



# Fat Loss Formula

Your Blueprint for Long-Lasting Results

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# Igniting Your Fat Loss Goals



Fat loss isn't just about fitting into that dress or achieving a certain number on the scale; it's about having a positive relationship with your body and your health. In a world overflowing with quick fixes and fad diets, it's easy to feel lost, overwhelmed or even discouraged. Yet, the truth is that sustainable fat loss is not only achievable - it's a journey toward a healthier, happier you!



When we talk about fat loss, we must consider more than just calories in and out. It's about understanding your body, nurturing your mind and creating a lifestyle that supports your goals. From making smarter food choices to incorporating physical activity and managing stress, every step we take together will be rooted in current research and best practices.



Over the next year, this fat loss program will guide you through a structured approach, helping you achieve lasting results. We'll explore nutrition, exercise and lifestyle strategies that are evidence-based and aim to help you not only lose fat but also foster a healthier, more enjoyable relationship with food and fitness.

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# Short-Term Plan

Kickstarting Your Fat Loss Journey

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# Week 1: Setting the Foundation

Fat loss is one of the most commonly pursued health goals, but it's about so much more than a number on the scales. Sustainable fat loss can improve energy levels, boost self-confidence, enhance metabolic health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. However, achieving fat loss requires more than just cutting calories; it's a combination of nutrition, exercise, mindset and consistency over time.

The short-term plan focuses on creating immediate yet manageable changes to your nutrition, activity levels and mindset. This phase is all about laying the groundwork for long-term success; forming the right habits that will accelerate your fat loss journey without feeling overwhelming.

## Action Plan

1. Establish a Calorie Deficit. For fat loss to occur, you need to be in a calorie deficit; burning more calories than you consume. The goal here isn't extreme calorie cutting, but rather a moderate reduction of 300-500 calories per day to ensure fat loss without triggering feelings of deprivation.

- Tip: Use the tacker and calorie tracking app, like MyFitnessPal, to help monitor your intake and understand where your calories are coming from.

- Tip: Focus on high-volume, low-calorie foods like vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains to help keep you feeling full while staying within your calorie limit.

2. Increase Protein Intake. Protein is crucial when it comes to fat loss. Not only does it keep you fuller for longer, but it also helps preserve muscle mass, which is essential for maintaining a healthy metabolism.

- Tip: Include a source of lean protein (like chicken, fish, eggs or tofu) at every meal, to optimise protein without relying on high-calorie foods.

# Food Tracker

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks	Notes
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

# Week 2: Structuring Your Meals

This week, the focus is on meal structure - ensuring every meal you eat includes a balance of macronutrients (protein, fats and carbs) and is timed properly to prevent snacking or late-night eating.

## Action Plan

### 1. Create Balanced, Structured Meals.

- Tip: Follow the “plate method” - fill half your plate with vegetables, one-quarter with lean protein and one-quarter with whole grains or starchy vegetables.

### 2. Eat every 3-4 hours to maintain energy levels and prevent overeating.

- Tip: Start with three meals and two snacks per day.

A structured meal approach not only helps regulate blood sugar levels but also prevents overeating at meals due to excessive hunger. Studies suggest that meal timing and composition can influence fat loss, by improving insulin sensitivity and preventing overeating.

# Week 3: Moving More

Exercise is a key part of fat loss, not only for the extra calories burned but for its role in preserving muscle mass. This week, begin incorporating physical activity into your routine, starting with achievable goals.

## Action Plan

1. Introduce movement, aim for 30 minutes of activity (such as walking, cycling, swimming or anything you love!) 3 days a week.

- Tip: Download a fitness tracker app or wear a watch that can help track fitness and work towards increasing your average daily steps.

Daily movement boosts your overall calorie burn. However, more importantly, it keeps you active and engaged in your health, creating momentum for the harder days when motivation wanes.

2. Include two strength-training sessions per week to support muscle retention and metabolism.

- Tip: Focus on fundamental movements like squats, lunges, push-ups and planks.

- Tip: If you're ready, start incorporating light dumbbells or resistance bands in your workout.

A study by the UK Department of Health found that a combination of cardiovascular and resistance training promotes better fat loss and muscle preservation than cardio alone (Department of Health, 2021).



# Week 4: Hydration and Sleep

Water plays an important role in fat loss. Not only does staying hydrated support your metabolism, but it also helps control hunger signals. Quality sleep is essential for fat loss. Poor sleep can increase cravings for high-calorie foods and make it harder to control your appetite.

## Action Plan

1. Optimise Hydration. Studies show that adequate hydration can increase feelings of fullness and improve metabolism, both of which support fat loss.

- Tip: Aim to drink at least 2 litres of water per day, increasing this amount if you exercise heavily.
- Tip: Drink a glass of water before each meal to help with portion control and reduce the risk of mistaking thirst for hunger.

2. Prioritise Sleep: Improving sleep in the short term is about building the basic habits that create a stable sleep routine.

- Tip: Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Set a consistent sleep schedule, going to bed and waking up at the same time each day.
- Tip: Create a pre-bedtime routine that helps your body wind down, such as reading a book, taking a warm bath or practicing deep breathing exercises.

Research by the University of Warwick found that inadequate sleep can interfere with appetite regulation, leading to overeating and reduced fat loss.

# Medium-Term Plan

Commit to change



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# Month 2: Optimising Nutrition and Exercise

As you move beyond the initial stages of fat loss, the medium-term plan focuses on solidifying habits, overcoming potential plateaus and continuing to refine your approach. The aim is to stay consistent while introducing new strategies that keep you motivated and ensure steady progress. This stage is about building momentum; optimising your diet and training, fine-tuning your goals and making sustainable adjustments to your lifestyle that will carry you forward into the long-term plan.

While you've already established a calorie deficit, now is the time to review and adjust based on your progress. Weight loss often slows down after the first few weeks as your body adapts to the calorie deficit. It's important to recalibrate your intake to ensure you're still losing fat at a healthy rate.

## Action Plan

1. Adjust your daily calorie target.

- Tip: Reassess your calorie needs every 4 weeks. As you lose weight, your body will require fewer calories to maintain its current weight, so you may need to slightly reduce your intake.

- Tip: Avoid aggressive calorie cutting; aim to stay within a deficit of 300-500 calories per day to maintain energy and avoid muscle loss.

2. Increase Resistance Training Frequency: Building lean muscle mass is critical for maintaining metabolism during fat loss. Over the next two months, aim to increase the frequency and intensity of your strength-training workouts.

- Tip: Use progressive overload - gradually increase the weight or resistance in your workouts every 1-2 weeks to challenge your muscles and prevent adaptation.

# Months 3-4: The Power of NEAT

While formal exercise is important, NEAT (Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis) - activities like walking, cleaning and fidgeting - can significantly impact fat loss. Increasing your daily movement, outside of workouts and planned exercise activity, can help you continue burning calories without adding stress to your body. Research from the International Journal of Obesity indicates that increasing NEAT can make a significant contribution to overall daily calorie expenditure and is crucial for long-term fat loss, especially when formal exercise time is limited.

## Action Plan

### 1. Focus on NEAT.

- Tip: Aim for 10,000 steps per day. If you have a sedentary job, set hourly reminders to stand up, stretch and walk around. Small bursts of movement add up!
- Tip: Incorporate more movement into your daily routine - take the stairs, walk to nearby destinations instead of driving or engage in active hobbies like gardening or dancing.

### 2. Track Progress Beyond the Scales: At this stage, it's crucial to track more than just your weight to stay motivated. Fat loss can slow as you build muscle, which may not reflect immediately on the scale.

- Tip: Take body measurements (waist, hips, arms etc.) and track how your clothes fit. Often, these measurements show progress even when the scales don't.
- Tip: Use progress photos to visually track changes in your body composition.

# Months 5-6: Driving Progress

As fat loss progresses, adding HIIT workouts can help break through plateaus. HIIT (High-Intensity Interval Training) involves short bursts of intense exercise followed by brief recovery periods. It's a highly efficient workout that can be done in less time compared to traditional steady-state exercise. HIIT elevates your heart rate quickly and keeps it elevated, even during rest, which maximises calorie burn and improves fitness. HIIT is especially effective for fat loss, boosting metabolism and improving cardiovascular health in a shorter time frame. Compared to steady cardio, HIIT builds strength, endurance and fat-burning capacity more efficiently, making it ideal for those with busy schedules.

## Action Plan

1. Start with 2 HIIT sessions per week, each lasting 20-30 minutes.

- Tip: Alternate between 30 seconds of maximum effort and 1-2 minutes of rest. Gradually reduce rest times as your fitness improves.

2. Refine your macronutrient ratios: As your body changes, your macronutrient needs may shift. Continue to focus on protein intake while adjusting your carbohydrate and fat ratios based on your goals and energy levels.

- Tip: Experiment with slightly increasing your protein intake if you're maintaining or increasing resistance training.

- Tip: Adjust your carb and fat intake based on how you feel - if energy levels are dipping, consider increasing your intake of healthy fats like avocados, nuts and seeds.

# Long-Term Plan

One Year Sustainable Success



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# Months 7-9: Embedding Habits

You've built solid habits, but long-term success is about maintaining those behaviours and ensuring that they become part of your lifestyle. At this stage, the focus shifts from consistent fat loss to overall health, muscle maintenance and sustainable practices that keep you lean and energised for the long haul. This final stage is designed to help you maintain fat loss while addressing any remaining barriers and fine-tuning your routine for long-term success. By now, you should be feeling more confident and in control, ready to cement these changes into your everyday life.

## Action Plan

1. Implement maintenance phases. A maintenance phase is a where you stabilise your weight after reaching your fat loss goals. During this phase, you gradually increase calorie intake to find a balance where you're neither losing nor gaining weight, allowing your body to adapt to its new set point. The focus shifts from fat loss to maintaining your results through balanced eating, regular exercise and sustainable habits. A well-executed maintenance phase prevents rebound weight gain and helps you solidify the healthy habits you've built, making your fat loss results long-lasting and more sustainable over time. These phases will allow you to preserve your muscle mass, boost your metabolism and improve your mental relationship with food.

- Tip: Calculate your new maintenance calories based on your current weight and activity level. A maintenance phase should last anywhere from 4-8 weeks, allowing your body to recover from sustained calorie restriction.

- Tip: Continue to focus on nutrient-dense foods and avoid slipping into old habits. Use this phase to re-establish balance, rather than reverting to overeating.

2. Refine Your Strength Training Program: By this point, your strength training program should be well-established, but that doesn't mean you can't continue to make gains. To avoid stagnation and ensure ongoing progress, switch up your routine every few months by changing the exercises, increasing the intensity or adding new training techniques.

A long-term study published in The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research found that consistently applying progressive overload and modifying strength programs can enhance muscle retention and fat loss over the course of a year.

# Months 10-12: Living for Longevity

As you approach the one-year mark, your focus should shift from short-term fat loss to long-term health and longevity. Continue emphasising a balanced, nutrient-dense diet, maintaining regular physical activity and finding ways to enjoy these healthy habits. At this stage, you should feel that your routine is integrated into your life without it feeling like a constant “diet” or restrictive practice.

## Action Plan

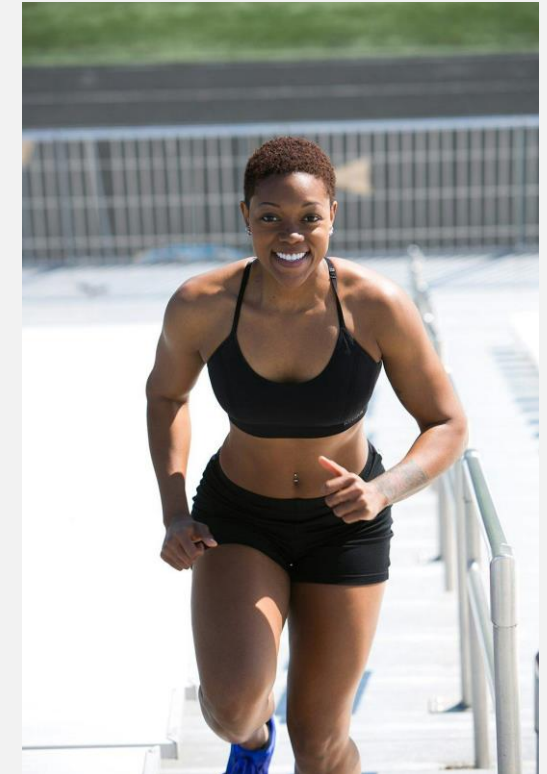
### 1. Emphasise Long-Term Habits for Overall Health.

- Tip: Experiment with flexible dieting. After almost a year of structured fat loss, you’ve likely learned what foods work best for your body. Try using an 80/20 approach - eating whole, nutritious foods 80% of the time, while allowing room for indulgences 20% of the time. The IIFYM concept, or ‘If It Fits Your Macros’, is a flexible dieting approach that emphasises tracking proteins, fats and carbohydrates rather than strictly counting calories or adhering to rigid food rules. The idea is that as long as you meet your daily macro goals, you can eat a variety of foods, including treats, without derailing your fat loss efforts. This method promotes sustainability and encourages a healthier relationship with food by allowing for more personal choice and flexibility, making it easier to stick to a nutrition plan in the long run.

- Tip: Stay active in ways you enjoy - whether it’s hiking, cycling, swimming or playing a sport. Regular activity shouldn’t always feel like hard work. Discover activities that make you look forward to movement.

2. Focus on Stress Management and Sleep. Chronic stress and sleep deprivation can hinder your efforts, even if your nutrition and exercise are on point. Incorporating daily relaxation techniques and sleep hygiene practices will help regulate hormones like cortisol, which can impact fat storage.

- Tip: Incorporate mindfulness practices like meditation, yoga or deep breathing exercises for at least 10 minutes daily. These practices can reduce stress and lower cortisol levels, which may promote fat loss around the stomach.





# Months 10-12: Living for Longevity

At this point, your relationship with the scale should evolve. Instead of constantly focusing on numbers, shift your attention to how you feel, how your clothes fit and the strength and energy you've gained. This shift in mindset will help prevent frustration if the scale doesn't move as rapidly as it once did.

## Action Plan

3. Continue Tracking Non-Scale Victories. Focusing on non-scale victories can promote a healthier mindset around body image and prevent burnout, making fat loss more sustainable in the long run. There's something quite satisfying about not feeling out of breath on a walk or fitting into that pair of jeans!

- Tip: Reflect on how far you've come - take time to appreciate your improved health markers like lower body fat percentage, better cardiovascular health or increased strength.

- Tip: Use tools like a fitness journal or a photo diary to continue tracking progress without relying on the scale. These visual and written records will remind you of your progress and motivate you to keep going.

4. Celebrate Your Success and Set New Goals. By the end of this long-term program, you should feel proud of the progress you've made. It's important to recognise the hard work you've put in over the past year and celebrate both big and small wins. Setting new goals - whether it's maintaining your weight, continuing to build muscle or improving your overall fitness - will help keep you motivated moving forward.

- Tip: Set new goals that challenge you and push you further. These might include training for a race, lifting a heavier weight or something new like climbing a mountain! New goals will keep you engaged and excited about your journey.

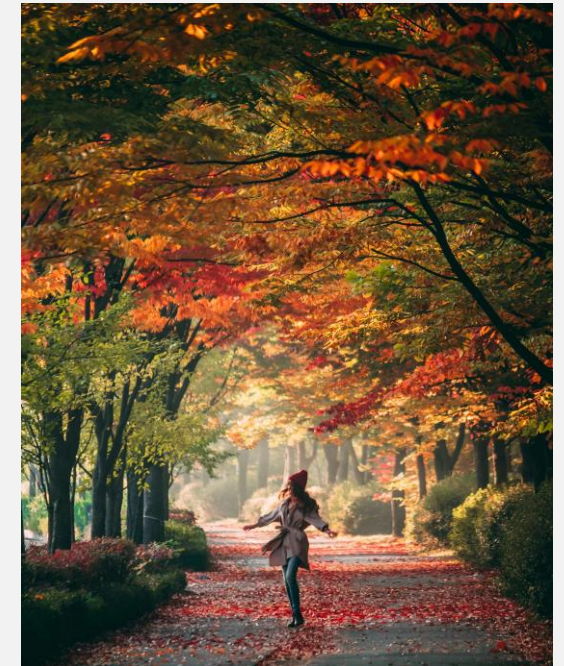
# Your Transformation, Your Future

Congratulations on making it through a full year of focused fat loss! This journey has equipped you with a wealth of knowledge and practical strategies to achieve sustainable fat loss while enhancing your overall health. You've developed strong habits, built a healthy relationship with food and exercise and transformed your body in a sustainable way. The long-term plan ensures that these changes become a permanent and achievable part of your lifestyle.

As you move forward, remember that fat loss is a journey, not a destination. Embrace the progress you've made, celebrate your achievements and stay committed to your goals. The tools and knowledge you've gained will serve you well, helping you maintain your progress and adapt to future challenges.

If you have any questions or feel like you could use more personalised guidance, don't hesitate to reach out. At Thrive Nutrition, we're here to fully support you every step of the way on your health journey. If you're looking for a more comprehensive, tailored approach, we offer full nutritional packages designed to help you achieve lasting results. With our expert guidance, you'll get the tools, resources and accountability to transform your health from the inside out.

Whether you're just getting started or ready to take things to the next level, we're here to make the process simple, motivating and completely focused on your unique goals. Together, we'll make sure you get the maximum benefit from everything we have to offer!



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# The small print

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2. Department of Health, 2021. Exercise and fat loss: Guidelines for health and fitness. UK Government
3. University of Warwick, 2022. Sleep and its effects on hunger hormones. Available at: <https://warwick.ac.uk>

## Disclaimer

At Thrive Nutrition, we want to make sure you're fully informed. While our action plans and guides offer expert advice and practical strategies for better health, they do not replace medical care. These guides are designed to support your wellness journey, but they are not medical advice and we don't claim to diagnose, treat or cure any medical conditions.

Our plans are created independently of your medical history, medications (past or present) or any ongoing treatments. That's why it's essential that you check in with your doctor, especially if you're being treated or supervised for a specific condition. They'll ensure that any changes you make work safely, alongside your current care.

Your health is personal and we're here to support you on your journey. But it's important to keep your healthcare provider in the loop about anything that might affect your wellbeing. Let's make sure you're supported on all fronts as you move forward!

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# Crush Cravings

Break Free from Emotional Eating

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# Take Back Control from Binge Eating



We've all been there... Reaching for chocolate when stress strikes, grabbing snacks out of boredom or eating when we're not even hungry... Emotional eating is more common than you think, but over time, it can damage our relationship with food, leading to weight gain, guilt and frustration.



Emotional eating is not a lack of willpower - it's often a response to deeper feelings and triggers. Understanding this is the first step towards reclaiming control over your food choices and your life. We'll focus on building awareness, identifying triggers and creating healthier habits. You deserve a balanced, joyful relationship with food and this guide is here to support you at every step.



This program is designed to guide you through breaking the cycle of emotional eating with practical, research-backed strategies. Whether you need short-term relief or are looking for long-term change, this plan provides a structured path to success with tools and tips to make each step achievable.



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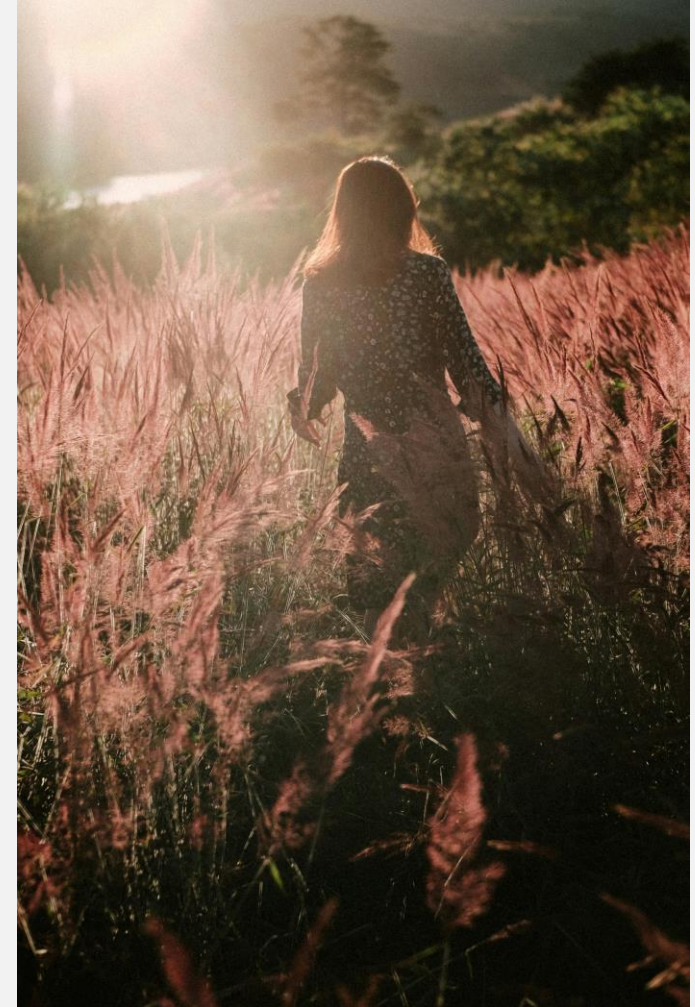
Take control and silence your cravings

References



# Short-Term Plan

Building Awareness and Gaining Control



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# Week 1: Track Your Eating and Emotions

In the first four weeks, the goal is to become more aware of your emotional eating patterns and triggers. This foundational step is crucial in identifying what's behind your eating habits and beginning the process of change.

Building awareness is the foundation for breaking emotional eating habits. By tracking what, when and why you eat, you gain clarity about your triggers and eating patterns. Emotional eating often happens because we can't process what we're feeling. When you become more aware of your body and can label emotions accurately, you start to regain control, reducing the need to soothe with food.

## Action Plan

1. Keep a detailed food and mood diary. Write down everything you eat, the time you ate it and how you felt before and after eating.
  - Tip: Use the enclosed tracker and emotions wheel to help identify and record everything. Honesty and detail are key.
  - Tip: Consider tracking your menstrual cycle to help link feelings and behaviours.
2. Reflect on your entries at the end of each day to spot any emotional patterns.

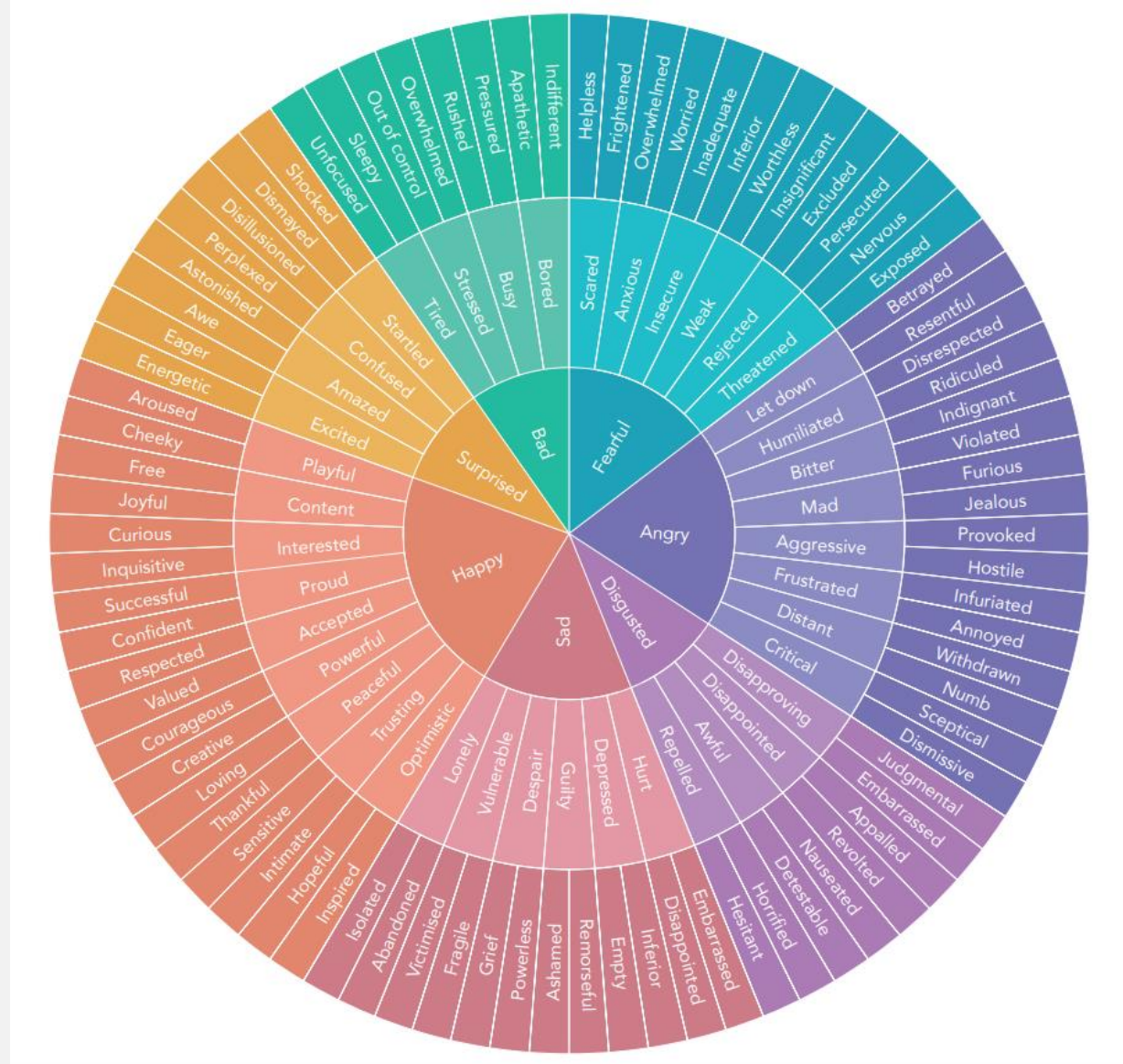
This process helps you become aware of emotional triggers, which is the first step toward change.



# Daily Food & Mood Tracker

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks	Notes
What did I eat?					
How did I feel? (use the emotions wheel)					
What caused those feelings?					
How do I actually want to feel? (use the emotions wheel)					
What can I do to create those feelings without food?					

# The Emotions Wheel



# Week 2: Practice Mindful Eating

Mindful eating helps break the cycle of mindless snacking and emotional eating. By slowing down and paying attention to your body's signals, you'll recognise when you're truly full and satisfied. Mindful eating reconnects you to your hunger and fullness signals, allowing you to eat for nourishment rather than emotional reasons.

## Action Plan

1. Dedicate time to eating without distractions; no TV, phone or work.

- Tip: Set a timer for 20 minutes to make sure your meal isn't rushed.

2. Take smaller bites and chew slowly. Pause halfway through your meal to assess your hunger level.

3. Engage All Senses During Meals: Focus on the colours, textures, smells and flavours of your food. This will help you reconnect with the experience of eating.

4. Incorporate Mind-Body Practices. As emotional eaters, many of us are disconnected from our bodies. Try to integrate mind-body practices such as breathing exercises. These practices promote body awareness and help you become more attuned to hunger and fullness signals. Focus on how your body feels during and after meals.

Studies show that mindful eating reduces emotional eating and overeating, helping you regain control over your eating habits.

# Week 3: Identify Emotional Triggers

Recognising your emotional triggers empowers you to respond to emotions without using food as a crutch. Practice distinguishing between physical hunger and emotional hunger. Physical hunger comes gradually, while emotional hunger is sudden and craves specific comfort foods (like ice cream or crisps). Awareness is the first step. By recognising the difference between emotional and physical hunger, you'll begin to understand when food is filling an emotional void rather than physical need.

## Action Plan

1. Review your food diary to find patterns. Do you reach for food when stressed, bored or upset?
  - Tip: Start a list of your common triggers and keep it visible, so you're more mindful when they arise.
2. Identify three emotional situations that lead to eating. Over time, you'll notice patterns and gain greater insight into your emotional triggers.
  - Identifying and addressing emotional triggers is essential for managing emotional eating.

The more you acknowledge and accept your emotions, the less likely you are to suppress them with food. Emotional resilience isn't about never feeling stress or sadness - it's about responding to those feelings in a healthy, constructive way.

# Week 4: Develop Healthy Coping Strategies

Emotional eating is often a quick fix for deeper emotional needs. Replacing this with healthier alternatives creates lasting change. Emotional eating happens automatically. By pausing and redirecting, you build the space to make conscious decisions rather than reacting impulsively. Choose non-food ways to manage emotions.

## Action Plan

1. When an emotional trigger arises, pause and take 10 deep breaths.

- Tip: Before reaching for food, pause and ask yourself what you're really feeling. Can you wait for five minutes before eating? Often, the urge will pass.

2. Keep a list of go-to activities that help manage emotions without food. For example, take a walk, call a friend, listen to music or do something creative. Experiment with relaxation techniques such as yoga and meditation.

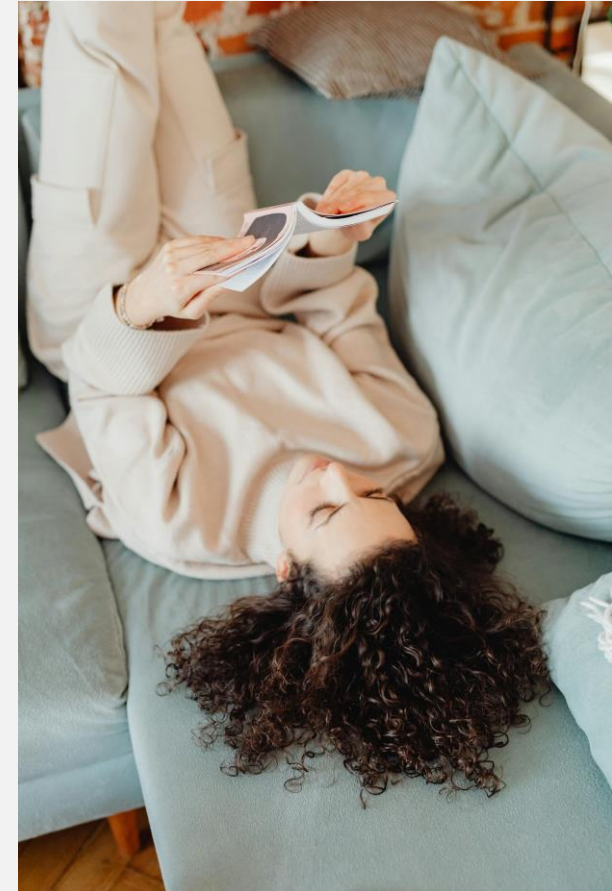
- Tip: Below is list of positive coping mechanisms to consider;

Walking  
Journalling  
Self-care

Fresh air  
Call a friend  
Coach / therapy

Time alone  
Reading  
Connect with others

3. Identify activities that make you feel good and write them down for easy access during moments of stress. Building non-food coping strategies reduces the reliance on emotional eating and supports overall emotional health.





# Medium-Term Plan

Reinforcing Healthy Habits



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# Month 2: Reframing Food

Over the last few months, you've expanded your ability to cope with emotions and started to adapt how you think about food. You're well on your way to creating a stronger, more resilient relationship with yourself and with what you eat. This is about progress, not perfection - so keep building on these habits. You're doing an amazing job and every step brings you closer to a more balanced and fulfilling life. When you reframe food as fuel, you start making more deliberate, health-driven choices that improve both your physical and mental well-being. Planning your meals also reduces impulsivity and reinforces the idea that food is there to nourish, not to pacify emotions.

## Action Plan

1. Reframe Food as Fuel. Move from viewing food as emotional comfort to seeing it as fuel for your body. Learn more about nutrition and focus on how different foods make you feel physically. Aim to nourish your body with balanced meals that stabilise your mood and energy.

- Tip: Avoid an overly restrictive diet - this phase is about balance, not deprivation.

2. Create a Weekly Meal Plan. Plan your meals ahead of time to reduce impulsive eating. Choose nutrient-rich, whole foods, such as lean proteins, whole grains and plenty of vegetables. When you take the time to plan, you're less likely to turn to quick, emotionally-driven food choices.

- Tip: Every Sunday, spend 20 minutes planning your meals for the week. Stick it on your fridge as a visual reminder. This removes the "what should I eat?" decision fatigue that can lead to emotional eating.

# Months 3-4: The Role of Micronutrients

Magnesium and vitamin D are essential for mood balance. By ensuring your body has enough of these key nutrients, you can improve mental resilience and reduce the emotional fluctuations that often lead to overeating.

## Action Plan

1. Boost Your Mental Health with Magnesium-Rich Foods. Magnesium plays a significant role in managing anxiety and stress, two key triggers for emotional eating. Add more magnesium-rich foods like leafy greens, almonds, pumpkin seeds and dark chocolate to your diet.

- Tip: Magnesium helps regulate cortisol levels (your body's stress hormone) and promotes a calm state of mind, reducing emotional eating impulses.

2. Focus on Vitamin D for Mood Regulation. Vitamin D is often linked to sunlight, but did you know it's also a crucial factor in mood regulation? Low vitamin D levels are associated with higher rates of depression and mood swings. Boost your intake through fortified foods, fatty fish or supplements if needed - especially during the winter months when sunlight is limited.

- Tip: Try incorporating a handful of pumpkin seeds as a snack or adding salmon to your meal plan twice a week for an easy boost in both magnesium and vitamin D.



# Months 5-6: Challenge Your Food Rules

Removing the emotional charge from food and breaking free from rigid food rules decreases the likelihood of binge eating or emotionally overindulging. This strategy fosters a healthy, balanced relationship with all foods.

## Action Plan

1. Challenge Your Food Rules. Many of us hold rigid beliefs about food - what's "good" and "bad." Start identifying any food rules you've internalised over the years and question them. For example, if you've always labelled chocolate as "bad," allow yourself a small piece occasionally without guilt.

- Tip: The goal is to neutralise emotional power food has over you.

1. Practice Food Flexibility. Experiment with flexible eating. Incorporate small indulgences mindfully and balance them with nutritious meals. Let yourself enjoy favourite foods in moderation. This practice will teach you that no single food can derail your progress and that indulgences, in moderation, can coexist with a healthy lifestyle.

- Tip: Challenge one food rule per week by adding a small serving of a previously "forbidden" food to your meal. Eat it mindfully and notice how you feel before, during and after.

# Long-Term Plan

Sustaining and Strengthening Change



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# Months 7-9: The Gut-Brain Axis

Congratulations on making it this far! You've spent months building new habits and transforming your relationship with food and now it's time to take it to the next level. The long-term focus is about deepening that control, reinforcing your emotional resilience and exploring new strategies. You're now ready to fully embed these practices into your life for good, so food no longer controls you but serves as a source of nourishment and pleasure.

## Action Plan

1. Explore the Gut-Brain Axis: New research highlights the connection between the gut and brain, also known as the gut-brain axis, which significantly impacts mood and emotional regulation. Support your mental health by incorporating more prebiotic and probiotic-rich foods into your diet. Add fermented foods like kimchi, kefir and sauerkraut, as well as high-fibre foods like oats to nourish your gut and, in turn, improve your mood regulation.

- Tip: Enjoy a side of kimchi or sauerkraut with your meals to support gut health.

2. Support Emotional Regulation. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fatty fish, flaxseed and chia seeds, have been shown to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Including these foods regularly in your diet can help you better manage emotional stress and reduce cravings linked to mood fluctuations.

- Tip: Aim for two portions of fatty fish (like salmon or mackerel) per week.

Your gut health is directly tied to your mental health and by nourishing your gut with the right foods, you can significantly reduce emotional stress. Omega-3s, on the other hand, help regulate the chemicals in your brain that control mood and stress responses, reducing emotional eating triggered by mood swings.

# Months 10-12: Balance Blood Sugar

Fluctuating blood sugar can contribute to mood swings, which often trigger emotional eating. Stabilising blood sugar helps prevent the physical crashes that lead to cravings.

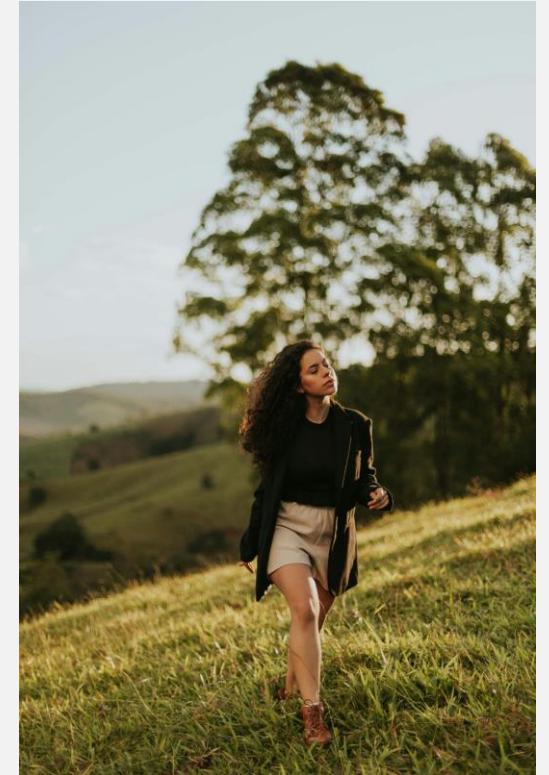
## Action Plan

1. Leverage Nutrition to Balance Blood Sugar and Mood. Focus on low glycemic index (GI) foods like whole grains, beans and non-starchy vegetables, which release energy slowly, keeping your blood sugar stable throughout the day.

- Tip: Reduce refined carbs and sugars that cause spikes and crashes in energy, which often leave you feeling emotionally vulnerable. Try out some of the swaps on the next page!

- Tip: Also, include protein with every meal to help keep blood sugar levels stable.

2. Practice Fasting or Time-Restricted Eating (TRE). New research suggests that time-restricted eating promotes natural appetite regulation and helps prevent late-night binges. Start with a 12-hour eating window (e.g., 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.) and gradually reduce it to 10 or 8 hours if it feels manageable. This approach not only regulates eating habits but helps align your eating schedule with your natural circadian rhythm, improving both mood and energy.



# Try these Refined Carb Swaps

Research from Diabetes Care shows that diets high in refined sugars and carbohydrates can lead to poor insulin sensitivity, while low-glycemic foods can significantly improve insulin function within weeks.

Instead of this...	Try this...
White rice	Brown / wild rice or riced cauliflower
White bread	Wholewheat or wholegrain bread
Pasta	Wholewheat pasta, spaghetti squash or courgetti
Chips	Cauliflower mash, sweet potatoes or cooked and cooled white potatoes (with skin on)
Sugary breakfast cereal, cornflakes	High-fibre, low sugar cereal or low sugar bran flakes
Instant oats	Steel-cut / rolled oats
Crisps	Nuts or raw veggies for dipping

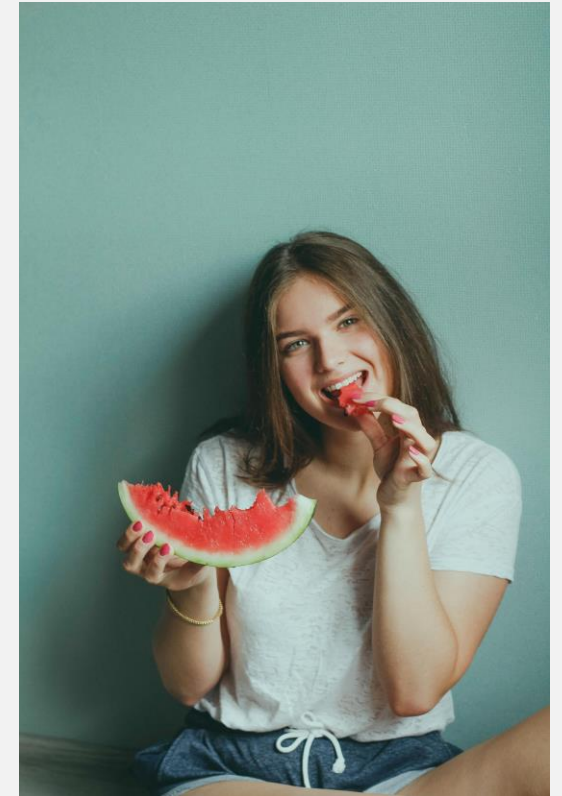
# Embrace Your Power to Transform

Breaking free from emotional eating isn't just about willpower; it's about self-awareness, compassion and growth. It's a journey of reclaiming control over your choices and with each small step, you're rewriting your relationship with food and emotions. Remember, setbacks are normal. They don't erase your progress; they teach you resilience. What matters most is that you keep moving forward, learning and adapting. Every choice to pause, reflect and choose differently strengthens your foundation for long-term change.

Imagine a life where food becomes nourishment, not a reaction to stress or sadness. Picture feeling in control, grounded and free from the cycle of emotional eating. You've already started this transformation and it's the cumulative effect of these daily actions that will lead to a healthier, more fulfilling future.

You don't have to do this alone. If you ever feel unsure, stuck or just need encouragement, reach out. Your journey is unique and I'm here to support you in any way you need. Together, we can make lasting changes and I'll be with you every step of the way - cheering you on as you move toward a more empowered, mindful relationship with food. Keep going, you've got this!

Whether you're just getting started or ready to take things to the next level, we're here to make the process simple, motivating and completely focused on your unique goals. Together, we'll make sure you get the maximum benefit from everything we have to offer. Let's thrive!



# The small print

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Our plans are created independently of your medical history, medications (past or present) or any ongoing treatments. That's why it's essential that you check in with your doctor, especially if you're being treated or supervised for a specific condition. They'll ensure that any changes you make work safely alongside your current care.

Your health is personal and we're here to support you on your journey. But it's important to keep your healthcare provider in the loop about anything that might affect your wellbeing. Let's make sure you're supported on all fronts as you move forward!

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# Beat the Bloat

Your Guide to a Healthier Gut

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# Unlocking the Power of Gut Health



Your gut is more than just a digestion machine - it's a complex ecosystem that impacts everything from energy levels to immune function and mental health.



Whether you're dealing with bloating, irregular bowel movements or just feel off, improving your gut health is one of the most powerful steps you can take for overall wellness.



This guide provides a short, medium and long-term roadmap, offering practical, achievable strategies that build lasting habits for a healthier gut.

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A Healthier Gut, A Healthier You

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# Short-Term Plan

4-Week Gut Reset



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# Week 1: Hydration and Fibre Boost

In the first four weeks, the goal is to calm your digestive system, eliminate irritants and introduce habits that lay the groundwork for long-term gut health. This phase is about resetting your gut and creating space for healing.

Hydration and fibre work together to keep digestion moving efficiently. Fibre absorbs water in the digestive tract, which helps bulk up stools and promotes regular bowel movements. Adequate water intake ensures that fibre can do its job properly, preventing constipation and bloating.

## Action Plan

1. Increase water intake to 2 litres per day: Begin your day with a large glass of water. Throughout the day, aim to drink a glass of water every couple of hours. Keep a water bottle on hand and set reminders if needed. Staying hydrated helps keep your digestive system flowing smoothly.

- Tip: If you struggle with plain water, infuse it with cucumber, lemon or mint for a refreshing flavour.

2. Add high-fibre foods gradually: To avoid overwhelming your digestive system, slowly increase your intake of fibre. Aim for 25-30g daily by incorporating vegetables (broccoli, leafy greens), fruits (apples, berries) and whole grains (quinoa, oats).

- Tip: Track your fibre intake with a food diary to ensure you're hitting your goals.

- Tool: Use a fibre tracker to check off daily servings of fruits, vegetables and whole grains (MyFitnessPal is easy to use).

# Week 2: Eliminate Common Irritants

Many people experience gut distress from common irritants like gluten, dairy and processed foods. Eliminating potential triggers can help reduce inflammation, ease digestive discomfort and give your gut the chance to heal.

## Action Plan

1. Reduce processed and sugary foods: Processed foods are often high in additives, sugars and unhealthy fats that disrupt the balance of bacteria in your gut. Focus on whole, unprocessed foods that are rich in nutrients and free from artificial ingredients.

- Tip: Check your cupboards and reduce the number of processed snacks, replacing them with more whole food options like nuts, fruits and seeds.

2. Eliminate gluten or dairy (optional): If you suspect sensitivity to gluten or dairy, try eliminating them for two weeks. Keep a journal of any changes in symptoms such as bloating, gas, or irregularity.

- Tool: Use the food & symptom tracker in this guide, to monitor how your body reacts during this elimination phase.

# Food & Symptoms Tracker

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks	Symptoms & Notes
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

# Week 3: Probiotic Power

Probiotics are beneficial bacteria that play a key role in balancing your gut microbiome, improving digestion and even supporting immune health. Fermented foods are natural sources of probiotics which introduce good bacteria to your system.

## Action Plan

1. Add fermented foods to your diet: Start with small portions of fermented foods like sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir or yogurt. These foods contain live bacteria that can help improve the diversity of your gut microbiome.

- Tip: Introduce one new fermented food each week, to avoid overwhelming your digestive system.

2. Consider a probiotic supplement: If fermented foods aren't for you, or you're looking for additional support, choose a high-quality probiotic supplement with multiple strains like Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium. Aim for a supplement that contains at least 10 billion CFUs (colony-forming units) per serving.



# Week 4: Slow Down and Chew

Digestion begins in the mouth. When you chew food thoroughly, you break it down into smaller pieces, which makes it easier for your stomach and intestines to process. Eating too quickly can lead to poor digestion, bloating and overeating.

## Action Plan

1. Chew each bite thoroughly: Aim to chew each bite 20-30 times before swallowing. This gives your digestive enzymes more time to work and prevents large food particles from entering your gut, which can lead to fermentation and gas.

- Tip: Set a timer for 20 minutes during meals and aim not to finish before the timer is up. Try to slow down your pace and savour your food.

2. Practice mindful eating: Remove distractions while eating - no TV, phone or computer. Focus on the smell, taste and texture of your food. This not only improves digestion but helps you tune in to your body's hunger and fullness signals.

# Medium-Term Plan

2-6 month Gut Restoration



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# Month 2: Strengthen Your Gut Lining

By the three-month mark, you should start feeling significant improvements in your gut health. This phase builds on the foundation by introducing deeper gut-healing strategies, reducing stress and refining your nutrition.

The gut lining acts as a barrier, preventing harmful substances from entering your bloodstream. When the gut lining becomes compromised (often referred to as "leaky gut"), it can lead to inflammation and a host of other issues. Strengthening your gut lining is essential for long-term gut health.

## Action Plan

1. Add gut-healing foods to your diet: Incorporate foods like bone broth, which is rich in collagen, as well as foods containing L-glutamine, an amino acid that supports gut barrier repair. You can find L-glutamine in foods like cabbage, spinach and beets, or take it as a supplement.

- Tip: Drink a cup of bone broth daily for its gut-soothing benefits.

2. Eat prebiotic foods: Prebiotics feed the good bacteria in your gut, helping them thrive. Foods rich in prebiotics include garlic, onions, leeks, asparagus and bananas.

- Tip: Consider prebiotic foods in your meal planning to help you include them regularly in your diet.

# Months 3-4: Stress and Gut Health

Chronic stress disrupts digestion, impacts your gut microbiome and can worsen symptoms like bloating, heartburn and constipation. Managing stress is critical for maintaining a healthy gut.

## Action Plan

1. Incorporate relaxation techniques: Engage in activities like yoga, meditation or deep breathing for around 10 minutes a day. These practices lower cortisol (the stress hormone) and support healthy digestion.

- Tip: Download a mindfulness app like Calm or Headspace to help you build a daily meditation routine.

2. Get enough sleep: Aim for 7-8 hours of restful sleep per night. Sleep is when your body repairs itself, including your gut lining and digestive system.

- Tip: Monitor your sleep quality and make adjustments to your bedtime routine as needed.

# Months 5-6: Digestive Enzyme Production

As you refine your diet, it's essential to ensure your body is efficiently breaking down and absorbing nutrients. Digestive enzymes help break down proteins, fats and carbohydrates, preventing bloating and discomfort.

## Action Plan

1. Incorporate more enzyme-rich foods into your diet. Certain whole foods naturally contain enzymes that can help your body break down and absorb nutrients more efficiently.

Pineapple: Contains bromelain, an enzyme that aids in breaking down proteins. Eating pineapple with meals can give your digestive system a natural boost.

Ginger: This root stimulates saliva, bile and gastric enzyme production. Try adding fresh ginger to your tea, smoothies or meals to support digestion naturally.

Mango: This tropical fruit contains amylase, an enzyme that helps break down carbohydrates. A few slices of mango after meals can aid digestion.

These natural sources are an effective way to enhance your digestive system's efficiency. They work with your body to support enzyme production and gut health, while also providing other important nutrients. Just by tweaking your meals and adding these foods, you can take a more holistic, food-first approach to improving digestion.

- Tip: Try incorporating one or two of these enzyme-rich foods into your daily meals. For example, snack on fresh pineapple or add a serving of mango to your lunch. Over time, these small changes can make a noticeable difference in your digestion!

# Long-Term Plan

One Year Gut Health Overhaul



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# Months 7-9: Trial Intermittent Fasting

As we progress towards the one-year mark, your gut health should be improving. Now, the focus shifts to maintaining and optimising these healthy habits. This phase will introduce more advanced strategies like intermittent fasting, seasonal eating and continued gut nourishment.

Intermittent fasting (IF) can give your digestive system the time it needs to rest and repair, reducing inflammation and encouraging a healthier gut microbiome. It's also shown to support healthy weight management and improve insulin sensitivity, both of which are critical for long-term metabolic health.

However, IF isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. According to recent research in the UK, while some people see great results, others may struggle with low energy, disrupted sleep or increased stress hormones when fasting for too long. That's why it's essential to listen to your body and adapt IF in a way that works for you. Women, in particular, may experience hormonal imbalances, if fasting is too long or too frequently. Therefore, the key is tuning in to your body's signals - if you're feeling fatigued or unwell, it's worth adjusting the duration or frequency of your fasting periods.





# Months 7-9: Trial Intermittent Fasting

## Action Plan

1. Start with a 12-hour fasting window: Aim to stop eating by 7 p.m. and have breakfast the next morning at 7 a.m. This is a gentle way to ease into fasting while giving your digestive system a break.

- Tip: Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water during your fasting window. Herbal teas and black coffee are also great options if you need something warm.

2. Gradually increase your fasting window. If you feel comfortable and your energy levels remain stable, try extending your fasting window to 14 or even 16 hours over time. For instance, finish dinner by 6 p.m. and have your first meal around 10 a.m. the next day.



Monitor your body's response: Everyone's body reacts differently to fasting. Keep a journal to track how you feel - note your energy levels, digestion, mood and sleep. If you experience any negative symptoms, it may be a sign that IF isn't right for you or that you need a different approach. Ultimately, finding a rhythm that supports your unique needs will help you achieve the best results.

# Months 10-12: Embrace Seasonal Eating

Eating seasonally is more than just a trend - it's about aligning your body with the natural cycles of the year. When you eat foods that are in season, you're getting produce at its peak, which means it's fresher, packed with nutrients and often better for your gut. Seasonal eating helps support your gut bacteria by providing a diverse range of nutrients, which is key to maintaining a healthy, balanced microbiome. Plus, seasonal foods tend to be more in tune with what your body needs at different times of the year - cooling, hydrating foods in the summer and warming, grounding ones in the winter.

## Action Plan

### 1. Choose Local, Seasonal Produce:

Each season brings different benefits to your plate. In the spring and summer, go for lighter, cooling options like leafy greens, cucumbers, berries and fresh herbs. These foods are great for hydration and keeping inflammation in check as temperatures rise. In autumn and winter, switch to more grounding, warming foods like root vegetables (think carrots, beets, sweet potatoes), winter squashes and legumes. These are rich in fibre and essential for gut health as the weather cools down and your digestive system craves more comfort.

- Tip: Check out your local farmers market or use a seasonal food guide to see what's fresh and locally available. Not only will this keep your meals varied, but it also supports local farmers and reduces your environmental footprint.



# Months 10-12: Embrace Seasonal Eating

## 2. Continue Your Gut-Friendly Habits:

Just because you're switching up your seasonal foods doesn't mean you should forget your core gut health practices. Keep up with your intake of probiotic-rich foods like yogurt, kefir and fermented vegetables (such as sauerkraut or kimchi). Don't neglect prebiotic fibres either - foods like onions, garlic and asparagus are excellent sources that feed your gut bacteria. Mixing these with seasonal foods gives your microbiome the variety it needs to stay strong and diverse.

- Tip: Experiment with new seasonal recipes to combine both prebiotic and probiotic foods. A winter stew with garlic, onions, root vegetables and a dash of miso is a great way to support gut health when the weather's cold.



Not only does eating seasonally benefit your gut health, but it's also a more sustainable and natural approach to nutrition. Your body evolves with the seasons and so should your diet. When you embrace this way of eating, you're giving yourself the right tools to feel energised, balanced and nourished all year long. Seasonal eating keeps things interesting too, with new foods coming into focus every few months, so you're less likely to fall into a rut with your meals.

# A Healthier Gut, A Healthier You

By following this action plan, you've taken crucial steps towards optimising your digestion and overall health. Gut health is a marathon, not a sprint and consistency is key. Whether you're just starting or well into your gut health journey, remember that small, consistent changes lead to significant long-term benefits. Embrace this journey and trust that your gut is a key player in living a vibrant, healthy life.

If you have any questions or feel like you could use more personalised guidance, don't hesitate to reach out. At Thrive Nutrition, we're here to fully support you every step of the way on your health journey. If you're looking for a more comprehensive, tailored approach, we offer full nutritional packages designed to help you achieve lasting results. With our expert guidance, you'll get the tools, resources and accountability to transform your health from the inside out.

Whether you're just getting started or ready to take things to the next level, we're here to make the process easier, motivating and completely focused on your unique goals. Together, we'll make sure you get the maximum benefit from everything we have to offer.

Ready to dive in? Let's thrive!



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