

Two Hearts Nutrition

WHAT TO COOK WHY TO EAT IT

NUTRITION FACTS HEALTH BENEFITS AND RECIPES

BY CARRIE BONFITTO, NC, BCHN

WHAT TO COOK
WHY TO EAT IT

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NUTRITION FACTS, HEALTH BENEFITS, AND RECIPES

BY CARRIE BONFITTO, NC
BOARD CERTIFIED IN HOLISTIC NUTRITION

To all the Libras who have supported me in my food journey.

-C.B.



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INTRODUCTION

This is not a book about being or becoming a master cook or sticking to a restrictive diet. This is a book about you. About how you can feed yourself a little bit better today, so that you can feel like your best self tomorrow.

If you've ever said, "I need to eat healthier," but felt (and still feel) confused about what that really means, this book is for you! If you want to figure out how to eat more veggies and make them actually taste good, this book is for you! Or, if you yo-yo diet and treat food like numbers instead of nourishment, this book is for you!

This book is from me to you. It's taken years to write it because it's taken me years to truly understand what I should be cooking and why I needed to eat the way I do.

Growing up as an Italian-American I was immersed in a culture of food. We all normalize what we are shown as kids. And whatever you were served, or learned to cook, or didn't learn to cook, or ate, or didn't eat, all becomes what is ingrained in your food choices. Breaking out of these patterns and opening your mouth and your mind to new foods and new information is difficult but not impossible. And it sure helps if you have a reason for wanting to change things up.

You might be struggling with excess weight, fatigue, diabetes, heart disease, pain, or skin conditions. Or like me you might have been bouncing from doctor to doctor for years trying to get a chronic condition diagnosed. Are you finally taking matters into your own hands?

My personal health struggles led me first to culinary school then to getting my board-certification in holistic nutrition where I learned to think about food differently.

Did you know that one whole 5-ounce bag of spinach is less than 2 servings of vegetables? Or that drinking a glass of orange juice actually makes it harder to fight germs for about 4 hours afterwards? Yes, you read that correctly, it's because the sugar in the juice down-regulates your immune system for a short period of time.

Within these pages, I give you dozens of my essential recipes, the ones I share most often with

the people who come to me for nutrition help and cooking lessons. They aren't fancy and the cooking techniques are easy to master. I've worked to keep them low-carb, low-gluten, and low-dairy (without sacrificing taste) as this combination works well for weight loss and wellness. You'll find delicious options for beverages, breakfasts, soups, lunches, snacks, dinner, and even desserts!

Plus nestled between the recipes, you'll get pages of solid information about why you should choose these ingredients for your recipes. And most importantly, why certain foods will help you cut cravings, improve digestion, regulate blood sugar, and make you feel lighter, more energized and vital.

This isn't a meal plan and you shouldn't try to follow it to reach some imaginary level of perfection.

Take it slow.

Start with one simple change, like your beverages, and do that wholeheartedly. Then move on to the next improvement. You can do this! Now let's get cooking.

With love,

Carrie

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"A woman is like a tea bag – you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water."

– Eleanor Roosevelt

BETTER BEVERAGES

Our beverages are the first place to begin when making healthy choices. By creating your own beverages instead of buying packaged ones, you will begin improving your health and your looks!

Soda, sports drinks, bottled coffees, teas, and even beverages thought of as healthy, like smoothies, juices, and nut milks, can be laden with added sugars.

The phosphoric acid in sodas and sports drinks is especially harmful as it leaches important minerals from our bones and teeth.

By consuming pure filtered water and making our own flavored beverages, you can drink essential nutrients that promote health with every sip.

The simple act of adding a few slices of cucumber, some berries, or a little lemon transforms plain old water into a special treat. Herbal teas are my favorite way to add minerals and chlorophyll to my diet.

Have you ever tasted freshly made nut milk? It's not even comparable to most of the packaged versions on the market.

Remember that any liquid that does not contain added sugar, caffeine, or alcohol counts toward helping you reach your water intake goal. Even sipping soups like clear broths can be a great way to keep you hydrated.

Hydration

One of the most overlooked components of health is our level of hydration. Water is an essential nutrient. It makes up 60% of our body's weight.

Every system in our body depends on water to function. It is used to regulate body temperature, flush out toxins and wastes, and carry nutrients and oxygen to all the cells of our body via the blood. It maintains moisture in the important mucus linings of the digestive tract and the nose. It lubricates our eyes, cushions our joints, and protects our tissues and organs like the brain from shock and damage.

Dehydration or the reduction of the water content in our bodies causes an imbalance between the salts and the sugars in our system. This impacts the way we feel and how our bodies perform.

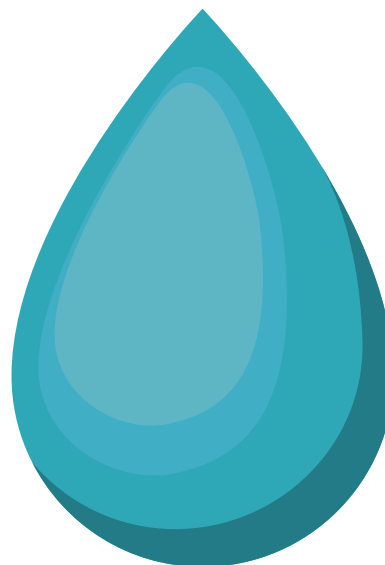
Symptoms of **mild dehydration** include:

dry sticky mouth	constipation
feelings of fatigue	dizziness
dry skin	muscle cramps
headache	irritability

Many people suffer from these symptoms needlessly, simply because they aren't drinking enough water.

But drinking water makes me pee too much!

Try adding a pinch of salt to your glass of water.



Salt provides electrolytes and helps your cells absorb the water you are drinking. Chronic dehydration can lead to serious health problems: organ damage; kidney stones; cholesterol problems; liver, joint, and muscle damage; and bone density loss.

A note about water quality:

Most plastic water bottles contain chemicals that leach into your drinking water. To lower your risk of drinking chemicals and make the most sustainable choice for the environment, drinking filtered tap water is the best decision.

Bisphenol A (BPA) and other chemicals in plastic are linked to health issues like birth defects, infertility, developmental disabilities in children, heart disease, and Type 2 diabetes.



ALL-STAR BREAKFASTS

Pecan Cinnamon Granola

Granola has a reputation of being good for you, but if you look at many of the packaged brands, they are loaded with sugar and often contain oxidized oils. Making your own is fast and easy. Plus once you get a few batches under your belt, you can change out the nuts, seeds, and dried fruit for any varieties that suit your health needs and your palate.

This version contains pecans and protein dense sunflower seeds to help keep you feeling full longer in the morning. These nuts and seeds are loaded with healthy fats and fiber that protect your heart and digestive tract. The cinnamon and whole grain oats help to regulate your blood sugar. And unsweetened dried cherries are added for their anti-inflammatory and pain relieving powers.

6 SERVINGS

4 cups raw, whole rolled oats
¾ cup raw pecans, chopped
⅓ cup raw sunflower seeds
⅓ cup raw pumpkin seeds
2 tablespoons chia seeds
2 tablespoons melted coconut oil
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 pinch salt
3 tablespoons dark maple syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ cup unsweetened coconut flakes
½ cup unsweetened dried cherries
or cranberries, chopped

Preheat the oven to 325 °F.

In a large rimmed baking sheet, combine all ingredients EXCEPT the coconut flakes and the dried cherries. Spread out the mixture evenly.

Bake for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the coconut. Bake for 5 more minutes until mixture is golden brown. As granola cools, stir in the dried cherries.

Cool completely before storing. Place in an airtight container and store in the fridge for up to 4 weeks.

Per serving: 297 calories; 18.5 g fat; 27.4 g total carbohydrates (6.8 g dietary fiber, 2.6 g sugar); 7.6 g protein; 0 mg cholesterol; 31 mg sodium; 59 mg calcium; 3 mg iron; 232 mg potassium; 0 mcg vitamin D.



ESSENTIAL SOUPS

Beet Soup with Cashew Cream

4 SERVINGS

For the cashew cream:

½ cup raw cashews
1 tablespoon lemon juice
⅓ cup water
2 cloves garlic

For the soup:

1 leek, whites and light
greens only, diced (1 cup)
2–3 red beets, peeled and
diced (4 cups)
2 cups beef bone broth
1 teaspoon grated ginger
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¼ teaspoon sea salt

Make the cashew cream: Put the cashews in a heat proof bowl. Boil some water and pour it over the cashews. Soak the cashews for 30 minutes, then drain. (You can skip this step if you are using a high-speed blender).

Blend the cashews, lemon juice, water, and garlic until creamy.

Make the soup: Place the bone broth, beets, garlic, leeks, and ginger in a medium pot, cover and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until the beets are soft, about 15 minutes. Puree the soup in batches. Return to the pan, reheat and season with salt and pepper.

Garnish each bowl with 4 tablespoons of the cashew cream.

Per serving: 218 calories; 8.3 g fat; 22.7 g total carbohydrates (4.9 g dietary fiber, 11 g sugar); 15.3 g protein; 0 mg cholesterol; 307 mg sodium; 52 mg calcium; 3 mg iron; 732 mg potassium; 0 mcg vitamin D.



Ginger Sesame Stir-fry

4 SERVINGS

Sesame sauce:

2 tablespoons tamari*
3 tablespoons sesame oil
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 tablespoon chopped garlic
1 tablespoon fresh ginger
3-4 tablespoons water

Stir-fry ingredients:

1 tablespoon avocado oil
2 cups mushrooms, quartered
1 carrot, sliced
3 cups green beans, chopped
1 red bell pepper, sliced
1 cup raw cashews
¼ cup tahini paste (or nut butter)

Garnish

3-4 scallions, sliced
2 tablespoons sesame seeds

In a small bowl, combine all the ingredients for the sesame sauce.

Heat the avocado oil in a large skillet or wok over high heat. Add the mushrooms, sprinkle with salt and pepper, cook for 5 minutes.

Add the carrots, green beans, and the bell pepper. Cook 5 more minutes until the vegetables are done to your liking. Add the cashews, stir.

Add the tahini paste and water and stir for 30 seconds to 1 minute, melting the tahini. Add the sesame sauce and more water, if needed, to the thin sauce. Cook for 30 seconds.

Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the garnishes. Serve as-is for a low-carb dinner or over brown rice if desired.

*Tamari is gluten-free soy
sauce made without wheat.

Per serving: 503 calories; 40.3 g fat; 29.2 g total carbohydrates (7.5 g dietary fiber, 6.3 g sugar); 13 g protein; 0 mg cholesterol; 547 mg sodium; 177 mg calcium; 7 mg iron; 742 mg potassium; 126 mg vitamin D.