



Nourished^{Rx}

Feed Your Health Weekly Lessons

A Guide to Better Health: Part 4





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Lesson 16

Sleep, Stress, & Nutrition



Why Do We Need Sleep?

Sleep allows the body and mind to recover and recharge. Getting enough sleep each night helps your body fight disease and illness. Sleep also allows your muscles to recover after exercise or injury. Quality sleep can also improve your mental health, leading to improved focus and mood.

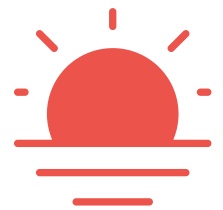
Most of us need 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night. When we don't get enough sleep, we are at an increased risk of weight gain, diabetes, heart disease, and depression. Lack of sleep may also increase the risk of falling or having an accident.

The Science of Sleep

We all have an internal clock that controls when we feel tired and when we feel awake. This clock works on a 24-hour cycle known as the circadian rhythm. Melatonin and cortisol are two hormones that help regulate the circadian rhythm.



Melatonin is released in the evening, when the sun begins to go down, and tells the brain that it is time to go to sleep.



Cortisol is released in the morning, when the sun rises, and tells the brain that it is time to wake up.

Once we fall asleep, our bodies cycle through four stages of sleep. The first three stages are known as non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep, followed by the final stage known as rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. NREM sleep relaxes your muscles, slows your heart rate, and slows brain waves. REM sleep often happens about 90 minutes after falling asleep and is when dreaming occurs. REM sleep is important because it turns on the areas of the brain that help in learning and memory.

How Aging Affects Sleep

Sleep cycles tend to change as we age because we produce less and less melatonin, making it more difficult to fall asleep. It is estimated that almost 50 percent of older adults have trouble falling asleep. Older adults also spend less time in REM sleep and tend to wake up more often throughout the night. Sleep medications are common for older adults. However, these medications can harm your health and memory if used for extended periods of time. Please speak to your doctor and care team before starting a new sleep medication or changing the dose of a current sleep medication.

Review the tips below to discover how you can get a better night's sleep without the use of sleep medications.

Small Changes for Better Sleep



Avoid screens (computers, phones, television) before bedtime. The light from screens can lower melatonin levels and make it harder to fall asleep.



Avoid big meals right before bed. Indigestion is more likely to happen when you are lying down.



Avoid sugary and spicy foods as well as alcohol and caffeine before bed. These foods can upset your stomach, keep you awake, and decrease your quality of sleep.



Limit the amount of fluids you drink before bed. You may find yourself needing to get up to use the bathroom throughout the night which can disrupt your sleep.

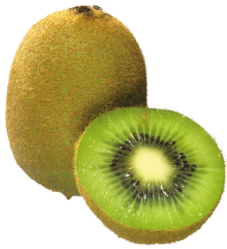


Remove distractions from your bedroom. Keep your sleeping area dark, calm, and free of clutter.

Keep the room cool. It is easier to fall asleep and stay asleep when the room is 65-68 degrees F. Try opening windows, adding a fan, or turning the heat down at night.

Some foods and drinks have been shown to help promote sleep.

Review the following list and think about which foods you can start incorporating into your nighttime routine.



Kiwi, also known as kiwifruit, has been shown to help improve sleep when eaten about an hour before bedtime.

Tart cherries and **tart cherry juice** contain melatonin and help improve sleep time and quality of sleep.



Fatty fish like salmon or tuna can help improve sleep when eaten three times a week.

Nuts like almonds, walnuts and cashews contain essential minerals known to help with insomnia and trouble falling asleep.



Chamomile tea, along with other decaffeinated warm beverages, can help improve sleep when consumed before bedtime.

Learn more about how stress effects your health on the next page!

As we age, our stress levels can increase due to things such as illness, money concerns, losing loved ones, or family challenges.

We can't eliminate stress, but we can manage it by being aware of what stress does to our bodies.

How Does Your Body Respond to Stress?

Our bodies naturally respond to stress. There are physical stressors (like a car accident or being chased by an animal) and mental stressors (like a work deadline). But, our body treats all stress the same way.

When you feel stress, your body makes “stress hormones” such as adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones can cause changes such as:

- **Increased heart rate**
- **Higher blood pressure**
- **Increased blood sugar**
- **Slower digestion**
- **Weaker immune system**

These changes will last until your brain no longer senses stress.

Both physical and mental stress are common and can go on for long periods of time. If stress continues for a long time without stopping, there can be long-lasting effects.

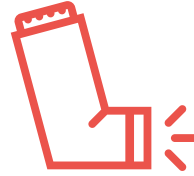
For immediate stress relief, try Four Count Breathing

- Take a breath in for four counts, pushing your belly out.
- Hold that breath for four counts.
- Release your breath for four counts.
- Repeat for at least 10 breaths.

Health problems linked to chronic stress:



Heart disease



Asthma



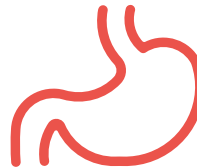
Diabetes



Depression



Headaches



Stomach
issues

Emotional Responses

Here are some common emotions you may feel as a result of stress:

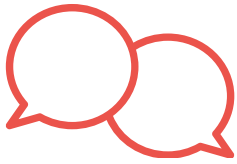
Restless
Afraid
Frustrated
Upset
Anxious
Tense
Distracted
Forgetful

Physical Responses

Here are some common ways that stress may show up for you as a physical response:

Not feeling hungry
Feeling hungry all the time
Problems sleeping
Needing to use the bathroom often
Feeling tired
Headaches
Body aches and pains

Ways to Manage Stress



Talk it Out

Sharing with a friend or family member can really help to work through difficult emotions. You can find support groups to help with stress caused by grief, caregiving, or other life issues. Working with a care manager, counselor, or therapist can be helpful too. Remember, everyone feels stress and you are not alone.



Make Time for Fun

Doing the things you love and having fun is a natural stress reliever. Laughing can relax your muscles, increase blood flow, and improve mood.



Relax and Breathe

There is nothing more stressful than when someone says “just relax.” But, there are some tools you can use to relieve stress and feel more relaxed. Guided meditation, gentle stretching, yoga, writing in a journal, and expressing gratitude are all proven stress relievers. Many of these are free and available online!



Stay Active

Exercise increases “feel-good hormones” called endorphins. Moving your body can boost your mood and energy level. It can help your brain work better. In upcoming lessons, we will explore ways to include more movement in your day.



Nourish Your Body

Foods with a lot of vitamins and minerals (like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds) nourish your body. When your blood sugar stays constant throughout the day it is much easier for your body to manage stress.



From Lesson To Action

After reading over this lesson, it is time to reflect on how you're handling sleep, stress, and nutrition in your life. Use the space below to answer some questions to help you develop a plan of action moving forward.



- How much sleep are you getting each night?
- What is one thing you can add or change about your nighttime routine to help you sleep better?
- What makes you feel stressed?
- How do you think your body responds to stress physically and emotionally?
- What has helped you manage stress in the past?

Lesson 17

The Power of Positivity



The Power of Positivity and How to Utilize it in 3 Simple Steps

The thoughts in our brains can be our best friend or our worst enemy. Harmful or negative thoughts can prevent us from taking action and reaching our goals. But, helpful and positive thoughts can keep us moving forward.

Our thoughts act like our behaviors and habits. If we often think negative thoughts, then over time it is easier and more comfortable to keep thinking those negative thoughts. But, if we increase how often we have positive thoughts, then it becomes easier for positive thoughts to be our “go to” response.

Even though it can feel challenging at first, swapping negative thoughts for positive ones can be very helpful. But how do you swap negative thoughts for positive ones? Good news! If you use the 3 simple steps below and repeat them regularly, you will find that your positive thoughts will come to mind more naturally and help you reach your goals faster.



Swapping Negative Thoughts for Positive Thoughts

Use this system for identifying your negative or harmful thoughts, pausing that habit, and replacing that thought with a new positive one. Swapping negative thoughts for positive thoughts is not about making excuses or “sugar-coating.” Upgrading your thoughts allows you to:

- Recognize that there may be a challenge you are facing
- Change your habit of thinking negatively about that situation
- Create space for action
- Remove shame, guilt, or anger about your progress

IDENTIFY

Identify your thoughts in the moment or after they happen. Ask yourself if this thought is helping you reach your goal. Would you say this to a family member or friend?

PAUSE

If you had a negative thought, take a pause. What triggers will help you to stop in the moment and swap your negative thoughts for a positive one?

REPLACE

Replace that negative thought with a positive one. A positive thought will help you feel excited about moving forward on your goal or will help you keep your motivation high.



Negative and Positive Thoughts: Examples

I hate eating healthy because it means I can't eat food that tastes good.



Eating healthy helps me reach my health goals. I will focus on the healthy foods that I really enjoy eating.

I am too lazy to exercise.



I am often tired and it can be hard to feel motivated to exercise. But, I will do light exercise that moves my body in a way that feels good.

I can't make any changes because my partner won't change the way they eat at restaurants.



It is tempting to eat the foods that my partner eats when we go out, but I can order exactly what I want off the menu to support my goals.

I ate "bad" food this week, so I might as well give up.



I had to eat fast food once this week, but I was able to enjoy my NourishedRx food, as well as other healthy food, over the course of the week.

Do any of these sound like you? Reflect and try to apply it to your current thoughts.

From Lesson to Action

Do you have any negative thoughts that come up when you think about your goals? If so, write them down below.

On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest, how important is it to you to replace your negative thoughts with positive thoughts?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

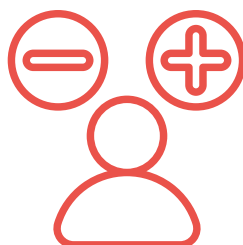
Current Negative Thought

Let's make it POSITIVE!



Current Negative Thought

Let's make it POSITIVE!



Lesson 18

Food Safety Guide 1



Why Is Food Safety Important?

This lesson is part one of two. Part one will teach you all you need to know about foodborne illnesses. Make sure to read part two next to learn about how to safely handle your food. Our immune system gets weaker as we age which makes it easier for us to get sick.

A foodborne illness is a sickness that a person can get from food. In the best case, a foodborne illness could cause a few days of sickness that can be managed at home. In the worst case, a foodborne illness could cause hospitalization, serious illness, and even death.

The most common symptoms include:

- Upset stomach
- Stomach cramps
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever



If you experience any of the following symptoms, contact your doctor immediately:

- Bloody stool/feces
- Temperature over 102 degrees F
- Frequent vomiting that prevents you from keeping any liquids or your medications down
- Dehydration (little to no urination, very dry mouth or throat, feeling dizzy when standing up)
- Diarrhea that lasts more than three days

While awareness of food safety guidelines is important, there is no need to be fearful. NourishedRx is here to help you learn. The good news is that it's pretty easy to get the hang of food safety.

Foodborne Illness Risks

While food in the U.S. is some of the safest in the world, there are 48 million cases of foodborne illness yearly. They can be contracted at home or at a restaurant by consuming infected food or beverages. Because these illnesses can impact so many people each year, it is important to know the risk factors and how to avoid them.

Food is more likely to be contaminated when:

- It is purchased from an unsafe source. For example, a grocery store is usually a safe place to buy food while an outdoor festival might be more risky.
- It is not cooked properly. Certain foods, like chicken, are not safe to eat if they are not cooked all the way through.

- It is stored at the wrong temperature. Always read the label for information on how food should be stored.
- It has been handled using equipment that was dirty. For example, it is important to clean a cutting board with soap and hot water after using it to cut raw meat.
- The people handling the food have poor personal hygiene habits like touching their face or not washing their hands. Remember to wash your hands with soap and water before and after preparing food.

How Foodborne Illness Happens

You might have heard words like virus, bacteria, parasite, or fungi (like the mold you might see on strawberries). These are called “pathogens” and they can cause foodborne illnesses.

Pathogens Need Six Things to Grow:

1. Food

Much like us, food gives pathogens energy to grow. Some foods that are at a higher risk of becoming unsafe are milk and dairy products, meat (beef, pork, chicken), fish, shellfish, baked potatoes, tofu, sprouts, sliced melons, cut tomatoes, cut/chopped/shredded lettuce, and eggs.

2. Acidity

Pathogens love foods that have little to no acid (like bread, raw chicken, milk, or cantaloupe). Pathogens have a hard time growing in and on acidic foods (like lemons, limes, or pineapples).

3. Temperature

The “Temperature Danger Zone” is 41 - 135 degrees F. This is the temperature range where it is easiest for pathogens to survive and grow on food. Food incorrectly stored for long periods of time may be risky to eat.

4. Time

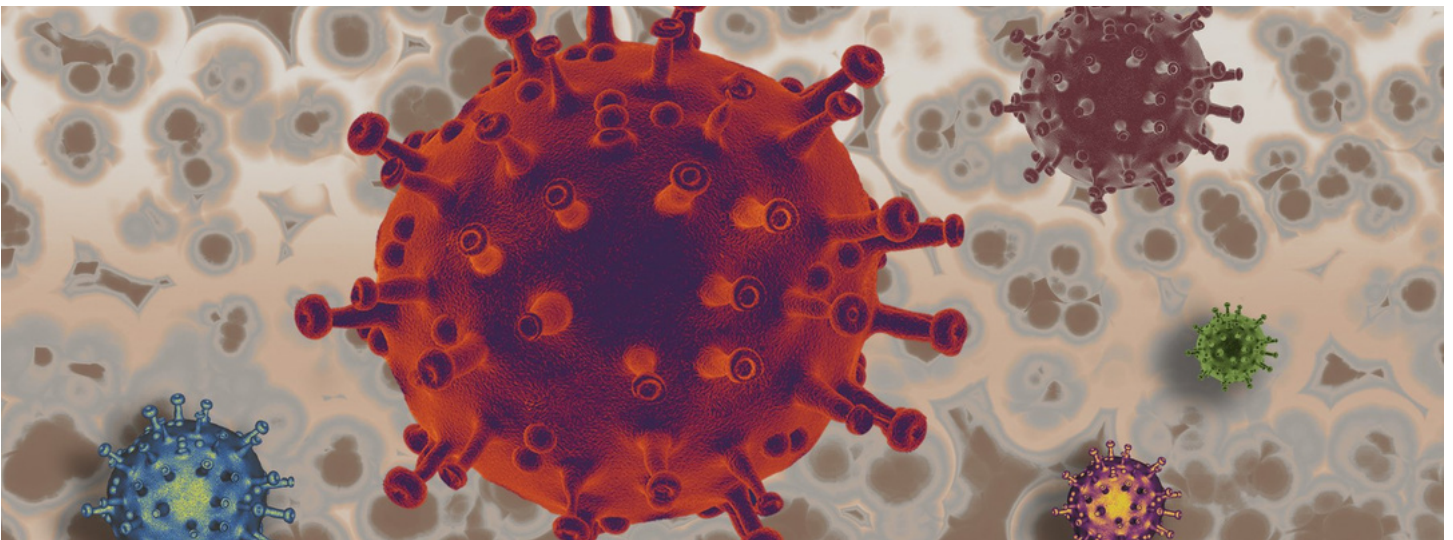
A food is most likely to become unsafe after four hours of being left out in the Temperature Danger Zone (41 - 135 degrees F). This is one reason why food left over at the end of parties should be thrown away.

5. Oxygen

Pathogens can grow with or without oxygen. Both types can be dangerous to our health. If you have ever seen a can of food that looks like it has expanded, it is likely because the food has a pathogen growing in it that does not need oxygen. Be sure to throw the can away immediately.

6. Moisture

Just like pathogens need food energy to grow, they also need moisture or water to grow. Drying and freezing are good ways to reduce moisture to slow the growth of pathogens. Instead of leaving raw chicken in the refrigerator for days, it is best to store it in the freezer until you are ready to cook it.



In part two of our food safety lesson, we will review the most common sources of food hazards. We will also share some tips on how to handle food safely so that you can happily share them with family and friends.

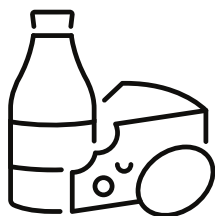
From Lesson to Action



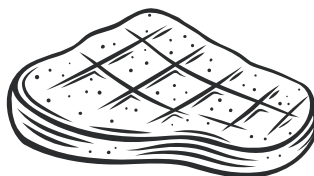
Do you wash your hands before you start cooking or eating? If not, time to start! Always wash your hands before and after you start cooking.

Make handwashing fun and effective by singing your favorite tune for at least 20 seconds.

Circle two high-risk foods to focus on and keep in mind how you are handling them.



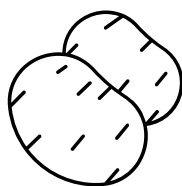
Milk &
dairy products



Meat
(beef, pork, chicken)



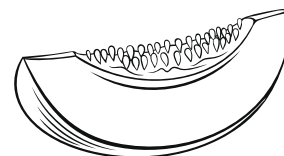
Fish



Baked
Potatoes



Sprouts



Sliced melons,
tomatoes, lettuce, etc.

How will you store the two items you circled above?

Lesson 19

Food Safety

Guide 2



Serving Up Food Safely

In part one of our two-part food safety series we introduced foodborne illnesses, why it's important to learn about them, and how to protect yourself. In part two of this series we'll be focusing on:

- Other common food hazards
- Tips for staying safe while handling food
- Where you can find recipes that help guide you in practicing good food safety habits

There are three main ways our food can become unsafe:

1. Through pathogens like viruses, bacteria, and mold
2. Through chemicals like cleaning supplies or from metals on cooking equipment like lead, copper, and zinc
3. Through non-food items that get into food, like metal shavings from cans, fingernails, hair, Band-Aids, or dirt



Together this sounds like a lot, but food safety is all about prevention. There are many ways to easily include better food safety practices into your everyday life.



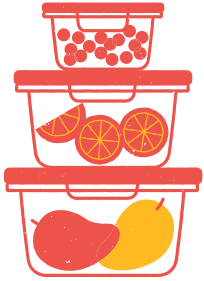
Tips to Stay Safe While Handling Food

- Cook food all the way through. Don't eat raw or undercooked meat!
 - Red meat should be cooked to 145 degrees F, ground meat to 160 degrees F, and chicken to 165 degrees F.
- Use separate cutting boards and knives for your produce and meat
- Wash your hands well before you handle food and anytime after you touch raw meat
- When handling food, wash your hands after touching your hair, face, or body
- Cover any cuts or scrapes on your hands and arms
- Store your cleaning supplies in a cupboard or closet away from food. Avoid spraying any cleaning supplies near food that you are about to prepare or have cooked

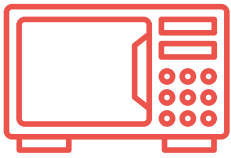




Cooling, storing, and reheating your food correctly is also important. If you know you have too much food or you're meal prepping, **COOL** your cooked food fast. For example, pour soups from a large pot into several smaller storage containers to get it to cool down faster.



Cover food tightly with plastic wrap, or **STORE** food in sealed containers. Keep refrigerated foods refrigerated and frozen foods frozen. Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator or the microwave. You can thaw food using cold water, but it is the least safe option. No foods should be thawed on the countertop at room temperature.



Depending on the food, you can **REHEAT** it in the microwave, on the stove, or in the oven. You should reheat food items to 165 degrees F. Heating food to this temperature will kill pathogens that cause sickness.



Top Tips for Navigating Food Safety

If you're still unsure about how to start practicing better food safety habits, start by focusing on the following:

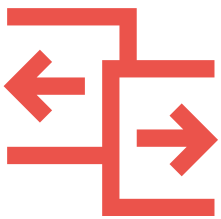
- Safe minimum cooking temperatures
- Hand washing
- Ways to avoid cross-contamination
- How to safely prepare produce for consumption

Four Steps to Food Safety



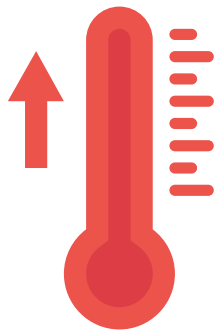
CLEAN:

Wash your hands before, during, and after food preparation. Make sure to wash countertops, utensils, and cutting boards with soap and water.



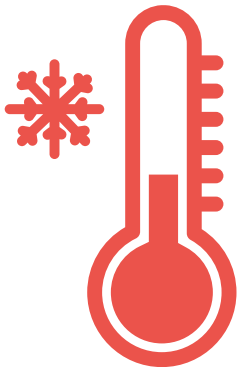
SEPARATE:

Raw meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood should be kept separate from produce. Anything you can eat raw should be kept separate from things you must eat cooked.



COOK:

Cook foods to their safe internal temperatures.



CHILL PROMPTLY:

Keep your fridge below 40 degrees F. Refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. Thaw frozen foods in the fridge.

From Lesson To Action

You have now completed Food Safety lesson 1 & 2. Take some time to reflect on what you can do to keep you and your loved ones safe when it comes to food.



- What food safety tips will you include in your routine this week?
- How will you cool, store, and reheat your food this week?

What are the four steps to food safety?
Fill in the blanks with the correct steps below

- | | |
|----------|----------------|
| 1. _____ | Chill |
| 2. _____ | Separate |
| 3. _____ | Cook |
| 4. _____ | Clean |
| | Chill Promptly |

BONUS: For safe eating, what temperature should chicken be cooked to?

Lesson 20

Understanding

Expiration

Dates



Expiration Dates and Food Waste

Expiration dates are meant to guide consumers on the best time to eat a product. However, there are many different labels out there such as “best by,” “use by,” and “expires on.” All those phrases can make it difficult to understand exactly what they all mean.

In fact, most people have trouble understanding these phrases. This is why expiration dates are one of the main causes of food waste. People throw away perfectly good food because the dates and labels mislead them.

This lesson is going to leave you with a better understanding of expiration dates to hopefully prevent you from throwing away food that is otherwise safe to consume.

Breaking Down the Labels

Not all food products you purchase will be labeled the same. Below we will break down what each of these labels means. The USDA defines each label as the following:



"Best if Used By/Before"

The date at which a product is considered “best” to eat in terms of quality and flavor. Often, foods with this label are safe to consume past the “Best By” date.

"Sell-By"

The date used by the store to determine how long to keep the product on the shelf for inventory management purposes. Foods with this label are also often safe to consume past the date shown.

"Use-By"

The latest date recommended by the manufacturer for use of the product. Typically, this date represents the date on which the food may start to lose optimal flavor or texture. We recommend trying to consume foods prior to the "Use-By" date when possible.

The takeaway here is that none of the above labels refer specifically to food safety. In fact, the only expiration dates that are required by law on food products are on baby formula. Baby formula expiration dates should be followed precisely and thrown out after the dates shown on the container. However, the dates on every other food product are there to tell you, the consumer, when the product is likely to be at its freshest.

Eating Foods Past the Expiration Date

Is it safe to eat something past the expiration date?
It depends!

Some products to be more mindful of are protein such as beef, poultry, fish, and dairy products. Dairy and meat can spoil and become unsafe if kept around for too long. The best way to tell and know if these foods are unsafe for consumption is to smell them. If the food has gone bad, there will be a noticeable odor.



As for packaged food, these products usually last longer than the “peak quality” date listed. If the package has not yet been opened, it will especially last beyond the date shown. Some crackers, bread, etc. may become stale before they reach the point of being unsafe for consumption. You will probably want to throw away stale items since they typically are not as enjoyable to consume. If you ever see mold or notice an off color or smell from packaged food, be sure to throw it out right away.



Mold more commonly grows on produce and bread products. Always take a look at the food before consumption, especially if it is past the dates listed on the package.

Rather than sticking to the dates on the package, learn how to use your eyes and nose to determine if a food is okay to eat. If items look and smell okay, they are likely safe to eat. As you implement these techniques, you will begin saving money and time with less food thrown out and fewer trips to the grocery store.



From Lesson To Action

How will these techniques change how you clean out your fridge and pantry?

Think about what's in your pantry and fridge; what foods should you pay most attention to when checking to see if they are safe to eat? (Hint: think about which foods are most likely to grow mold and bacteria!)

Are you ready to start preventing food waste by trusting your eyes and nose before you throw away foods? What are the 2 markers that food has spoiled? Answers: Smell, Look.

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Lesson 21

Adding New Flavors to Your World



Adding New Flavors to Your World

Are you bored with your meals? Do you feel like you eat the same thing over and over again? Are you a picky eater and want to learn to enjoy more flavors? Adding new flavors to your meals adds variety and has many health benefits.

This lesson explores flavor combinations that make for delicious meals. We also share tips for successfully learning to like more veggies.

Flavor Combos

1. Onions + Carrots + Celery

This mix is found in both French and Italian food. Chop these veggies and cook them together with a healthy fat like olive oil. This creates a delicious base for soups, stews, and casseroles. Add parsley and thyme with bay leaves or garlic and sage for even more flavor.

2. Onions + Carrots + Peppers

This combo is the base for many dishes in Cajun and Creole cuisine. It is often paired with garlic, parsley, and paprika.



3. Onions + Tomatoes + Garlic + Peppers

Tomatoes add a pop of bright color and flavor to the classic base of onion, garlic, and peppers. Cooking these four ingredients together and adding them to some brown rice will give your meal a big boost in flavor.

Experiment with other Latin-influenced herbs and spices like cilantro, cumin, paprika, and spicy peppers or chilis.

4. Onions + Tomatoes + Garlic + Raisins + Green Onions

Adding raisins gives this combo a lightly sweetened flavor. Including spices like turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, cumin, coriander, cardamom, and pepper will give your meal a serious depth of flavor and some color. These combinations are common in Middle Eastern cuisines and are great for meat dishes. Add in some chicken or lamb and serve over rice.

5. Garlic + Green Onions + Ginger

The strong flavors of garlic and ginger work well together and can give your meal the essence of Chinese cuisine. Add hot chilis, Chinese five-spice blend, and/or cilantro to this combo and serve on grains, roasted veggies, meat, and/or tofu. These flavor combinations will make your meal truly satisfying and flavorful.

6. Onions + Garlic + Chilis + Ginger

Indian cuisine is complex and cannot be easily defined by just a few flavors and foods. But this combo is a great start to adding Indian flavors to your meal. Toss in some curry, garam masala, turmeric, ginger, and use coconut milk (from a can) to create a rich sauce.



You can also try different combinations with your favorite veggies and flavors! You never know what may work well together and what you may enjoy. For example, if you usually enjoy roasted butternut squash and turkey separately, you can pair them together to make a butternut squash chili. Or, if you already enjoy asparagus with garlic and lemon juice, try cooking it with some chili powder and lime instead for a different flavor. This can be a fun way to try new flavor combinations with foods and flavors you already enjoy!

Find Your "Gateway" Veggies

If you are having trouble adding new veggies into your routine, try to find your “gateway” veggie. This is a vegetable option that you enjoy eating frequently and fits into your diet well. The next step is to find a veggie similar to your gateway veggie. These vegetables may either have a similar appearance, texture, taste, and/or cooking method. Here are some examples below:

If you already enjoy...

Carrots



Butternut
Squash



Cabbage



Mashed
Potatoes



Try...

Parsnips

Sweet
Potatoes

Bok Choy

Cauliflower
Mash



So You Didn't Like it the First Time

Remember that you may not like it right off the bat when trying something new. But that does not mean that you won't like it in the future. You may need to try a new food and cook and flavor it in different ways many times before knowing that you do not like it. If you have ever introduced a new food to a young child, you know it can take up to 10 times of hearing "yuck" before you hear "yum!"

If you have only tried something once or twice, try it again and see what you think. Prepare the food in a different way to change up its texture! For example, if you tried mashed parsnips and didn't like them, try roasted slices next time. Add a new flavor or sauce to the food. If you did not like plain, baked tofu, try adding some peanut sauce next time. It will add a whole new dimension to the tofu, and your taste buds might thank you for giving the new flavor a try!



From Lesson To Action

Write below some new food combinations that you are excited to try!

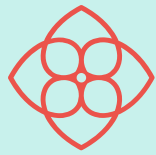
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What are two ways you could add extra flavor to your meals this week?

Where will you find your next food inspiration?!

Maybe a friend, colleague, neighbor or a new cooking show or video!





Nourished^{Rx}

Food is health, food is care.
Food is healthcare.