

# Ditch The Junk

*A 7-Day Challenge*



# **THE CHALLENGE**

The goal of this challenge is to ditch processed foods (a.k.a. “junk”) in your daily meals and snacks for one week.

It sounds scarier than it is. Remember, seven days is all you have to commit to.

Of course, most people transition from seven days to lifestyle change when they see and feel the results. There is often a renewed sense of health and wellness. I’ll talk more about that below.

This challenge is easier when you encourage your co-workers, friends, family and clubs to take part. How about having your club put together a betting pool based on who will make it the full week?

Okay. Let’s dive in.

# **PART 1 – INTRODUCTION: WHY AVOID “JUNK” (A.K.A. “PROCESSED FOODS”)?**

Do you experience gas, bloating, sleep issues, headaches, fatigue, etc.? If yes, then you may be pleasantly surprised how you feel after a week of ditching the “junk.”

As you can imagine, over the time that junk (i.e. processed, fatty, sugary, salty and/or hyper-palatable) food consumption has increased, so have the rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. Not to mention new research on the links between junk foods and poor gut and mental health.

Before we go into more details on what exactly junk food is and the problems with it, let’s look at what you’re going to get out of this 7-day challenge. Then we’re going to overcome some common obstacles.

Remember, this 7-day challenge will fill your body with an abundance of nutrients and a renewed sense of health and wellness.

I look forward to supporting you through this week.

## **WHAT YOU GET**

- A list of delicious real foods that you can eat
- A 7-day menu with recipes
- A list of the junk that you will want to avoid (and lots of good reasons why!)

## **OBSTACLES**

Let’s get the obstacles out of the way right off the bat.

“But I don’t eat that much junk food.”

This is a very common obstacle. Let me ask you this: Do you know how it can be harder to edit your own work than editing someone else’s work? Well, as a practitioner, when I start to assess what my clients are consuming on a daily basis, that’s when I find some of those sneaky junk foods.

“It is too expensive to eat whole foods all the time.”

When you have a meal plan and you stick to it, which is included in this program, you will have less food waste. This is one thing that will cut your grocery costs.

Also, you are only buying whole foods, not whole foods AND junk foods. Those are staying in the store this week. Buying both will skyrocket your grocery bill.

“But I like junk foods.”

Let’s get this one thing straight, your body and overall health don’t like junk foods. It’s sending you signals loud and clear like gas, bloating, sleep issues, headaches, and fatigue, but you keep ignoring them. I will bet that after removing junk foods for a week, you will not enjoy them as much if you choose to reintroduce them.

“I don’t have time to cook.”

Planning it out helps, and again I have done it for you here. While baking chicken nuggets and fries in the oven for 30 minutes seems like less effort, it’s the same amount of time that it will take to cook two veggies and place a few chicken breasts on the BBQ. What you don’t have time for is being home ill, missing work, and still having to pay bills without an income.



“But what about the kids?”

If junk foods are not good for you, then they are definitely not good for them. In fact, eating too much junk is linked with serious health issues in adolescents! Eating whole foods for a week is not going to hurt them one bit. They might complain, whine and glare at you but I promise, they will not starve. And they may feel better and healthier too!

## MAKE A COMMITMENT

Commit to one week of “ditching the junk.” I know you can do this! Food is nourishment for your body. What you are eating should add to your health, not take it away.

## WHAT TO DO

1. **Part 1** – Once you’ve made your commitment, grab a cup of tea and give

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this ebook a read through.

2. **Part 2 – All About Junk Food** has some great info and a few recommended videos that I think you'll enjoy.
3. **Part 3 – Your Food Plan and Recipes** list the foods and menu. Have a look and see how great some of the recipes are. Honestly!
4. Take inventory of the ingredients you already have at home and make a grocery list.
5. Head out to the store.
6. When you get home, prepare your produce for the week.

**Pro Tip:** You may even want to portion out your snacks for the week in handy “to go” containers so that packing your lunches and snacks is quick and easy.

## LEGAL STUFF

The information presented in this plan is not intended as medical advice or as a substitute for medical counselling. The information should be used in conjunction with the guidance and care of your physician. Consult your physician before implementing any nutrition program or dietary changes you feel could be harmful to your health.

## PART 2 – ALL ABOUT JUNK FOOD: WHAT EXACTLY IS “JUNK FOOD?”

Junk food has become so abundant in our food supply that one could nearly fill a grocery cart with only junk food items and technically still eat from all of the food groups.

In a nutshell, we’re talking about food products that are:

- Easy to obtain (a.k.a. “convenience” foods)
- Often cheaper than homemade
- Engineered to be “hyper-palatable” because they’re sweeter, saltier, and fattier than natural whole foods
- Made with cheap ingredients that are unhealthy (e.g. trans fats, processed grain products, etc.)
- Contain many chemical additives; for example, preservatives (to prevent the food from rotting), artificial colours, fake flavours, etc.

The term ‘PROCESSED FOOD’ means any food that has been altered from its natural state, either for safety reasons or convenience. They are food products that are packaged, branded, ready-to-eat convenience foods.

Some of the common characteristics of junk foods are “hyper-palatability, sophisticated and attractive packaging, multi-media and other aggressive marketing to children and adolescents, health claims, high profitability, and branding and ownership by transnational corporations.” (Montiero, et al, 2016).

Junk foods are not made from foods that you would use to cook a meal in your kitchen. Junk foods are made from ingredients. Things like hydrogenated oils, starches, and “hydrolyzed proteins.” They’re full of additives like preservatives, emulsifiers, binders, flavours, and colours.

“The function of many of these is to make the product look, smell, feel, and taste

like food.” (Montiero, et al, 2012).

This is a huge problem!

Junk foods may resemble a whole food, but the amount of processing all of those ingredients have gone through has virtually destroyed any nutrition. This makes these “food-like products” not nearly as healthy as we think they are.

Let’s take enriched wheat flour as an example of a processed food. The beloved grain is stripped of its outer hull, where much of the fiber resides, along with many vital nutrients. The wheat then undergoes a bleaching process because, esthetically, people like a “white” product. Then, those nutrients that we stripped from nature are now replaced with synthetic vitamins, minerals, or other nutrients to give our wheat the name “enriched” wheat flour. The enriched wheat flour is seen in cookies, crackers, bread, cereal, and snacks all over the grocery store aisles.

This process is used over and over again to make these products shelf stable, more visually pleasing, cheaper to produce, or to create a convenience food. They are specifically made to imitate or intensify the qualities of food, to make them “hyper-palatable.”

Junk foods also often contain artificial flavours and colours. These ingredients are used to make them taste and look better than they would naturally. This makes it very difficult for us to say no, even though we know they’re not good for us. It’s as though the company is hijacking our taste buds so we will come back for more. When we pass by it on the grocery store shelf we instantly remember how good it tasted and struggle with not putting it into our carts.

In the end this does nothing for our health.

Let's take Lays potato chips for example. Their saying is “**I BET YOU CAN’T HAVE JUST ONE.**” A serving size is about 1 oz or about 8 chips. I don’t know about you, but that is just not possible for me. I always want more once I start. My taste buds have been hijacked.

Oh, and did I mention that junk foods are more profitable for these big food companies than nutritious, real, unprocessed foods?

## **QUICK RECAP**

- Junk foods are actually processed food products (not real food)
- They are not nutritious (or natural)
- They're engineered to look, smell, feel, and taste better than real food
- Additives hijack our taste buds, making us consume more
- They don't add to our health, and in fact can take away from our health

## **SOME VIDEOS SHOWING YOU**

### **WHAT I MEAN**

**VIDEO: THE NATIONAL – The science of addictive food**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cpdb78pWl4&list=WL&index=252&t=57s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cpdb78pWl4&list=WL&index=252&t=57s)

**VIDEO: TED-MED – Why we can't stop eating unhealthy foods**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTNIHyjip94&t=5s&list=WL&index=253](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTNIHyjip94&t=5s&list=WL&index=253)

# THE SEVEN MAIN PROBLEMS WITH JUNK FOOD

(adapted from Montiero, et al, 2012)

There are seven main problems that junk foods bring into our lives that whole foods don't:

**1. NUTRITIONALLY UNBALANCED.** Junk foods contain too much fat, sugar and/or salt. Their ingredients are often processed and unhealthy to begin with (e.g. trans fats). They also contain many chemical additives. And, of course, they lack essential vitamins, minerals, fiber and other health-promoting compounds (e.g. antioxidants).

**2. ENERGY-DENSE.** Junk foods have a lot of calories (i.e. energy), and not a lot of nutrition. This makes them “energy dense”. In fact, what you want is the complete opposite, which is “nutrient dense”.

**3. HYPER-PALATABLE.** Junk foods are usually made to be artificially hyper-palatable, habit-forming, and even quasi-addictive. They often lead to high blood sugar levels and prevent your body's natural ability to feel full. This lead us to eating too much of them, sometimes without even realizing it.

**4. DISPLACE MEALS.** Often, junk foods are very convenient and are eaten as (large high-calorie) snacks. The problem here is that when we eat too much of them, they can prevent us from eating a healthy nutritious meal when it's time to do so.

**5. IMITATIONS OF FOOD.** Many junk foods are meant to imitate real food, even though they don't contain nearly the nutrition that real foods have. They can mislead people into thinking they are eating a serving of healthy food when they actually are not. Beware of deceptive labels and advertising!

**6. FALSELY SEEN AS HEALTHY.** Junk foods can give a false impression of being healthy. Just because they have been fortified with synthetic vitamins, minerals, and other compounds doesn't mean that they are a healthy food.

**7. AGGRESSIVELY ADVERTISED.** Have you heard the advice to stay away from any foods with advertising? That is sage advice. These junk foods are profitable enough to get big advertising funding, and they erode your (and your family's) health and wellness.

## QUICK RECAP

Junk foods have several problems, including:

- They're nutritionally imbalanced
- They're energy-dense
- They're hyper-palatable
- They displace healthy meals
- They're food imitators
- They're falsely seen as healthy
- They're aggressively advertised

## HOW PROCESSED DOES IT HAVE TO BE TO BECOME “JUNK?”

Of course you have to know what you are looking for. There are degrees of processing and what I want you to focus on eliminating are the ones that are heavily processed. It's true that nearly everything we purchase in the grocery store has been processed to some degree. It's difficult to get away from any kind of processing. Even dairy, grains, and meat have gone through some processing. These are not the foods that I want you worrying about, though.

We have our more obvious processed foods like Kraft dinner, canned soups, TV dinners, frozen pizza, lunch meats, cookies, granola bars, and cheese in a jar that

are our concern. A lot of the time they don't even resemble real food and they are loaded with flavour enhancers such as salt, MSG, sugar, or trans fats. Add in all the other man-made chemical additives and it can get pretty easy to identify the difference between junk and a real whole food. We'll get into some specifics below.

## INGREDIENTS TO AVOID

Before we go over some of the worst additives, here are some simple rules when it comes to ingredients to avoid. You'll find the ingredients listed on the side or back label of the product. We're not talking the front label claims, or even the Nutrition Facts table, but the actual ingredients that were used to make the food (or junk food):

- If you have to sound it out, put it back.
- If it sounds like your kid's science experiment, put it back.
- Make sure the ingredients are something that you would have in your cupboard at home, for example oats, brown rice, basmati rice, yogurt, cheese.
- If sugars are listed in the top three ingredients on the label, put it back.
- If sugars (anything with an "ose") are listed more than 3 times on the label, put it back.

## THE WORST ADDITIVES

An additive is an ingredient that is added to the food product to change how it looks, tastes, and feels. These are things like bleaching agents, preservatives, colours, sweeteners, etc.

While there are lots of additives out there, some are worse than others. Become used to checking the ingredient labels on foods before you buy them, and take particular note of the additives listed here.

## GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE OR HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP

Fructose is a natural sugar found in fruit. But when it appears on a food label, it's more likely to be one of the favourite by-products of corn production. It's sweeter tasting than regular sucrose (table sugar). Your body digests fructose very differently than it does glucose. Fructose is processed by the liver where it's either converted to glycogen (stored glucose) or is used to produce fat. The body is more likely to convert fructose to fat when you are consuming a high carbohydrate diet (like the majority of North America). And when you're taking in excess fructose and carbs, you can easily gain weight.

A diet high in fructose can lead to:

- high blood fats, a major risk factor for heart disease
- overeating or weight gain
- insulin resistance, which can lead to type 2 diabetes
- fatty liver disease

## YEAST EXTRACT OR MSG

Yeast extract, or MSG, is a flavour enhancer that gives food a savoury flavour. It's an ingredient in over 40 flavour additives including sodium caseinate and hydrolyzed protein. The "G" in MSG stands for "glutamic acid" which can act on your nervous system. Because of this, consuming large amounts of MSG has been linked with neurological symptoms in people who are sensitive to it. They can experience symptoms such as headaches or numbness/tingling. It's also been linked with asthma attacks in some people. Not to mention that it can stimulate your taste buds, which may cause you to eat more.

## HYDROGENATED / PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED VEGETABLE OILS

These are where the infamous “trans fats” come from. When hydrogen is added to a vegetable oil it results in “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” oil. This process turns fats that are normally a liquid at room temperature into a solid. Think of vegetable oil versus margarine. Eating these fats are linked with a host of serious diseases including heart disease and cancer. They increase your “bad” cholesterol and decrease your “good” cholesterol. Yikes!

**Pro Tip:** Don’t trust a label that says “Trans Fat Free” or “Zero Trans Fats” on the front! Food manufacturers are allowed to say that as long as the food contains less than 0.2 g/serving (Canada) or 0.5 g/serving (US). This is why you should check your ingredient label to make sure the word “hydrogenated” is not there anywhere.

## TARTRAZINE OR YELLOW #5

This is a food dye that makes junk foods yellow. There is no other reason to put it into any product other than esthetics. It has been linked to hives, asthma, and other allergic reactions in people who are sensitive to it. This has actually been banned in some other countries, but still allowed in North America.

## ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

These are found in so many processed foods that claim that they are sugar free, especially diet pop and protein powders. They are listed under the names Acesulfame potassium, ACE K (Sunett, Sweet One), Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet), Neotame, Saccharin (SugarTwin, Sweet’N Low), and Sucralose (Splenda).

Many people are sensitive to artificial sweeteners, particularly aspartame. In fact anyone with PKU (phenylketonuria) absolutely must avoid it. At least one study

showed an increase in seizures in children who had aspartame-containing drink. And it may increase the frequency of headaches in adults.

## QUICK RECAP

Avoid the following additives on the ingredient list:

- Glucose/fructose or high fructose corn syrup
- Yeast extract or MSG
- Hydrogenated/partially hydrogenated oils
- Tartrazine or yellow #5
- Artificial sweeteners

## HOW DO I “DITCH THE JUNK?”

Now that you know how to identify junk food, and some of the key ingredients to avoid on your labels, you are more informed than many people.

Congratulations!

You now have the tools to know which “food products” you should not buy.

If you’d like a simple rule to think about when you’re choosing a food it’s this:

“Don’t eat anything your great-grandmother wouldn’t recognize as food.”

This is one of the most famous quotes from Michael Pollan.

If we follow this rule, it will eliminate the majority of the junk foods on the grocery store shelves. There are almost always better choices that are worth purchasing.

**Pro Tip:** When it comes right down to it, almost all groceries in the middle aisles are off limits. Stick to the outside perimeter of the grocery store. You will only

find your grains and legumes in the middle aisles so grab those and push your cart around the outside again to avoid temptation.

**DELI MEATS.** Deli meats are a no go for the challenge, as they are usually quite high in sodium, nitrates and other additives. Eating too much has been linked to colon cancer, so we'll ditch these in favour of real meat.

**DIET PRODUCTS ARE OFF THE LIST.** If the front of the package says low fat, diet or fat free, then leave it. It takes a lot of processing to remove the fat from a product. The manufacturer is left with no choice but to put in additives, emulsifiers and sugar in it to make it taste good again.

**ANYTHING THAT COMES IN A PACKAGE WITH A LONG LIST OF INGREDIENTS IS OFF LIMITS.** So that means cereals, candy, canned soups, canned spaghetti, chips, granola bars, instant noodles, frozen dinners, chocolate bars, Slurpees, cookies, Lunchables, and deli meats, etc.

**DRIVE-THRUS ARE OFF LIMITS.** You can guarantee that all fast food restaurants use unhealthy fats and additives to create their dishes.

## QUICK RECAP OF FOODS TO AVOID

- All deli meats (opt for real meat)
- Pop, iced tea, bottled lemonade, juices, etc.
- Packaged, processed foods, frozen dinners
- Drive-thrus
- Diet or low fat products
- Ingredient lists of more than 5 ingredients

# PART 3 – YOUR FOOD PLAN AND RECIPES: CHALLENGE APPROVED FOOD LIST

I know it's easy to become overwhelmed when you start looking at all the ingredients that go into our processed foods. I actually hope it did gross you out just a little bit so that it won't be so hard for you to ditch them.

You can still have all your vegetables—even the starchy potatoes, peas, yams, sweet potatoes, and corn. Enjoy these healthy carbs. If frozen vegetables are more convenient for you, then go for it.

**Pro Tip:** Read the ingredient label first though to make sure the frozen vegetable isn't battered or covered in salty sauce made from unhealthy fats.

**EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY PROTEIN.** Include chicken, eggs, beef, pork, wild caught fish, canned light tuna or wild pacific salmon, buffalo, venison, black beans, chickpeas, lentils, nuts, and seeds. Watch your serving size for protein; if it is bigger than the palm of your hand, you are eating too much. And remember, deli meats are ditched.

**ALL FRESH FRUITS ARE ON THE LIST.** Enjoy two fruits every day and if you are having a sugar craving, have an extra one and make this your first pick before you reach for something else.

**GRAINS AND LEGUMES MAKE THIS LIST.** This means that lentils, rice, oatmeal, quinoa, black beans, kidney beans, and chickpeas are good to go. If you're choosing to use dried legumes, make sure you give them a good rinse first. Portion size on these is generally ½ cup.

**ENJOY ALL NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES.** That means all your leafy greens, carrots, string beans, broccoli, cauliflower, beets, cucumbers, peppers, Brussels sprouts, mushrooms, and onions. If it grows and you find it in your produce section enjoy! Aim for 5 servings of veggies every day. Eat these abundantly!

**SPICE IT UP!** Experiment with all your spices, either dried or fresh. Cilantro, parsley, basil, sage, and thyme are great herbs to start with. Try adding lemon juice to your veggies for a dash of added flavour.

**THE BEST WAY TO ENJOY SALAD DRESSING IS TO MAKE YOUR OWN.** It only takes a few minutes and you will have enough for the week. Oils and vinegars with spices are great, or if you like a creamy dressing, use plain yogurt with a little salsa.

**CONVENTIONAL WHITE BREAD DOESN'T MAKE THE LIST.** It can be very processed and full of additives and preservatives. If you make your own bread, that is great. You might be able to find a local bakery using whole ingredients, or give sourdough a try. Remember to enjoy in moderation, though. Often eating bread-type items such as bagels, English muffins, crackers, and muffins take up valuable space (and calories) intended for more healthy options such as veggies and fruit.

**BEVERAGES.** Water, tea, and coffee are challenge approved. Everything else can be ditched for the week. Please use real cream or milk in your coffee and avoid the International Delight type coffee additives. Avoid using sugar in your coffee and tea if at all possible, or at least swap to coconut sugar.

**ENJOY ALL NUTS AND SEEDS.** Remember to buy them unsalted and keep them in your fridge or freezer to ensure freshness.

**DAIRY AND DAIRY ALTERNATIVES CAN BE ENJOYED.** Cheese, yogurt, Greek yogurt, milk, almond milk, coconut milk, goat milk, goat cheese, and cashew milk, etc. Aim to purchase only white cheese, as orange cheese is most often made with food colouring.

# QUICK RECAP OF APPROVED FOODS

- All veggies (fresh or frozen)
- All fruits (fresh or frozen)
- All fresh or frozen meats (not deli meats)
- All beans and lentils
- Eggs
- Whole grains
- All herbs and spices
- Local or homemade whole grain bread
- Water, tea, and coffee
- All nuts and seeds (unsalted)
- Dairy and dairy alternatives



# SUGGESTED 1 WEEK MENU

Have a look at the following menu; it is there as a guide only. If you choose to eat something else, that is absolutely fine.

Remember that your goal is to avoid the processed foods that have been previously listed.

## MENU PREVIEW:

Meal	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
BREAKFAST	Oatmeal Pancakes	Veggie Omelette	Yogurt & Berries	Tropical Smoothie	Oatmeal & Berries	Oatmeal Pancakes	Eggs & Avocado
LUNCH	Tuna Salad	Leftover Chili	Leftover Chicken w/ Salad	Leftover Stew	Leftover Salmon w/ Salad	Chopped Chicken Salad	Green Salad w/ Beef
SUPPER	Chili	Chicken Stir-Fry w/ Rice	Slow Cooker Chicken Sweet Potato Stew	Wild Salmon w/ Green Beans	BBQ Chicken Sweet Potatoes & Peppers	Slow Cooker Roast w/ Potatoes Carrot & Onion	Turkey Sausage Stir-Fry

# 1 WEEK MENU

## DAY 1

**BREAKFAST:** Homemade pancakes drizzled with 100% maple syrup and berries of your choice (or unsweetened applesauce)

**LUNCH:** Tuna salad sandwich topped with lettuce & tomato on bread with a side of raw carrots & cucumbers

**SUPPER:** Chili

*FOR TOMORROW:* Take chicken out of freezer and thaw in fridge

## DAY 2

**BREAKFAST:** Veggie omelette

**LUNCH:** Leftover chili

**SUPPER:** Chicken stir-fry with cooked rice

*FOR TOMORROW:* Take chicken out of freezer and thaw in fridge and chop veggies

## DAY 3

**BREAKFAST:** Plain yogurt topped with berries and nuts

**LUNCH:** Green salad with leftover chicken stir-fry, topped with seeds and cranberries

**SUPPER:** Slow cooker chicken sweet potato stew

*FOR TOMORROW:* Take salmon out of freezer and thaw in fridge

## DAY 4

**BREAKFAST:** Tropical smoothie

**LUNCH:** Leftover stew

**SUPPER:** Wild salmon, green beans, and cooked rice

*FOR TOMORROW:* Take chicken out of freezer and thaw in fridge in marinade

## DAY 5

**BREAKFAST:** Oatmeal topped with berries and hemp hearts

**LUNCH:** Green salad with salmon

**SUPPER:** BBQ chicken, sweet potatoes, and peppers

*FOR TOMORROW:* Take beef out of freezer and thaw in fridge

## DAY 6

**BREAKFAST:** Warmed oatmeal pancakes

**LUNCH:** Chopped chicken salad with peppers, red onion zucchini, and chickpeas

**SUPPER:** Slow cooker roast with potatoes, carrots & onion

*FOR TOMORROW:* Take sausage out of freezer and thaw in fridge

## **DAY 7**

**BREAKFAST:** Hard-boiled eggs with tomato & avocado slices

**LUNCH:** Green salad with shaved roast beef

**SUPPER:** Nitrate free turkey sausage stir-fry with cooked rice

*FOR TOMORROW:* Plan your menu for the following week and go shopping

# **SNACKS**

- Veggies & hummus or guacamole
- Apple or pear slices & natural almond or peanut butter
- Fruit
- Plain yogurt with berries
- Apple slices sprinkled with cinnamon and a tablespoon of hemp seeds
- Homemade muffins or granola bars (recipes below)
- Keep to whole foods!

# DAY 1

## OATMEAL PANCAKES (SERVES 4)

- 1 ½ cups rolled oats
- 2 cups milk — cow, almond, coconut, or rice
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ¼ cup coconut oil, melted

1. In a large bowl, add oat and milk to soften.
2. In medium bowl, stir flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.
3. Add eggs and oil to large bowl of wet mixture. Mix.
4. Add dry ingredients to large bowl.
5. Fry 1/4 cup at a time in a touch of oil until edges become dry and top has bubbles. Flip over and cook until golden.
6. Freeze leftovers.

## TUNA SALAD (SERVES 1)

- 1 can tuna
- ½ avocado
- 1 rib of celery, chopped
- Dash of sea salt
- ½ lemon squeezed
- lettuce leaves

1. Open the can of tuna and drain all the water out. Mash ½ ripe avocado (outside should be dark green in colour and soft to touch). Add in tuna, celery, lemon and sea salt and mix well. Serve on top of lettuce leaves.

## CHILI (SERVES 4)

- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 lb ground turkey or beef
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 red pepper
- 1 orange pepper
- 1 package of fresh mushrooms
- 1 each: red, green, and yellow pepper, chopped
- 1 can each: navy beans, black beans, and kidney beans
- 1 can or jar stewed tomatoes
- 1 can tomato paste
- 2 tbsp chili powder
- A few dashes of cayenne pepper if you wish

1. Sauté onions in a tablespoon of oil and cook ground turkey or beef until browned.
2. Combine all ingredients into crock-pot and cook on low all day or on high for 4 – 5 hours. If you want a larger batch, add more beans and tomato. This can also be done in a pot. After all ingredients are added simmer for 20 minutes for flavours to combine.

## DAY 2

### VEGGIE OMELETTE (SERVES 1)

- 2 tbsp sweet white onion, diced
- 2 handfuls spinach
- 1 red pepper
- 2 eggs, beaten with 2 tbsp water added
- Sprinkle of white cheddar cheese (optional)

1. Preheat oven broiler and raise oven rack.
2. Sauté onion, spinach and pepper in a pan. Remove from pan.

3. Add eggs and allow to cook for 2-3 minutes or until they look nearly done.
4. Place veggies on top of eggs, top with cheese and place under broiler for 1-2 minutes.

Get creative with your veggies!

## CHICKEN STIR-FRY (SERVES 2)

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 chicken breasts, sliced
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups red pepper, chopped
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tsp sesame seeds
- 1 cup steamed rice

1. Add oil to large skillet and cook chicken until it begins to brown on the outside, and is no longer pink on the inside. Remove chicken and set aside.
2. Add onion, garlic, and vegetables to hot skillet, stirring constantly until soft.
3. Add chicken back to skillet, mix with peppers, and heat for a few minutes.
4. Serve with ½ cup steamed rice, and top with sesame seeds.
5. Don't forget to hold some stir-fry leftovers to top your green salad for lunch tomorrow.

## Day 3

## GREEN SALAD WITH LEFTOVER

### CHICKEN (SERVES 1)

- Your favourite green leafy vegetable
- 1 green onion
- ½ chopped cucumber
- Leftover chicken stir fry

- Dried cranberries
- Pumpkin or sunflower seeds

1. Top leaves with veggies, chicken stir fry, cranberries, and seeds.
2. Serve with creamy yogurt dressing (below).

*TO HELP YOU DITCH THE STORE BOUGHT BOTTLES OF SALAD DRESSING, I HAVE A FEW SIMPLE RECIPES IN THIS WORKBOOK.*

## CREAMY YOGURT DRESSING

- 1 cup Greek yogurt, plain
- 1 tbsp poultry seasoning
- ¼ cup salsa
- 0 – 4 tbsp milk

1. Put ingredients into a bowl and whisk. Add milk one tablespoon at a time to reach desired thickness.

## SLOW COOKER CHICKEN SWEET

### POTATO STEW (SERVES 4)

- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 bunch spinach
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 2 litres chicken stock
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning

1. Place all the ingredients in a large slow cooker. Stir, cover, and cook on high for 4 hours or on low for 6.
2. Soup is done when chicken is cooked through and the sweet potatoes are easily pierced with a fork.

## DAY 4

### TROPICAL SMOOTHIE (SERVES 1)

- 1 cup frozen mango chunks
- ½ banana
- Handful of baby spinach
- ½ cup coconut milk
- Ice (optional)

1. Blend all ingredients except ice. If you'd like it icier, add some ice.

### SALMON

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Fresh salmon fillet, 1 per person
- 1 lemon, sliced
- Sea salt
- Fresh dill
- ½ cup cooked rice per person (follow instructions on package)
- 1 cup green beans per person, steamed

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.

**If using a cast iron skillet:**

2. Preheat skillet on stove with oil.
3. Sprinkle salmon with sea salt and dill.
4. Place salmon in skillet and top with sliced lemon.
5. Cook on medium heat for 2 minutes.
6. Place in pre-heated oven and bake for 7 minutes in oven.
7. Turn on oven broiler and broil for 4 minutes. Cooking time will vary with thickness of fillet. Salmon is cooked when it flakes easily.

**If baking:**

2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Place salmon on prepared sheet and sprinkle with salt and dill. Place lemon slices on top.

4. Bake 10 –12 minutes & then broil for an additional 4 minutes. Cooking time will vary with thickness of fillet.

## DAY 5

### GREEN SALAD WITH SALMON (SERVES 1)

- Your favourite green leafy vegetable
- 1 green onion
- 1 pepper any colour
- ½ chopped cucumber
- Salmon (leftover or canned)
- Dried cranberries
- Pumpkin or sunflower seeds

1. Top leaves with veggies, salmon, cranberries, and seeds.
2. Serve with Dijon dressing (below).

### DIJON DRESSING

- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 dash salt & pepper

1. Put ingredients into a bottle with a tight fitting lid and shake vigorously until well combined.

# BBQ CHICKEN, SWEET POTATOES, AND PEPPERS (SERVES 4)

- 8 chicken drumsticks
- 2 large sweet potatoes
- 4 peppers (any colour)
- Olive oil
- Salt & pepper

1. Spray BBQ grill with oil; heat, and add drumsticks.
2. Cut sweet potatoes and peppers into large pieces that won't fall through the BBQ grill.
3. When chicken is half done, add sweet potatoes to the grill alongside them.
4. After chicken is nearly done, turn sweet potatoes over and add peppers. Grill chicken until it is done through, and veggies start getting slightly charred.
5. Drizzle veggies with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.

## DAY 6

# SLOW COOKER ROAST WITH POTATOES, CARROTS, AND ONIONS

(SERVES 4)

- 2 or 3 lb beef roast
- 4 potatoes, coarsely chopped
- 6 carrots, coarsely chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cups beef broth
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- Black pepper

1. Place the roast in the slow cooker and add the vegetables around it. Pour the broth over everything and sprinkle with garlic powder and pepper.
2. Cook on high for about 5 hours, or on low for 6 – 8 hours.
3. Check for doneness by piercing roast with a fork. If it falls apart, then it's done.

## DAY 7

### GREEN SALAD WITH BEEF (SERVES 1)

- Your favourite green leafy vegetable
- 1 green onion
- 1 pepper any colour
- ½ chopped cucumber
- Leftover roast beef, sliced
- Dried cranberries
- Pumpkin or sunflower seeds

1. Top leaves with veggies, salmon, cranberries, and seeds.
2. Serve with balsamic vinaigrette (below).

### BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

- 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 5 tbsp water
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp garlic, minced
- 2 dashes salt & pepper

1. Put ingredients into a bottle with a tight fitting lid and shake vigorously until well combined. Enjoy!

## TURKEY SAUSAGE STIR-FRY (serves 2)

- 2 tsp oil, divided
- 2 turkey sausages (nitrate free), sliced
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 2 cups raw carrots, sliced
- ½ cup mushrooms, sliced
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- Salt and pepper
- ½ cup cooked rice per person (follow instructions on package)

1. Heat 1 tsp oil in large skillet. Add sausage and cook until brown. Transfer to a bowl.
2. Add 1 tsp oil to skillet along with onions and carrots. Cook for 2 minutes.
3. Add mushrooms and broccoli. Cover and reduce heat.
4. After a few minutes, when broccoli and carrots are soft, add sausage back in to heat.
5. Sprinkle with salt & pepper and serve with cooked rice.

## SNACKS

### BANANA OAT MUFFINS

- 1 cup oats
- 1 cup oat flour (you can blend oats in your blender to make this)
- ¼ cup brown or coconut sugar
- 1.5 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 3 tbsp ground flax seed
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup melted coconut oil
- 2 cups mashed bananas (about 6 medium)
- ¼ cup chopped nuts, optional

1. Preheat oven to 375°F and place 12 large muffin cups into muffin tin.
2. Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl.
3. Whisk eggs, oil, and bananas in a medium bowl.
4. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and gently fold together until moistened.
5. Add nuts and divide evenly into muffin cups.
6. Bake for 25 minutes or until top springs back when lightly pressed with the back of a spoon.

## NO-BAKE PEANUT BUTTER

## CHOCOLATE GRANOLA BARS

- 2 cups old fashioned oats
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup flaxseeds
- ¾ cup peanut butter
- ⅓ cup honey
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup chocolate chips

1. Mix oats and seeds in a large bowl. Add peanut butter, honey, and vanilla. Stir until all ingredients are combined. Mixture will be thick.
2. Place mixture into an 8 x 8 baking pan. Cover and place in freezer for at least 1 hour. Cut into bars. Keep leftover bars in freezer.

## ABOUT ME



Michelle Post is a C.H.N.C. Holistic Nutritional Consultant and a graduate of the Metabolic Balance® Program (2016), Business Wellness Systems (2015) the Canadian School of Natural Nutrition 2015, and graduate of the Coaches Training Institute (2009).

“Since graduating from the Metabolic Balance Program I have successfully released over 35 lbs of weight and my energy has increased immensely. It is the best program I have worked with to reset my metabolism and rebalance my hormones. I've never felt better in my life.”

For more information on Michelle’s program, contact now to receive your FREE 20-minute telephone consultation (value over \$40)!  
[www.making-strides.ca](http://www.making-strides.ca) Phone: 403.266.2867 [michelle@making-strides.ca](mailto:michelle@making-strides.ca)



# RESEARCH

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