened (but not breaking apart; undercooked/al dente is better than overcooked).

Drain zucchini and combine with the sauce (or keep separate and serve the sauce over a bed of the zucchini noodles if you prefer). Add the basil to the sauce and simmer for 5 minutes before serving. Optional: Serve with grated walnuts on top.

Notes: Instead of making zucchini noodles, you may also add chunks of diced zucchini to the sauce. / Greens, such as kale or chard, may also be added; kale with the tomatoes; chard with the basil. / To grate walnuts that look like Parmesan cheese, use a rotary style cheese grater.

Preparation: 25 minutes      Cooking time: 40 minutes

## **Pizza Pasta** (makes 2 hearty servings)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

whole grain pasta, any shape, enough for 2 hearty servings  
10 mushrooms, sliced (I like cremini or white button)  
1 medium yellow onion, chopped  
2-3 garlic cloves, minced (1 tablespoon or so)  
1 28-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes, diced (about 2 cups)  
1 cup basil leaves (about 20 leaves), rough chopped  
1 tsp nutritional yeast  
2 tbsp walnuts or pine nuts  
3 tbsp water (or drained off juice from can of tomatoes)

Cook the pasta according to the package instructions; drain, rinse and set aside. You can use any shape or kind of pasta here. Cathy likes brown rice pasta and quinoa pasta.

In a blender, blend the nutritional yeast, nuts and water until smooth (a high-speed blender works best here to break up the nuts, but any blender will work). Set aside.

Sauté the mushrooms and onion in a skillet or pot in a couple tablespoons of water, adding just a little water as you go to prevent sticking (as the vegetables cook, their water will be released as well). Sauté for 5-7 minutes on med-high heat. Halfway through add the garlic (garlic can burn easily, so it doesn't need to cook as long). Add the diced tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes; add the basil in the last 1 to 2 minutes. Pour the pasta in and toss everything together. Serve hot garnished with a little chopped basil or parsley and/or some ground nuts and nutritional yeast.

NOTES: Optional vegetables: You may also add in other things that are reminiscent of pizza, like artichoke hearts, olives, bell peppers, zucchini, and fresh thyme and oregano. A handful of chopped, fresh greens would also be good (kale, chard, spinach, collards). Cathy is partial to sweet yellow onions in this recipe, but any kind may be used, even shallots and red onions. If you are a big garlic lover, you may want to add in another clove or two.

Tomatoes: Fresh tomatoes may be used as well, and would be especially good when they are in season. Cathy uses whole peeled tomatoes here, but you can also use 2 cans of diced or crushed tomatoes.

Nutritional yeast: If you've never tried nutritional yeast, it can be found in bulk at Whole Foods or other healthy groceries. It gives a cheesy flavor without the dairy. And a little goes a long way, so Cathy just uses 1 teaspoon above. But if you want a cheesier flavor, feel free to add more.

Sauce: This dish is only lightly sauced; if you want more sauce, add in a can of tomato sauce with the tomatoes, or double the sauce ingredients here (water, nuts, nutritional yeast).

Low-cal: Feel free to omit the nuts if you are trying to cut calories. The dish will still be very flavorful, just without the slight creamy texture.

## **Fettuccine No-Fredo with Broccoli and Sautéed Mushrooms** (makes 8 servings)

\*Courtesy of Susan Voisin at [blog.FatFreeVegan.com](http://blog.FatFreeVegan.com)!

The pureed cauliflower forms a light yet creamy sauce that moistens the pasta and broccoli, while the sautéed mushrooms add chewy texture and earthy flavor. Besides being a great way to sneak a vegetable into a meal, this just tastes good.

1 large head cauliflower, chopped into small pieces  
4 cups water (use less if your cauliflower is small)  
4-6 cloves garlic, minced  
1 to 2 tsp dried basil  
1/2 to 2 tsp dried oregano  
pinch cayenne pepper  
freshly ground black pepper  
1 pinch nutmeg  
1 1/2 tbsp nutritional yeast  
2 large Portabella mushrooms, sliced 1/4-inch thick  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1/8 cup wine (Susan uses white, but red will do)  
1 pound whole grain fettuccine  
1 head broccoli, cut into florets

**Sauce:** Using the lesser amounts of each seasoning, place the cauliflower and next 7 ingredients into a large saucepan and cook, covered, until the cauliflower is very soft, about 15 minutes. When it's completely tender, use a blender to puree the cauliflower and water to a smooth sauce. (If you have a good hand blender, Susan recommends you do this in the pot.) Check the seasoning of the sauce, and add more to taste; add the nutritional yeast. Allow the sauce to simmer uncovered and thicken while you prepare the mushrooms and pasta.

**Sautéed Mushrooms:** Heat a non-stick skillet. Add the 2 cloves garlic and mushrooms, and cook, stirring, until the mushrooms begin to exude their juices. You can prevent them from drying out by keeping the skillet covered between stirrings. When the mushrooms get juicy, add the wine. Cook just until the wine is absorbed and then set aside, covered, until ready to serve.

**Pasta:** Bring a large pot of water to a boil, add the fettuccine and set a timer for 3 minutes less than the amount of time indicated on the package. When the timer goes off, add the broccoli and cook for three minutes, or until the pasta is al dente. (For her fettuccine, this meant Susan cooked it for 9 minutes, added the broccoli, and cooked it for 3 more.) Drain the pasta and broccoli and return it to the pan. Stir in the cauliflower sauce and serve topped with sautéed mushrooms.

Cooking time (duration): 45 minutes

## **Red Lentil and Spinach Dal** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Anthony Zacchino at [BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com!](http://BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com)

4 cups water or vegetable broth  
2 cups red lentils  
1 cup cooked brown rice  
1/2 cup kale, chopped  
1/2 cup fresh spinach, chiffonade  
1/2 red onion, chopped  
2 cloves of garlic, diced  
1 tsp curry powder  
1 tsp turmeric  
1 tsp garam masala  
1/2 tsp cumin  
1/2 tsp black pepper\*

Under the faucet, rinse the lentils well under warm water until the water runs clean. This is important to do because it not only cleans the lentils of any debris, but also will help to increase the nutritional absorption while cutting down on the amount of gas they may cause.

After the lentils are thoroughly rinsed, transfer them into a large pot with the water and bring to a boil. Let the lentils boil for about 25 minutes. If foam starts to collect on the top of the water, simply scrape it off with a spoon. When the water is mostly absorbed, add the rice, red onion, kale (frozen mixed greens can also be used) and the spices to the lentils and turn the heat down to a simmer.

Cook for another 5-10 minutes until the greens are soft and the spices are well absorbed.

Put the chiffonade spinach into a bowl, and then spoon your dal on top, letting the spinach wilt slightly. Can be served with whole wheat crackers, but sprouted bread would also be delightful.

\*Be sure to include black pepper whenever you are cooking with turmeric or curry as it helps the body metabolize them.

## **Maple-Mustard Lentils** (makes 3 servings)

\*Courtesy of Anthony Zacchino at [BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com](http://BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com)!

1 cup dried green lentils  
1 sweet potato –peeled and cubed  
½ cup brown or wild rice  
½ head lacinato kale- chopped  
1 small red onion - chopped  
3 cloves garlic -minced  
1 handful of golden raisins

14 oz can of no-salt added diced tomatoes  
3 tbsp maple syrup (use a high quality syrup it makes a big difference in the taste)  
3 tbsp mustard  
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar  
1 tbsp veggie broth or water  
dash of mustard powder  
dash of cinnamon

Prepare the lentils (soak in water for 8 hours, if possible) and rice as normal (can both be prepared in the same pot). While the lentils and rice are cooking, peel the sweet potato, and start preparing the other ingredients. Once the lentils and rice are done cooking transfer them into a dutch oven or oven-safe container. Add the other ingredients including the ingredients for the sauce (keep the kale and raisins to the side for now). Mix the contents well, cover and put into the oven at 375° for 25 minutes.

After 25 minutes, take the mixture out and remix it. Now, add the kale and raisins and put the dish back into the oven uncovered for another 12-15 minutes, or until most of the liquid is absorbed and the sweet potatoes are soft.

Serve hot and top with chia seeds and sunflower seeds for Omega-3s and some added crunch.

In total, the dish takes around 50 minutes to prepare and cook. If you precook the sweet potato for about 10 or 15 minutes while the lentils are cooking, you can reduce the overall time this dish needs.

As an added benefit the maple-mustard lentils keep well up to one week in the refrigerator or it can be frozen for future meals.

## **California Quinoa Salad** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of KidTestedFirefighterApproved.com!

2 cups quinoa  
4 cups water (for cooking quinoa)  
1 24oz package frozen mango, thawed (or 3 fresh mangos, diced)  
1/2 large red onion, diced  
1 large red pepper, diced  
1 small bunch cilantro, chopped  
3/4 cup unsalted, dry-toasted slivered almonds  
1 - 1 1/2 cups raisins  
2-3 cups frozen edamame, thawed  
juice of 4 limes  
3-4 tbsp balsamic vinegar

Rinse quinoa well, cook as directed. When done, fluff quinoa well with a fork, spread out and let cool. Add all other ingredients and toss together. Enjoy cold!

## **Chili-Mac** (makes 6 servings)

\*Courtesy of Susan Voisin at [blog.FatFreeVegan.com](http://blog.FatFreeVegan.com)!

2 cups whole grain elbow macaroni  
1 onion, chopped  
1 15oz can tomato sauce  
1 1/2 cups water  
4 tsp mild chili powder\*  
1/4 tsp chipotle chili powder  
10oz frozen corn kernels  
1 16oz can pinto or kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
2 to 3 tbsp nutritional yeast  
5 cups thinly-sliced kale (thick stems removed before slicing) or other greens\*\*  
pepper, to taste

Cook the pasta in plenty of boiling water until tender. Drain. Sauté onion in a large non-stick pot until translucent. Add remaining ingredients, as well as cooked pasta. Simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve hot.

Notes:

\*This is chili powder, not pepper, a mixture of mild chili peppers and cumin that adds no heat to the dish. If you want it spicy, add cayenne or additional chipotle chili powder.

\*\*If you use a faster-cooking green such as spinach, add it during the last 3 minutes of cooking.

Preparation time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 30 minutes

## **Create-Your-Own Lentil Taco Bar** (makes 4 servings)

For the Lentil Taco “Meat” (\*Courtesy of Lindsay Nixon at [HappyHerbivore.com](http://HappyHerbivore.com)!):

2 cup cooked lentils (brown or green)

2 tbsp ketchup

1 tbsp yellow mustard

1 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce

1 tbsp chili powder

2 tsp lemon or lime juice

1 1/2 tsp cumin

1/2 tsp paprika

1/4 tsp garlic powder

1/4 tsp onion powder

1/4 tsp dried oregano

1/8 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)

salsa (optional)

Pulse warm lentils in a food processor or blender until chopped up or pureed (your choice).

Transfer to a mixing bowl and stir in remaining ingredients. Taste, adding pepper as desired, plus a touch of salsa if the mixture looks dry.

Fixings:

- greens of your choice (spinach, romaine, etc.)
- salsa
- corn
- bell peppers, diced
- fresh tomatoes, diced
- avocado, diced (or guacamole)
- nutritional yeast
- corn tortillas

Assemble all the fixings into separate bowls. Have fun loading up corn tortillas with the lentil taco “meat” and all your favorite fixings!



## **Make-Your-Own Sushi**

\*Courtesy of the Engine 2 Diet!

It is healthy, really easy to make (once you get the hang of it) and is a great meal for friends and family who might be wary of eating anything plant-strong. This is also a great meal for kids to learn to make. Just have the veggies, brown rice and nori ready to go and let them make their own sushi!

- bamboo mats (you can get these at any grocery store)
- plastic wrap
- brown rice (short grain)
- nori sheets (or seaweed sheets)
- rice vinegar
- veggies! – We like using mushrooms, peppers, avocado, sweet potato, cucumber, asparagus, carrot. It's best to cut them length wise and thin. We also put raw kale (chopped up) in our sushi. You can use any combination of vegetable that you like.
- wasabi
- low sodium soy sauce

Cook your rice! Use short grain brown rice, wash it well, and add a little bit more water than the instructions call for and cook till it's really done (all the water out) to make it more sticky. Cool the rice. Transfer rice to a non-reactive bowl (glass or wood). Add rice vinegar. We pour the vinegar slowly over a large base wooden spoon, be sure to try and spread it out evenly. You do not need a lot of rice vinegar, just enough to cover the top of the rice lightly. Mix well with wooden spoon.

Cover bamboo mat with plastic wrap. Cut and place nori sheet on mat, putting the shiny side up (some people toast their nori first). The nori should be about 7 inches by 3- 4 inches. This usually means you are cutting about 2 inches off the top. Save this for hand rolls.

Spread rice over nori – we use our hands for this, because it's easier. When you use your hands, put a little rice vinegar on your hands. Place your ingredients, in one single strip across the middle of the nori sheet with rice. Don't use too much. It is best to use three ingredients.

\*You can also make these rice side up, simply flip the nori sheet with rice over.

Roll your sushi! Fold the bamboo mat over the ingredients and tightly roll the sushi. Remove roll from bamboo mat and cut with a SHARP knife! Serve with low sodium soy sauce, wasabi and ginger! EAT!

## **Raise the Roof Sweet Potato Lasagna** (makes 12 servings)

\*Courtesy of *The Engine 2 Diet Book!*

1 onion, chopped  
1 small head of garlic, all cloves chopped or pressed  
8oz mushrooms, sliced  
1 head broccoli, chopped  
2 carrots, chopped  
2 red bell peppers, seeded and chopped  
1 can corn, rinsed and drained  
1 package Silken Lite tofu  
½ tsp cayenne pepper  
1 tsp oregano  
1 tsp basil  
1 tsp rosemary  
2 jars pasta sauce (no oil, low sodium, low sugar)  
2 boxes whole grain lasagna noodles  
16oz frozen spinach, thawed and drained  
2 sweet potatoes, cooked and mashed  
6 roma tomatoes, sliced thin  
1 cup raw cashews, ground

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees.

Sauté the onion and garlic on high heat for 3 minutes in a wok or nonstick pan. Add the mushrooms and cook until the onions are limp and the mushrooms give up their liquid. Remove them to a large bowl with a slotted spoon. Reserve the mushroom liquid in the pan. Sauté the broccoli and carrots for 5 minutes and add to the mushroom bowl. Sauté the peppers and corn until just beginning to soften. Add them to the vegetable bowl. Drain the silken tofu by wrapping in paper towels. Break it up directly in the towel and mix into the vegetable bowl. Add spices to the vegetable bowl and combine.

To assemble the vegetable lasagna:

Cover the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch casserole with a layer of sauce. Add a layer of noodles. Cover the noodles with sauce. This way the noodles cook in the oven, saving time and energy. Spread the vegetable mixture over the sauced noodles. Cover with a layer of noodles and another dressing of sauce. Add the spinach to the second layer of sauced noodles. Cover the spinach with the mashed sweet potatoes. Add another layer of sauce, the final layer of noodles, and a last topping of sauce. Cover the lasagna with thinly sliced roma tomatoes. Cover with foil and bake in the oven for 45 minutes. Remove the foil, sprinkle with the cashews, and return to the oven for 15 minutes. Let lasagna sit for 15 minutes before serving.

### **Pavlov's Pizza** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Brian Hart from *My Beef With Meat!*

3-4 cups water (depending on your brand of polenta)

1 cup polenta

16 oz. tomato sauce or crushed tomatoes (or kale pesto, recipe below)

2 cups fresh spinach

3 large tomatoes, sliced

1 cup pineapple, cubed (fresh or frozen)

½ cup roasted red peppers

2 cloves garlic, crushed

(Other favorite pizza toppings: mushrooms, arugula, asparagus, or olives)

1/3 cup nutritional yeast

Preheat oven to 400°. Prepare pizza stone by sprinkling with corn meal or lining a pan with parchment paper.

Add polenta to boiling water and whisk until mixture thickens and there are no clumps (instructions for preparing polenta vary from brand to brand - check the specific preparation instructions for your type of polenta). Pour polenta mixture onto pizza stone or pan and flatten into desired crust shape. Precook the polenta crust for 10 minutes.

Remove crust from oven, add sauce, toppings and sprinkle with nutritional yeast. Return to oven and cook in oven for 10 minutes. Slice into generous portions and serve warm, alongside a salad.

Tip: To avoid a soggy pizza, precook the vegetables before placing on the pizza.

### **Kale Pesto** (makes 4 cups)

\*Courtesy of Rip and Jane Esselstyn from *My Beef With Meat!*

2 cups kale (cooked, optional)

1 1/2 cups walnuts (toasted, optional)

2 garlic cloves, chopped

1/2 cup water, or more as desired

zest of 1/2 lemon, or more to taste

juice of 1/2 lemon, or more to taste

1 1/2 cups fresh basil leaves

If you'd like, steam kale and toast the walnuts (5 to 7 minutes in the oven). Place the kale and walnuts in a food processor (or high-speed blender) and blend. Add the garlic, water, lemon zest, lemon juice, and basil and continue to blend. When the mixture reaches the texture of traditional pesto, taste it and add more water, basil, or lemon as needed. Serve on a pizza, over pasta, or use as a spread, a dip, or a dressing.

## **Eggplant Rollatini** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of Gena Hamshaw at [ChoosingRaw.com](http://ChoosingRaw.com)!

2 large eggplant, sliced lengthwise into 1/4 inch thick slices  
1 package (16 oz or so) extra firm tofu, pressed for 10 min or more to release extra water  
1/2 10 oz. package frozen spinach, drained thoroughly  
1/3 cup nutritional yeast  
2 tsp dried basil  
1 tsp dried oregano  
1/2-1 tsp minced garlic (or garlic powder to taste)  
Black pepper to taste

"In a Hurry" tomato sauce:

1 clove garlic  
1 28 oz can of fire roasted diced or crushed tomatoes (Gena really likes Muir Glen Organic)  
2 tbsp organic tomato paste  
Handful of coarsely chopped fresh basil

Place eggplant slices onto baking sheets and sprinkle well with sea salt or kosher salt. Let sit for 30 minutes; this decreases bitterness and removes excess moisture. Pat the slices dry.

Make the tomato sauce. Sauté the garlic till fragrant. Add the diced tomatoes, paste, and heat thoroughly. Toss in basil at the end, and remove from heat.

Heat oven to 400°. Roast eggplant till browning (about 20-30 min) flipping slices halfway through.

While eggplant cooks, transfer tofu to a bowl and crumble it with hands. Add the nutritional yeast, pepper, garlic, basil, oregano, and spinach. Mix it well with hands, crumbling through fingers till it resembles a bowl of crumbly ricotta cheese.

When eggplant is finished, transfer slices to a cutting board (wait for them to cool, of course) and add about 3 tbsp of the ricotta mixture to the end of one side. Roll up from that side, and place seam down in a baking dish of choice till you've finished all slices.

Reduce oven to 350°. Smother the eggplant rolls with tomato sauce, and bake, uncovered, for about 20-25 minutes, or until hot.

## **Lentil Sweet Potato Loaf** (makes 10 servings)

\*Courtesy of Gena Hamshaw at ChoosingRaw.com!

1 cup celery, chopped  
1/2 yellow onion, chopped  
2 3/4 cup vegetable broth (or water)  
1 cup lentils  
1.5 cups grated sweet potato  
1 cup rolled oats  
1 tsp thyme  
1/2 tsp rosemary  
1/4 cup organic tomato paste  
organic ketchup (optional)

Sauté the onions and celery until soft and the onions are browning - about 8-10 minutes. Add lentils and vegetable broth to the pot, along with grated potatoes. Cook mixture on a simmer until broth has absorbed and lentils are very tender - about 30 minutes. Stir in oats and remove mixture from heat. Add spices and season with pepper to taste. Texture should be very thick, but pliable. If you think it needs to be drier, add some more oats; if it's too dry, add a little water. Press mixture into a loaf pan. Brush with ketchup if desired. Bake at 350° for 45-50 minutes, or until a knife finds it firm. If the top starts to brown, cover with foil midway through.

## **Beans & Brown Rice Bowl** (makes 4 servings)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

This is a fun, tasty, and colorful bowl that is super easy to make. No recipe is really needed, just cook some brown rice and beans (or used canned), chop up some veggies, and serve on a bed of greens, topped with salsa and avocado!

2 cups brown rice, uncooked  
2 cans black beans (low/no sodium), drained and rinsed  
2 red, orange, or yellow bell peppers, diced  
1 small red onion, diced  
1 - 2 mangos, diced (or use 1 - 2 cups frozen mango chunks)  
1 cup fresh or frozen corn  
1 avocado, diced  
greens of your choice  
salsa

Cook brown rice. While the brown rice is cooking, chop and prepare the rest of the veggies. Once cooked, combine brown rice with beans and veggies in a large bowl. Serve on a bed of greens with salsa and avocado on top, to taste.

## **Veggie Chili** (makes 6 servings)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

½ cup water for sautéing

1 each green, yellow, red bell pepper, seeded and diced

3 ribs celery, diced

1 yellow onion, diced

1 tsp garlic powder

1 tsp ground cumin

2 tsp dried oregano

1 tsp ground ancho chilies

1 15-oz. can diced tomatoes or 1 box Pomi brand diced tomatoes

1 15-oz. can each no-salt kidney, black, and pinto beans, drained and rinsed

1 15-oz. can no-salt corn, drained (or 1-1/2 cups frozen or fresh)

Water as needed

½ cup chopped fresh cilantro or parsley

Heat up the 1/2 cup of water in a soup pot over medium heat. Add the bell peppers, celery, onion, garlic powder, cumin, oregano and ground ancho chili powder, and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes, the corn, and all the beans, and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 30 minutes, adding water as needed. Stir in the cilantro or parsley shortly before serving.

Notes: Look for canned beans without salt. / This chili is very mild in its spices, so feel free to add more chili powder or a hotter chili powder if you wish.

Preparation: 20 minutes

Cooking: 45 minutes

## **Sloppy Lentil Joes** (makes 4-6 servings)

\*Courtesy of Heather McDougall of the McDougall Program!

This is a quick and easy meal that also reheats well for lunch the next day or two. Serve this stuffed into a whole-grain bun and eat with your hands, or ladle it over the buns (open-face style) and eat with a fork. Pairs great with steamed kale and fresh corn (when in season).

3 1/3 cups water or low-sodium vegetable stock  
1 onion, chopped  
1 red bell pepper, chopped  
1 tbsp chili powder  
1 1/2 cups dried brown lentils  
1 15-ounce can diced fire roasted tomatoes  
2 tbsp soy sauce  
2 tbsp Dijon mustard  
2 tbsp brown sugar  
1 tsp rice vinegar  
1 tsp vegetarian Worcestershire sauce

Place 1/3 cup of the water or stock in a large pot. Add the onions and bell pepper and cook, stirring occasionally until onions soften slightly, about 5 minutes. Add the chili powder and mix in well. Add the remaining liquid, lentils, tomatoes, and the rest of the seasonings. Mix well, bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and cook over low heat for one hour, stirring occasionally. Serve on whole-wheat buns, or fresh baked bread, with the trimmings of your choice.

## **Create-Your-Own Salad Bar**

- greens of your choice (spinach, kale, red leaf lettuce, swiss chard, arugula, radicchio, etc.)
- lots of fresh chopped veggies (carrots, tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, cucumber, beets, broccoli, cauliflower, red onion, mushrooms, celery, red cabbage, green peas, corn, etc.)
- low/no sodium beans, drained and rinsed (kidney beans, chickpeas, pinto beans, black beans, cannellini beans, black-eyed peas, green lentils, brown lentils, etc.)
- fresh or dried fruit
- avocado, chopped or a handful of nuts/seeds
- hummus, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, salsa

Chop and assemble all ingredients in bowls on your counter. Grab a large bowl and load up with all the greens, veggies, beans, and fruit you like. Top with a handful of avocado or nuts/seeds. Enjoy as is or dress your huge salad with hummus, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, or salsa to taste. Use whatever veggies you have on hand and enjoy a huge, colorful, and creative salad!

## Easy-Peasy Veggie Broth

\*Courtesy of Anthony Zacchino at [BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com](http://BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com)!

Try using this homemade, no-cost vegetable broth in place of oil. It can be used to sauté with, cook beans, rice, and grains in, for the base of salad dressings, and even for homemade-dips like hummus.

As you cook during the week, keep any clean scraps, peels, and trimmings from all the veggies that you would normally toss out or compost. Save these in the freezer until you have a large Ziploc baggie worth. Once you have done this, put all the scraps into a large pot. Fill the pot with water (making sure to cover the scraps with at least 2 or 3 inches of water.) Cover the pot and bring to a boil. Once it is boiling, reduce to a simmer for another 10 minutes. By this time a delightful smell will have spread throughout the kitchen. Turn off the flame keeping the pot covered for another 30 minutes.

After the vegetable scraps have “steeped” for about 30 or 40 minutes, remove the lid and let the broth cool. After its sufficiently cooled, strain the liquid from the pot into a glass tupperware container. I typically make between 10 and 12 cups of broth at a time. When refrigerated the broth will last up to 10 days. It can also be frozen for several months.

Suggestions for what to use:

A typical batch of my broth is made from the cores, peels, skins, stems, tops and bottoms of various veggies.

Cores include: bell peppers, cabbages, and tomatoes

Peels include: carrots, onion, and ginger, squashes,

Stems include: kale, collards, and other greens as well as broccoli and mushrooms

Tops and Bottoms include: carrots, celery, green beans, onions, and garlic.

Tips and Notes:

Not all of the above ingredients are edible but they are all perfectly fine for making broth with.

For an additional boost of flavor, try adding your favorite spices. Anthony often adds turmeric, black pepper, and chili flakes. Bay leaves are also great.

Adding a whole clove of garlic is also a great way to boost the flavor.

Try tossing in one apple core to help sweeten the broth just a little bit.

Another great thing about this broth is that it is salt-free unlike most found in stores and literally costs nothing to make.

Every week's broth will be just slightly different. Experiment with different combinations and have fun.



# Snack Recipes

**Kids love to snack. Cut-up fresh fruit and vegetables are great to always have on hand for when a snack-attack strikes. Here are a few other ideas for snacks that both you and your kids are sure to enjoy!**

## **Quinoa Cornbread** (makes one 8×8 pan)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

1 cup water  
1/2 cup dry quinoa  
1 cup cornmeal  
1/3 cup rolled oats, ground into flour  
1-1/2 tbsp flax seeds, ground  
2 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 of a ripe banana  
1 cup apple juice (or 2-3 pitted dates soaked in 1 cup water)  
Water as needed

Cook the quinoa: boil 1 cup water, then add in the dry quinoa, reduce to a simmer, cover and cook for 15-20 minutes until the water is gone and the quinoa is fluffy.

While the quinoa is cooking, combine the cornmeal, oat flour, flax seeds, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon.

In a separate bowl, mash the banana with a fork, and blend in the apple juice (or water and dates). (If using dates instead of apple juice, mix the banana, dates and water in a blender for a smoother consistency.)

Combine wet and dry ingredients with a fork; fold in the cooked quinoa. The mixture should be thick, but add a little water if it's too stiff. Spread mixture into a non-stick or parchment paper-lined 8×8-inch square pan and bake at 350 for 25 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes before cutting.

Notes: You can also use blue cornmeal in place of the yellow cornmeal, and add fresh corn kernels or blueberries for a heartier, more colorful cornbread. / Quinoa comes in yellow, red and black, so feel free to use red or black for a more variegated cornbread. / Use a powerful blender, like a Vitamix or Tribest personal-size blender, to grind the flax seeds and oats, and to blend the bananas, dates and water.

Preparation: 20 minutes      Cooking: 25 minutes

## **Hummus** (makes 2.5 cups)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

1 medium-large red bell pepper  
3 cups cooked garbanzo beans (or 2 cans pre-cooked)  
2 cloves fresh garlic, minced  
4 tbsp lemon juice  
1 tsp ground cumin

To roast the red pepper, preheat oven to 375 degrees. Place the whole red pepper (including stem) in a baking dish standing upright and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, until pepper starts to wrinkle and brown a bit on the outside.

Remove the stem from the roasted pepper and cut into large pieces. Place all of the ingredients into a food processor, blending until smooth. Use as a dip for vegetables, sandwich spread, or topping for baked potatoes.

Preparation: 15 minutes      Cooking time: 30 minutes

### Notes

Traditional hummus: For a more traditional tasting hummus, leave the red pepper out. For a bit of richness, add 1-2 tablespoons of tahini (ground sesame seed paste, which can be found near the peanut butter in stores).

Beans: If you'd like to cook garbanzo beans from scratch (dry beans), soak 1 and a half cups dry beans in a bowl of water overnight. After they have soaked, place the beans in a pot with enough water just to cover them and bring to a full boil before reducing heat to a low boil. Cook for about one and a half hours, or until softened, adding water as needed to keep beans covered. One cup of dry beans makes about two and half cups of cooked beans. Save any extra beans to use on your salad or in soup (and save the cooking water, as it is especially flavorful; and use it to store extra cooked beans in). Since cooking dry beans from scratch is a bit of work, It's always good to make extra beans. You can also freeze cooked beans.

### **Hot Pink Hummus** (makes 1 1/2 to 2 cups)

\*Courtesy of Jane and Zeb Esselstyn Hart in *My Beef With Meat!*

1 can (15oz) chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
juice of 1/2 lemon  
1 tbsp tahini (optional)  
1 beet, cooked and peeled

In a food processor, combine the chickpeas, garlic, lemon juice, and tahini (if using) and pulse until well mixed. Add water to thin as needed to achieve the desired texture, and the beet for color. Serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

Variation: For Plain Jane Hummus, leave out the beet!

### **Creamy Artichoke Spinach Dip** (makes 5-6 servings)

\*Courtesy of Dreena Burton at [PlantPoweredKitchen.com](http://PlantPoweredKitchen.com)!

3/4 cup raw cashews (unsoaked)  
3/4 cup plain unsweetened non-dairy milk (Dreena likes almond or soy, but your choice)  
2 1/2 - 3 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice  
1-2 medium-large cloves garlic (use less/more to taste)  
1/2 tsp dry (ground) mustard  
freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
2 cups frozen artichoke hearts, partially thawed (helps for pulsing in blender)  
2 cups (loosely packed) spinach leaves

Preheat oven to 425°. In a blender/food processor, first add cashews, milk, lemon juice (Dreena likes the full 3 tbsp for tanginess), garlic, dry mustard, and pepper. Blend until very smooth. (If using a high-powered blender, this will only take a minute or so. If using a standard blender/food processor, keep blending until very smooth). Add artichokes and spinach and just PULSE through. Do not fully blend, keep some chunky texture! Transfer to an oven-proof baking dish, and bake for 17-20 minutes. Remove and say 'ahhhh'.

## **Tamari Roasted Chickpeas** (makes 1 3/4 cups)

\* Courtesy of Dreena Burton at [PlantPoweredKitchen.com](http://PlantPoweredKitchen.com)!

These scrumptious roasted chickpeas will quickly become a weekly go-to recipe in your home. They are a snap to prepare, and each chickpea absorbs the tamari and lemon juice during baking, making every nibble delicious! They are ideal for packing into lunches, but are especially wonderful still warm served straight up, or to top salads, soups, pastas, or pizzas!

1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained (about 1 3/4 cups)  
2 – 2 1/2 tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice (balsamic vinegar is also good)  
2 – 2 1/2 tsp tamari  
1/2 tsp fresh rosemary, chopped (or 1 tsp fresh thyme  
or oregano) (optional, can omit if making for children)  
1/8 – 1/4 tsp pure maple syrup or agave nectar

Preheat oven to 400°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. On the baking sheet, add all ingredients and toss to combine. Bake for about 25 minutes, tossing chickpeas once or twice during baking, until tamari and lemon juice are absorbed (chickpeas will still be tender, not crunchy). Serve warm for appetizers or at room temperature for snacks.

(These chickpeas make a sensational topper for salads, pasta dishes, soups, and stir-fries. Also, leftovers can be lightly mashed with condiments for a sandwich spread, or whizzed in a mini-food processor with a touch of lemon juice, and tahini for a chunkier hummus.)

## **Blueberry Chia Seed Pudding**

\*Courtesy of Anthony Zacchino at [BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com](http://BringYourOwnLentils.blogspot.com)!

3/4 cup chia seeds  
2 cups unsweetened almond milk  
1 large banana- ripe  
1 cup blueberries

To begin, put the almond milk (or any non-dairy milk) in the blender with the banana and 3/4 cup of the blueberries. Blend until smooth and dark blue.

While that is being blended, add the chia seeds to a large mixing bowl or container. Once milk is done being blended, simply pour it on top of the seeds.

Now all you need to do is stir once every 5 minutes for the next twenty minutes or so. Similar to flax seeds, the chia will absorb the liquid and obtain a gelatinous texture. The mixture should be done after about twenty minutes of soaking and mixing. The mixture should be now be thick and ready to eat. Anthony prefers it refrigerated and often adds another 1/4 cup of fresh blueberries to the top.

### **Chocomole** (makes 1 cup)

\*Courtesy of Anne Stevenson in *My Beef With Meat!*

- 1 ripe avocado, pitted and peeled
- 1/3 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon (optional)
- 1/4 cup water, or more as needed

Process the avocado, maple syrup, cocoa powder, vanilla, and cinnamon (if using) in a food processor or high-speed blender. Add the water, as needed, to achieve a smooth mixture.

### **Apple “Doughnuts”**

- your favorite apple
- nut/seed butter of your choice
- your favorite toppings (such as: dried or fresh fruit, chia seeds, cacao nibs, homemade granola, unsweetened coconut, spices, etc.)

Wash apple and remove the core. Slice apple into thin rounds. Spread a thin layer of nut/seed butter on to each apple round. Top with you favorites and enjoy this fresh, tasty, and simple snack!

### **Make-Your-Own Trail Mix**

- nuts (walnuts, almonds, cashews, peanuts, pecans, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, etc.)
- seeds (sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.)
- cacao nibs
- dried fruit (raisins, goji berries, dried cranberries, dried banana, dried apricots, dried pineapple, etc.)
- plain puffed grain cereals (Nature’s Path and Arrowhead Mills offer sever varieties, such as: puffed brown rice, puffed kamut, puffed millet, puffed corn)
- rolled oats

Combine your favorite ingredients in a ratio that suits your taste. Enjoy!

Notes: look for dried fruit that has no added sugar or oil and nuts that have no added salt or oil.

## **Ants On a Log (sweet or savory)**

- celery, washed and cut into sticks
- nut/seed butter of choice; low/no salt, no added oil, no added sugar (peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, sunflower seed butter, etc.)
- raisins

-OR-

- celery, washed and cut into sticks
- hummus
- low/no sodium canned black beans, drained and rinsed

Spread nut/seed butter on celery and top with raisins. Alternatively, spread hummus on celery and top with black beans.

## **Banana Soft Serve** (makes 1 serving)

This is a super quick and easy frozen treat you will be sure to love!! When frozen banana are blended, they take on the magical consistency of ice cream. Easy, delicious, and nutritious!! You'll want to keep some bananas chopped up in the freezer all the time.

1 banana, peeled, chopped, and frozen  
splash of non-dairy milk of your choice

Place the frozen banana chunks into a blender or food processor and blend well. Add a splash of non-dairy milk to achieve desired creaminess and consistency. Enjoy!!

Variations: Add some additional "flavoring" to your soft serve by adding some cacao powder, a handful of nuts/seeds, a spoonful of nut/seed butter, mint leaves, spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, etc.), or vanilla extract. Also try adding in a handful of other frozen fruit (berries, mango, pineapple, etc.), or using other frozen fruit in place of the banana entirely. The possibilities are endless!

## Homemade Granola

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

This is a basic go-to formula for really delicious and flavorful homemade granola. Feel free to make it your own by adding your favorite ingredients and making new combinations. The smell of your kitchen while this is cooking is amazing!

3 cups rolled oats  
1 tbsp ground flaxseed  
1 tbsp chia seeds  
1 tbsp cacao nibs  
1/4 cup almonds, roughly chopped  
1/4 cup walnuts, roughly chopped  
1/4 cup pecans, roughly chopped  
1/4 cup cashews, roughly chopped  
1/2 tbsp cinnamon (or to taste)  
1/2 - 1 tsp ground nutmeg (or to taste)  
1 tbsp vanilla extract  
1 large banana, very ripe  
2 dates, pitted and soaked in water for 10mins  
1/4 - 1/2 cup dried fruit (we usually add goji berries, but raisins or dried apricots are also delish!)

Preheat oven to 300°. Mix the first 11 ingredients (except for the banana, dates, and dried fruit) together in a large bowl. Add additional spices to taste. In a blender, combine banana and soaked dates, adding just a little of the soaking water to get things moving. Blend to a smooth consistency. Pour over oat mixture. (Alternately, maple syrup can be substituted for the blended date and banana mixture. Start with 1 tbsp maple syrup and sweeten lightly to taste). Stir well, making sure all the oats are evenly coated. Spread oat mixture evenly on to an ungreased baking sheet (you can line it with parchment paper if desired). Bake at 300° for 15 minutes. Check granola and stir gently. Bake for another 10-15 minutes until oats are crunchy (they will also get crisper as they cool). As oven temperatures vary, keep an eye on the granola so as to not burn it! Remove granola from oven and mix in dried fruit, to your preference. Let cool on the counter and enjoy!

# Dessert Recipes

For special occasions, and every once-in-a-while when you want a special treat, here are some tasty and fun recipes to create! They are filled with wholesome and nutritious ingredients. But of course, simply having a piece of fresh, juicy, and sweet fruit is perfect for a dessert too!

## **Carrot Cake!** (makes a 9x13" cake)

\*Courtesy of The College Greens!

2 cups whole wheat flour (or whole wheat pastry flour)  
1 tbsp baking powder  
1 tsp cinnamon (or more!)  
¼ tsp each ginger, cloves, nutmeg  
¼ cup almond milk or soymilk  
½ cup chopped walnuts  
½ cup raisins  
2 tbsp ground flax mixed with 6 tbsp warm water  
1 cup maple syrup  
½ cup applesauce  
2 cups shredded carrot  
½ tsp vanilla  
1 small can crushed pineapple

Mix ingredients together, pour into floured or parchment paper-lined 9x13" dish. Bake at 375° for 30-35ish minutes.

Frosting:

2/3 cup almond milk or coconut milk  
1-2 cups raw cashews  
½ - 1 cup pitted dates  
1-2 tsp vanilla  
3-4 tbsp maple syrup

Put everything together in a food processor or blender and blend. Keep tasting to decide what to add. Adjust amounts of ingredients to make as much frosting as you want!

Let cake cool before frosting it. Decorate cake with walnuts and raisins. Enjoy!!! Yummmm :)



### **Frozen Chocolate Banana Treats** (makes 25 - 30 balls)

\*Courtesy of Ann Esselstyn from the *Forks Over Knives Companion Book!*

2 bananas, very ripe  
1/3 cup cacao powder  
1/3 cup maple syrup  
1/3 cup non-dairy milk of your choice (unsweetened)  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
2 cups rolled oats  
Ezekiel cereal

Purée bananas, cacao, maple syrup, non-dairy milk, and vanilla in a food processor or blender until well combined. Transfer to a bowl and add oats. Mix well until sticky.

Line a baking sheet with wax paper. Place Ezekiel cereal in a bowl. Scoop out teaspoon-sized balls of banana-oat mixture. Roll balls in cereal and/or sprinkle cereal until banana-oat ball is covered in cereal. Place on lined baking sheet. Repeat with remaining banana-oat mixture.

Freeze the entire pan of chocolate treats. After the treats are completely frozen (a few hours), transfer to an airtight container and store in the freezer.

### **Banana-Cashew Balls** (makes 10 balls)

\*Courtesy of Susan Voisin at [blog.FatFreeVegan.com!](http://blog.FatFreeVegan.com)

1 overripe banana  
1/4 cup raw cashews  
1 tbsp flax seeds, ground  
3 tbsp oatmeal (regular or quick oats)  
2 medjool dates, pitted  
1/4 vanilla bean, split and scraped

Cut the banana into slices about 3/4-inch thick and place them on a microwave-safe plate. Microwave on 60% power for about 7 minutes, until most of the moisture has boiled out of the banana. Scrape the banana off the plate while it is still hot (makes cleanup easier) and allow to cool.

Pulse the cashews in the food processor until coarsely ground. Add the flax seed and oatmeal and pulse a few more times. Add the banana and dates, and scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean into the processor. Blend into a thick paste.

Moisten your hands. Scoop up the paste by heaping teaspoons and form into small balls. Place each one on a plate, not touching. Cover and keep refrigerated.

## **Banana Oatmeal Peanut Butter Cookies** (makes approximately 20 cookies)

\*Courtesy of Rip Esselstyn in *My Beef With Meat!*

3 ripe bananas, mashed  
1 tbsp vanilla  
¾ cup natural chunky peanut butter (look for no salt, sugar, or oil added)  
3 tbsp maple syrup  
2 cups old fashioned oats  
½ cup whole wheat flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
½ cup non-dairy chocolate chips or raisins

\*to make gluten free substitute whole wheat flour with a gluten-free flour

Preheat oven to 350°. Prepare a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Mix bananas, vanilla, peanut butter and maple syrup into a creamy consistency in a large bowl. In another bowl, combine oats, flour, and baking powder. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and stir until they are well combined - the batter should be slightly sticky. Fold in the chocolate chips or raisins. Place rounded, heaping tablespoon-sized balls of the batter onto the ungreased, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Bake for 15-18 minutes. Gobble these up while they are still warm!

## **Chocolate Mango Mixed Berry Parfait**

\*Courtesy of Jeff Novick!

1 bag thawed mixed frozen berries  
2 fresh mango  
2 tbsp pure cocoa powder  
2 tsp diced walnuts (optional)

Blend 1 mango with 2 tbsp cocoa powder. Arrange a layer of berries in bottom of parfait glass. Top with chocolate mango mixture. Add another layer of berries. Top with chocolate mango mixture. Add another layer of berries. Top with chocolate mango mixture. Top with diced mango. Top with 1 tsp diced walnuts (optional). Ahhhhh!!!!

Variations:

You can also substitute 2 very ripe bananas or 8 oz fresh applesauce for the mango.

You can also substitute any other fresh or frozen fruit for the berries.

You can also adjust the amount of cocoa. More cocoa makes it thicker and richer but more bitter.

Less cocoa makes it thinner and less bitter.

## **Oatmeal-Raisin Cookies** (makes about 2 dozen)

\*Courtesy of Cathy Fisher at StraightUpFood.com!

1 cup water  
6 medjool dates, pitted  
½ cup raw, unsalted pecans  
2 cups rolled oats, ground into flour  
¾ cup rolled oats  
2 tbsp whole flax seeds, then grind them  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp cinnamon  
½ tsp nutmeg  
¼ tsp Chinese 5-spice (optional)  
3 tbsp lemon juice  
½ ripe banana, sliced  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
½ cup raisins  
½ cup chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350°. Line the bottom of a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat, and set aside. Place pitted dates and pecans together in a bowl with the water and soak for at least 30 minutes.

Combine all of the dry ingredients (oat flour, oats, flax, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and 5-spice) in a large bowl and mix with a fork. Combine the dates, pecans and their soak water with the lemon juice, banana and vanilla in a high-speed blender, and blend until smooth. Add to the bowl of dry ingredients and mix; add in the raisins and walnuts.

Using a one-tablespoon measure, place a scoop of cookie dough on your baking sheet and press down just slightly (oil-less cooking don't spread as much). Bake for 15-18 minutes on the middle rack, until cookies are lightly browned on top (check at 15). Remove from oven and let sit for 5 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack.

Notes: Regular (whole) rolled oats work best (as opposed to quick or instant oats). / If you don't want to grind your own oat flour at home, you can use packaged oat flour, or experiment with different whole-grain flours. / A Vitamix or Tribest Personal Blender work best to blend the wet ingredients, although a regular blender would work too, especially if pecans and dates have soaked thoroughly (this enables the natural fats and sugars from the nuts and dates to be evenly distributed throughout the dough). / Chinese 5-spice is a wonderful blend of cinnamon, star anise, anise seed, clove, and ginger. It adds a little something special to the cookies, but is not required.

Preparation: 30 minutes      Cooking time: 15-18 minutes

**Adonis Cake** (makes a 9x9" cake)

\*Courtesy of Betty Speer and Adonis from *My Beef With Meat!*

1½ cups of whole wheat flour  
3 tbsp dry cocoa  
1 tsp baking soda  
2/3 cup maple syrup  
6 tbsp unsweetened applesauce  
1 tbsp white vinegar  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
¾ cup cold water

\*to make gluten free, use a gluten free flour instead

Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 9x9" cake pan with parchment paper. In a mixing bowl combine flour, cocoa, baking soda, and mix well. Add maple syrup, applesauce, vinegar, vanilla and water and mix well. Pour into the prepared cake pan. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

Prep time: 10 minutes          Cook time: 30 minutes

Frosting (makes about 2 cups, enough for one cake):

12oz package silken tofu  
¾ cup dairy-free, semisweet chocolate chips, melted  
1 tbsp vanilla extract

Place the silken tofu in a food processor. Add the melted chocolate chips to the food processor and blend. Add the vanilla and blend until chocolatey and creamy. Taste at this stage; if using grain-sweetened chips, you may want to add a bit of pure maple syrup - or not! Trust your own taste.

Use immediately or refrigerate until ready to use.

## Closing Letter

Hello again :)

Hopefully by the time you're reading this, you've at least read through most of the articles, done a few activities, and cooked up some scrumdillyishious recipes!! And, with any luck, you're feeling better informed about what is healthy, why it is, and where to start. Things may seem slightly overwhelming at first, and we understand that. But we truly believe in what we have shared with you, and we only want the very best for you and your family. Eating a plant-based diet will bring greater health and well-being for now and for forever! We pinky promise :)

So if you're ready to take the plunge and go all-in, go for it!! But if you're more of a "dip your toes in first" type of person, go ahead and ease your way into the plant-based lifestyle a little bit at a time. Either way, you are taking action and making positive change! GO YOU!!!

We're really excited for you! This is awesome :) As we said in our introduction, this truly is the adventure of a lifetime (and it will elongate and improve the experience of your lifetime!). It's been fun learning together, but now it is time for us to wave you off on your journey.

Wishing you many vibrant years of life abundant in health and happiness,  
Tara, Jenna, and Craig

# Additional Resources

## Websites for more information:

<http://www.drmcDougall.com>

<http://engine2diet.com>

<http://www.forksoverknives.com> (also check out the documentary *Forks Over Knives*!!)

<http://www.heartattackproof.com>

<http://www.pcrm.org>

<http://www.tcolincampbell.org>

## Websites with lots of great recipes:

<http://blog.fatfreevegan.com>

<http://happyherbivore.com>

<http://plantpoweredkitchen.com>

<http://www.straightupfood.com/>

## Recommended books for reading:

*Approaching the Natural: A Health Manifesto*

*The China Study*

*The Complete Idiot's Guide to Plant-Based Nutrition*

*Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes*

*The Engine 2 Diet*

*My Beef with Meat*

*The Pleasure Trap*

*Power Foods for the Brain*

*Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease*

*The Starch Solution*

*Whole: Rethinking the Science of Nutrition*

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