

GUIDE TO
GUT HEALTH

*An Intuitive Approach
to Digestive Wellness*

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WHAT TO EAT

Enjoy foods that are fresh, vibrant, and as close to their earthen form as possible.

Fill your diet with whole grains, legumes, fruits, veggies, ferments, spices & seaweeds. Opt for small amounts of high quality animal products if desired.

Minimize processed foods and enjoy prepared foods in moderation.

Always read all ingredients on packaged foods, and avoid those with unfamiliar ingredients.

Steer clear from foods that are excessively salty, sweet, creamy, oily or greasy.

Infuse your cooking with culinary spices & garnish with fresh herbs to stimulate digestion.

Keep each meal simple with few ingredients, and gain nutrient diversity by varying each meal throughout the day.

HOW TO EAT

Be present while eating – just eat. Sit down and focus all of your energy on the food in front you.

Practice good posture while eating & digesting.

Chew your food to a mush before swallowing.

Drink liquids before or after your meal. If necessary, take small sips of warm water.

Enjoy meals at consistent times each day.

Start your day with a warm, simple breakfast such as oatmeal, porridge or congee.

Consume cold, raw & other difficult to digest foods midday, when digestion is at its peak.

Finish eating at least three hours before bedtime.

Stretch, move & massage your abdomen daily. Check in with your gut about how it's feeling.

THE JOURNEY TO DIGESTIVE HEALTH

The Weekly Wellness Journal serves as a useful tool in cultivating the most optimal diet and lifestyle practices for your health. By incorporating journaling into your routine, you'll create a guide map for yourself and be able to see a coherent picture of what's serving your body and what needs to change.

CREATING YOUR JOURNAL

The Weekly Wellness Journal template that I have provided on the last page is meant to serve as a guide, but can be modified as desired to suite your needs. Feel free to print and use it or find another format that fits your daily routine, whether that means jotting down details in a notebook or creating a spreadsheet on your computer. There are also many food diary apps that work just as well. The key is to just be consistent with your notes, regardless of your recording method.

The template is organized by weekdays; always be sure to record the calendar date. Dedicate a few minutes each day for notes. If you miss a day, jot down what you remember and keep moving forward.

WHAT TO RECORD

The first 3 rows of the sheet – Morning, Midday & Evening – should be used to record the following:

- Meals, snacks & drinks, including the time eaten and as many ingredients listed as possible.
- Noticeable indicators relevant to your health, ranked on a 1 (best) to 10 (worst) scale for severity. Examples include energy, bloating, abdominal pain, cramps, headaches etc. Record time & duration.

In the Sleep section, record any relevant notes about your previous night's sleep and energy levels for the present day. Under Notes, add any additional information that you feel would be relevant for you.

Examples include emotional stressors, skin flare-ups, bowel movements, exercise or meditation practice.

| | |
|---------|---|
| | MONDAY |
| MORNING | <p>9am: green tea with honey</p> <p>10am: oatmeal with cinnamon, nutmeg, apples & walnuts</p> |
| MIDDAY | <p>2pm: rye toast with hummus, tomato, cucumber, sprouts, olive oil & balsamic</p> <p>4pm: banana, dark chocolate</p> |
| EVENING | <p>8pm: white rice with sautéed chicken, kale, broccoli, mushrooms, garlic & lemon</p> <p>9pm: ginger tea Slightly bloated 3/10</p> |
| SLEEP | <p>Went to bed early & got 8 hours of sleep</p> <p>Energy 2/10</p> |
| NOTES | <p>Yoga & meditation for 20 minutes in the am</p> <p>Lots of work but feeling productive</p> |

WEEKLY REVIEW

At the end of each week, take a few minutes to review. Observe the problematic areas where you recorded negative symptoms, and trace these back to meals within the previous 24 hours. Which foods could they have possibly been caused by? Any lifestyle factors that could contribute? Mark or highlight foods, meals or habits you believe to be aggravating.

Consider the most common irritating foods: these include processed wheat, soy, dairy, nuts, seeds; spicy, sweet, salty, oily or greasy foods; raw, undercooked or physically cold foods; and complex meals with lots of ingredients. Depending on the severity of your symptoms, you may want to eliminate all of the above for at least one or two weeks, especially when observing a flare-up.

CULTIVATE EACH MEAL

Work through one meal at a time, starting with breakfast. Strip the meal down to just a few simple ingredients that you think work well for you (such as rolled oats with cinnamon). Once you've created a foundation that sits well in your stomach, build on this by adding in one or two ingredients at a time (like walnuts & apple slices). After establishing a few healthy options for your first meal of the day, work on the second one.

During this transition period, warm, nourishing and simple meals will best serve you. Focus on incorporating lots of congee & porridge, vegetable & bone broths, nourishing soups & stews, and steamed or baked vegetables.

GET INSPIRED & BE PATIENT

Find inspiration within the recipes & dishes of your ancestors, however many cultures they may be from. Consider the foods that previous generations in your family were eating, and navigate towards these grains, legumes, produce, herbs & spices when shopping for groceries. Carve out time each day or set a couple days each week to prepare enticing, delicious meals.

Be consistent with your Journal for at least three weeks; it may be necessary for three months or longer. The goal is to cultivate a connection with your gut, and in time you may be able to follow the process without keeping record. Journaling could also serve as a useful tool for years to come. Most of all, take your time and be patient and compassionate toward your body & your journey.

WEEKLY WELLNESS JOURNAL

Start Date:

| | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
|---------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| MORNING | | | | | | | |
| MIDDAY | | | | | | | |
| EVENING | | | | | | | |
| SLEEP | | | | | | | |
| NOTES | | | | | | | |