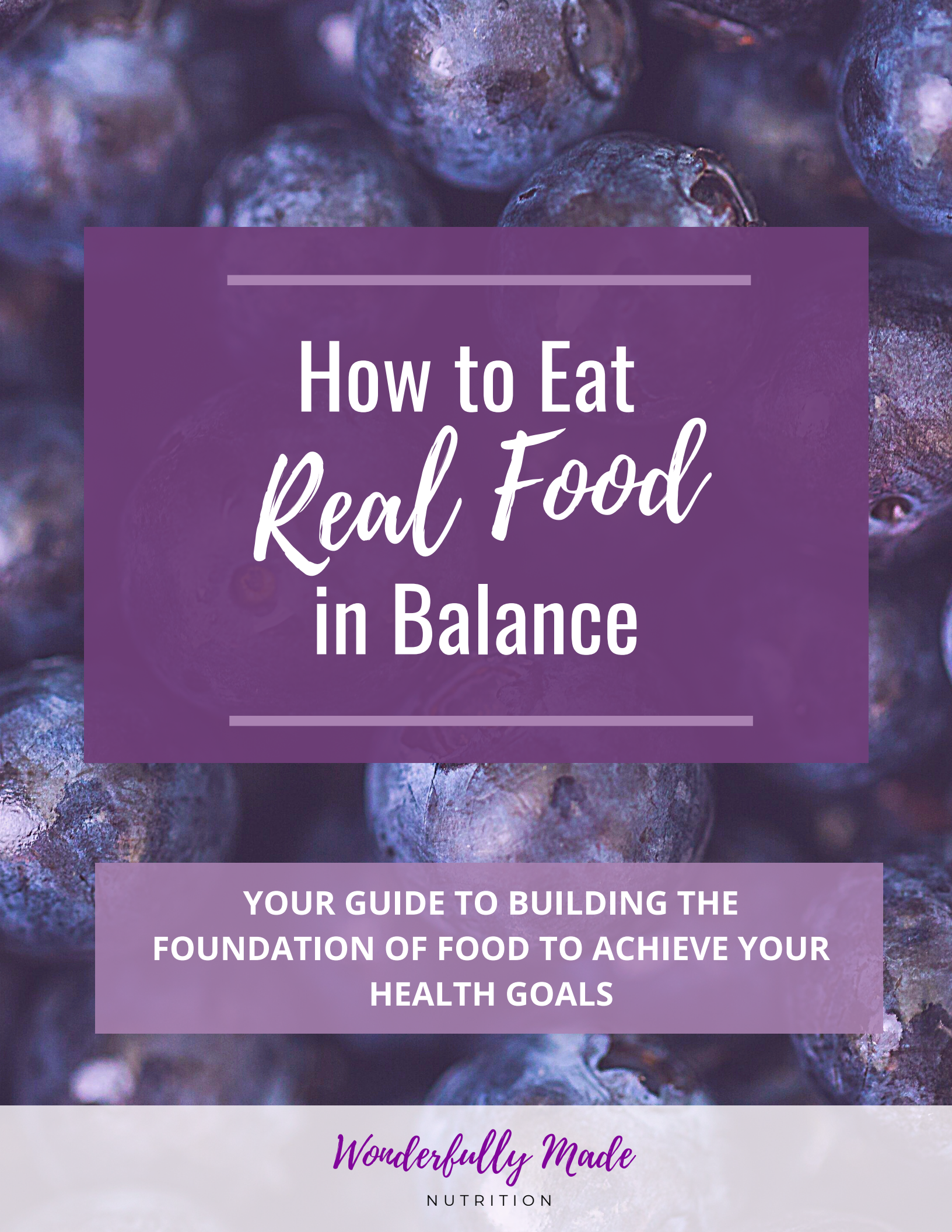




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# How to Eat *Real Food* in Balance

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YOUR GUIDE TO BUILDING THE  
FOUNDATION OF FOOD TO ACHIEVE YOUR  
HEALTH GOALS

*Wonderfully Made*

NUTRITION

# Welcome!

What you will find in this guide is a framework (my real food macros approach) for how to build meals that support your body's ability to overcome your health challenges. These are my top recommendations I prescribe to my clients to provide real results of sustainable weight loss, gut health, regular & healthy periods, reduced cravings, and all-day energy.

## The way you eat is arguably the most influential factor in your health.

If you have done even the slightest searching on the internet about best diet for XYZ symptom or need, you have probably heard a variety of suggestions, many of which contradict each other. You might have tried a lot of these suggestions too (low carb, keto, dairy free, vegan, health guru X's detox diet, etc, etc), but likely you're here because you didn't get the results you wanted, and now you're left more confused and jaded.

You're tired of the merry-go-round of diets, random supplements, and quick fixes. Instead, you want a sustainable way of eating that you can easily follow for the rest of your life. You want to stop the fatigue, digestive symptoms, pain/inflammation, and- for the love of God- STOP the weight gain & lose weight without having to exercise or diet your life away!

Sounds like a *dream*! But come along with me and we'll make it a *reality*!

## How is this different than any other "diet" literature out there?

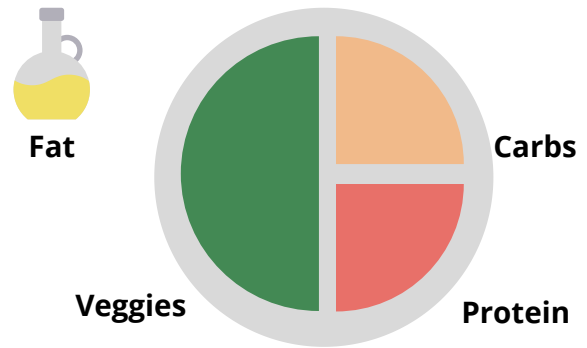
Unlike programs which don't actually teach you a sustainable way to eat for life (I'm looking at you, Weight Watchers!), or prescribe outdated yet persistent nutrition recommendations like eat low fat, or even newer advice that creates fear and confusion around the consumption of any carbs, my real food macros approach actually teaches you how to choose & build meals on your own **so you can finally be the confident person who knows exactly how to support your health!** This approach simultaneously takes care of the essential dietary components you need without having to track everything.

# ARE YOU READY TO Reclaim your health?

# What does it mean to be a Balanced Meal?

The short answer is it likely contains real, whole foods in roughly this combination: 1/4 protein, 1/2 vegetables, 1/4 wholesome carbs, and a serving of healthy fat.

We'll discuss this further in this guide. But first, we really need to begin with a new understanding of the WHY behind these mealtime recommendations. Let's dig in.



## Meals that support our overall health (gut health, hormones, mental health, etc) are ones that...

- Satisfy with a generous serving of protein and some healthy fats. Protein satiates us most, with healthy fats coming in second.
- Focus on a variety of vegetables.
- Contain lots of fiber from a variety of sources: vegetables, nuts, seeds, fruits, tubers, whole grains.
- Include real food carbohydrates in balanced ways.
- Provide lots of nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.
- Balance blood sugar.
- Contain real, wholesome or at least minimally processed foods.
- Avoid highly processed or additive-laden foods, including foods we don't readily think as highly processed like inflammatory industrial oils such as soybean or corn oil.
- Avoid each individual's trigger foods. For example, they may be gluten and/or dairy free, depending on an individual's needs. (All of the recipes in this guide are gluten free & can easily be made dairy free).

You may be thinking though,

*"Can one approach really hit all of these criteria? And if so, will the food even taste good & will it be easy to prepare?"*

The answer is... YES!

When you build meals like these, you help reduce every single one of your negative health symptoms because these meals support the **major underlying causes of ill health**:

1. **Inflammation**
2. **Nutrient insufficiency**

1. **Imbalanced blood sugar**
2. **Imbalanced gut health**

**Across all types of chronic conditions, inflammation is the common thread.**

Inflammation can draw its origins from many factors, but some of the simplest ways you can address this starting today is by eating real wholesome food in proper balance.

## Balancing Blood Sugar



### What are carbs?

Carbs (Carbohydrates) = components of foods that get broken down into sugar in our bodies.

Foods that are made up of mostly carbs include sugar, sweeteners, grains, fruit, pastries, sweet treats, pasta, bagels, pretzels, crackers, beans & milk too. Once those carbs are broken down into sugar, they get absorbed into the bloodstream. In the blood the sugar can then be transported to cells where they can be used for energy.

If not used for energy immediately, your body turns that sugar into stored energy. Some of that stored energy is glycogen (quick energy stored in the liver & muscles, usually used during exercise). However, when sugar is present in excess to what the body needs at the moment, the excess sugar gets stored as body fat. Of course, overeating in general can cause us to store more body fat.

*But usually people gain weight not because they eat too much chicken (protein) or olive oil (healthy dietary fat) but rather because of excess refined carbohydrate intake.*

### Why is balancing blood sugar so dang important in weight management?

In blood sugar regulation, insulin is the “key” to unlock cells to allow blood sugar to enter in. If this “key” becomes faulty through insulin resistance, blood sugar begins to rise and stay high.



During insulin resistance, the body produces extra insulin to try to compensate for the faulty response to a normal amount of insulin so that it can clear the blood of the excess sugar.

**Regardless of whether or not your body is managing to keep the levels of sugar in your blood normal, the excess insulin is a huge problem for weight management.**

These higher levels of insulin in the blood cause more fat storage and dreaded weight gain, sometimes despite a person's efforts to eat less and move more (which is so often the rudimentary advice still given to people today by well-meaning practitioners).

Over time, insulin resistance left unaddressed can lead to increased blood sugar and is associated with increased risk for developing diabetes, high triglycerides and cholesterol levels, and liver issues.

## Why does insulin resistance occur in the first place?

Inflammation, as we said earlier, is the common theme in most chronic conditions. Inflammation is likely at the root of insulin resistance, but high blood sugar from a high refined carb diet (or excess carbs beyond an individual's tolerance level) in turn causes more inflammation. But thankfully, inflammation can be effectively reduced through optimizing diet and lifestyle. So let's learn how to do this through balancing our blood sugar.

***Bottom line: if you want to overcome your chronic condition, you may have to address insulin, blood sugar balance, and inflammation.***

## How to Balance Blood Sugar

The most important piece regarding blood sugar is how much & how quickly the sugar dumps into our bloodstream. Our body wants a steady & moderate amount, not a big load quickly.



## What makes blood sugar spike?

When too much sugar is dumped into the blood too quickly, we see a host of issues occur immediately. **Swings in our blood sugar causes peaks & valleys in our mood, energy levels, sleep, and hormones.**

**High blood sugar occurs mostly due to poor dietary habits.** When we eat more refined carbs/starches/sugars compared to proteins, healthy fats, and veggies & wholesome carb sources, more sugar gets dumped into the blood.

## Some other non-dietary factors that increase blood sugar include:

- Too much stress. Our bodies release cortisol when stressed. Cortisol in turn causes higher blood sugar and disrupts our hunger signals, making us crave more carbs and sugar.
- Lack of quality sleep (quality sleep is 7+ hours but also going to bed ideally before 11pm and feeling well rested in the morning)
- Inflammation. As we said, inflammation and insulin resistance usually run hand in hand. Inflammation can be caused by imbalances in diet and lifestyle including gut health imbalances.

## What helps normalize blood sugar?

**Protein, fiber & healthy fat help slow the breakdown of carbs**, slowly releasing sugar into the blood over a longer period of time, allowing the body to maintain a stable range of blood sugar & therefore prevent quick spikes. Fiber is found in vegetables, fruits, whole food carbs (whole grains, sweet potatoes, etc), nuts, seeds, and beans.

## Action steps to balance blood sugar

### Start with better carb choices

1. Choose a quality carb
2. Keep carbs to 1 portion per meal (this works for most women)
3. Always pair carbs with a protein food  
Example: pair apple + 1-2 Tbsp almond butter; pair 1/4 cup raisins + 1/4 cup walnuts; pair sweet potato + chicken.

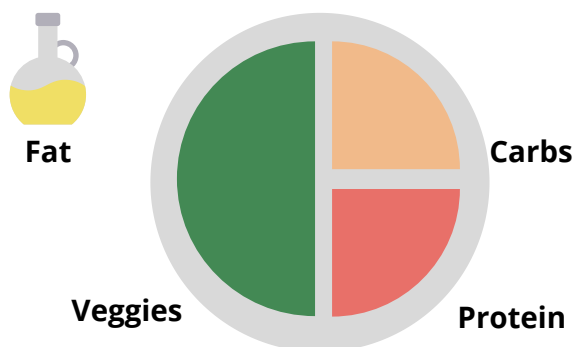


## Build balanced meals using macros

And then putting it all together, the major results come when you combine foods to make your meals.

### At each meal, include:

- 1 serving protein
- 1 serving wholesome carbs
- 1-2 servings healthy fat
- LOTS of veggies!



Seem too simple? It IS this simple! This is literally the foundation of health. Keep reading to learn the how-to's!

## How Often Should I Eat Each Day?

Overall, we want to aim to reduce the need for insulin production at a given meal (i.e. eat less carbs and choose wholesome carbs for the ones you do eat). We also want to reduce the frequency of eating throughout the day in order to avoid insulin stimulation as much as we can as well as give our gut/digestive system a break! So for most people, we want to avoid snacking on food all day long.



Most of my clients tend to feel best when eating three meals a day and usually one snack in the afternoon to bridge the often long gap between lunch and dinner.

If you still experience cravings throughout the day that make it impossible not to snack frequently, then we need to do some work on the fundamentals of health to bring balance back to metabolism.

This *might* mean that:

- Your meals do not contain enough protein or fat
- Your meals contain too many quick-digesting carbs
- You need to work on balancing gut health
- You need to balance cortisol hormone levels through stress reduction, cutting caffeine, getting better sleep, and/or possibly you need the help of some supplements
- You need to incorporate exercise, especially strength training, into your weekly routine

## Seeing the bigger picture: What needs to be done before weight loss can happen



So many people seek to lose excess weight. However, **successful weight loss only happens after we get blood sugar normalized.** (I'll add that addressing gut health (like inflammatory triggers and gut bacteria imbalances), sleep, stress, and exercise greatly support blood sugar balance too! But we'll stick to the dietary tips in this guide)

It is almost impossible to reduce calorie intake when unregulated blood sugar constantly causes excess cravings and energy "rollercoasters".

***Bottom Line: When we fix our blood sugar, we can fix our cravings and weight.***

# Real Food - The Foundation for Health

Real food is whole food or minimally processed versions of fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds, whole grains, meat, fish, poultry, and dairy.

Real food is vital for bringing the body “back on line” into proper functioning. Because real foods are nutrient dense, they enable the body to heal & restore toward optimal nutrient status so that the multitude of processes that occur in our bodies every day can actually take place as they ought. **Real food is essential for achieving desired health outcomes like weight loss, balancing our hormones, reducing inflammation, restoring gut health, and so much more.**

## Wholesome Carbohydrates

Healthy, high quality carbohydrate foods support our bodies by providing energy, fiber and nutrients.

Wholesome carbs include:

- Fruit
- Whole grains, like brown rice, quinoa, and oats
- Legumes like beans, chickpeas, and lentils
- Starchy vegetables like sweet potatoes, regular potatoes, plantains, and parsnips
- Foods made with these and other simple, wholesome ingredients, eg. low sugar granola

## Real Protein

Protein provides the building blocks of our muscles, skin structure, hormones, blood, digestive enzymes, and other body chemicals.

Wholesome protein sources include:

- Meat, poultry, eggs, fish. Minimally processed. Baked, sauteed, or roasted rather than deep fried.
- Simple dairy products – milk, yogurt, kefir, and cheese- without the need for too much sugar, fillers and other ingredients in these foods.
- Nuts, seeds, and nut & seed butters with simple ingredients.
- Beans, lentils, soybeans, & tofu. Whole-food sources rather than concentrated extracts like soy protein isolate in “high protein” bars & cereals.

## Vegetables

Vegetables provide abundant nutrients that support every single process in the body plus plenty of fiber to feed our gut bacteria & support our gut health. One key piece here is getting a variety of colors. Nutrients in the foods give it the color from the orange color of vitamin A in carrots to the deep purple of anthocyanin antioxidants in blueberries. When we eat a variety of color, we eat a variety of nutrients.

## Healthy Fats

Healthy fats are the backbone of hormones and skin, help our immune system respond to inflammation, a great source of long-lasting energy that keeps our blood sugar balanced, etc.

Sources of health fats include:

- Olives, coconut, avocado, nuts, seeds, nut butters
- Healthy oils: olive, coconut, avocado
- Foods that contain anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats: salmon, tuna, egg yolks from pasture-raised or omega-3 enriched chickens, walnuts, flaxseeds, & chia seeds

### Healthy Oils- Natural is Nourishing!

There are some unhealthy oils that are best to be avoided. These are the industrial vegetable oils which include corn, soybean, cottonseed, safflower, and sunflower oils.

What makes these different from healthy oils? Firstly, they come from plant sources that are not naturally good sources of fat. It all goes back to asking, ***“what is the intended purpose of this food in its natural, whole food form?”***

For example, corn is a grain. So to get the oil, you need to use a LOT of corn extract a small amount of oil, way more corn than you'd eat in a week (about 7 servings of corn gives 1 Tbsp corn oil)!! All of these industrial oils have an imbalance of fats, with unnatural levels of inflammatory omega-6 fat and very little anti-inflammatory omega-3 fat.

On the other hand, healthy oils are those that come from naturally oily foods, like olives, avocados, and coconuts. These can all simply be pressed to extract their oils, like a delicious cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil. And these naturally contain anti-inflammatory fats. Nature working at its best!

***Do oils really matter that much?*** 100% YES! Unhealthy industrial oils are in a LOT of packaged and processed foods. But there are some healthy alternative snack foods available with healthier oils. Simply take a look at some packages the next time you're at the grocery store and start swapping over time.

These simple changes will greatly help shift the dial towards reducing inflammation & freeing up your body to function optimally!

## Macros

“Macronutrients” are the nutrients you need in large (“macro”) amounts. The 3 types of Macros = Carbohydrates, Protein & Fats. These are the main building blocks of foods. They provide the main fuel sources for our bodies- fuel to move, build the structure of our body, and carry out essential daily functions.

Understanding how to build your meals with real food Macros in mind is a practical and sustainable way of eating that supports your body in functioning optimally so that you can thrive with amazing health!

# Macros Guide

## Carbohydrates

### Starchy Vegetables

- beets
- corn
- legumes: beans, lentils, peas\*
- parsnips
- plantains
- potatoes, sweet potatoes/yams

### Grains

- rice
- quinoa
- corn
- popcorn
- oats (choose certified gluten free)

### Fruit

- fresh, frozen, or dried

## Protein

- beef
- chicken
- lamb
- pork
- turkey
- wild game
- uncured deli meat
- uncured jerky
- eggs
- salmon
- tuna
- other fish
- shrimp & other shellfish

\*Beans, lentils & peas contain protein but we will count them mainly as carbs!

## Non-Starchy Vegetables *\* these are made up of carbohydrates but in low amounts, so you don't have to count them as carbs servings*

- artichoke
- asparagus
- broccoli
- brussels sprouts
- cabbage
- carrots
- cauliflower
- celery
- cucumber
- eggplant
- garlic
- green beans
- leafy greens
- leeks
- mushrooms
- onions
- peppers
- pumpkin
- radish
- snap peas
- squash
- tomatoes
- turnips

## Healthy Fats

### Whole Food Fats

- avocado
- coconut
- coconut milk (canned)
- coconut butter
- olives

### Fats & Oils for Cooking

- olive oil
- coconut oil
- avocado oil
- butter
- ghee

Other foods that contain healthy fats: salmon, egg yolks, grass fed beef

### Dairy Fats

- butter (usually still tolerated even if you dairy intolerant)
- cheese
- cream

### Nut/Seed Butters

- almond butter
- cashew butter
- peanut butter
- sunflower seed butter

### Nuts

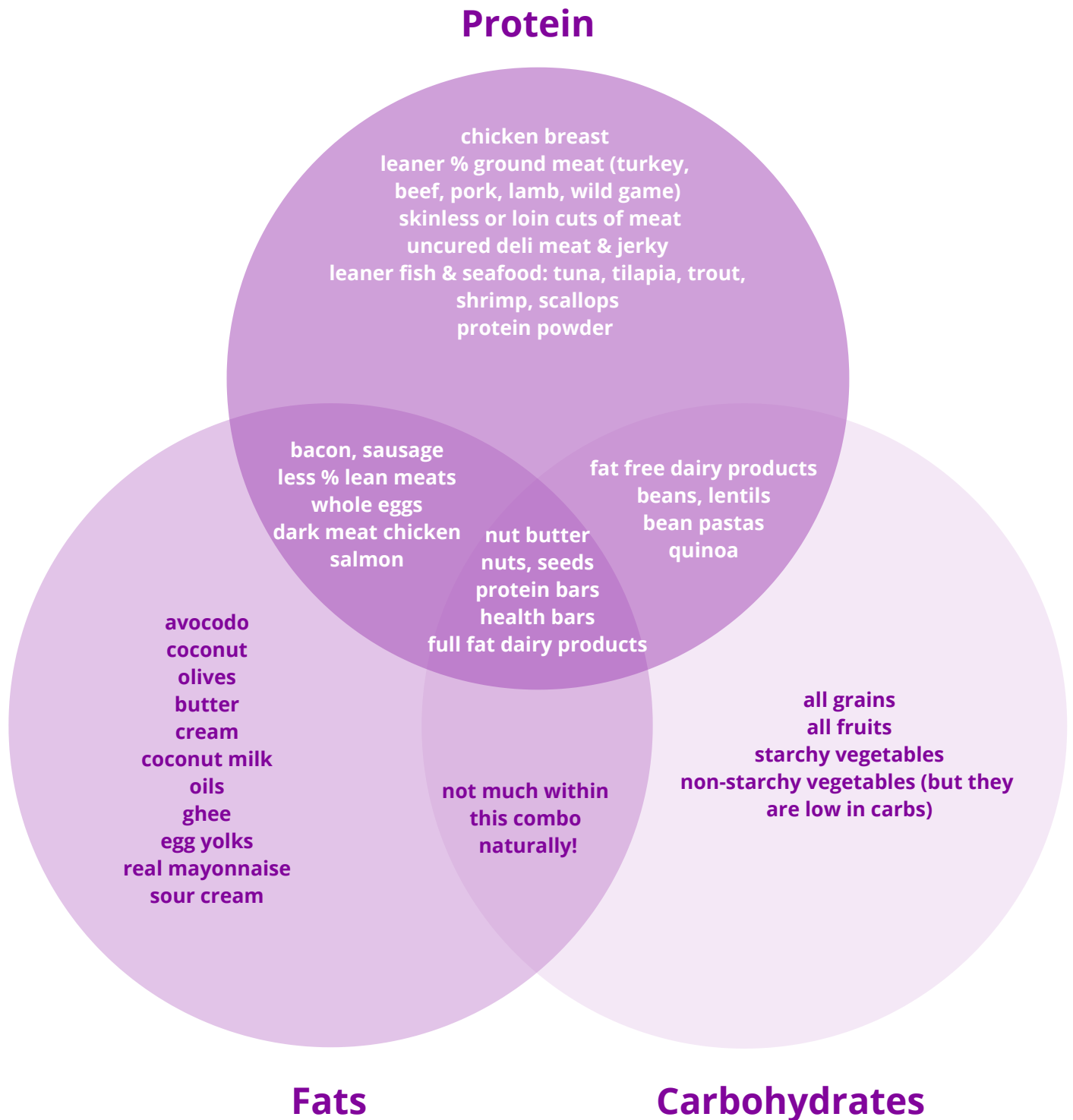
- almonds
- Brazil nuts
- cashews
- hazelnuts
- pecans
- peanuts
- pistachios
- walnuts

### Seeds

- chia seeds
- flax seeds
- pumpkin seeds
- sesame seeds
- sunflower seeds

# Macros Venn Diagram

Some foods are a combination of Macros. See how foods fit into the 3 Macros categories. Once you understand the general makeup of foods, you can easily "make up" your meals with balanced combos of the macros!

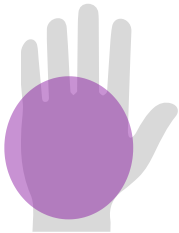


# Macros Portions

Each drawing represents ~1 serving of that Macro.

## Protein

~25g protein serving



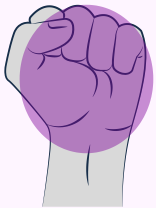
~4 ounces  
meat, fish, poultry  
(size of palm)



~1 cup high  
protein dairy, like  
Greek yogurt,  
cottage cheese

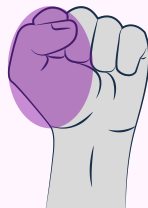
## Carbohydrates

~25 g carb serving



### Size of fist

1 cup of fruit pieces like  
berries, pineapple chunks  
1 cup chopped potato,  
1 cup cooked oatmeal  
1 banana



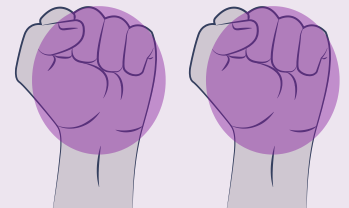
### Half of fist

1/2 - 2/3 cup  
cooked brown rice,  
quinoa, cooked  
beans



### Small cupped handful

1/4 cup dried fruit



## Non-Starchy Vegetables

### Size of 2 fists or more

2 or more cups of non-  
starchy vegetables

## Fats

~15 g fat serving



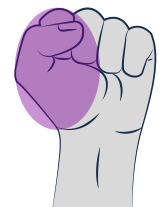
1 Tbsp butter, oils



2 Tbsp nut &  
seed butters



1/4 cup nuts/seeds (small  
cupped handful),  
1/4 cup canned coconut milk



1/2 cup olives,  
1/2 avocado

# Building Balanced Meals

All you have to do is choose a food from each category, portion out your serving size (use your hand estimates), and start building!\*

## Steps\*

## Example meal building

- |                                                                     |   |                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Choose 1 protein serving.                                        | → | 1 cup chopped chicken breast                                |
| 2: Choose 1 carb serving.                                           | → | 1 medium baked sweet potato                                 |
| 3: Add <i>plenty</i> of non-starchy veggies.                        | → | Steamed broccoli, chopped tomatoes, sautéed onions          |
| 4: Choose 1-2 healthy fat servings.                                 | → | 1 Tbsp drizzle olive oil & sprinkle of walnuts as a topping |
| 5: Add other flavors from herbs, spices, and condiments like salsa. | → | Drizzle balsamic vinegar, salt & pepper                     |
| 6: Serve up your finished meal!                                     | → | Toss all in a bowl & enjoy!                                 |



"Colorful Balsamic Chicken Bowl" :)

The options are endless! Start building your own simple, balanced meals!

\* This is a foundational approach for generalized sustainable health. You may need an individualized approach that may need to adjust amounts based on your activity level, height & weight or eliminate or add certain foods based on your individual health needs.

## Why this Real Food Macros approach?

When we build our meals with real foods & balancing Macros in mind, we usually end up balancing our essential nutrition needs AND at the same time balance our blood sugar and reduce inflammation. *How easy is that?*

*Balancing Macros with highly processed foods rather than real foods does NOT lead to sustainable optimized health.*

## What my clients usually experience when they start this real food macros approach:

- Balanced blood sugar which means less cravings for sugary or refined carb foods
- Satisfied and healthily full after meals
- Increased energy that lasts throughout the day
- No more need for strict calorie counting, “dieting”, or knowing every single nutrient in foods
- Improved sleep
- Improved gut health
- Better periods

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### Extra Tip:

This approach to building meals is good for everyone, not just you struggling with your negative health symptoms! So don't feel like you're missing out by eating this way. This approach is the foundation of lifelong health. *Cheers to the rest of our lives!*

P.S: If you want to help your family & friends to get on track with their own health, this Real Food Macros approach is likely the BEST place to start!

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# Recipes

## Breakfast

**TIP:** People who make their first meal each day an excellent source of protein, fat and fibrous foods have fewer cravings throughout the rest of the day.

### No-Cook Breakfast Ideas

1. Parfait
2. Tapas (pair snack/app items) cheese + deli meat + 1/2 avocado + leftover veggies
3. Homemade shake

#### Parfait

Makes 1 serving. ~400 calories.

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup 2-5% fat plain Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup berries
- 1/4 cup nuts or seeds
- Sprinkle of cinnamon

#### Directions

Simply add all ingredients to a bowl or container to take on the go.

\*To make this recipe dairy free, simply swap out the yogurt for a plain dairy free yogurt & add a small scoop of protein powder (choose one with simple ingredients).

#### Tapas

Great idea to pair snack/app items together to build into a healthy meal of finger foods. This is a meal idea for lunch & dinner as well!

- Assortment of protein options: uncured deli meat, hard boiled eggs, cheese
- Choice of fat: Avocado slices (keep to 1/2 avocado per serving), handful of nuts
- Lots of leftover veggies
- Handful of berries, apple slices, or other fruit (keep to 1/2 cup)



## Homemade Shake - Your Go-To Formula for Health!

Use this formula for an incredibly easy meal that's nutrient-dense & keeps blood sugar balanced.



- Protein: 1 serving (usually 1 scoop) low sugar protein powder
- Carb: 1/2 cup fruit of choice (berries are great!)
- Veggie (optional): 1 cup dark leafy greens (spinach or kale) or other, fresh or frozen
- Fat: 1-2 Tbsp coconut oil, 2 Tbsp nut butter, 1/2 avocado, etc
- Liquid: 1/2 - 1 cup milk of choice or water (more or less depending on thickness you desire)
- Nutritional boosters:
  - 1 Tbsp ground flaxseed or chia seeds / 1 tsp turmeric powder / 1 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder / 1 tsp maca powder

Add all ingredients to a blender. There are so many variations of this. Find your faves!

## My Nutrient-Dense Shake

Makes 1 serving. ~ 400 calories

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup water
- 1 scoop Vanilla protein powder
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 2 Tbsp peanut butter
- 1/2 Tbsp coconut or olive oil
- 1 big handful baby spinach leaves
- 1 Tbsp ground flaxseed
- 1 Tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp maca powder

## My All-Year-Round Creamy Pumpkin Spice Shake

Makes 1 serving. ~ 400 calories

### Ingredients

- 1/4 cup canned coconut milk (counts as fat!)
- 1 scoop Vanilla protein powder
- 1/2 banana
- 1/4 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 1 Tbsp almond butter or nut butter of choice
- 1 Tbsp ground flaxseed
- 1 Tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp maca powder
- 1/2 tsp pumpkin pie spice or dashes of ground cinnamon, cloves & nutmeg

## Easy-to-Cook Breakfast Ideas

Each are written for 1 serving but can easily be scaled to more servings.

1. Loaded Egg Bowl
2. Overnight Oats
3. Easy Whole Food Pancakes



### **Loaded Egg Bowl**

Makes 1 serving. ~500 calories

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 medium sweet potato
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 avocado
- Veggies of choice: chopped kale, broccoli, peppers, onions, etc
- 2 tsp cooking fat (coconut oil or butter)
- Flavorings of choice: fresh herbs, dried spices, hot sauce, parmesan cheese

#### **Directions**

1. Poke holes into sweet potato all over with a fork. Wrap in a paper towel and cook in microwave for 4-5 minutes until soft. Remove from paper towels, slice open to cool slightly.
2. While the potato is cooking, cook the eggs your way in 1 tsp fat.
3. Sauté veggies in 1 tsp fat.
4. In a serving bowl, add the split sweet potato, topped with veggies, eggs, and flavorings.

### **Overnight Oats**

Makes 1 serving. ~200 calories (just the oats + yogurt)

#### **Ingredients**

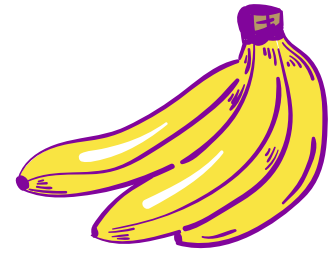
- 1/2 cup oats (Oats are naturally gluten free but can be contaminated with some gluten. Can choose certified gluten free if you need to follow a strict gluten free diet.)
- 1/2 cup plain kefir or Greek yogurt (if using Greek yogurt, mix in 1 Tbsp water)
- Flavorings: cinnamon, pure vanilla extract
- Toppings: berries, nuts, seeds, coconut flakes
- Optional: 1 tsp honey or maple syrup; or stevia, monkfruit, or erythritol

#### **Directions**

1. In a small container, add the oats, kefir/yogurt, flavorings and optional sweetener. Top with toppings.
2. Seal with lid and refrigerate overnight or for at least 4 hours.

## Easy Whole Food Pancakes

Makes 1 serving, ~500 calories



### Ingredients

- 1 banana or 1 medium sweet potato\*
- 2 large eggs
- Optional flavorings: Cinnamon, vanilla extract
- 1/2 Tbsp cooking fat (coconut oil or butter)
- Toppings (no need for fake syrups!): 2 Tbsp nut butter, 1/4 cup mashed berries as healthy jam

### Directions

1. Mash the banana with a fork. Whisk in the eggs and flavorings.
2. Heat coconut oil in a skillet over medium heat.
3. Add egg mixture to skillet. Smooth the mixture evenly into skillet to create one large pancake.
4. Cook about 1-2 minutes until cooking side of pancake is brown and doesn't stick to the skillet. Flip with a large spatula or try your best pan flip! Cook 2nd side for about 1 minute.
5. Remove from heat, put on plate, and top with your favorite toppings!

### \*Sweet potato version

- Wash a sweet potato. Poke several holes into it with a fork.
- Wrap potato in a paper towel & microwave for 4 minutes or until soft to touch.
- Peel and remove the skin (Careful! Use a dry paper towel to hold the potato while it's still hot).
- Mash the sweet potato with a fork and use in place of the banana.

## On-the-Go Snack or "Mini-Meal" Options

Each of these provide 200-300 calories to fill you up with energy until your next full meal.

- EPIC meat bars
- RXBar
- DIY Trail mix (1/4 cup salted nuts or seeds, 2 Tbsp dried fruit, 2 Tbsp unsweetened coconut flakes)
- 2 hard boiled eggs + 1 apple + 1 cheese stick
- Apple + 2 Tbsp nut butter
- Container of 1/2 cup strawberries, 1 Tbsp nut butter, cinnamon

## Lunches & Dinners

There are innumerable recipes & resources available online. But I'd like to share some of my favorite original recipes that truly provide macros in balance and pack a ton of nutrients while remaining easy to make. Cooking & prepping wholesome food at home need not be a long toil in the kitchen but rather a quick, easy & fun activity.

### 5-Minute Salmon Salad

Makes 1 serving. ~500 calories

#### Ingredients

- 1 small can (2oz) salmon (like Bumble Bee wild caught)
- Sauce/dressing: 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt or 1/2 mashed avocado, mixed with salt & lemon juice to taste (or 2 Tbsp liquid dressing\* if in a pinch)
- 1 large handful mixed greens
- 1 cup chopped or sliced veggies (like cucumber, tomatoes, red bell peppers, or leftover cooked veggies)
- 1/4 cup chopped fruit (like grapes or apples)
- Handful of nuts
- 2 Tbsp diced or shredded cheese
- Extra lemon juice (optional)

#### Directions

1. Drain the salmon. Mix salmon with your dressing of choice.
2. Add the mixed greens to a bowl. Top with salmon mixture and the rest of the ingredients and a squeeze of lemon juice.

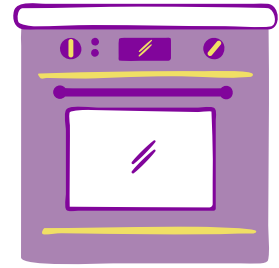


#### \*Olive-Oil Based Vinaigrette

- Use an olive or avocado oil based dressing (like Primal Kitchen brand) or easily make your own. Simple ratio is 3 parts olive oil to 1 part vinegar and add herbs & spices. For example, make a batch by whisking together 6 Tbsp olive oil, 2 Tbsp vinegar or lemon juice, and salt and spices to taste (like 1 tsp garlic powder, 1 tsp onion powder, 1/2 tsp salt, sprinkle of dried basil).

## Chicken Sheet Pan Meal

Makes 4 servings. ~500 calories each.



### Ingredients

- 2 cups Brussels sprouts
- 4 large carrots
- 4 medium parsnips
- 4 chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup olive oil based balsamic vinaigrette (see dressing recipe above\* for healthy homemade version)
- 2 tsp dried herbs, like Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp salt
- Optional toppings: walnut pieces or other nuts, grated parmesan cheese

### Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 400° F.
2. Halve the Brussels sprouts and chop the carrots and parsnips into 1/2 inch pieces.
3. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper or foil and arrange the chicken and chopped veggies on it.
4. Pour the dressing over the chicken and veggies. Sprinkle with the dried herbs and salt. Use your hands to massage the dressing and spices onto the chicken and veggies. Evenly space the contents on the pan.
5. Roast for 25-30 minutes until the chicken is cooked through and no longer pink in the middle and the vegetables are tender and slightly browned.
6. Top with walnuts and parmesan cheese.

## Ground Beef & Pumpkin Skillet - 10 minutes!

Makes 4 servings. ~450 calories each.

### Ingredients

- 4 servings whole grain or bean based pasta (serving described on package)
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1, 15oz can pumpkin puree (or about 2 cups)
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 5 oz baby spinach or chopped kale
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp turmeric (optional for anti-inflammatory boost)
- Optional: 1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese

## Directions

1. Cook grains or bean pasta according to package directions.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium high heat.
3. Add ground beef to skillet and break up beef with a wooden spoon. Turn the pieces of meat every 2 minutes for about 6 minutes.
4. Add pumpkin, spinach, and spices of choice. Stir to combine. Cook for an additional 2-3 minutes until beef is fully cooked and spinach is just wilted.
5. Serve beef mixture over serving of cooked grain/pasta. Top with parmesan cheese (optional).

## Bonus: Antioxidant Pesto!

Makes 16 servings (2 Tbsp each). ~1100 calories per serving.

### Ingredients

- 1/4 cup walnuts
- 1/4 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1/4 cup sunflower seeds
- 1/4 cup Brazil nuts
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese\*
- 1 cup fresh basil (leaves & stems!)
- 1 cup fresh parsley (leaves & stems!)
- 1 cup spinach or kale leaves
- 1/2 tsp salt (or more to taste)
- 1/4 tsp pepper (or more to taste)
- Water, as needed

### Directions

1. Add all ingredients to a food processor or high powered blender. Blend until a smooth mixture forms without chunks.
2. If the mixture needs a little help moving along, add 1 tbsp at a time of water until mixture is well blended.

**Nutrition Note:** this pesto provides an easy way to eat more nuts, seeds, herbs & olive oil to get a diverse array of minerals, vitamins, & antioxidants! Feel free to use other combinations of nuts and seeds based on what you have on hand. This pesto is particularly nourishing for the immune system, thyroid & reproductive health.

\*Make it dairy free by swapping out the parmesan cheese for nutritional yeast, but just use half the amount of nutritional yeast. For example, 1/2 cup parmesan --> 1/4 cup nutritional yeast.

# Meet Victoria

Registered Dietitian / Functional Nutritionist  
Owner of Wonderfully Made Nutrition

I help people with underlying gut & hormone issues transform their metabolic health & lose weight for life!

I practice a functional medicine nutrition approach using real food to target the root causes of health conditions.

For many clients who desire it, we incorporate spirituality into what I call "faith-inspired wellness" to guide them toward whole healing of body + mind + spirit. My own healthy journey is marked by functional nutrition & faith used together to overcome severe, chronic gut issues as well as disordered binge eating to find freedom of body, mind, & spirit.



**[Click here to book a FREE Nutrition Strategy Call with Victoria](#)**

Have Questions? Send Victoria an email at [Victoria@WonderfullyMadeNutrition.com](mailto:Victoria@WonderfullyMadeNutrition.com)

## A Faith-Inspired Foundation

We were created out of love from God with innate dignity and purpose. Our bodies are the vessels by which we live, create, love, serve, pray, and glorify.

These bodies of ours house our physical personhood but also our mental/emotional and spiritual personhood. By this I mean that

*we are all at once body, mind, and spirit. We cannot separate these beautiful, purposeful parts of us.*

These altogether make up our whole health.

Our bodies are meant to thrive and function well so that we can live fruitful lives. We are therefore called upon to care for our bodies in order to support them to thrive & function at optimum. This means that we don't wait for health conditions to crop up. We make this a way of life now.

One major way in which we support the thriving function of our bodies is to nourish them with nutritious food. Food can be the most powerful form of daily medicine and sustenance. It is also meant for pleasure and celebration. Throughout all of human history, food has been a primary staple of celebrations because it reflects the abundance of God to us-

*He gives us everything we need to be nourished.*

But in today's modern culture, we are often disconnected from the "gift" that food is as well as our bodies.

But we, of course, know that a precious gift must be used well. In acknowledging our own identity as created by a Creator, we realize that when we can see our world through the eyes of gratitude for who we are and what we have been given, we can see the truth that our nourishment ought to come from *real, wholesome, nourishing food*.

Real, wholesome food as God created it is meant to nourish our bodies so that they may thrive and function and enable us to carry out our God-given purpose. This is the kind of "food" we mean when we say *"food is medicine"*. This real, true food can help us heal when life & circumstances (and many of times even our own actions) present obstacles to our health.

Of course, though, we ought to seek temperance in actions. When we choose to eat real, wholesome foods, we ought to do so from the perspective that it is a gift. A gift that is not meant to be obsessed over, feared, overused or underused. We seek to eat real food with open hearts & minds, free from obsession or fear if we sometimes choose other foods.