

Building Healthy Habits

with



Part Three
Foods to Incorporate



The mindful food journaling app

Build a path towards your healthiest self yet!



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Unsplash | Jake Farris

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The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of several peach slices. The peaches are cut in half, revealing their yellow-orange flesh and dark brown, textured pits. The slices are arranged in a way that they overlap, creating a sense of depth. The lighting is soft, highlighting the natural texture and colors of the fruit.

Disclaimer

We are not medical professionals. Life experiences and stories we share should not be considered as medical advice. If you have a medical condition, please visit a licensed health professional.

The included material has been reviewed by health professionals with their OK on the content provided.

Always remember to take everything with a grain of salt and most importantly remember MODERATION.

We hope you find this informative and a helpful starting point to your health journey!

The Ate team



Unsplash | Celina ALbertz

Part 03

Foods to Incorporate

Building small habits into your everyday

Foods to Incorporate

What are the foods that all meal plans should work on incorporating? We've highlighted some of the more important ones to include, their benefits, and examples!

We wanted to bring you this next ebook that focuses on Foods to Incorporate to help you understand and highlight foods that are important in consuming to live your healthiest life yet!

Foods to Incorporate, focuses on healthier food options. Foods that can help with your overall health: mentally, physically and emotionally.

Remember, these are all recommendations. Some of these foods will work for you, some will not. See what does work for you and incorporate them into your day, if they don't work, then go ahead and try something else.



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Vegetables

From an early age, we're told to eat our vegetables. Some we like, some we'd do without. Nonetheless, all vegetables contain important vitamins, nutrients and fibers that our bodies need daily.

Benefits of vegetables:

- Vegetables with a mix of vitamins and nutrients including potassium, fiber, and vitamins A, E, and C make these a super food (examples: broccoli, spinach, tomatoes, garlic, etc.).
- Vegetables can help reduce risk for cancer, heart disease and type-2 diabetes.
- Vegetables contain chlorophyll which equates similarly to a serving of vitamin D (normally attainable from the sun), this is especially important during the cold winter months.



Unsplash | Nathan Dumlao

Did you know?

When you feel stressed, do you turn to comfort foods like mac-and-cheese?

There's a better solution!

Studies have shown that vegetables can help improve your resilience to stress. Magnesium and vitamin C can be depleted by stress but with a serving of vegetables you can replenish these important nutrients!

Next time you are in a stressful situation and turning to "comfort foods" try adding in some vegetables to reduce the stress!

Best vegetable options:

- Spinach
- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Kale
- Tomatoes
- Beets
- Garlic
- Onions

Foods from Plants

Consuming foods in moderation is key but one particular group that you should emphasize is foods from plants. Try incorporating more of your foods from plants. This does not mean that you need to completely get rid of meats and fish just make sure that a larger percentage of your food is coming from plants.

Benefits of eating plants:

- Can reduce chronic diseases
- Limits the chances of getting type 2 diabetes
- Can lower blood pressure
- Lowers chances of developing cardiovascular disease
- Will help you feel fuller longer
- Fruits and vegetables have a high fiber content, which help in digestion
- Helps lower cholesterol and blood sugar levels
- Maintain healthier skin with less meat

Meal examples (without meat):

- Plant powered Breakfast: whole grains + plant protein (tofu, beans, nuts) + fruit or vegetable
- Snack: nuts, grains, fruits and veggies



Unsplash | Shelley Pauls

Top meat alternatives:

- Chickpeas
- Tofu
- Tahini
- Beans
- Lentils

Top plant choices:

- Romaine
- Sweet Potatoes
- Bell peppers
- Spinach
- Beets



Unsplash | Gareth Hubbard

Increase Fiber

Dietary fiber is important to our digestive health and for regular bowel movements. Why should you increase fiber? It can help prevent heart disease, diabetes, weight gain, some cancers, and can also improve digestive health.

Additional benefits from fiber:

- Helps control blood sugar
- Lowers the risk of heart disease and strokes
- Helps with the feeling of fullness
- Can help in weight loss
- Slows down carbohydrate metabolism
- Can aide in skin health

Best fiber sources:

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Beans & legumes
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Oats
- Dark chocolate
- Avocados



Unsplash | American Heritage Chocolate

Important:

Whole grains are not the best source of fiber, as they contain anti-nutrients and glutinous, “binding” proteins.

Seasonal Produce

It may seem like a nuisance to eat food locally but it is the next step that you should try to do when you are going on your weekly shopping trip. You may be accustomed to going to the same grocery store and picking up a box of strawberries in the middle of winter in New England but did you think where those strawberries are coming from? How they have been shipped and packaged to keep them looking bright, red, and fresh over a couple of days? They've most likely been modified.

This is why it is important to buy local. You will gauge an understanding of what is fresh and grown in season, and most importantly the nutrients will be preserved.

Did you know?

Once a food is picked, it begins to lose its nutritional value. When we are more involved in our food and take the time to pick it ourselves or purchase it locally, studies show that these are examples of healthy food behaviors and that we are mindfully making decisions about the foods we consume. The extra time we spend with the food allows for better eating habits.



Unsplash | Yulia Khlebnikova

Benefits of eating seasonal:

- More flavor
- More nutrients & nutritional
- More informed and healthier option

Low-Sugar Fruits (Berries & Apples)

Apples and berries are some of the best choices when choosing fruits to eat.

These fruits are full of flavonoids (antioxidants in the fruit). A handful of flavonoid fruits can help decrease your risk to diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers.

Best low-sugar fruits:

- **Apples** – one of the top go-to fruits by American's! Apples have enzymes that break down simple sugars that are helpful because instead of storing the sugar as fat, it is flushed out of your system.
- **Pear** – The next best fruit with low sugar levels are pears because they protect against type 2 diabetes. Pears also contain 1/4 of your daily need for fiber.
- **Berries** – Berries are another great option including both blueberries and strawberries both packed with a variety of antioxidants helping to prevent cancer, and inflammations.

Important reminder:

It is very important that these fruits are consumed as whole fruits as opposed to fruit juices because the juices contain additional sugars and sweeteners disregarding the nutritional content the fruit provides.

What about sugar fructose levels in fruits?

Apples, pears and berries contain low amounts of sugar that are sure to not make your sugar levels rise quickly.

Berries and apples have been changed the least since they started breeding. They are a better option of eating than other fruits because they tend to have the nutrients in them and have not been touched by pesticide sprays and chemicals due to being picked earlier and being harvested in the large refrigerated trucks.



Unsplash | Dose Juice

More Berries

Berries are an essential addition to any eating plan. These include blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and strawberries all packed with a variety of antioxidants helping to prevent cancer, inflammations, and manage diabetes.

Did you know!

If you wake up sore after a workout or a practice, berries can help with the soreness! They not only help fight diseases and muscle ache but also help boost performance as well.



Unsplash | Nanxi Wei



Unsplash | Joseph Gonzalez

Berry Tips:

- If you cannot buy fresh berries in the winter, then freeze them at the end of the summer. This will allow you to still enjoy these flavonoid boosting fruits throughout the entire year!
- Berries go great with sweet and savory recipes and they taste just as great on their own as a healthy snack.

Low-Gi Foods

Glycemic index (GI levels) are important as they rate the carbohydrates based on how quickly they will raise your blood glucose levels. It is an advanced way of classifying carbs as simple or complex.

How does the GI scale work?

The GI scale uses glucose or white bread as a reference, which is given a GI score of 100.

The foods that break down the quickest (simple carbs) have a higher index (more than 70) as opposed to more complex carbs such as oats that break down carbs slower, with a lower index (less than 55). Lower GI scores have a slower breakdown of the food and can help keep you feeling fuller over a longer period of time in addition to not raising your blood sugar levels quickly.

Did you know?

- Texture, size and ripeness of a food will affect the GI level. Example, an unripe banana can have a GI of 30 while a ripe banana has a GI of 50, but in either case, they are both low GI fruits.
- Cooking can change a food's GI index because the food is being broken down into smaller particles.
- A food with a low GI index does not mean that it should be over consumed. Keep everything in moderation! A healthy balance is having both low and high GI foods in your meals.

GI food examples:

- **Low GI (less than 55)** - beans, fruit, milk, pasta, grainy bread, porridge, lentils
- **Medium GI (55 to 70)** - orange juice, honey, basmati rice, whole meal bread
- **High GI (over 70)** - potatoes, white bread, short-grain rice



Unsplash | Eiliv-Sonas Aceron

When and what to eat?

Example - an athlete training for a marathon

- **Before:** eat foods that have a low GI index two hours before the event because the food is still in your small intestine giving off energy for several hours.
- **After:** refuel your body with high GI foods during the first 24 hours in order to quickly replenish your glycogen levels.

Unprocessed Food

Unprocessed foods are the better and healthier option and avoid harmful chemicals. Stick with foods that do not have food labels. If there is an ingredient that you cannot pronounce, the chances are you shouldn't be consuming it either. It may take a little time to adjust to this, but at the end of the day, you will know what you've consumed throughout the day.



Unsplash | Louis Hansel

Benefits to eating unprocessed:

- More energy
- Healthy mind
- Glowing skin
- Helps reduce weight
- Overall better for health

Why is processed food the lesser option?

Processed food is packaged and contains chemicals, GMO ingredients, extra acid, too much sugar, extra gluten and unnatural ingredients because the food has been altered in some form by the time it reaches the customer. When reading the food label on a packaged food, almost all processed foods contain additional sugar (including mustard and deli meat that you may eat). This doesn't mean that all pre-packaged food is processed. Some companies make sure they do not have additional add ins in their food. However, once you're in the habit of eating whole foods, when you do end up eating processed food you will be able to taste the additional chemicals.

Tips to eating unprocessed:

- Buy ingredients not meals
- Buy one-label foods
- If you cannot pronounce an ingredient you shouldn't be eating it

Complex Carbs

There are two types of carbs, simple and complex carbs. Complex carbs are the better of the two types to consume. Complex carbs are important because they are a source of energy for our bodies and we need an optimal amount to be able to fully function both physically and mentally throughout the day. They are also important for our daily digestive system, metabolism, sleep, and even help our nervous system to function by reducing nervousness and anxiety.

Why complex carbs?

- Our bodies need good, non-refined complex carbs
- These are carbs that are not processed
- Contain a complete source of carbohydrates with fiber and natural sugars
- Available within vegetables, fruits, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds and whole grains

Best complex carb options:

- Brown rice
- Whole wheat bread
- Sweet potatoes
- Anything brown or green is GOOD

What about white rice?

It has been refined to be white and high fiber components have been removed, losing its complex that would normally make it a healthy complex carb. If you choose to eat rice, try brown rice as that will contain a healthy complex carb makeup.



Unsplash | Ella Olsson

Reminder:

Carbs have been getting a bad reputation in the media making people fearful of eating them. This is not something we should be worried about! Complex carbs are good carbs!



Sweet Potato & Jasmine Rice

Potatoes and rice are great when adhering to a food plan as they are both complex carbs, and contain many nutrients for a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, they can help keep your energy levels up, but make sure to switch it up with some alternatives! Try adding sweet potatoes opposed to normal potatoes and jasmine rice instead of white rice from time to time.

Choosing between rice and potatoes:

- Rice is a better choice when it's brown or wild rice because the starch of the rice can be drained in the water it is cooked in.
- For potatoes the starch remains in the potato after its been cooked (this differs for sweet potatoes making them a better option than normal potatoes).
- Potatoes have a higher GI, meaning that it quickly breaks down the nutrients into glucose, causing blood sugars to rise and making you feel hungrier quicker.

Why sweet potato?

- Sweet potatoes are a great source of vitamin A, vitamin C, manganese, and also vitamin B6
- Sweet potatoes taste great whether they are steamed or boiled, but you do not need to include the brown sugar like at Thanksgiving. A little olive oil or seasoning can make the flavor go a long way
- Has a lower GI allowing the nutrients to break down slower
- Craving fries? Try sweet potato fries next time!



Unsplash | Katarzyna Grabowska

Reminder:

Have a healthy mix of sweet potatoes, potatoes and/or rice. Dairy and vegetables can also provide a source of carbs meaning that not every meal needs to have a load of rice or potatoes. Mix it up so that your body does not get used to eating the same form daily.

Protein Sources

Protein is important for their long chains of amino acids, which are important molecules for our eating plans. Protein is key because it helps keep your metabolism running, which then helps in keeping energy up and allowing blood sugar levels to remain stable.

Protein is possible to consume from vegetables but also accessible from animal protein – meat, dairy, eggs and fish.



Unsplash | Karly Gomez

Not enough protein can lead to...

- Being susceptible to low energy because of an amino acid deficiency
- Can make building muscle mass more difficult
- Harder time concentrating and remembering things
- Having mood swings
- Unstable blood sugar levels
- Trouble maintaining and/or losing weight

Best protein options:

- Grass-fed beef
- Lentils
- Wild fish
- Organic chicken
- Black beans
- Kefir or yogurt
- Free-range eggs
- Raw cheese

More Fish (& Seafood)

Fish contain certain nutrients that do not come through while eating meat products. Fish encompass important omega-3 fatty acids that are crucial in maintaining the cardiovascular system for regulating blood. Another benefits to fish is the high-protein and low-fat that they provide. Predominantly found in white fish and seafood products. Fat found in fish is amongst the “good” fats that people should be consuming daily.



Unsplash | Charlota Blunarova

Benefits from fish:

- Fat from the fish help absorb additional vitamins and nutrients consumed during the day
- Will give you the most brainpower
- Can help with depression for women after pregnancies

Best fish options:

- Albacore Tuna (US & Canada)
- Wild Alaskan Salmon
- Black Cod
- Oysters
- Crab
- Clams
- Lobster
- Mussels
- Sea Bass

Eat the Yolk (& More Free-Ranged Eggs)

An egg is so simple. A top staple amongst the foods that individuals consume, used in so many different meals and recipes, yet, there is more to it. What do you need to keep in mind when it comes to eggs? Be aware of the difference of a free-range egg vs. caged-eggs. Choose the free-range when you can!

Free-range eggs

- Come from chickens that are from small farmers in local areas
- Not fed a processed diet full of hormones, pesticides and antibiotics
- When you crack an egg open from a free-range egg, their yolk is a darker yellow/orange color and they taste better!

What else about free-range eggs?

- Important source of omega-3 fatty acids
- Substantial amount of vitamin E
- Less cholesterol and saturated fat than caged-eggs
- Yolks of these eggs contain lutein and zeaxanthin (antioxidants that are important to vision - protecting the eye from UV and high-intensity blue lights)

Eat the yolk?

The myth that the yolk of the egg is unhealthy and raises cholesterol levels is something to leave behind us. Eat the yolk and the free-caged eggs to protect your vision and consume its nutritional value that they have to offer!



Unsplash | Charisse Kenion

Grass-Fed Meat

There are three different meats consumers can buy: grass-fed, organic and normal grain-fed feeding. The best choice is grass-fed (beef, poultry and pork) due to their high quality. These meats come from animals that eat the grass and other grass like things found in their surroundings up until slaughter.

Grass-fed

- Has the greatest nutritional content.
- Contains vitamin K2 (important for heart and bone health) in addition to vitamin E.
- Helps with brain functions and preventing diseases.
- Contain the most flavors, as it has the least amount of fat on its meat.
- Reduces the antibiotic-resistant bacteria that is normally found on farms with animals that are raised in grain-fed spaces.
- It is environmentally sustainable to keep the water supply clean with grass-fed meat as opposed to grain-fed meat which is wrecking water supplies.
- Support local farmers by buying straight from the farmer in order to make sure it is in its purest form without any additives or any misleading labels.



Unsplash | Miha Rekar

Organic

- Not the healthiest option even though the label reads organic.
- These are also grass-fed in the beginning but then grain fed. The grain that these animals are fed is organic which is why the label on the package will read "organic".
- There will be extra fat on the meat because the grains make it easier for the cow to put on extra weight to reach its slaughter weight.

Grain-fed

- Least healthiest option
- Has a bland taste because of excess fat surrounding the meat.
- These animals began eating grass but then quickly switched to grain feeding because it was the best option for the farmer (to save money and quickest weight gain for the animal).
- Contains fewest nutrients and will be the unhealthier and cheaper option in the store.

Full-Fat Dairy

The growing fad of “low-fat” everything is not beneficial to us! Fat does not make us fat! Here’s why you should stick to full fat foods especially when you are consuming dairy.

Eat full-fat and ditch the low-fat:

- Research has found that people that consume low-fat products are just as likely to develop cardiovascular problems and type 2 diabetes as those individuals that consume full fat dairy products.
- Full-fat products might actually be better off when it comes to weight loss.
- Consuming low-fat products will not benefit your health and wellness results.
- Even with full-fat products, be mindful and aware of your consumption because dairy does not contain the important fiber and nutrient contents that are necessary for digestion and metabolism.
- Dairy contains some nutrients that are important but in small amounts.

Benefits of full-fat dairy:

- Heart healthy
- Helps treat individuals with irritable bowel syndrome by keeping the digestive tract calmer
- Helps lower the sugar intake when a person consumes full-fat dairy products



Unsplash | Amanda Vick

What else?

The next time you are deciding between low-fat milk and whole milk go ahead and have the whole milk. Whole milk goes bad after a few days of the open date because there are less preservatives and chemicals that are in it as opposed to the other milk products that have a longer expiration date. These longer expiration dates are possible because of additional chemicals.

Nutrient Dense Snacks

Snacking throughout the day because you're always hungry? Make sure the snacks are nutrient dense so that you are fueling your body with the right energy as opposed to quick and easy processed foods.

Snacking can:

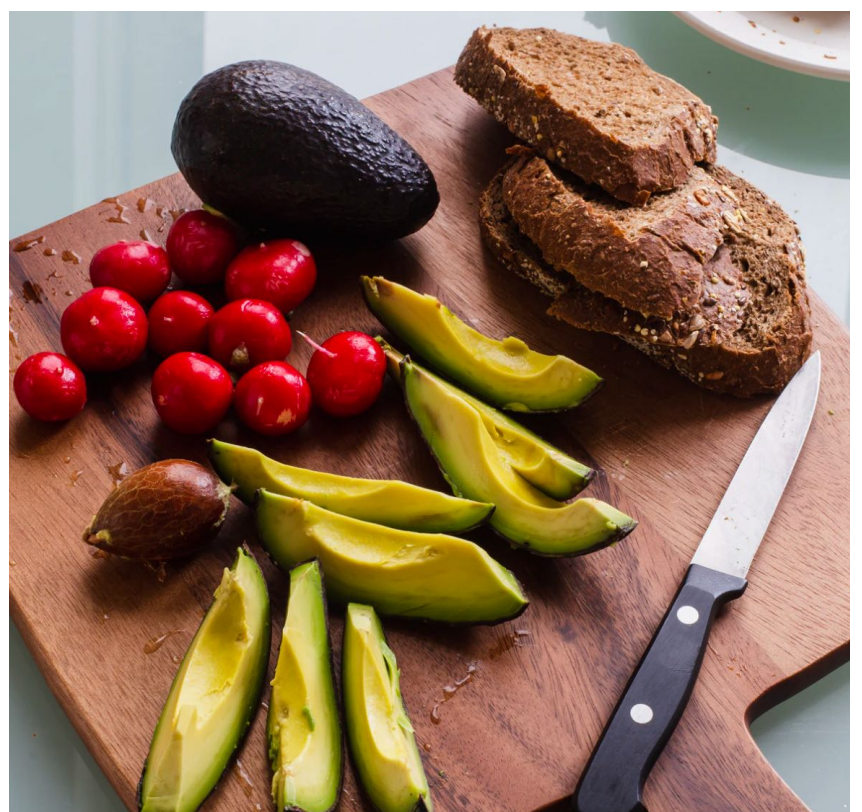
- Improves overall health
- Helps curb cravings
- Boosts your mood and brain power
- Gives you the extra energy that you need during the day to keep going

Always have on hand:

- Apples
- Grapes
- Avocado
- Pears
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Tomatoes
- Tuna in water
- Strawberries
- Even oatmeal

Pair different food groups together to build that perfect snack! Ex:

- Banana with peanut butter
- Whole grain crackers with sliced cheese and veggies
- Oatmeal and blueberries
- Greek yogurt and berries
- Toast with avocado and tomatoes
- Air-popped popcorn and almonds
- Whole-wheat crackers and tuna
- Apple and cheese



Unsplash | Louis Hansel

How to practice this in the Ate app?

When journaling in Ate, choose one (1) experiment at a time to focus on.

Then, journal all your foods that you eat. If you're able to follow that experiment, mark it On-path. If you're unable to follow the experiment for that meal, then mark it Off-path.

Simply working on incorporating new foods, or more foods of a particular kind from one meal to the next will help you to start building better eating habits!

Have that experiment down? Then move onto the next experiment! OR if that first experiment just isn't working for you and your lifestyle, try another experiment!

Don't forget!

YOUR food journal is for YOUR eyes only (unless you decide to share)!

Make sure to journal everything to get the best results in becoming YOUR healthiest self!



Unsplash | Hannah Tasker



A pineapple with a green crown and a textured yellow-brown body is wearing a pair of black aviator sunglasses. The background is a light, slightly blurred gradient.

Try an experiment today!

And share this guide with
others to help them build
healthier habits too!

Or check us out below

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