

# DETOX FROM SUGAR, NOW

Your complete  
guide to ditching the  
sweet stuff for good.

**20**  
recipes  
+ your quit  
sugar meal  
plan



Clean Eating







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**KETO FRIENDLY**







**Berry Chia Parfait**  
p. 28

# Table of Contents

**4 Quit Sugar**  
Put an end to an unhealthy relationship with sugar.

**5 The Many Names for Sugar**  
It goes by 52 sneaky names. Here's the exhaustive list.

**6 Carbs and Sugar: Are They The Same Thing?**  
Better understand this important macronutrient.

**7 The Difference Between Natural and Processed Sugar**  
A must-know for your sugar-free life.

**8 Why You Crave Sugar**  
The science behind your sugar dependency.

**10 Sugar Health Connections**  
The health risks of consuming sugar.

**12 Cut Back On Sugar**  
Where to start when removing sugar from your diet.

**14 Introducing Monk Fruit**  
Nature's healthiest and versatile sugar alternative.

**18 Monk Fruit Mania** Monk fruit is exploding in popularity and for good reason. Here are some of our favorite products.

**20 Recipes**  
Sugar-free recipes to add to your regular rotation.

**23 Your 1-Week No Sugar Meal Plan**  
Everything you need to detox from sugar and feel great.

**P** Paleo  
**F** Freezable  
**Q** Quick *under 45 minutes*  
**V** Vegetarian *may contain eggs and dairy*  
**GF** Gluten-free  
**GFA** Gluten-free adaptable *Recipe contains soy sauce, hoisin sauce, miso, Worcestershire sauce and/or tamari. All of these ingredients are available in gluten-free and regular varieties.*

# Quit Sugar

Do you get a sugar craving every day around 3 pm? Is dinner not complete without dessert? Does chocolate make you feel better when you're sad or anxious? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you might have an unhealthy relationship with sugar.

BY TIFFANI BACHUS, RDN, AND ERIN MACDONALD, RDN

Research continues to show a strong correlation between sugar consumption and a myriad of health conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity and Alzheimer's. And sugar isn't just found in the obvious sweet foods – it also hides under many different names. In this section, we explain what sugar is, how your body metabolizes it, why you crave it and the impact it has on your health. We packed these pages with useful tips to help you gain control over your sugar consumption so you can still enjoy it in smaller amounts.



## THE MANY FORMS OF SUGAR

Quite often, the word "sugar" gets used rather generically and is the source of much confusion. It's time for a refresher course on the sweet stuff. There are six major forms of sugar, three of which are monosaccharides (one molecule) and three of which are disaccharides (two molecules bonded together). The monosaccharides are glucose, fructose and galactose. The disaccharides are sucrose, lactose and maltose.

### MONOSACCHARIDES:

#### GLUCOSE

is the primary energy source for the body and brain. Glucose is the end product of carbohydrate metabolism. Starches are comprised of long chains of glucose.

#### GALACTOSE

is a simple sugar found in milk and dairy foods.

#### FRUCTOSE

is a simple sugar found in fruits, honey and root vegetables. Fructose has very little impact on blood sugar levels, and because of this, a crystalline form of fructose is added to many foods marketed as "sugar-free" or "diabetic-friendly."

### DISACCHARIDES:

#### SUCROSE

is the most common disaccharide, comprised of glucose and fructose. Listed as simply "sugar" on a food label, this is the white stuff in granulated or cube form commonly stirred into coffee or tea and added to baked goods. Table sugar is produced from sugar cane or sugar beets.

#### LACTOSE,

found naturally in milk, is a disaccharide composed of one galactose unit and one glucose unit.

#### MALTOSE

is a disaccharide composed of two glucose units. Maltose is found in molasses and is used in fermentation.



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## OTHER COMMON FORMS OF SUGAR

• **High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS)** is a mixture of glucose and fructose produced from corn. The most common form of HFCS has 55% fructose and 45% glucose.

• **Corn syrup** is made from corn and is usually 100% glucose.

• **Agave** is a very popular sweetener from the agave plant because it has less of an impact on blood sugar levels. It is 70 to 90% fructose and 10 to 30% glucose.

• **Honey** is made by bees from the nectar of a flowering plant. There are many types of honey, based on the nectar source. Although it is rich in antioxidants and does have some antimicrobial properties, it is still mostly sugar.

• **Maple syrup** is made from the circulating sap of sugar maple trees. Like honey, it contains trace minerals and antioxidants but it, too, is still mostly sugar.



# The Many Names For Sugar

When you read a food label at the market, you might be overlooking many forms of sugar as it can have many names. In fact, there are at least 52 different names for sugar that are hiding in plain sight!

- |                                       |                         |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Barley malt                           | Date sugar              | Icing sugar     |
| Beet sugar                            | Demerara sugar          | Invert sugar    |
| Blackstrap molasses                   | Dextrin                 | Lactose         |
| Brown rice syrup                      | Dextrose                | Malt syrup      |
| Brown sugar                           | Diastatic malt          | Maltodextrin    |
| Buttered syrup                        | Ethyl maltol            | Maltose         |
| Cane juice crystals                   | Evaporated cane juice   | Maple syrup     |
| Cane sugar                            | Florida crystals        | Molasses        |
| Caramel                               | Fructose                | Muscovado sugar |
| Carob syrup                           | Fruit juice             | Panela sugar    |
| Castor sugar                          | Fruit juice concentrate | Raw sugar       |
| Coconut sugar                         | Galactose               | Refiners' sirup |
| Confectioners' sugar (powdered sugar) | Glucose                 | Rice syrup      |
| Corn syrup                            | Glucose solids          | Sorghum syrup   |
| Corn syrup solids                     | Golden sugar            | Sucanat         |
| Crystalline fructose                  | Golden syrup            | Treacle sugar   |
| D-ribose                              | Grape sugar             | Turbinado sugar |
|                                       | Honey                   | Yellow sugar    |

### Commercially produced sugar is added to foods for a variety of reasons:

- Heightens sweetness
- Causes crystallization
- Contributes to food structure and texture
- Aids in growth of yeast in baked goods
- Prevents spoilage

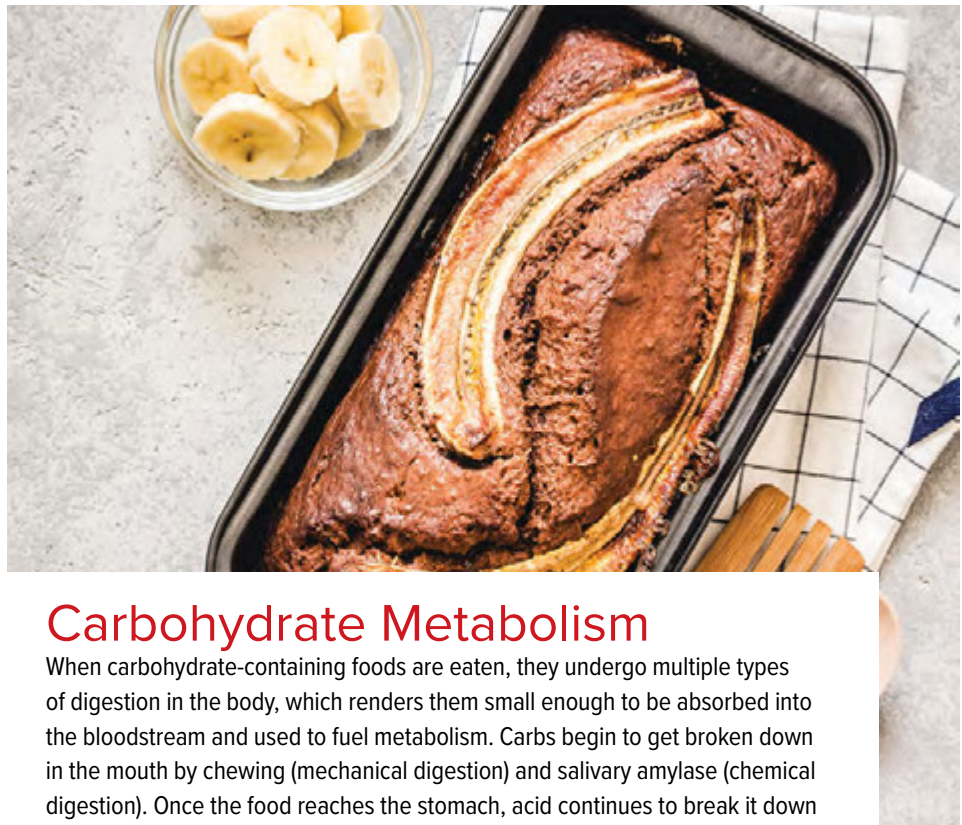
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# Carbs and Sugar: Are They the Same Thing?

Dietary carbohydrate is one of the three macronutrients (protein and fat are the other two) that fuel the body with calories that are needed to sustain life. Dietary carbs are composed of a broad range of sugars, starches and fiber. Carbs are found in grain products, fruit, vegetables, milk products and meat alternatives such as nuts, seeds and legumes, in addition to all forms of sweet beverages and foods. When people refer to “sugar,” they often assume it is the familiar sweetener known as sucrose (table sugar or white sugar). As previously mentioned, there are many types of sugars, classified according to their chemical structure.

One specific type of carbohydrate that needs mentioning is fiber. There are two kinds of fiber: soluble (found in pectin and inulin) and insoluble (cellulose), and you need both. We will discuss the importance of fiber throughout this section.

The bottom line is that all the carbs you eat (sugar being one type) will be broken down in the body to the simplest forms of sugar – fructose and glucose – and then used by the body for energy metabolism or stored as fat. Carbs contain four calories per gram and there are 16 calories per teaspoon (four grams of sugar).



## Carbohydrate Metabolism

When carbohydrate-containing foods are eaten, they undergo multiple types of digestion in the body, which renders them small enough to be absorbed into the bloodstream and used to fuel metabolism. Carbs begin to get broken down in the mouth by chewing (mechanical digestion) and salivary amylase (chemical digestion). Once the food reaches the stomach, acid continues to break it down so it is small enough to enter the small intestines where enzymes break it down into monosaccharides. Once in this form, the simple sugars cross over into the bloodstream and are transported to the liver where they are either used by the liver or further distributed to the rest of the body.

Fiber, found in plant foods, impacts the digestion and absorption of glucose. Insoluble fiber acts like a latticework in the upper small intestines, and soluble fiber acts like a sponge, plugging up the holes. Together, they slow the rate at which sugars get digested and metabolized and how they impact your blood sugar level. Most fiber is resistant to digestion and continues to travel through your digestive tract where it will be consumed by gut bacteria and promote good health.

When glucose enters the bloodstream (known as blood sugar or blood glucose), blood glucose levels rise, which signals the pancreas to release insulin, a hormone responsible for shuttling the glucose out of the bloodstream and into the cells where it will be burned for energy. At least this is what’s supposed to happen in a healthy person. **The circulating glucose has one of three fates:**

1. It is taken in by the cells and used for energy.
2. It will be stored in the liver and muscles as glycogen, which will later be converted back into glucose for energy.
3. It gets converted into body fat.

In metabolically unhealthy people – those who are overweight (i.e., have a high body-fat percentage) or inactive, have abdominal obesity, high blood pressure, dyslipidemia, high stress levels or poor sleep or who smoke – the cells don’t always respond to the insulin, and, as a result, insulin resistance develops. This increases a person’s risk for a number of health conditions, which will be covered later.





## What's the Difference Between Natural and Processed Sugar?

Yes, there is a difference between natural and added sugars. Natural sugars are the sugars that naturally occur in foods like fruit (fructose) and milk (lactose). Added sugars are sugars and syrups that are added to processed foods to change their flavor, improve texture or extend shelf life. Added sugars sneak into many foods, even those that don't taste sweet. Here are some of the most common processed foods that typically contain added sugars:

- Salad dressing
- Pasta sauce
- Barbecue sauce, hot sauce, ketchup, mayonnaise
- Soup
- Bread
- Yogurt (especially flavored and drinkable yogurts)
- Cereal
- Granola
- Kombucha

Naturally occurring sugars should not present a significant health problem unless you have an allergy, sensitivity or intolerance to them. For example, many people are lactose or fructose intolerant, which means they lack necessary enzymes to help break these sugars down for proper digestion. As a result, foods containing these sugars can cause a number of symptoms, primarily digestive (gas, bloating, diarrhea), soon after they're ingested.

The best treatment is supplementing with the proper digestive enzymes or avoiding those types of food.

When reading food labels, it's important to understand how many grams of sugar are naturally occurring and how many are added. It's now easier to distinguish between the two since food labels are now required to list added sugars in addition to total sugars. A read-through of the ingredient list helps to determine if added sugars make up a large proportion of your food. If one of the first few ingredients is a type of sugar, it likely contains a high amount. Manufacturers try to skirt this issue by using smaller amounts of various kinds of sugar so they end up toward the bottom of the ingredient list.

Pretty sneaky!

The American Heart Association recommends limiting added sugars to no more than 25 grams (six teaspoons) per day for most women and no more than 36 grams (nine teaspoons) each day for most men.

## Is Too Much Fructose Harmful?

Fructose has gained a lot of attention over the past few years. It is a monosaccharide that makes up 50% of table sugar, but it is metabolized differently than glucose. Scientists are concerned that excessive intake may contribute to metabolic disorders. Fructose is metabolized almost completely in the liver and used to make glucose, replenish liver glycogen and synthesize triglycerides. Triglycerides can build up in liver cells and damage liver function. Triglycerides released into the bloodstream can contribute to the growth of fat-filled plaque inside artery walls.

Before the food industry started mass producing refined sugar, humans rarely consumed fructose in large amounts since you could only get it by eating fruits, vegetables and tubers. Many anti-sugar and anti-fructose scientists point out the correlation of increased intake of refined sugars with an increase in metabolic diseases.

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## Why You Crave Sugar

A craving is an intense desire for a specific food. Cravings are rooted in the regions of the brain that are responsible for memory, pleasure and reward. Unfortunately, food cravings can be a major roadblock for people trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### There are many reasons a craving for sugar will happen:

**EMOTIONAL** Intense feelings of emotion – happiness, sadness, anger, frustration, loneliness, boredom, fear or anxiety – will cause someone to reach for something sweet or starchy as the glucose will increase the production of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which brings on a feeling of calm.

**HORMONAL** When certain hormones are too high or too low, it's a signal for the body to crave fast-acting sugar.

**NUTRIENT DEFICIENCY** If your diet is very restrictive or limited in its variety of foods, inadequate intake of micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) can occur, many of which can lead to cravings in sugar. Calcium, magnesium, zinc and chromium are the most common micronutrient deficiencies associated with sugar cravings. Also, if you undereat at meals or over the course of a day, your body will crave calorie-dense foods – sweet, processed and fried foods – to sustain it.

**ENVIRONMENTAL** There are many environmental cues that cause you to crave sugar. It could be the bowl of candy sitting on a coworker's desk, the tray of donuts in the workroom or the vending machine that you make a beeline for every day at 3 pm for a sugar-rich “pick-me-up.”

## The Addictive Nature of Sugar

Sugar is known to be incredibly addictive. When you consume sugar, your body produces a large amount of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that is associated with pleasure and reward. When dopamine levels decline, you seek out more sugar to keep that dopamine rush going. Sugar lights up the same reward centers as cocaine and heroin. Over time, your tolerance for sweets builds up, so you need more to reward yourself. When trying to remove sugar from your diet, you might experience symptoms of withdrawal including fatigue, depression and headaches. Sugar also spurs the release of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which produces a feeling of calm and relaxation. Here are five factors that can contribute to sugar cravings:

### BLOOD SUGAR IMBALANCE

When blood sugar levels run low, your body perceives your fuel levels to be low. Because survival is your body's primary goal, it sends out signals for the most rapidly acting fuel – sugar. Meals that are high in carbohydrate and low in protein and fat, too low in calories and spaced too far apart are all causes for low blood sugar.



### IMBALANCED MEALS & MEAL TIMING

Let's expand a little on two of the above-mentioned causes of low blood sugar – imbalanced meals and meal timing. Meals that do not have sufficient amounts of protein and fat to balance out the carbohydrate-containing food are not “macro-balanced.” The Standard American Diet (aka the Westernized diet) is one that is rich in refined carbohydrates and low in protein and healthy fat. High-carb meals spike blood sugar and insulin levels, which can lead to both a low blood sugar level (and sugar cravings) and fat storage. Fat and protein, in addition to fiber, are crucial for preventing blood sugar levels from quickly rising. They help provide a steady rise and maintenance of energy. Make sure that every meal and/or snack contains some kind of fat and/or protein to accompany any carbohydrates being consumed. When it comes to meal timing, we see imbalances in blood sugar occur when you go too many hours between meals. This can result from meal skipping, intermittent fasting or prolonged fasting. While there is ample evidence that multiple types of fasting have health benefits and can ultimately help reduce sugar cravings, if you're unaccustomed to it or have poor metabolic flexibility, you may find yourself struggling with sugar cravings initially.

### STRESS

When you are under stress – from work, finances, kids, relationships, your health – your adrenal glands release cortisol (the stress hormone). High cortisol causes your liver to release glucose into your bloodstream (high blood sugar). Once blood sugar is high, your pancreas releases insulin

to lower blood sugar levels to normal, which can often overcorrect, leading to low blood sugar and the craving for sugar and quick-carb foods. This is the roller coaster ride of blood sugar. When stress levels are high from strong emotional feelings – sadness, fear, anxiety, loneliness – we often turn to sugar to soothe. Little do we realize that the fast-acting carbs in sugar increase the production of serotonin, which makes us feel calm and relaxed.

### LACK OF SLEEP

All it takes is one night of bad sleep to impact the hormones that regulate hunger and fullness and increase your cravings for sugar-rich food. Ghrelin, the hunger hormone, should be low most of the day and begin to rise when you are hungry and then taper off when you are full. Leptin, the satiety hormone, should start to rise at the end of a meal, signaling fullness. After a night of poor sleep, ghrelin levels markedly increase and stay elevated all day while leptin levels stay low, which means you're feeling hungry all day and never full and satisfied. If that weren't enough, the lack of quality sleep hinders your willpower, leading to impulsive behaviors, like reaching for sugary snacks.

### DEHYDRATION

Hunger and thirst can produce similar sensations in the brain and make you think you're hungry when what you really need is water. Thirst is a poor indicator of hydration status, as by the time you feel thirsty, you're actually 1 to 2% dehydrated, which can have a significant impact on cognition, hunger, energy and body temperature regulation. Drink plenty of water throughout the day.



SUGARY FOOD PHOTO BY BRANDON BARRE

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# Sugar-Health Connections

## HEART DISEASE

A study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that people who ate between 17 and 21% of their calories from added sugar had a 38% higher risk of dying from heart disease compared with people who consumed 8% or less of their calories from sugar. The average person consumes 256 extra calories a day in the form of added sugar, which contributes to weight gain, increased triglycerides and small, dense LDL particles, all of which contribute to atherosclerosis.

## CANCER

Cancer is caused by genetic mutations. However, many experts believe that sugar feeds cancer cells and high blood sugar can contribute to cancer cells becoming resistant to cell death and tumors becoming resistant to chemotherapy.

Obesity is another risk factor for developing cancer. Obesity changes hormone levels in the body, which is associated with a higher risk of developing cancer and having cancer recur or progress.

## MICROBIOME

Your gut is home to trillions of bacteria, viruses and fungi, each of which plays a different role in your health. The goal is to have a balance of bacteria types (probiotics) and a large variety of different bacterial strains. The gut microbiome impacts how food is digested, impacts blood sugar levels, has a role in the production of neurotransmitters and supports your immune system.

Probiotics thrive on indigestible fibers, known as prebiotics, that are found in green bananas, cooked and cooled rice, artichokes, asparagus, onions, oats and many other plants. On the other hand, when too much sugar is consumed, as is common in the typical Westernized diet, it can affect the number and types of bacteria in your gut. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to a healthier microbiome, we suggest reducing or removing sugar, refined carbs and processed foods and nourishing with a whole-food diet balanced in carbs (fiber), protein and fat.

## DENTAL HEALTH

When you eat something high in sugar or refined carbohydrates and you don't immediately rinse your mouth or brush your teeth, the sugar sits on the surface of your teeth and attracts harmful bacteria. These bacteria feed on the sugar and form dental plaque that produces lactic acid, which lowers the pH in your mouth (making it more acidic) and dissolves minerals from tooth enamel (demineralization). While saliva helps to reverse this damage through remineralization, over time, the enamel is weakened and destroyed by repeated exposure to sugary and sticky foods.

## HEALTHY SKIN

Regular consumption of sugar and refined carbohydrates impacts skin throughout its life cycle. Sugar leads to a burst of inflammation that goes throughout the entire body. The large insulin spikes that come with high sugar intake increase production of skin oils and contribute to growth of pore-clogging cells, which cause acne. Sugar can also contribute to aging, sagginess and wrinkles through the production of advanced-glycation end products (AGEs).

Glycation is the oxidative process in which free sugars bind with free proteins, DNA and lipids, leading to loss of protein, function and impaired elasticity of tissues like skin, tendons and blood vessels. The glycation reaction is highly accelerated in the presence of high blood sugar.

## BLOOD SUGAR, INSULIN RESISTANCE & DIABETES

One in three Americans has a silent blood sugar problem known as insulin resistance. Insulin resistance increases your risk of developing prediabetes, type 2 diabetes, obesity and Alzheimer's disease. Here's the cycle that leads to insulin resistance: Eat sugary and high-carb foods; the pancreas produces insulin; cells resist insulin; insulin stores sugar as fat; you feel tired and crave sugar; repeat.

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While genetics, age and ethnicity play a role in developing insulin resistance, controllable factors, such as high body weight/body fat, large waist circumference, inactivity, poor sleep habits and smoking, have much more of an impact.

Insulin resistance develops when the cells ignore or resist the signal from insulin, which asks cells to open up so sugar from the blood can enter the cell and be burned for energy. When cells don't respond to the insulin, the sugar has nowhere to go except float around the blood, causing inflammation, oxidation and glycation, or it gets turned into fat and stored in cells. Over time, the beta-cells in the pancreas can get worn out and no longer keep up production of insulin to meet the demand of rising blood sugar. When this happens, prediabetes or diabetes is diagnosed.

While sugar consumption doesn't directly cause diabetes, eating excess sugar and refined carbs can contribute to weight gain and impact the function of insulin.

The good news is that insulin resistance can be reversed. Lower-carbohydrate diets, exercise, sleep, stress management and smoking cessation are all lifestyle factors that can heal the body and improve insulin sensitivity.

### COGNITIVE HEALTH & MOOD

Research has indicated that over-consumption of sugar triggers imbalances in certain brain chemicals, which increases chances of outcomes such as depression and anxiety. Excess sugar impacts dopamine (a neurotransmitter that deals with the brain's reward system) similar to a potent narcotic.

Sugar is also linked to cellular inflammation, and some studies are indicating that this is a likely culprit in the onset of depression. While there is no conclusive proof that sugar consumption is a direct cause of depression, there is a decent indication that excess sugar is at least a contributing factor to depression in some people.

Sugar has also been found to suppress brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a natural antidepressant. BDNF stimulates the formation of new brain cells and protects the brain from neurodegenerative diseases. Sugar, especially when combined with high fat intake, decreases BDNF production. Low BDNF is associated with depression, anxiety disorders, dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Additionally, Alzheimer's disease (AD) is now being called "type 3 diabetes," as there is a strong correlation between insulin resistance, diabetes and Alzheimer's. Scientists think that insulin resistance in the brain is a contributor to memory and cognitive decline associated with AD.

### WEIGHT

Daily consumption of high-sugar foods causes chronically high blood glucose and insulin levels. As discussed previously, your cells stop responding to insulin, known as insulin resistance. When insulin is not able to help shuttle glucose into cells for energy, it takes the excess blood sugar and puts it into fat storage. High blood sugar and insulin levels also impact the satiety hormone, leptin, causing leptin resistance, which blunts the fullness signal.

High blood sugar levels are seen as a stress to the body, which causes a release of the stress hormone cortisol. Elevated cortisol levels are linked to weight gain, especially in the midsection of the body. This type of fat is the most damaging as it forms around and through your organs, like your liver and pancreas, producing more inflammation and more cortisol.

### LIVER FUNCTION

When fructose enters the liver, complex chemical transformations take place. When limited glycogen stores are full, excess fructose is converted into liver fat via a process known as lipogenesis, resulting in nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). NAFLD increases harmful LDL, increases blood pressure, promotes buildup of fat around organs and makes tissues insulin-resistant.

This looks just like what happens in the livers of those who consume too much alcohol. It affects up to 30% of adults in the US and other countries and affects between 70 and 90% of those who are obese or have diabetes. Left unaddressed, NAFLD can develop into nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), a more harmful disease state that occurs when scar tissue (fibrosis) is visible in the liver and can develop into advanced scarring or liver cancer.



## Common Questions

**1 /** Since fruit has lots of sugar, should I avoid it?

There's nothing wrong with eating fruit as it contains fiber, vitamins, minerals and a whole host of antioxidants. We recommend limiting your intake to one piece of fruit at a meal or snack and pairing it with a protein and/or fat to slow its digestion and impact on blood sugar levels.

**2 /** Can I eat bananas?

Of course! Bananas are a great source of potassium and fiber. Just make sure to choose a smaller banana and pair it with some nuts or nut butter.

**3 /** Why is it OK to use dates, monk fruit and bananas in detox recipes but not other natural sugars like maple syrup, honey or coconut sugar?

Whole-food sources of sugar, like dates, monk fruit, bananas and applesauce, have an advantage over natural sweeteners like honey, maple syrup and coconut sugar – fiber. Dietary fiber, found in all whole plant foods, takes longer to digest and thus helps to slow the rise of your blood sugar. But like any meal, you never want to eat just fruit or other pure carbohydrate. Always combine carbs with protein and a healthy fat so that the blood sugar rise is slow and steady and less insulin will be needed to move the sugar from the blood to the cells where it can be burned for energy.

In baking items like quick breads, you can substitute monk fruit, very ripe puréed bananas, applesauce, pear sauce, baby food plums or puréed dates (we like the Medjool variety) for sugar.

# Cut Back On Sugar

WITH THESE HEALTHY TIPS:

- **Avoid** processed and refined food.
- **Don't** drink your sugar. Skip soda, sweetened coffee and tea drinks, juices, smoothies, shakes and fruity alcoholic beverages.
- **Eat** a macro-balanced breakfast (and lunch and dinner). Include high-fiber carbs, protein and healthy fats.
- **Avoid hunger** by eating meals at regular intervals.
- **Stay hydrated.** Drink water, lemon water, herbal tea and decaf coffee or tea throughout the day to promote better hydration. Keep caffeine intake to before noon so it doesn't interfere with your ability to fall asleep at night.
- **Manage your stress.** Try breathing exercises, meditation, walking in nature, yoga and exercise.
- **Pair** naturally sweet foods such as fruit with nuts, seeds or nut butter.
- **Use "sweet" flavorings** in meals. Try cinnamon, nutmeg, orange zest, vanilla or almond extract or coconut butter/manna.
- **Improve** your sleep quality. Power down the electronics at least an hour before bed to encourage your brain to produce enough melatonin to make you feel sleepy. Inhale lavender essential oil, which calms the brain and promotes relaxation. Take an Epsom salt bath, which is rich in magnesium, also known to promote better sleep. Sip some chamomile tea, an herb with mild sedative properties.
- **Distract and delay.** Before giving in to that sweet craving, give yourself 10 minutes to get up and out of the current environment and take a walk, drink some water, go outside or call a friend – anything that will distract your brain. Quite often, the craving is rooted in an emotion, exhaustion or boredom, and doing something else will take your mind off of it.
- **Use spices** that help manage blood sugar levels, such as cinnamon, ginger and turmeric.
- **Supplement** with minerals, such as calcium, magnesium, chromium and/or zinc (consult with a medical professional who is well-versed in supplements).





## What to Expect When You Quit the Sweet Stuff

It's not all rainbows and butterflies, but once you get over the hump, you'll be glad you did it.

When you take the plunge and forgo all added sugars, be aware that you may experience some short-term physical and mental discomfort that's a direct result of your body's reliance on sugar. When you eat sugar, it signals the same reward pathways in the brain as heroin, cocaine and morphine – yes, you read that right! Over time, your tolerance to sugar becomes

higher and you require more of the sweet stuff to experience the same pleasure. Quitting sugar deprives that area of the brain from the feel-good neurotransmitters dopamine and serotonin. As a result, you may feel withdrawal symptoms, such as anxiety, moodiness, brain fog, headaches, inability to concentrate and even mild depression. In addition, you may even feel more

tired than usual, be more prone to stress and experience mild disturbances in sleep. While none of this sounds great and may make you rethink quitting sugar, these symptoms will only last for a few days (up to two weeks max), depending on the amount of sugar you're used to. Keep reading for our tips on how to soldier on and minimize detox symptoms.

## Quit Sugar the Right Way

**1. QUIT COLD TURKEY.** While some experts will suggest you slowly wean off of sugar, this only prolongs the symptoms of withdrawal.

**2. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER.** Staying hydrated is a good strategy overall as it helps with feeling full and keeping energy levels stable. It can also help keep your digestive tract on the regular (especially in conjunction with #4 below). Plus, thirst is often confused with hunger, so drink up! Water, sparkling water (unsweetened) and tea (black, green and herbal) are all excellent choices.

**3. EAT MORE PROTEIN.** Consuming more protein will help keep you fuller and help manage blood sugar levels after meals, preventing that midmorning or midday crash that has you running for an energy bar or flavored coffee drink for a pick-me-up.

**4. EAT MORE FIBER.** Fiber is found in all plants – fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes and whole grains – and can help keep you feeling fuller for longer as well as manage your blood sugar levels by keeping them steadier. If you're really craving something

sweet, try a piece of fruit (in-season, of course) with some nut butter. When you increase your fiber intake, remember to increase your fluid intake to keep things regular.

**5. EAT SOUR OR BITTER FOODS.** Bitter foods shut down the receptors in the brain that crave sugar. They can also slow the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream and help regulate blood sugar levels. Bitter foods include cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts), arugula, citrus peels, coffee and green tea. Our favorite: make a matcha latte!

**6. FIND SOMETHING ELSE TO DO.** Many of us have made eating sugar at certain times of the day – after meals or in the evening – a habit, and as a result, we are just programmed to reach for something sweet. Replace the sweet treat with something that occupies your mind and your hands. Try reading, playing brain games, doing Sudoku puzzles, or try your hand at knitting.

Start with a period of at least 30 days for your sugar detox to allow your system to get past the annoying side effects and through to the other side – hello clearer mind, more energy and zero sugar cravings! Just because you're giving up sugar doesn't mean you can't still enjoy sweet-tasting foods – even delicious and decadent-tasting desserts. This is where monk fruit comes in. Not only is this totally natural sweetener incredibly versatile, you can get it in liquid and granulated form to work with all types of recipes. Click through to the following pages to learn all about it.



Southeast Asian monk fruit in its whole-fruit form.

# 3 WAYS WITH Monk Fruit Sweetener

Meet the newest alt-sweetener on the block. This truly delicious and low-glycemic sugar sub is worthy of a spot in your pantry and is oh-so-easy to add to recipes.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLIMPIA DAVIES

## MIX IN SOME MONK FRUIT

Since monk fruit is 100 to 200 times sweeter than table sugar, a small amount will suffice in cooking or baking. Some products are sweetened only with monk fruit, while others combine it with other sweeteners such as cane sugar, erythritol and dextrose. Read product labels carefully as erythritol can cause digestion troubles in some individuals. In the following recipes, we used between  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp in both sweet and savory dishes to bring balance and richness. We like to pair this product with bold flavors like smoked paprika or the sumptuous caramel of the dates.

Shrimp Salad Rolls  
with Thai Dipping Sauce





Pineapple  
Upside-Down Cake



Instant Pot Pulled  
BBQ Chicken  
with Coleslaw



### What the Heck is Monk Fruit?

A small, round fruit native to Southeast Asia, monk fruit is known by many names, including Buddha fruit and *luo han guo*. It is extremely perishable and therefore typically sold dried or distilled in the form of a sweetener in North America and Europe, where it is not grown. Boasting zero calories and having a low-glycemic index, the sweetener – made by crushing the flesh of the fruit and extracting it into a powder or a liquid – is making waves in the health and wellness world. While only recently a phenom in the West, monk fruit has been used for centuries in traditional Chinese herbalism. Monk fruit is a wonderful sweetener for adding to coffee, tea, smoothies and even mains and desserts thanks to its well-rounded flavor profile.



## Instant Pot Pulled BBQ Chicken with Coleslaw

SERVES 4.

- 1½ lb** skinless, boneless chicken thighs
- ½ cup** sliced yellow onion
- ¾ cup** unsalted tomato paste
- 2 tbsp** apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp** Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp** smoked paprika
- 1 tsp** garlic powder
- ½ tsp** monk fruit sweetener  
*(TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Liquid Monk Fruit)*
- ½ tsp** sea salt
- ¼ tsp** ground cayenne powder
- 4** whole-wheat buns

### SLAW

- 1 14-oz** bag shredded coleslaw mix
- ½ cup** avocado oil mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp** chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tbsp** fresh lime juice

**1.** Cook chicken: In the Instant Pot, place chicken, 1 cup water and onion. Lock lid and set release valve to “sealing.” Adjust to high pressure and cook for 30 minutes. When cooking is done, let pressure release for 10 minutes (don’t move the vent). Carefully set release valve to venting. When metal pin in lid falls and all pressure is released, unlock lid. Transfer chicken and onion to a large bowl with a slotted spoon.

**2.** Prepare sauce: In a small saucepan on low, whisk ½ cup water, tomato paste, vinegar, Worcestershire, paprika, garlic powder, monk fruit sweetener, salt and cayenne until smooth. Simmer for 12 minutes, whisking occasionally, until thick and glossy. Toss chicken to coat with sauce.

**3.** In a large bowl, mix all coleslaw ingredients together. Fill each bun with pulled chicken and coleslaw.

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe): Calories: 587, Total Fat: 29 g, Sat. Fat: 6 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 16 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 6 g, Carbs: 40 g, Fiber: 8 g, Sugars: 13 g, Protein: 35 g, Sodium: 730 mg, Cholesterol: 134 mg

**TIP:** To prepare on the stove top, place chicken, 1 cup water and onion in a saucepan on medium-low. Simmer 45 to 50 minutes, until chicken can be shredded with 2 forks.

## Shrimp Salad Rolls

with Thai Dipping Sauce **Q** **GF**

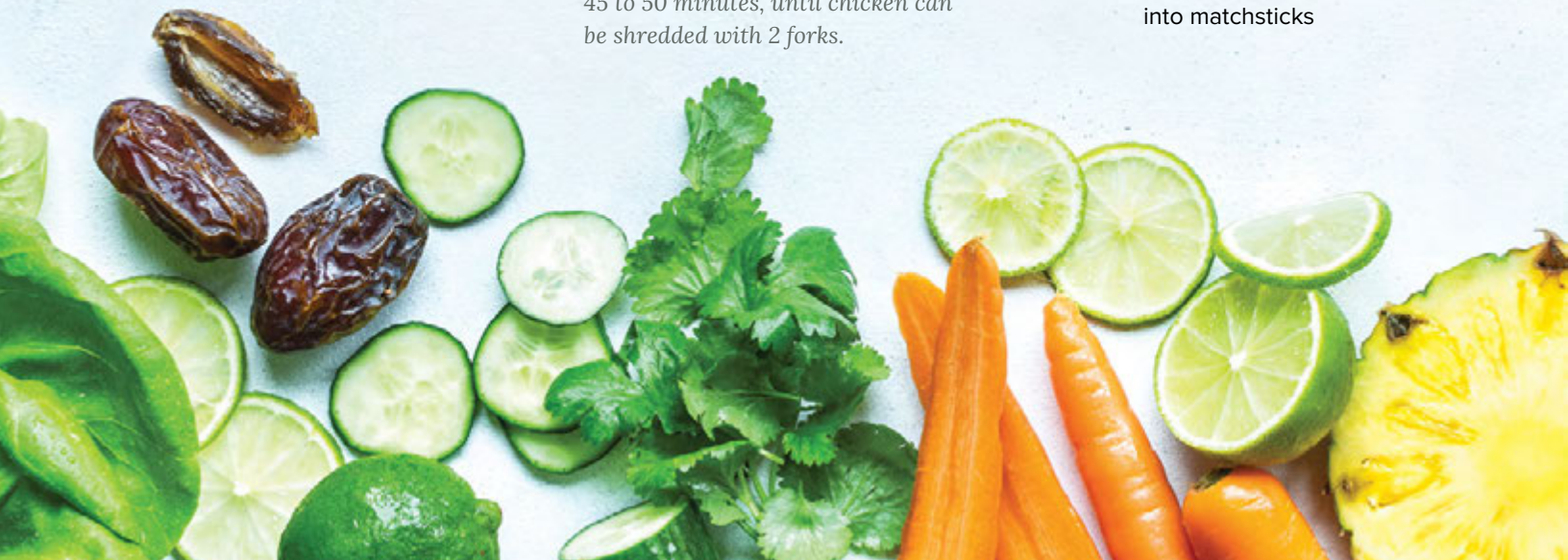
SERVES 4 TO 6.

### SAUCE

- 1** red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 tbsp** apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp** peeled and minced ginger
- 1 tbsp** fish sauce
- 2 tsp** sesame oil
- 2 cloves** garlic, peeled
- 1 tsp** red pepper flakes
- ¼ tsp** monk fruit sweetener  
*(TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Liquid Monk Fruit)*
- 2 tbsp** fresh lime juice
- 2 tsp** arrowroot starch

### ROLLS

- 12** rice paper wrappers
- 1 lb** medium frozen cooked shrimp, thawed, tails removed and sliced in half
- ½ cup** each fresh cilantro and mint leaves
- 1 head** butter lettuce
- 1** carrot, cut into matchsticks
- ½** English cucumber, cut into matchsticks





## Pineapple Upside-Down Cake (F) (V) (GF)

SERVES 8.

**1.** Prepare sauce: To a small saucepan, add bell pepper, vinegar, ginger, fish sauce, sesame oil, garlic, pepper flakes, monk fruit and 1 cup water. Bring to a simmer on low for 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Using an immersion blender, blend sauce until smooth. In a separate bowl, whisk together lime juice and arrowroot. Whisk the arrowroot-lime mixture into sauce and bring to a simmer for 1 minute. Set aside to cool.

**2.** Assemble rolls: Fill a shallow bowl with warm water. Soak 1 rice paper wrapper in water until softened and pliable, about 30 seconds. Spread wrappers on a clean tea towel. Along the bottom third of the wrapper, place about 4 shrimp halves. Top with cilantro and mint leaves. Top with 1 lettuce leaf and a few pieces each of carrot and cucumber. Fold sides over and tightly roll up. Place on tray, seam side down; cover with damp towel. Repeat with remaining ingredients to make 12 rolls. Cut each roll diagonally in half. Serve with dipping sauce.

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe): Calories: 318, Total Fat: 4 g, Sat. Fat: 1 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 1 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 2 g, Carbs: 40 g, Fiber: 4 g, Sugars: 3 g, Protein: 32 g, Sodium: 575 mg, Cholesterol: 214 mg

### CARAMEL

- 15** Medjool dates, pitted
- ¼ cup** organic, unsalted butter
- 1 tsp** pure vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp** monk fruit sweetener  
(**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Liquid Monk Fruit**)

### CAKE

- ½ cup** organic, unsalted butter, room temperature + additional for greasing pan
- 1 15-oz can** unsweetened sliced pineapple or 1 whole fresh pineapple, peeled, cored and sliced
- 2 cups** blanched almond flour
- ½ cup** coconut flour  
(**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Coconut Flour**)
- ¼ cup** arrowroot
- 2 tsp** baking powder
- 1 tsp** each ground cinnamon and ginger
- ¼ tsp** ground allspice
- 2 large** eggs
- ¾ cup** whole milk
- 1 tsp** pure vanilla extract
- ½ tsp** monk fruit sweetener  
(**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Liquid Monk Fruit**)

**1.** Make caramel: In a small bowl, soak dates in ½ cup hot water for 5 minutes. In a blender, place dates and water and purée until smooth. In a small saucepan on high, cook butter until melted, bubbly and brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in date purée. Cook on medium until fully incorporated, stirring occasionally. Stir in vanilla and monk fruit sweetener.

**2.** Prepare cake: Preheat oven to 350°F and grease an 8-inch springform cake pan. Line pan with parchment then grease parchment with extra butter. Arrange slices of pineapple on bottom of prepared pan. Pour caramel over pineapple.

**3.** In a large bowl, whisk together almond flour, coconut flour, arrowroot, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger and allspice. In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat remaining ½ cup butter on high until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. Beat 1 egg into the butter at a time, 1 minute each. Add flour mixture to butter mixture and mix until combined. Add milk, vanilla and monk fruit sweetener and mix until combined. Spread batter evenly over pineapple. Bake for 40 minutes, or until a cake tester comes out clean. Invert cake onto a serving plate immediately to prevent the caramel from sticking.

**PER SERVING** (⅛ of recipe): Calories: 531, Total Fat: 36 g, Sat. Fat: 14 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 15 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 4 g, Carbs: 49 g, Fiber: 9 g, Sugars: 33 g, Protein: 10 g, Sodium: 189 mg, Cholesterol: 96 mg



# Monk Fruit Mania

Sayonara, sugar! Monk fruit is the coolest zero-calorie sugar substitute in town. Try it in our top ready-made treats, or bake your own using our favorite monk fruit sweeteners below.

BY ANIKA A. SYEDA, ILLUSTRATIONS BY JUSTINE WONG,  
RECIPE BY SARAH SWEENEY, PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANGUEL DIMOV



### BITE-SIZED BONBONS

Go Better Keto Dark Chocolate Almond Butter Cups – think better-for-you nut butter cups. **\$15**, [gobettertoday.com](http://gobettertoday.com)

### HIT THE SWEET SPOT

Enjoy healthier sweet treats with **NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit with Organic Erythritol 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement**. **\$10**, [nowfoods.com](http://nowfoods.com)



### CRUNCHY CRAVINGS

Keto Granola from Kiss My Keto is the perfect parfait topper. Our fav flavor is coconut almond pecan. **\$12**, [kissmyketo.com](http://kissmyketo.com)



*Enjoy this low-carb blend of nuts and seeds on its own or layered over yogurt.*

*Peanut butter & jelly is the perfect medley in this luxe bar.*



### A NEW WAY WITH PB&J

Health-conscious chocaholics need to get their hands on Brooklyn Born Chocolate's keto confectionaries. **\$25 per four pack**, [store.brooklynbornchocolate.com](http://store.brooklynbornchocolate.com)



*Monk fruit, or luo han guo, is a small, round fruit native to Southeast Asia.*



**LIQUID GOLD**  
**NOW Real Food® Organic Caramel Monk Fruit Zero-Calorie Liquid Sweetener** blends seamlessly into cooking and baking. **\$13**, [nowfoods.com](http://nowfoods.com)



### SPREAD THE LOVE

Layer ChocZero No Sugar Added Chocolate Hazelnut Spread over crunchy toast for an easy sweet snack. **\$9**, [choczero.com](http://choczero.com)



### THE COOLEST CUPPA

Caffeinate your day while keeping sugar at bay with Emshika's Nitro Thai Iced Coffee and Tea. **\$24 per six-pack**, [by-emshika.com](http://by-emshika.com)

*Check out our fav flavor: Salted Caramel*

### R.E.D.D.

R.E.D.D. Plant Based Protein Bars are the ultimate low-sugar high-fiber snack on the go. **\$3**, [reddbar.com](http://reddbar.com)





## No-Sugar Gingerbread Cake

with Caramel Whipped  
Cream & Drizzle



SERVES 8.

HANDS-ON TIME: 20 MINUTES.

TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES.

- 1 tbsp** organic unsalted butter
- 10 large** egg whites
- ½ cup** 1 to 1 granulated monk fruit sweetener (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit with Organic Erythritol 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement)
- 1 cup** almond flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Blanched Almond Flour)
- 3 tbsp** unsweetened cocoa powder (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Cocoa Powder)
- 2 tsp** each ground ginger, cinnamon, allspice, and cloves
- 1 cup** dried Medjool dates, finely chopped
- ½ cup** dark chocolate (at least 75%), finely chopped

### ICING

- 3 tbsp** 1 to 1 granulated monk fruit sweetener
- 2 tbsp** organic unsalted butter
- 1 tsp** pure vanilla extract
- ¾ cup** whipping cream
- ½ tsp** caramel flavored liquid monk fruit sweetener (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Caramel Monk Fruit Zero-Calorie Liquid Sweetener)

**1.** Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease bottom and sides of a 9-inch round pan with butter and line with parchment paper. In a large bowl, whisk egg whites until stiff, adding granulated sweetener, 1 tbsp at a time.

**2.** In a separate bowl, whisk almond flour, cocoa and spices together. Fold almond flour mixture into egg white mixture. Add dates and chocolate. Gently fold until no white remains.

**3.** Spoon mixture into prepared pan. Bake for 15 minutes, or until cake rises. Reduce oven temperature to 300°F and bake for another 10 minutes. Set aside to cool.

**4.** Make caramel sauce: Place remaining granulated sweetener

in a small saucepan with 2 tsp water over medium heat. Once sweetener has dissolved, increase heat to medium-high for 5 to 8 minutes, until mixture is a light golden color. Remove from heat and let cool for 3 minutes. Gently whisk in butter and vanilla extract.

**5.** To a mixing bowl, add whipping cream and liquid monk fruit sweetener and whisk on high speed until medium to stiff peaks form, about 1 minute. Top cake with whipped cream and drizzle with caramel sauce.

**PER SERVING** (⅛ of recipe): Calories: 376, Total Fat: 27 g, Sat. Fat: 12 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 10 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 2.5 g, Net Carbs: 45 g, Fiber: 6 g, Sugars: 19 g, Protein: 10 g, Sodium: 83 mg, Cholesterol: 37 mg







# No-Sugar Holiday Treats

These edible gifts all use monk fruit sweetener for a festive treat without a drop of added sugar.

RECIPES BY SARAH SWEENEY, PHOTOGRAPHY BY DARREN KEMPER

## Spicy-Sweet Mixed Nuts

SERVES 8.



- ¼ cup** NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement
- 1 tsp** kosher salt
- ½ tsp** ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp** ground cayenne pepper
- 1 cup** raw unsalted almonds (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Raw Unsalted Almonds)
- 1 cup** raw unsalted pecans (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Raw Unsalted Pecans)
- 1 cup** raw unsalted cashews (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Raw Unsalted Cashews)
- 1 cup** raw unsalted walnuts
- ¼ cup** organic unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tbsp** chopped fresh rosemary

- 1.** Preheat oven to 325°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 2.** In a small bowl, combine monk fruit sweetener, salt, cinnamon and cayenne. To a large bowl, add almonds, pecans, cashews and walnuts. Pour in melted butter and stir to combine. Pour monk fruit mixture over nuts. Stir well, until nuts are lightly coated. Stir in rosemary. Spread mixture in a single layer over sheet.
- 3.** Bake for 12 to 15 minutes. Let nuts cool completely on sheet before packaging into jars.

**PER SERVING** (⅓ of recipe): Calories: 401, Total Fat: 38 g, Sat. Fat: 7 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 17 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 12 g, Carbs: 18 g, Fiber: 5 g, Sugars: 2 g, Protein: 9 g, Sodium: 288 mg, Cholesterol: 15 mg





## Grain-Free Pistachio & Cranberry Scones F Q V GF

SERVES 8.

**1½ cups** almond flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Blanched Almond Flour)

**½ cup** coconut flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Coconut Flour)

**¼ cup** tapioca flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Tapioca Flour)

**⅓ cup** **NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement** + additional sprinkle for garnish

**2 tsp** each baking powder and baking soda

**¼ tsp** sea salt

**¼ cup** cold organic unsalted butter

**2 large** eggs

**⅓ cup** whole milk

**1** orange, zested and juiced

**1 tsp** pure vanilla extract

**¼ cup** roughly chopped pistachios + additional for garnish

**⅓ cup** unsweetened dried cranberries or cherries

**1.** Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment.

**2.** In a large bowl, whisk together almond flour, coconut flour, tapioca flour, monk fruit sweetener, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Using a box grater, grate butter into bowl; blend with fingers to incorporate.

**3.** In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, orange zest and juice and vanilla. Stir egg mixture into flour mixture. Stir in pistachios and cranberries.

**4.** Using a spatula, scrape dough onto prepared sheet. Using your hands, press dough into an 8-inch circle. Sprinkle top with additional sprinkle of monk fruit sweetener and pistachios. Using a pastry cutter or sharp knife, cut into 8 triangles and gently separate.

**5.** Bake 20 for 22 minutes, until golden brown. Set aside to cool before packaging scones into containers.

**PER SERVING** (⅛ of recipe): Calories: 284, Total Fat: 22 g, Sat. Fat: 6 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 10 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 4 g, Carbs: 26 g, Fiber: 6 g, Sugars: 4 g, Protein: 9 g, Sodium: 600 mg, Cholesterol: 63 mg

## Holiday Crackle

F V GF

SERVES 8 TO 10.

### BASE & CARAMEL

- 1½ cups** almond flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Blanched Almond Flour)
- ¼ cup** arrowroot flour
- ¼ tsp** sea salt
- 1 large** egg, whisked
- 4 tsp** water, divided
- 1¼ cups** **NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement**
- ¼ cup** cold organic, salted butter, cubed

### TOP

- 5 oz** unsweetened dark chocolate, chopped
- 1 tbsp** **NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement**
- ½ cup** toasted pepitas

- 1.** Preheat oven to 375°F. Cut 2 11 x 15-inch sheets parchment paper. Set aside.
- 2.** Prepare base: In a small bowl, whisk together almond flour, arrowroot and salt. Add egg and one-half of water and stir together to form a dough. Scrape onto one sheet of parchment and place second sheet on top. Roll out into a 9 x 13-inch rectangle and transfer to a 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Peel off top sheet of parchment. Bake for 10 minutes, until light golden.
- 3.** Prepare caramel: To a medium saucepan on medium, add monk fruit sweetener and remaining one-half of water. Once sweetener has dissolved, increase heat to medium-high and simmer for 8 to 10 minutes, until it reaches a light golden color. (**NOTE:** You may notice

- some evaporation coming out of saucepan; keep your exhaust fan on.) Turn off heat; cool for 3 minutes. Carefully whisk in butter, 1 cube at a time. Pour over crust. Set aside to cool for 15 minutes, until set.
- 4.** Prepare chocolate top: Bring a small pot of water to a simmer and place chocolate in a heat-proof bowl set over top. Add remaining monk fruit sweetener, stirring until chocolate is melted and sweetener is dissolved. Pour chocolate over top of caramel in baking dish, spreading with a spatula. Sprinkle with pepitas.
  - 5.** Refrigerate for 40 minutes, until fully set. Break into pieces and package into containers.

**PER SERVING** (⅛ of recipe): Calories: 331, Total Fat: 30 g, Sat. Fat: 11 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 13 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 5 g, Carbs: 46 g, Fiber: 6 g, Sugars: 1 g, Protein: 10 g, Sodium: 120 mg, Cholesterol: 39 mg





A top-down photograph of a light pink ceramic cup filled with black coffee. To the right, a white wire cooling rack holds several pieces of golden-brown bread, some topped with raspberries and almonds. The background is a light, neutral color.

# NO SUGAR

## Brunch

**No-Sugar Raspberry  
Almond Loaf**

p. 27

A top-down photograph of a white ceramic plate. It features a slice of toast topped with a generous amount of baked beans, garnished with fresh green herbs and small pieces of white cheese. Another slice of toast with beans is visible below it.

**Better Baked  
Beans on Toast**

p. 25

These breakfast dishes are all free of refined sugar so they won't have you crashing by 10am. Not to worry if you have a sweet tooth though, monk fruit comes to the rescue for you sweet-seekers.

RECIPES BY SOO KIM,  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ASHLEY CAPP

## Two-Potato Röstli Waffle

(F) (Q) (V)

SERVES 4.

HANDS-ON TIME: 15 MINUTES.

TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES.

Skin-on Russets and sweet potatoes make up these cheesy röstis, or Swiss-style hash browns. We use both yellow and green onions here, but if you're looking to simplify, you can use just the yellow onion. Customize this dish with toppings of your choice – see note below for some flavor ideas.

- 2 Russet potatoes, coarsely grated and squeezed dry
- ½ sweet potato, coarsely grated and squeezed dry
- 1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tbsp whole-grain spelt flour or whole-wheat flour
- 1 tsp safflower oil
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¾ cup coarsely grated aged cheddar cheese

1. Heat a waffle iron to medium. Preheat oven to 250°F. Place an oven-safe rack over a large baking sheet.

2. To a large bowl, add all ingredients except cheese; mix until combined. Fold in cheese.



3. Mist waffle iron with cooking spray. Spread a generous ½ cup of potato mixture onto waffle plate (or according to capacity of your waffle maker). Cook until browned and crisp, 3 to 5 minutes. (**TIP:** Reduce heat if waffles brown too quickly.)

4. Transfer to prepared rack; place in the oven to keep warm. Repeat with remaining batter, making about 8 waffles total.

**NOTE:** Serve these waffles plain or use them as a base for your favorite topping combination. Try smoked salmon, capers, red onion and a dollop of sour cream; poached eggs, sautéed mushrooms and steamed broccolini; or, for a fruity option, omit the onion in the batter and top with yogurt and berries.

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe): Calories: 204, Total Fat: 10 g, Sat. Fat: 5 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 1 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 3 g, Carbs: 21 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 3 g, Protein: 9 g, Sodium: 416 mg, Cholesterol: 69 mg





## Better Baked Beans on Toast Q V

SERVES **4**. HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**.  
TOTAL TIME: **15 MINUTES**.

Instead of the typical sugar-filled tomato sauce in baked beans, the sauce in our version relies on peppery fresh thyme, savory coconut aminos and sour apple cider vinegar to balance out this protein-rich, hearty breakfast.

- |                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| <b>4 tsp</b>    | extra-virgin olive oil, divided   | <p><b>1.</b> In a large skillet on medium, heat one-half of oil. Add onions and cook, stirring until lightly caramelized, 4 to 5 minutes, adding a splash of water if sticking. Stir in garlic and thyme and cook, stirring constantly, 30 seconds.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Push onions to one side of the pan; add remaining one-half of oil to the center of the pan and stir in tomato paste. Cook, stirring paste until color darkens, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Stir with onions to coat. Add water, beans, coconut aminos and paprika. Cook, stirring, until beans are hot and evenly coated, adding more water if mixture absorbs all the sauce.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Stir in vinegar and remove from heat. Divide beans among toast and top with feta (if using). Garnish with any leftover fresh thyme.</p> |
| <b>½</b>        | yellow onion, finely chopped  |   |
| <b>2 cloves</b> | garlic, minced  |   |
| <b>2 sprigs</b> | fresh thyme   |   |
| <b>¼ cup</b>    | unsalted tomato paste   |   |
| <b>½ cup</b>    | water, or more if needed  |   |
| <b>2 cups</b>   | cooked or BPA-free canned unsalted cannellini beans, drained and rinsed |   |
| <b>1 tbsp</b>   | coconut aminos  |   |
| <b>¼ tsp</b>    | smoked paprika  |   |
| <b>½ tsp</b>    | apple cider vinegar   |   |
| <b>2 slices</b> | whole-grain sourdough or country rye toast, halved                      |   |
| <b>2 tbsp</b>   | full-fat crumbled feta cheese, optional                                 |   |

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe):  
Calories: 231, Total Fat: 6 g, Sat.  
Fat: 1 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 4 g,  
Polyunsaturated Fat: 0.5 g,  
Carbs: 36 g, Fiber: 10 g,  
Sugars: 4 g, Protein: 10 g,  
Sodium: 214 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg





## Persian-Style Spinach & Herb Sauté *with Eggs*

Q V GF

SERVES 4. HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES.

Awaken your senses with this aromatic breakfast of fresh parsley, cilantro and dill in a spinach sauté with softly cooked eggs nestled inside. A savory yogurt-saffron topping finishes this delightfully easy dish. Serve with a bowl of walnuts or pomegranates to round out your breakfast.

**1/8 tsp** saffron threads  
**2 tbsp** boiling water  
**1/2 bunch** fresh flat-leaf parsley  
**1/2 bunch** fresh cilantro  
**1/2 small** bunch fresh dill  
**2 tbsp** extra-virgin olive oil  
**1** yellow onion, thinly sliced  
**5 cloves** garlic, finely chopped  
**1 1/4 tsp** ground turmeric  
**1/2 tsp** sea salt, divided  
**3 cups** frozen spinach  
**1/2 tsp** ground black pepper  
**1/2 cup** water  
**3 tbsp** fresh lime juice  
**4** eggs  
**2/3 cup** full-fat plain yogurt or Greek yogurt

**1/2 tsp** sumac (**TIP:** While not a true substitute for citrusy sumac, crushed red pepper flakes and sweet paprika can be used in its place if you can't find it.)

**1.** To a small, heat-proof bowl, add saffron. Using the back of a small spoon, crush threads until they break apart slightly. Pour boiling water over top to let saffron bloom; set aside to cool.  
**2.** Roughly tear the parsley, cilantro and dill, including tender stems.  
**3.** To an extra-large skillet on medium, heat oil. Add onion and cook, stirring, until very brown with a few crispy pieces, 6 to 8 minutes. Add garlic, turmeric and one-half of salt; cook, stirring, until fragrant, 30 seconds.

**4.** Add spinach, fresh herbs, remaining one-half of salt, all of pepper and water. Cook, stirring, until spinach thaws and herbs are wilted and aromatic, about 5 minutes. Add lime juice and cook 30 seconds.

**5.** Using a large spoon, create 4 wells in spinach mixture. Crack an egg into each well and cook, undisturbed, 1 to 2 minutes. Gently stir through eggs to break up the yolks. Spoon yogurt over spinach followed by saffron liquid over top.

**6.** Remove from heat while eggs are still very soft. Sprinkle sumac over top, and garnish with any leftover herbs.

**PER SERVING** (1/4 of recipe): Calories: 222, Total Fat: 14 g, Sat. Fat: 4 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 8 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 2 g, Carbs: 14 g, Fiber: 5 g, Sugars: 4 g, Protein: 14 g, Sodium: 438 mg, Cholesterol: 191 mg





## No-Sugar Raspberry Almond Loaf

(F) (V)

SERVES 8 TO 10. HANDS-ON TIME: 10 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 20 MINUTES.

This flavorful loaf is sweetened with dates and granulated monk fruit, the latter of which is derived from a fruit native to Southeast Asia that's 100 times sweeter than granulated sugar. It's low-glycemic and works beautifully in baking recipes. Serve slices with almond butter and fresh fruit.

<b>6</b>	Medjool dates, pitted and torn	<b>1 cup</b>	unsweetened desiccated coconut + additional for top
<b>¼ cup</b>	boiling water	<b>½ cup</b>	whole-grain spelt flour
<b>3 tbsp</b>	melted coconut oil ( <b>TRY:</b> NOW Real Food® Organic Virgin Coconut Oil)	<b>3 tbsp</b>	granulated monk fruit sweetener ( <b>TRY:</b> NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement)
<b>1½ cups</b>	frozen raspberries, divided	<b>2 tsp</b>	baking powder
<b>2 large</b>	eggs	<b>¾ tsp</b>	baking soda
<b>2 tsp</b>	pure vanilla extract	<b>¼ tsp</b>	sea salt
<b>1½ cups</b>	almond flour ( <b>TRY:</b> NOW Real Food® Organic Blanched Almond Flour)	<b>4 tsp</b>	sliced almonds, optional

**1.** Preheat oven to 350°F. Line the bottom of an 8½ x 4½-inch loaf pan with parchment paper and mist with cooking spray.

**2.** To a medium heat-proof bowl, add dates, boiling water and oil; set aside for 5 to 10 minutes. Mash with a fork until mixture forms a smooth paste, or transfer to a small food processor and pulse until smooth. Let cool.

**3.** In a small bowl, set aside a handful of raspberries. In a large bowl, mix remaining raspberries, date mixture, eggs and vanilla until combined. Stir in almond flour, coconut, spelt flour, monk fruit sweetener, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir in reserved raspberries, then scrape mixture into prepared pan, smoothing the top. Top with an additional sprinkle of coconut and almonds (if using).

**4.** Bake until golden and a cake tester inserted in center comes out clean, 55 to 65 minutes. (**TIP:** Cover loaf with foil if browning too quickly.)

**5.** Let cool in pan 10 minutes, then tip out loaf and transfer to a cooling rack.

**PER SERVING** (⅓ of recipe): Calories: 342, Total Fat: 25 g, Sat. Fat: 12 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 8 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 3 g, Carbs: 29 g, Net Carbs: 18 g, Sugar Alcohols: 4.5 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 10 g, Protein: 8 g, Sodium: 344 mg, Cholesterol: 47 mg



## Berry Chia Parfait

P F V GF

SERVES 4. HANDS-ON TIME: 20 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES.\*

\*PLUS CHILLING TIME.

We've elevated your basic chia pudding into this beautiful, three-layer treat sweetened with only liquid monk fruit. The vibrant mixed berries will help you get closer to eating a rainbow of colors each day.

- 1 13.5-oz** BPA-free can full-fat coconut milk
- 2/3 cup** chia seeds, divided (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Black Chia Seeds)
- 20 drops** liquid monk fruit sweetener, divided (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Liquid Monk Fruit)
- 2 tsp** pure vanilla extract
- 1/8 tsp** sea salt
- 1 10-oz** bag frozen mixed berries, thawed
- 1** orange, juiced
- 1/4 cup** water

**1.** Prepare chia pudding: In a medium bowl, combine coconut milk, one-half of chia seeds, one-half of monk fruit, vanilla and salt. Stir to mix well. Cover and refrigerate until thickened, at least 4 hours. (**NOTE:** Check after an hour to make sure seeds aren't clumping at the bottom; if so, stir to redistribute.)

**2.** Prepare berry mixture: In a small saucepan, combine berries, orange juice, water and remaining one-half of monk fruit. Bring to a simmer on medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until berries are juicy and have softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Mash with a fork, then

transfer to a bowl and stir in remaining one-half of chia seeds. Let cool for 15 minutes.

**3.** Transfer half of each mixture to a food processor and process until combined.

**4.** Divide pudding-berry mixture from processor among 4 small bowls or parfait glasses. Divide remaining chia pudding over first layer, spreading evenly. Divide remaining berry mixture over top of each bowl. Cover and chill before serving.

**PER SERVING** (1/4 of recipe): Calories: 371, Total Fat: 29 g, Sat. Fat: 19 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 1.5 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 7 g, Carbs: 24 g, Fiber: 12 g, Sugars: 7 g, Protein: 7 g, Sodium: 78 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg





## Chocolate Banana Bundt Cake

P F V GF

SERVES 20. HANDS-ON TIME: 20 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 25 MINUTES.

- 2 cups** no-sugar-added chocolate chips (such as stevia- or monk fruit-sweetened), divided
- 3 cups** blanched almond flour
- ½ cup** arrowroot starch
- 2 tbsp** coconut flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Coconut Flour)
- 1 tsp** each baking powder and baking soda
- ½ tsp** sea salt
- 6** ripe bananas
- 6 tbsp** ghee or extra-virgin olive oil
- 12** pitted dates
- 24 drops** liquid monk fruit (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit Zero-Calorie Liquid Sweetener**)
- 4 tsp** pure vanilla extract

- 4 large** eggs, beaten
- 1 cup** toasted, chopped walnuts

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F. Mist a 10-inch Bundt pan with cooking spray. In a medium heat-proof bowl set over a pan of simmering water, place one-half of chocolate chips. Cook, stirring, until chocolate chips are melted and smooth. Remove from heat.
- 2.** In a large bowl, combine almond flour, arrowroot, coconut flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In a food processor, combine bananas, ghee, dates, monk fruit and vanilla; blend until smooth. Pulse in eggs just to incorporate. Add to bowl with flour mixture; stir until well combined. Fold about one-third of batter into

melted chocolate. Divide remaining chocolate chips and walnuts among both batters; stir to combine.

- 3.** Drop dollops of each batter in prepared pan, alternating them. Use a knife or a skewer to swirl batters together to create a marbled effect.
- 4.** Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 55 to 65 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes, and then flip over onto rack and remove pan. Cool completely and cut into 20 slices. Store leftovers covered in the refrigerator or freezer.

**PER SERVING** (1 slice): Calories: 352, Total Fat: 26 g, Sat. Fat: 9 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 9 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 5 g, Carbs: 37 g, Net Carbs: 22 g, Sugar Alcohols: 8 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 14 g, Protein: 8 g, Sodium: 161 mg, Cholesterol: 49 mg



# 1-Week Sugar Detox Meal Plan

## LOW-CARB EATING FOR METABOLIC FLEXIBILITY

Kick off your sugar-free lifestyle and improve your blood sugar and metabolic health with this keto-inspired meal plan. Our 7-day plan is fiber-rich and filling, thanks to healthy fats, plant-based protein, seafood and loads of veg.

BY ERIN MACDONALD, RDN AND TIFFANI BACHUS, RDN, PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLIMPIA DAVIES

If your health goals include reducing inflammation, improving insulin resistance and losing weight, then a plant-forward keto plan may be what you're looking for. The original plant-based keto diet, known as Ketotarian, was created by functional medicine expert Will Cole, IFMCP, DNM, DC, author of *Ketotarian*, *The Inflammation Spectrum* and *Intuitive Fasting*. Cole found that marrying high-fat aspects of the keto diet with the antioxidants and fiber of a plant-based diet yielded the best of both: less inflammation and better overall health.

Inflammation lies at the root of many health conditions, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, Alzheimer's disease and obesity. A plant-centered keto approach to fighting inflammation focuses on nonstarchy vegetables, small amounts of low-sugar fruits, nuts and seeds, fermented foods and optional animal foods, such as eggs, seafood and ghee. Total daily carbs should be between 50 and 75 grams (though recommendations vary).

But fighting inflammation isn't the only benefit of this style of eating. It also helps keep your blood sugar in check and, ultimately, may help you achieve metabolic flexibility. Simply put, this is when your body is able to use whatever fuel it has available: It can use carbs when they're around, or burn fat for energy when they're not.

You might not think this is a goal worth striving for, but if you've ever had a hangry moment, we beg to differ.

"When our body is in a state of balance, we should be going from comfortably full after we eat, to hungry, and back to full again," explains Cole. "Unfortunately, most people are at a state of imbalance where they are going from uncomfortably full, to hungry, cranky, dizzy, or shaky, and then back to full and uncomfortable again once they eat. The latter is not based on our nutritional needs but rather a blood sugar imbalance."

Cole has seen improvements to his patients' blood sugar, thyroid issues and autoimmune diseases when they follow this style of eating in conjunction with time-restricted eating, whereby meals are eaten within a window of time (see page 34 for more details).

Another benefit of metabolic flexibility? You can start to trust your own hunger signals. "When you start feeling hunger cues, it won't be because of a blood sugar or hormone imbalance, but because your body actually needs more nutrients and energy," explains Cole.

We've put these principles together in this plan that uses veg sources of protein like tofu, seeds and nuts, as well as omega-3-rich seafood for a delicious menu that helps to support a healthy blood sugar level.





**Pumpkin Waffles with Cinnamon Pecans**

p. 32

## Fat: The Key to Better Blood Sugar?

Fat is essential to health. It's a source of energy and helps absorb fat-soluble vitamins. Plus, it's needed for healthy cell membranes, the myelin sheaths surrounding nerves and for making hormones. Eating a higher-fat, lower-sugar, lower-carb diet is also one of the keys to metabolic flexibility – it trains your body to use fat for fuel in the absence of carbs. But, not all fats are created equal. Here is your cheat sheet to which fats are anti-inflammatory to promote health and which are pro-inflammatory that promote chronic health conditions.

### Anti-inflammatory fats

Fruit oils such as extra-virgin olive oil, avocado oil, coconut oil

Fatty fruits such as olives and avocado

MCT oil

Raw nuts (macadamia, walnuts, pecans) and nut butters

Seeds (chia, hemp, pepitas, freshly ground flax) and seed butters

Omega-3 fats: salmon, anchovies, sardines

Some omega-6 fats (gamma-linoleic fatty acids): evening primrose oil, borage oil

### Neutral fats

Saturated fats from grass-fed animals and coconut oil

Ghee (clarified butter)

### Pro-inflammatory fats

*Trans*-fats including hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil

Most omega-6 fats: industrial seed oils like grapeseed oil, canola oil, soybean oil, sunflower, oil, safflower oil, peanut oil





**BREAKFAST**

## Key Lime Pie Shake

**P F Q GF**

**SERVES 1.**  
**HANDS-ON TIME: 5 MINUTES.**  
**TOTAL TIME: 5 MINUTES.**

Lightly sweetened with monk fruit, this smoothie aids digestion and provides an antioxidant boost. We used key limes for their uniquely tart flavor, but you can substitute with regular limes.

- 2 tbsp** fresh lime juice (preferably from key limes)
- ¾ cup** unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- ½** avocado
- 2 scoops** marine collagen peptides
- 2½ tsp** granulated monk fruit sweetener (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement**)
- ice cubes, as desired

To a blender, add all ingredients. Blend until smooth.

**PER SERVING** (1 recipe): Calories: 234, Total Fat: 17 g, Sat. Fat: 2 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 11 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 2 g, Carbs: 22 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 1 g, Protein: 12 g, Sodium: 138 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg

**BREAKFAST**

## Pumpkin Waffles with Cinnamon Pecans

**F Q GF**

**SERVES 2.** **HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES.** **TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES.**

Wake up to these pumpkin-spiced waffles, made with a blend of almond and coconut flours for a lower-carb start to your day. We spread them with ghee and top them off with cinnamon roasted pecans for a hint of sweetness.

### WAFFLES

- 2 large** eggs, room temperature, lightly beaten
- 2 tbsp** pumpkin purée
- 2 tbsp** coconut oil, melted (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Virgin Coconut Oil**)
- 2 tbsp** unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- ½ tsp** pure vanilla extract
- ½ cup** almond flour (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Blanched Almond Flour**)
- 2 scoops** marine collagen peptides
- 1 tbsp** coconut flour
- 1 tbsp** granulated monk fruit sweetener (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement**)
- 1 tbsp** ground flaxseed (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Flax Seed Meal**)
- 1 tsp** orange zest
- 1 tsp** each pumpkin pie spice and ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp** baking powder
- ¼ tsp** sea salt
- 4 tsp** ghee, for serving

### CINNAMON PECANS

- ½ tbsp** coconut oil, melted
- 1 tsp** granulated monk fruit sweetener
- ¼ tsp** ground cinnamon
- ⅓ cup** raw pecans, chopped (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Raw Pecans**)

**Pinch** sea salt

- 1.** Prepare waffles: In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, pumpkin purée and coconut oil. Whisk in almond milk and vanilla.
- 2.** To wet ingredients, add almond flour, collagen, coconut flour, monk fruit, flaxseed, orange zest, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon, baking powder and salt. Whisk until dry ingredients are incorporated.
- 3.** Preheat a waffle maker and grease with additional coconut oil. Cook waffles according to manufacturer's directions.
- 4.** Meanwhile, prepare pecans: In a small bowl, whisk together coconut oil, monk fruit and cinnamon. Add pecans and stir to coat. Transfer to a small pan over low heat and cook for 6 to 7 minutes, stirring every minute to prevent burning. Season with salt.
- 5.** To serve, spread waffles with ghee and sprinkle with pecans.

**NOTE:** If following our Meal Plan, freeze one serving of leftover waffles; store pecans in an airtight container at room temperature. Thaw and reheat in a toaster oven when called for.

**PER SERVING** (½ of recipe): Calories: 668, Total Fat: 60 g, Sat. Fat: 25 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 21 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 10 g, Carbs: 24 g, Fiber: 9 g, Sugars: 4 g, Protein: 20 g, Sodium: 523 mg, Cholesterol: 208 mg







**Sesame  
Almond-  
Smothered  
Tofu Cups**  
p. 34



LUNCH/DINNER

## Sesame Almond–Smothered Tofu Cups

Q V GF

SERVES 4.  
HANDS-ON TIME: 25 MINUTES.  
TOTAL TIME: 25 MINUTES.

An addictive sesame–almond sauce adds zip to crispy fried tofu and a medley of crunchy veggies, served up in lettuce leaves for an easy handheld dinner or lunch.

### SAUCE

- ¼ cup coconut aminos
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- ¼ cup raw almond butter
- 2 tsp toasted sesame oil

### LETTUCE WRAPS

- 14 oz organic extra-firm tofu (preferably sprouted)
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 5 oz zucchini, sliced into matchsticks
- 5 oz shiitake mushrooms, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 8-oz can water chestnuts, rinsed and drained, diced
- ¼ cup chopped green onions
- ¼ tsp each sea salt and ground black pepper
- 2 heads butter lettuce
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tbsp snipped chives

### FASTING FOR BETTER BLOOD SUGAR

Fasting is often paired with lower-carb eating plans as it can help your body reach a state of ketosis, when your body switches to using fat as its main source of fuel. Time-restricted eating is a type of fasting where you narrow the window of time when you consume food (for example, between the hours of 8 am to 6 pm). “Fasting also allows your body to decrease inflammation, which, in turn, also helps you become more metabolically flexible,” explains Cole.

For more information on fasting, check out [cleaneating.com/fasting](http://cleaneating.com/fasting).



1. Place all sauce ingredients in a jar. Seal and shake until smooth. Set aside.

2. Drain tofu and cut lengthwise into 8 planks. Place each plank between layers of paper towels and press to absorb as much water as possible. Stack planks and slice lengthwise into 4 slices, then slice crosswise into bite-size cubes.

3. In a large nonstick skillet on medium-high, heat one-half of olive oil. Add zucchini, mushrooms, bell pepper and garlic and sauté for 3 minutes, stirring often. Stir in water chestnuts and green onions and cook for 1 minute longer. Transfer to a plate.

4. Wipe out skillet and heat remaining olive oil on medium-high. Add tofu. Season with salt and

pepper and cook until golden on the bottom. Flip and continue to cook, turning, until most of the sides are lightly golden, 6 minutes. Add half of the sauce and stir to coat.

5. Place lettuce leaves on a plate. Top each lettuce leaf with vegetables and tofu. Drizzle with additional sauce. Garnish with cilantro and chives.

**NOTE:** If following our Meal Plan, make sauce ahead. Cook one-half of veg-tofu mixture for the first 2 servings of the week. Store one-half of the veg-tofu mixture (uncooked) in the refrigerator along with sauce; cook and assemble when called for.

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe): Calories: 373, Total Fat: 25 g, Sat. Fat: 3 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 13 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 7 g, Carbs: 20 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 9 g, Protein: 19 g, Sodium: 509 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg



LUNCH/DINNER

**Grits-Gone-Keto** with Shrimp & Garlicky Greens

(F) (GF)

SERVES 4.

HANDS-ON TIME: 15 MINUTES.

TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES.

In this keto take on a Southern classic, we used cauliflower in place of grits. A quick sauté of baby greens adds garlicky flavor and a dose of antioxidants.

GRITS

- 1 head cauliflower, cut into florets
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ tsp each sea salt and ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 1 tbsp ghee, melted
- ¼ cup hot water

SHRIMP/GREENS

- 1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 5 cups baby greens (kale, chard, spinach)
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- ⅛ tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp ghee
- 1 lb large frozen shrimp, peeled and deveined, thawed
- 1½ tbsp Cajun seasoning

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Prepare grits: Place cauliflower on prepared sheet, toss with oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for 25 to 30 minutes, or until lightly golden and fork tender.

3. Transfer cauliflower to a food processor. Add yeast and ghee. Pulse to break down the cauliflower until mostly smooth, adding some of the hot water if needed to achieve desired consistency.

4. Prepare greens and shrimp: In a large pan over medium-high, heat oil. Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add greens and sauté 2 more minutes. Add lemon juice and pepper. Transfer to a plate.

5. In same pan, heat remaining ghee. Add shrimp to pan and

sprinkle with Cajun seasoning. Sauté until shrimp is just cooked through, about 2 minutes per side.

6. Place cauliflower grits on a plate; top with greens and shrimp.

**NOTE:** If following our Meal Plan, freeze 2 portions for later in the week. Refrigerate remaining. Thaw and reheat when called for.

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe): Calories: 277, Total Fat: 15 g, Sat. Fat: 7 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 6 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g, Carbs: 10 g, Fiber: 4 g, Sugars: 3 g, Protein: 27 g, Sodium: 447 mg, Cholesterol: 207 mg





LUNCH/DINNER

Caesar-ish Kale Salad with Pepitas & Hemp Seeds



SERVES 2.  
HANDS-ON TIME: 20 MINUTES.  
TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES.

Raw cashews form the base for this silky dressing with big Caesar flavor. To keep it dairy-free, we used nutritional yeast in place of Parmesan cheese for an authentic taste plus a boost of B<sub>12</sub>, an essential nutrient that can be hard to come by on a plant-forward plan.

DRESSING

- 1/4 cup raw cashews (TRY: NOW Real Food® Raw Cashews)
- 1/4 cup hot water
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp white miso
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1/8 tsp ground black pepper
- Pinch sea salt

SALAD

- 1 bunch kale, ribs removed and roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp hemp seeds (TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Hemp Seed Hearts)
- 1/4 cup pumpkin seeds (TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Pumpkin Seeds)
- 1 cup grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsp minced shallots

1. Make dressing: To a blender, add cashews and pulse to a fine powder. Add hot water and pulse again until very smooth. Add remaining dressing ingredients and pulse until smooth.

2. To a large bowl, add kale. Pour dressing over kale. Using both hands, massage dressing into kale for 60 to 90 seconds. Add hemp and pumpkin seeds and toss. Toss in tomatoes and shallots.

**NOTE:** If following our Meal Plan, store leftover serving in an airtight container in the fridge.

**PER SERVING** (1/2 of recipe): Calories: 396, Total Fat: 26 g, Sat. Fat: 4 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 11 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 8 g, Carbs: 33 g, Fiber: 8 g, Sugars: 8 g, Protein: 19 g, Sodium: 407 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg





**BREAKFAST**

## Apple Crumble Muffins

P F Q GF

SERVES **4**. HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**.

TOTAL TIME: **35 MINUTES**.

The ultimate grab-and-go breakfast, these lightly spiced muffins are made with almond flour to keep them lower in carbs.

### MUFFINS

- 1 cup** almond flour (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Blanched Almond Flour**)
- 4 large** eggs, whisked
- 1** apple, peeled and diced
- ¼ cup** unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- 1 tbsp** granulated monk fruit sweetener (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement**)
- 2 tbsp** coconut oil
- 2 scoops** marine collagen
- 1 tbsp** ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp** baking powder
- ⅛ tsp** sea salt

### CRUMBLE

- ½ cup** almond flour
- 2 tsp** solid coconut oil
- ½ tsp** granulated monk fruit sweetener (**TRY: NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement**)
- ½ tsp** ground cinnamon

- 1.** Preheat oven to 325°F. Grease a 12-count nonstick muffin pan with cooking spray or line with paper muffin cups.
- 2.** To a large bowl, add all muffin ingredients and mix to combine. Divide batter among muffin cups.
- 3.** In a small bowl, combine crumble ingredients. Using your hand, cut coconut oil into flour. Sprinkle topping over muffins.
- 4.** Bake for 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of muffin comes out clean. Let cool.

**NOTE:** If following our Meal Plan, freeze 6 muffins for later in the week. Store remaining muffins in a container in the fridge. Reheat in a toaster oven when called for.

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe): Calories: 437, Total Fat: 35 g, Sat. Fat: 11 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 16 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 6 g, Carbs: 21 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 6 g, Protein: 18 g, Sodium: 280 mg, Cholesterol: 186 mg





LUNCH/DINNER

## Salmon Fried Cauli-Rice

SERVES 4.

HANDS-ON TIME: **25 MINUTES.**

TOTAL TIME: **25 MINUTES.**

Veg-loaded cauli-rice stands in for grains in this salmon bowl. Find prepared cauli-rice in the produce or frozen section of the grocery store, or you can DIY by pulsing cauliflower in the food processor.

### SAUCE

- 2 tbsp** coconut aminos
- 2 tbsp** rice vinegar
- 1 tsp** ground ginger
- ½ tsp** toasted sesame oil

### CAULI-RICE/SALMON

- 2 tbsp** extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 12 oz** riced cauliflower
- 5 oz** shiitake mushrooms, diced
- 2** carrots, grated
- 1** zucchini, diced
- 1** shallot, minced
- 2 large** eggs
- 3 tbsp** chives
- 2 tbsp** hemp seeds (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Hemp Seed Hearts)
- 1½ lb** skinless wild-caught salmon, sliced into cubes
- ⅛ tsp** each sea salt and black pepper

- 1.** Place all sauce ingredients in a jar. Seal and shake. Set aside.
- 2.** In a large nonstick skillet on medium-high, heat one-half of olive oil. Add cauliflower, mushrooms, carrots, zucchini and shallot.

Sauté 5 to 6 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.

- 3.** Whisk eggs in a bowl and add to vegetables; toss to coat. Cook for 2 minutes.
- 4.** Shake sauce again; add to pan. Stir to combine. Add chives and hemp seeds and stir. Transfer to a large serving bowl. Wipe out pan.
- 5.** In the same pan on medium-high, heat remaining one-half of olive oil. Add salmon and season with salt and pepper. Cook 3 minutes per side. Serve over cauli-rice.

**NOTE:** If following our Meal Plan, freeze 1 serving for later in the week and refrigerate remaining. Reheat when called for.

**PER SERVING** (¼ of recipe): Calories: 464, Total Fat: 23 g, Sat. Fat: 4 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 10 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 7 g, Carbs: 18 g, Fiber: 5 g, Sugars: 9 g, Protein: 46 g, Sodium: 481 mg, Cholesterol: 170 mg



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
<p><b>BREAKFAST:</b> 1 serving Apple Crumble Muffins (p. 37; save leftovers)</p> <p><b>LUNCH:</b> 1 serving Sesame Almond–Smothered Tofu Cups (p. 34; save leftovers)</p> <p><b>DINNER:</b> 1 serving Salmon Fried Cauli-Rice (p. 38; save leftovers)</p>	<p><b>BREAKFAST:</b> 1 serving Pumpkin Waffles with Cinnamon Pecans (p. 32; save leftovers)</p> <p><b>LUNCH:</b> 1 serving Salmon Fried Cauli-Rice (leftovers, p. 38)</p> <p><b>DINNER:</b> 1 serving Grits-Gone-Keto with Shrimp &amp; Garlicky Greens (p. 35; save leftovers)</p>	<p><b>BREAKFAST:</b> 1 serving Apple Crumble Muffins (leftovers, p. 37)</p> <p><b>LUNCH:</b> 1 serving Grits-Gone-Keto with Shrimp &amp; Garlicky Greens (leftovers, p. 35)</p> <p><b>DINNER:</b> 1 serving Sesame Almond–Smothered Tofu Cups (leftovers, p. 34)</p>	<p><b>BREAKFAST:</b> 1 serving Apple Crumble Muffins (leftovers, p. 37)</p> <p><b>LUNCH:</b> 1 serving Caesar-ish Kale Salad (p. 36; save leftovers)</p> <p><b>DINNER:</b> 1 serving Salmon Fried Cauli-Rice (leftovers, p. 38)</p>
<p><b>NUTRIENTS:</b> Calories: 1,274, Fat: 48 g, Sat. Fat: 18 g, Carbs: 59 g, Fiber: 19 g, Sugars: 24 g, Protein: 83 g, Sodium: 1,270 mg, Cholesterol: 356 mg</p>	<p><b>NUTRIENTS:</b> Calories: 1,409, Fat: 98 g, Sat. Fat: 36 g, Carbs: 52 g, Fiber: 18 g, Sugars: 16 g, Protein: 93 g, Sodium: 1,451 mg, Cholesterol: 585 mg</p>	<p><b>NUTRIENTS:</b> Calories: 1,087, Fat: 75 g, Sat. Fat: 21 g, Carbs: 51 g, Fiber: 18 g, Sugars: 18 g, Protein: 64 g, Sodium: 1,236 mg, Cholesterol: 393 m</p>	<p><b>NUTRIENTS:</b> Calories: 1,297, Fat: 84 g, Sat. Fat: 19 g, Carbs: 72 g, Fiber: 20 g, Sugars: 23 g, Protein: 83 g, Sodium: 1,168 mg, Cholesterol: 356 mg</p>

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p><b>BREAKFAST:</b> 1 Key Lime Pie Shake (p. 32)</p> <p><b>LUNCH:</b> 1 serving Salmon Fried Cauli-Rice (leftovers, p. 38)</p> <p><b>DINNER:</b> 1 serving Caesar-ish Kale Salad (leftovers, p. 36)</p>	<p><b>BREAKFAST:</b> 1 serving Apple Crumble Muffins (leftovers, p. 37)</p> <p><b>LUNCH:</b> 1 serving Sesame Almond–Smothered Tofu Cups (leftovers, p. 34)</p> <p><b>DINNER:</b> 1 serving Grits-Gone-Keto with Shrimp &amp; Garlicky Greens (leftovers, p. 35)</p>	<p><b>BREAKFAST:</b> 1 serving Pumpkin Waffles with Cinnamon Pecans (leftovers, p. 32)</p> <p><b>LUNCH:</b> 1 serving Grits-Gone-Keto with Shrimp &amp; Garlicky Greens (leftovers, p. 35)</p> <p><b>DINNER:</b> 1 serving Sesame Almond–Smothered Tofu Cups (leftovers, p. 34)</p>
<p><b>NUTRIENTS:</b> Calories: 1,094, Fat: 66 g, Sat. Fat: 10 g, Carbs: 73 g, Fiber: 20 g, Sugars: 18 g, Protein: 77 g, Sodium: 1,026 mg, Cholesterol: 170 mg</p>	<p><b>NUTRIENTS:</b> Calories: 1,097, Fat: 75 g, Sat. Fat: 21 g, Carbs: 51 g, Fiber: 18 g, Sugars: 18 g, Protein: 64 g, Sodium: 1,236 mg, Cholesterol: 393 mg</p>	<p><b>NUTRIENTS:</b> Calories: 1,318, Fat: 100 g, Sat. Fat: 35 g, Carbs: 54 g, Fiber: 20 g, Sugars: 16 g, Protein: 66 g, Sodium: 1,479 mg, Cholesterol: 415 mg</p>





## SHOPPING LIST

### PROTEINS & DAIRY

- 8 large eggs
- 1 jar marine collagen
- 1½ lb skinless wild-caught salmon
- 14 oz sprouted organic extra-firm tofu
- 1 lb frozen shrimp

### VEGGIES & FRUITS

- 1 small can pumpkin purée
- 1 orange
- 1 apple
- 5 key limes
- 1 avocado
- 12 oz riced cauliflower
- 10 oz shiitake mushrooms
- 2 carrots
- 1 zucchini
- 2 shallots
- 1 bunch chives
- 2 lemons
- 1 head garlic
- 1 bunch kale
- 6 oz grape tomatoes
- 1 8-oz can water chestnuts
- 5 oz Japanese eggplant
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 bunch green onions
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro
- 1 head butter lettuce
- 1 head cauliflower
- 8 oz baby green (kale, chard, spinach)

### NUTS, SEEDS & OILS

- 1 bottle extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 jar coconut oil (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Virgin Coconut Cooking Oil)
- 1 bottle toasted sesame oil
- 1 bag almond flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Blanched Almond Flour)
- 1 bag ground flaxseed (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Flax Seed Meal)
- 1 jar ghee
- 2 oz raw pecans (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Raw Pecans, Unsalted)
- 1 bag hemp seeds (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Hemp Seed Hearts)
- 1 oz raw cashews (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Whole, Raw & Unsalted Cashews)
- 1 oz pumpkin seeds (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Unsalted Raw Pumpkin Seeds)
- 1 jar raw almond butter

### PANTRY STAPLES & EXTRAS

- 1 carton unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- 1 bottle pure vanilla extract
- 1 bag coconut flour (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Coconut Flour)
- 1 bag granulated monk fruit (**TRY:** NOW Real Food® Organic Monk Fruit 1 to 1 Sugar Replacement)
- 1 container baking powder
- 1 bottle coconut aminos
- 1 bottle rice vinegar
- 1 bottle nutritional yeast
- 1 container white miso paste
- 1 bottle Dijon mustard
- 1 bottle pumpkin pie spice
- 1 bottle ground cinnamon
- 1 bottle sea salt
- 1 bottle ground ginger
- 1 bottle ground black pepper
- 1 bottle Cajun seasoning





# Sensationally Sweet. Surprisingly Zero.

NOW Real Food Organic Monk Fruit delivers delicious sweetness without any aftertaste or calories! Use our 1:1 sugar replacement in your favorite low-carb recipes. Or, try the chocolate, vanilla, caramel or pumpkin spice liquids to add a flavor boost to coffee without any calories — and grab some packets for on-the-go sweetening!



**KETO FRIENDLY**



**V**  
**vegan**



[nowrealfood.com/monkfruit](http://nowrealfood.com/monkfruit)





# Sensationally Sweet. Surprisingly Zero.



## One-to-One Sugar Replacement!

Monk Fruit delivers a delicious sweetness without adding any calories. Our 1:1 sugar replacement is perfect for swapping out sugar in your favorite recipes. Plus, it's keto friendly and suitable for diabetics.

[nowfoods.com/monkfruit](http://nowfoods.com/monkfruit)



**KETO  
FRIENDLY**

