



Four Steps to Naturalize Your Life:

A Healthier Home and Body, Inside and Out!

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With the effects of the recent trend toward all things natural and organic (not to mention local, seasonal, Greenmarket, etc., etc.), most of us have gotten used to reading the ingredients on the things we put in our bodies. Most of us know to avoid high fructose corn syrup, bleached and refined sugars and flours, trans fats, and artificial colors and flavors. But do you know that there are equally (if not more) harmful ingredients in the products you are using on your body and in your home every day? Just as we read the labels of what we put in our pantries and bodies, we must read the ingredients of the products we put in our medicine cabinets, broom closets, and on our bodies.

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Most of the natural products listed throughout this book can be found online at the

Organic Beauty Store!



Step One: Read Your Ingredients

There is definitely some controversy regarding the potential harm of the following ingredients, much of it spearheaded by the companies that use them, and the lobbies representing those who create and supply them. But my theory is, why take the risk? If there is even a chance that these ingredients can cause cancer or be in any way seriously detrimental to our health, why not take the safe route and avoid them altogether? We ought to. Here's how!

Eliminate the following dangerous chemicals from your beauty, hair, and cleaning products:

- [PARABENS](#): Parabens are preservatives found in most hair and skincare products that you would find at your pharmacy or supermarket. In addition to simulating the effects of estrogen (disturbing the endocrine system, and potentially increasing risk of breast cancer), contributing to weight gain and fat storage, and having been found in cancerous breast tumors, parabens have also been found to be harmful to men



(adversely affecting the secretion of testosterone and the function of the male reproductive system).

- **PHTHALATES:** Phthalates are found in many hair care products, fragrances, and plastics. They have been found to be carcinogenic, lead to infertility and decreased sperm count, and can damage the proper development of male fetuses.
- **SODIUM LAURYL SULFATES (SLS):** SLS is found in many hair care products, deodorants, detergents, and toothpastes. Like parabens, it also has been found to mimic the effects of estrogen and may be responsible for a variety of health problems like a decrease in male fertility, increased risk for breast cancer, cataracts, urinary infections, as well as damage to skin and hair follicles.
- **FORMALDEHYDE:** (i.e.: Formalin, Methanal, Oxymethylene, Urea, 1,3-Dioxetane, Quaternium 15, Methylaldehyde, Methylene Oxide, Formic Aldehyde, Oxomethane Formalin, Phenol Formaldehyde) Formaldehyde can be found in a LOT of household and beauty products, under one of its many guises. Effects include leukemia, headaches, dermatitis and cancer. Come on people, this one's a no-brainer.
- **PETROLEUM:** (i.e.: Petrolatum, Mineral Oil, ethylene oxide, PAHs, and 1,3-butadiene, Propylene Glycol, PVP) Petroleum, nearly ubiquitous in all its forms and derivatives, has been found to be a major carcinogen and toxin. It could cause breast cancer, dermatitis, damage to the ear and auditory nerves, kidney damage and liver problems, according to various clinical studies.

Although this list is by no means exhaustive, it is a great start. A more exhaustive list of chemicals to avoid can be found [here](#). Go through your cabinets, your shower, and all the products you use regularly and either throw out any products that contain these ingredients, or finish them off but do not replace them.



Eliminate the following dangerous chemicals from anything you put in your mouth.

- HIGH-FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP: I'm sure by now you've heard all about HFCS and how sneakily terrible it is for your body. Among other negative effects, over-consumption of fructose causes weight gain, increases levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin, and has been linked to increased risk of diabetes and heart disease.
- MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE: MSG is an excitotoxin, which causes cell hyperactivity and damage, and has been linked to IBS, migraines, sleeping disorders, asthma, diabetes, ADD, seizures and strokes, among many other unpleasant effects.
- ASPARTAME: This artificial sweetener is present in everything from sodas to gums, but has been linked to brain tumors, memory loss, and seizures, as well as an increase in toxicity in the brain.
- SACCHARIN: This is another artificial sweetener with loads of adverse effects, and has been linked to several different forms of cancer. In the 1970's, the government mandated placing warning labels on foods containing saccharin, but, due to pressure from the diet industry, this mandate was lifted in 1997.
- ARTIFICIAL FOOD COLORING: We all know that food coloring is terrible (remember that whole yellow #5 penis joke from elementary school? Turns out it was all true!), and yet, Americans continue to buy foods laden with these carcinogenic toxins. Artificial coloring has been linked to nearly every single form of cancer, as well as ADD and hyperactivity in children, skin irritations, and asthma. Still want to eat that red velvet cake?
- PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED VEGETABLE OIL: Also known as trans-fat, these oils have added hydrogen atoms to make the fat more saturated and increase shelf life.



What this process also accomplishes is increased risk of heart disease, cholesterol, obesity, and stroke.

- SODIUM NITRATE AND NITRITE: This common additive is found in nearly all commercially processed meats (hot dogs, lunch meats, bacon, smoked fish), and can lead to the production of chemicals called nitrosamines in the body, which are linked to several different kinds of cancer. Just one of the many reasons to avoid processed meats!
- BHA AND BHT: (Butylated hydroxyanisole and butylated hydroxytoluene) are preservatives found in cereals, chips, chewing gum, and vegetable oils, are super carcinogenic and have also been linked to ADD and hyperactivity in children.



Step Two: Revamp Your Broom Closet

Now that you've (hopefully) been scared senseless by all the harmful chemicals hiding out in your common household products (and possibly contributing to your allergies, headaches, sleep problems, mood swings, immunity, and pimples), you might be a little overwhelmed at the prospect of replacing everything you've purged. If you're looking to save some money, don't just dump everything at once. Rather, replace your household products with healthier alternatives as they run out. Use the handy guide below to ease the transition to great, non-toxic household products that I've tested out and use in my home. OR, hit the natural market, Whole Foods, or Trader Joe's near you, and do some product testing of your own! [Clorox Green Works](#), [Seventh Generation](#), [Mrs. Meyer's](#), and [Method](#) all make safe, non-toxic, and environmentally friendly cleaning products. All the products listed are also available at [The Organic Beauty Store](#) online!



All-Purpose Cleaning:



Clorox Greenworks Natural All-Purpose Cleaner and Seventh Generation All-Purpose Cleaner both clean just as well as your standbys, but with non-toxic, plant and mineral derived formulas that are non-carcinogenic and non-irritating to skin and body.



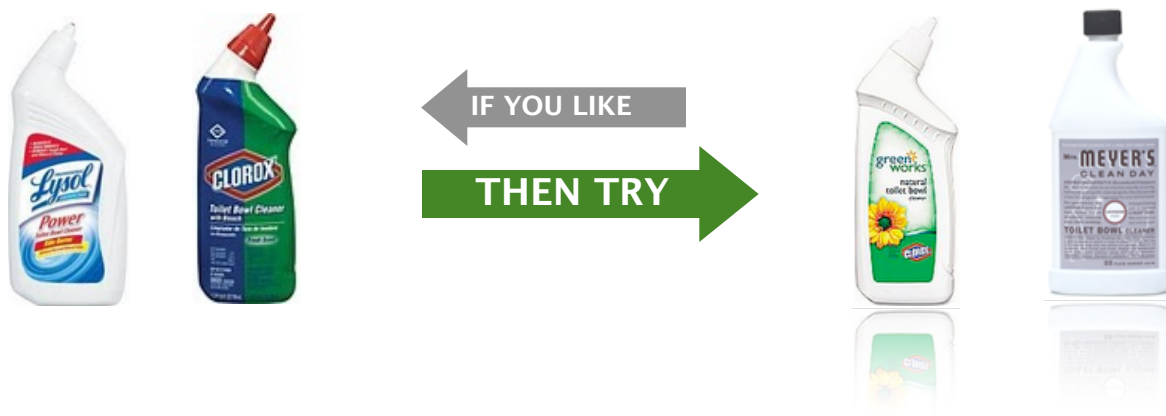
The glass cleaners by Clorox Greenworks and Seventh Generation are just as effective, while being totally safe for your body and home! They also have much less toxic and offensive smells, which makes cleaning a more enjoyable experience.



Bathroom:



Here's some more good stuff from [Clorox Greenworks](#) that do just as good a job as the far more harmful standbys. Also, try the [Method](#) bathroom cleaner set. They have a great [Tub and Tile Spray](#), [Daily Shower Spray](#), and [flushable wipes](#), all non-toxic and safe for your body!



Another great cleaning alternative for toilet cleaners from, you guessed it, [Clorox Greenworks](#)! This does the job just as well, has a natural scent, and won't poison your air. Also, try the toilet bowl cleaner from [Mrs. Meyer's](#), another great, non-toxic brand. A lot of their cleaning products tend to be a little TOO gentle for my messy self (though they are probably the safest out there... GREAT for a home with children), but this cleaner works really well, and smells like delicious lavender!



Floors:



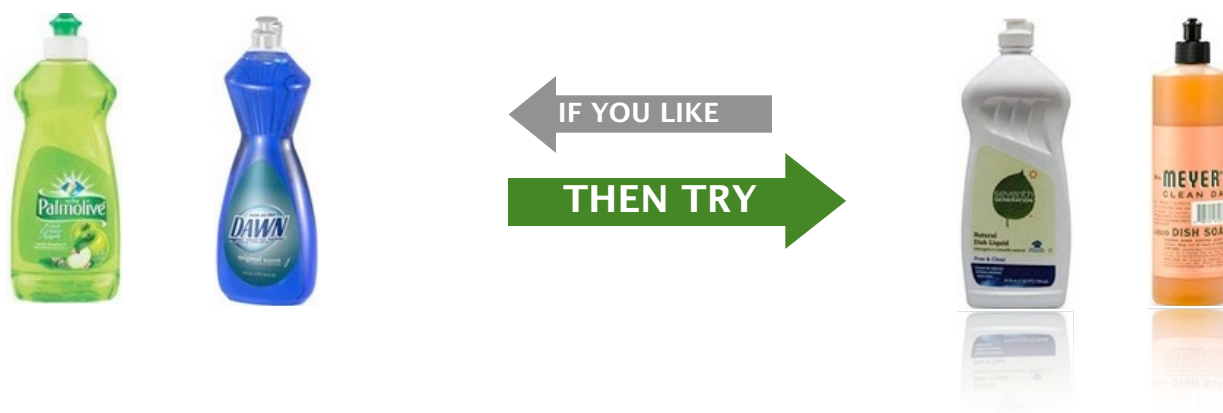
Another great natural cleaning brand is **Ecover**, which makes fabulous non-toxic floor soap out of plant-derived ingredients. It works great on all floor types and leaves no chemical residue.



And for those of you who, like me, love the wet mop, **Method** has an AWESOME alternative to the whole Swiffer product line. Great wet mops for wood floors, tiles, everything, and all without dangerous chemicals!



Kitchen:



These natural dish soap alternatives not only smell AMAZING, but they are super gentle on your hands, and don't leave harmful chemical residue on your plates, that will eventually end up inside your body. [Seventh Generation Free and Clear](#) is great for people with allergies, but I love [Mrs. Meyers Geranium](#), which makes my whole house smell like a garden!



The chemicals in kitchen degreasers are particularly harsh, for your skin, your respiratory system, and your health in general. For degreasing your stove or other appliances, try [CitraSolv](#), an all-natural product that uses citrus oil and other plant-derived substances to dissolve grease. It may take a little longer to do the job, but it is WELL worth it when you consider the detrimental effects the traditional products have on your health.



Another incredibly harmful common household product is Ajax (and other products like it, like Comet, etc.), which contains crystalline silica, a known carcinogen. If you're going to switch out any of the harmful products in your home, make this one a top priority. A great alternative is [Mrs. Meyer's Surface Scrub](#), which is made from natural and non-harmful ash and oxygen bleach. Super effective, and as with all Mrs. Meyer's products, SO many delicious smelling varieties to choose from!

Laundry:



Until recently, I would have added Seventh Generation's laundry detergent to my recommendations, but learned, much to my surprise, that my trusted brand uses Sodium Lauryl Sulfates (or SLS) in its detergent, an important lesson in keeping your eyes open and following [Step One: Read Your Ingredients!](#) You can never be too careful. I like [Ecos](#) and [Citrasuds](#), two great brands with natural ingredients that leave your clothes clean and



yummy smelling, without all the pesky issues of male infertility, breast cancer risk and damage to skin and hair follicles.



With laundry detergents and fabric softeners, it is especially important to go with natural, non-toxic alternatives, as the ingredients in these products (like Mrs. Meyer's Dryer Sheets and Ecover Liquid Fabric Softener) spend the most time in direct contact with your skin.

Avoiding parabens, SLS, bleach, and other harmful chemicals is vital to maintaining long term health and avoiding a whole slew of unfortunate health problems, especially in the reproductive regions.



Its super important to go with non-chlorine bleach options, as chlorine is not only troublesome for your skin, but also contaminates the air in your home, which can lead to respiratory problems and all kinds of other unpleasanties. I think you'll find that these non-



chlorine bleaches (by [Seventh Generation](#) and [Ecover](#)) work just as well, and will never lead to horrible splotches all over your unmentionables.

Phew! If you're anything like me, cleaning your house makes you feel kind of tired, sick, sneezing, with a runny nose and irritated eyes, right? That's not just your natural aversion to the Cinderella-life... it's the harmful stuff in your cleaning products! If you swap out all the toxic cleaners in your home as they run out, you'll soon have a broom closet brimming with safe, delicious smelling, non-toxic cleaning supplies that might even make you more enthusiastic about cleaning! Or, at the very least, make the whole ordeal a lot more pleasant.



Step Three: Revitalize your Beauty Routine

Tossing all your old, chemical-laden makeup, skin- and hair care supplies can be incredibly scarring. Some women use the same mascara for decades... the very prospect of switching brands can be like betraying an old friend. But with all the recent popularity of all things green and organic, there has never been a better time to switch to organic and/or natural products. There are great products for problem skin, aging skin, great makeup, even sunscreen! All without harmful chemicals and carcinogenic additives. Want to browse the options? [Future Natural](#) and [Spirit Beauty Lounge](#) are great sites for organic skin- and hair care, featuring great brands such as Juice Beauty, Mod.Skin Labs, John Masters, and Farmaesthetics. Those of us who are incurable Sephora addicts can get a fix with [Sephora's Natural and Organic](#) section, where you can stock up on all the best organic brands, like Boscia, Bare Escentuals, Josie Maran, Pangea, Korres, and Tarte.



Natural vs. Organic

In selecting your new beauty products, keep the following in mind: "Natural" and "Organic" are not the same thing. Though using products labeled natural is still preferable to the pharmacy-bought, chemical brands, you may still be using products that have dangerous pesticides and repellents in them. Organic ingredients are grown or processed in accordance with strict regulations, without the use of these carcinogenic chemicals. In an ideal world, we would all only put organic products in and on our bodies. However, affordability and availability are issues for some people, but that shouldn't prevent every one of us from making better choices. Start by eliminating the most dangerous elements (see [Step One](#)) and go from there! Or, if you're ready to dive in 100%, check out [The Coming Clean Campaign](#) for a list of USDA certified organic brands. [The Environmental Working Group Skin Deep](#) is an amazing database of beauty and personal care products that are rated by their safety. See how yours add up and make the switch!



Hair

[Intelligent Nutrients Hair care](#) is a really great line of products, certified organic by the UK Organic Soil Association. I particularly like the Harmony line, featuring great anti-aging, revitalizing, volumizing shampoos and conditioners chock full of antioxidants. Another good line, though not all organic (despite the name!), is [John Masters Organics](#). My favorite of their products are the Sea Salt and Lavender Hair Mist and Dry Hair Nourishment and Defrizzer, and both happen to be USDA certified organic!

[Desert Essence Organics](#) also features mostly certified organic ingredients in a bunch of really great hair care products for all types of hair. I particularly like the [Organic Coconut Oil Shampoo](#) and [Conditioner](#) - perfect for dry hair.



Face

Simply Divine Botanicals has an amazing line of natural skincare products, with some certified organic ingredients. My absolute favorite face wash is called Black Velvet, and it is perfect for all skin types, from acne prone to dry and sensitive. Of the 100% organic brands, Miessence is one of my absolute favorites. I particularly like their Purifying skincare line, which is great for problem skin, and uses ingredients such as organic Echinacea and thyme. They also have an organic glycolic peel!



One of my all-time favorite moisturizers is the Sweet Black Tea and Rice Facial Moisturizer from Juara, a natural, Indonesian skincare company. They use great ingredients like Kombucha, avocado, and rice bran oil that make for radiant, amazing skin.

Makeup

Bare Escentuals makes a great line of pure mineral makeup that is actually pretty healthy for your skin. I like the mineral foundation (with SPF 15!) and the mineral veil. For slightly heavier coverage, I am a big fan of Korres Wild Rose Foundation, which is super lightweight for a foundation and is jam packed with all kinds of anti-oxidants and super healthy ingredients, and SPF 10. It's not an organic line, but all of their products are formulated without parabens, SLS, and other harmful chemicals.



There are actually quite a few new organic mascaras coming on the market, and it's about time! The delicate skin around your eyes is a really easy way for harmful chemicals to get

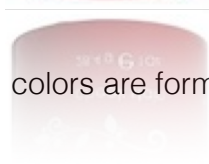


into your bloodstream, so it's really important to use quality ingredients on those peepers. One of my favorite mascaras is [Organic Wear 100% Natural Origin Mascara](#) from Physician's Formula. It's a really thick formula with a finely bristled brush that gives a super voluminous look, and the ingredients are mostly organic, and almost ALL natural. Miessence also makes great mascara, and is 87% organic (although a bit pricey).

For eyeshadow, blush, and everything else fabulous, I have a few go-to lines. [Bare Escentuals](#), [Korres](#), and [Josie Maran](#) are all good places to start. [Tarte](#)



also makes some amazing natural (though not organic) products; my faves are the [Natural Cheek Stain](#) (so good for more dramatic fall looks) and the [Lipsurgence Natural Lip Stain](#), both formulated with plant-based ingredients that are rich with antioxidants, and both are paraben, SLS, pthalate, and mineral oil free! For 100% certified organic ingredients, my favorite lines are [Lotus Pure Organics](#) (try their awesome, antioxidant rich [All-Natural Lipstick](#), with color derived from natural fruit pigments), and [Nvey Organics](#), whose line of vitamin-infused [eyeshadows](#) in 24 different colors are formulated with sensitive skin around the eyes in mind.



Nails

The products we use on our nails are perhaps the most toxic aspects of our beauty regiments. Almost all commercial nail polish brands have heaping amounts of terrifying chemicals in them (formaldehyde, toluene, DBP) which cause a whole mess of health problems, including (but not limited to!) respiratory problems, reproductive complications, liver and kidney toxicity, headaches, fatigue, and yes, even cancer. There's a reason why manicurists wear surgical masks! The good news is that we now have options... [Priti NYC](#) is my absolute favorite. They have pretty much [every color under the sun](#), have NONE of the





carcinogenic toxins listed above, and even have some organic ingredients! They even make a completely non-toxic, soy based [nail polish remover](#), which actually works (believe it or not!).

See?? No need to panic about throwing away your trusted Maybelline's and Neutrogena's, there are much better, healthier, and even more effective products out there that won't harm your body! If you have some favorite organic or natural products, check out [The Organic Beauty Blog](#) to comment and share them!



Step Four: Restructure Your Eating Habits!

By now we have (hopefully) all made drastic changes to the products we put on and around our bodies. We have become more mindful of ingredients, and realized that harmful toxins and carcinogens enter our body through ways other than our mouths. But how we eat is still the most impactful and important method of promoting total body health... Unfortunately, it is also the hardest. Buying new beauty products or cleaning products is as easy as checking out at the grocery store, it doesn't involve a complete makeover of habits we have been honing and reinforcing for, well, as long as we have been conscious, really. This step is the most important of the 5 Steps; therefore, it's most difficult to incorporate into your life.

But I'm going to make it easy for you!!!

Being healthy, slim, and vital is not the huge, daunting task that the plethora of diet books, and conflicting bits of information regarding what to eat and avoid would have you



believe. It is actually quite simple and neatly summarized in Michael Pollan's [Food Rules: An Eater's Manual](#):

"Eat food, not too much, mostly plants."

That's it! Really. If you take one thing away from this article, let it be this. I would make only one change, and that is adding the word "organic" before plants. Here's why:

Conventionally grown produce is rife with pesticides and genetic modification that is not only devastating to the environment, but also terrible for your body. Food that is conventionally grown is sprayed with all kinds of pesticides, particularly [organophosphate](#) (an insecticide that was used as nerve gas in WWII), [malathion](#) (a



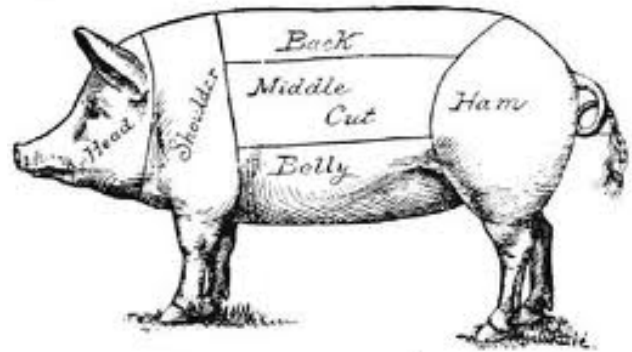
carcinogenic insecticide also used to kill head lice), and [chlorpyrifos](#) (another insecticide linked to autoimmune disorders, neurological effects, and developmental disorders). To keep these pesticides out of the body, one would have to scrub produce with soap and then peel it, which effectively deprives the body of a great deal of nutrients that make the food healthy to begin with. Incidence of cancer, neurological disorders, cognitive

impairment, and a slew of other adverse effects can be completely avoided by switching to organic and/or locally grown produce, where pesticide use is prohibited and regulated by the community.



Stick with organic and/or locally grown produce.

Organic and locally grown produce is also, for the most part, free of genetic modification (GMO), which is linked to digestive disorders (like gluten, soy, and corn intolerance), upset of natural gastrointestinal acidity and in some cases, even more lethal effects. This is all in the name of creating crops that can withstand the toxic levels of pesticides that are sprayed on them. If plants need to be genetically modified to be able to handle these toxins, how are our bodies supposed to deal with them?!



We especially need to apply the rule above to meat. Conventionally raised cows, pigs, and chickens are fed terrible diets of genetically modified corn, are given high doses hormones and antibiotics throughout their lives, and are reared in terrible conditions that all affect the quality of the meat and eggs that we eat. The added hormones present in non-organic meat, dairy, and eggs are responsible for high incidences of cancers, developmental issues, diabetes, hypothyroidism, weight gain and a slew of other disorders. The antibiotics present in non-organic meat and dairy is responsible for new strains of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics, requiring higher doses and more medicine to treat a variety of illnesses in humans. So...

...If you must consume meat and dairy, make sure it is organic, grass-fed, and pasture raised.

However, even with organic dairy, hormones are still present (albeit natural hormones), which can be really confusing and detrimental to our natural hormonal balance. Humans are actually the only mammals that continue to ingest dairy products after infancy, especially dairy from another species. The fact that there is such widespread incidence of



lactose intolerance is a function of the fact that our bodies are really not meant to ingest dairy past infancy. Dairy products, organic and non-, also contain a protein called casein, which has been found to promote the growth of cancer... It also has an addictive quality, which is what makes us crave cheese! Both dairy and animal proteins are high in fat and cholesterol, and diets that include a lot of these foods definitely heighten the risk of cancer, heart disease, obesity, acid reflux and other problems. I know meat and dairy is yummy, but for optimum health, make it no more than 20% of your total diet.

Make animal protein and dairy no more than 20% of your total diet. Stick with fish, eggs, and occasionally yogurt.

But even that 20% is much more than is necessary. Most people in the U.S. get WAY more protein in their diet than is necessary, which is actually quite harmful to your health. Unless you're a professional body builder, or are trying to severely pack on the pounds, you ideally don't need more than 25 to 30 grams of protein (or about 4% of your daily caloric intake) in your diet. If you are eating a healthy, balanced diet of mostly whole grains, lots of vegetables, legumes, fruit, and healthy fats (like olive oil, nuts, and occasional fish), you are getting more than enough protein for optimal health and weight.

So... what should you eat?? It's really quite easy, and most likely, you already know what you should be eating, but for one reason or another, you haven't really figured out how to make it happen. The easiest way to eat well is to add in, little by little, the good foods you know you should be eating, which will gradually crowd out all the foods you know you should avoid (sugar, processed foods, white flour, dairy, red meat, trans fatty junk food), until you have a healthy balanced diet!



Comprise most of your diet of organic whole grains and vegetables, and eat the colors of the rainbow!

Whole grains like quinoa, brown rice, millet, buckwheat, and oats are NOT the enemy. As part of a balanced diet, you will not gain weight from eating these foods. Structure every meal so that the majority of what you're eating is grains and seasonal vegetables. Experiment! Get a few cookbooks, and try to recreate some of your favorite foods at home using healthier ingredients. Love pasta? There are tons of healthy pastas out there, like quinoa pasta, which is high in protein and fiber, and tastes amazing. Don't know where to start? Head to your local health food store and pick up a new grain or vegetable you've never tried, and then Google it or input it on [Epicurious.com](https://www.epicurious.com) to find tons of great new recipes! Make sure every meal is full of foods that are rich in color (dark leafy greens, bright red and orange veggies, yellow or brown grains) to make sure you are getting all of the vitamins you need.

To satisfy your sweet tooth, incorporate organic, seasonal fruit and natural sweeteners like agave and stevia instead of refined sugar.

No one said you have to eat a boring diet to be healthy. Love dessert? Find a coconut or nut based ice cream that is sweetened with agave. Like sugar in your tea? Switch to [stevia](#), a natural sugar substitute that has zero calories and won't affect your blood sugar. Love to bake? Use [agave](#) or [stevia](#) instead of sugar, a [whole grain](#) or [gluten-free flour](#) instead of white flour, and Earth Balance instead of butter.



Eat whole foods as much as possible, and limit your intake of processed, refined, or enriched foods.

Processed foods are not nearly as beneficial to your body, and aren't nearly as fun to prepare. Eat whole grains, whole fruits and vegetables more than you eat foods made out of them (like breads, pastas, chips, baked goods). You'll get much more satisfaction and nutrients, and you will definitely feel more full! Stick with minimal ways of cooking and preparation (steaming, sautéing, baking, boiling, and roasting) for maximum benefit and retention of nutrients.

Include healthy fats in every meal instead of unhealthy fats like butter, lard, and trans fats.

Low fat diets are actually the cause of the epidemic of obesity in America. We need healthy fats to stay thin, healthy, and full, and the contents of low-fat foods are actually much higher in sugar, simple carbohydrates and additives than the full-fat versions. Including olive oil, coconut oil, nuts, fish, and eggs in our diets keeps us healthy and staves off heart disease, and even cancers!

Drink LOTS of water and green or herbal tea instead of coffee, soda, store-bought juices and sugary drinks.

Water is the basis of our diet, the most important element. Try to make sure you drink a glass of water every two hours or so... set an alarm on your phone if it helps! Green tea is also great for the system... it's a super food and a powerful anti-oxidant! Juices are ok once in a while, if you juice them at home, but they are devoid of fiber and often will contain way more sugar than your body needs (would you ever sit down and eat 5 oranges? That's how many it takes to make a tall glass of juice!)..



That's it... Enjoy your newfound health!

These nine simple guidelines will revolutionize your relationship with food. Once you make these guidelines into habits, you will find that you experience fewer cravings, and less inclination towards eating unhealthy foods. You will have more energy, lose weight, and generally feel loads better. I promise! And you don't have to make these changes all at once. Gradually incorporating these guidelines into your daily diet and into your thinking about food will make it so much easier to establish better habits.



If you feel like you could benefit from some guidance around incorporating these changes into your life in a way that is gradual, fun, and utterly doable, please be in touch! As a holistic health and nutrition counselor, I work with my clients to meet their health goals and look, feel, and be their absolute best in a way that is supportive and non-restrictive. Take the first step toward lifelong health and happiness by setting up a free initial consultation today! Contact me through my website below.