

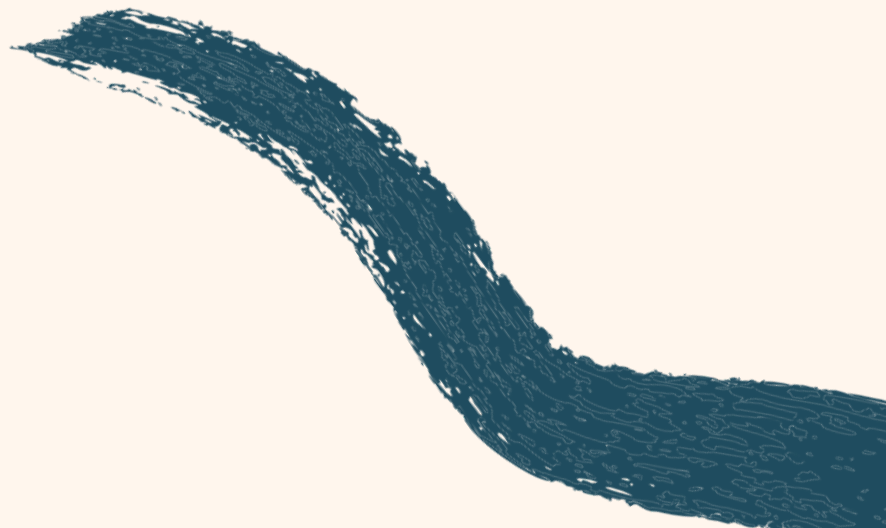


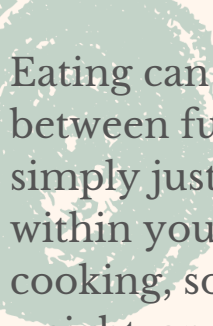
Expert  
Nutrition and  
*Wellness*





FUEL Your *fit* Life





Eating can be *hard*, especially when you're active. It takes a balance between fueling your body right, quality nutrients, and foods that are simply just there for enjoyment (something that is totally OK btw) all within your already busy lifestyle. Navigating grocery shopping, cooking, social events, what to eat before/after a workout, cravings, weight, an on-the-go lifestyle, a career, and your overall health is A LOT, but it doesn't have to feel this way.

I've created this guide to help YOU stop overthinking food. Our society's emphasis on good/bad foods, weight, and fad diets makes food so much more CONFUSING than it needs to be. This guide is here to clear it up for you. It will help you stop viewing food as the villain, break free from food rules, and start ENJOYING FOOD AGAIN so you can live more freely and focus more on what's really important to you.

So to get started, let's chat about some basics!

## WHAT YOUR BODY *really* NEEDS:

No matter what your activity level, your body needs energy (or calories) to function optimally. If you didn't put gas in your car, would it still run? NO. You can put the best oil in your engine, but if you don't fill it with enough gas you won't get far from your own driveway! Diet culture and our society's focus on superfoods, detox teas, and the like teaches you that calories are something you can just look past. BUT, that isn't the reality.

Your brain alone needs at least 250 calories DAILY to function optimally. That's like the amount of calories in a hearty bowl of oatmeal! Your heart needs around 450 calories and just your liver and kidneys alone need almost as much as a 10 lb puppy! Yes, this is in just 1 day. So, what am I getting at with all this sciency stuff?

Due to essential organs, your baseline energy needs often START around AT LEAST 1200 calories (and 1600 calories for men) and that's before you even open your eyes in the morning. And no, this doesn't even begin to cover your workout. Actual needs vary above these numbers based on your height, weight, daily life, genetics, and exercise.



So, does this mean I want you counting calories? **ABSOLUTELY NOT**, but it's important to be aware of what these numbers really look like. I'm sure you have questions though. How do people seem to function perfectly fine on low calorie diets? Why am I not hungry for more? Why does my weight stay the same if I'm eating well below that?

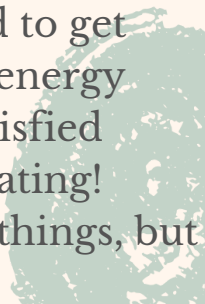
Unlike a car, your body is equipped with a backup system to keep you moving during energy-scarce times. Your metabolism **SLOWS DOWN** will run certain body processes slower or not at all to conserve energy. What you see as weight management or even just eating healthy, your body can see as a threat. Over time, this can work against you. An underfueled body will age easier, digest food poorly (hello, bloating and gas) and keep you dragging with fatigue in your life and workouts. Your hormones can get all out of whack (wondering where that period went?) and, to make matters worse, you may be left overthinking food and exercise and dealing with uncontrollable cravings and episodes of overeating. Stuff that totally gets your way of you living your best life.

This isn't meant to scare you, love. It's meant to bring these side effects of constant dieting, restriction, and strict food rules to your attention because diet culture doesn't do that for you. When your metabolism gets thrown off, it's not that your body doesn't need the energy, it's that it's just not used to getting it. To set your body (and life!) up for long-term success, all you have to do is retrain it.

*Create* A MORE SUSTAINABLE DIET:

Rather than thinking about food as the enemy, I want you to shift your mindset to how can this food work **FOR ME**.

Each time we eat, there are a few different things that we need to get out of a meal or snack. Really, our goals should be to support energy needs, get some nutrients, be satisfied in the moment, stay satisfied until the next time you eat, and actually **ENJOY** what you're eating! Obviously, everything we eat is not going to meet all of these things, but it helps to put it into perspective. Just a munching session?




Maybe all we are getting is enjoyment and that's perfectly OK. Actually hungry or eating a meal? The more of these goals we want to hit.

The important thing to remember with this is that ALL FOODS fit into the goals above. To create a more sustainable eating pattern we need to shift our mindset away from “no” foods to **everything in moderation** while keeping the above in mind. When certain foods are labeled “off limits,” we crave them more and this totally throws off our internal cues. Instead, focus the majority of your intake on hitting MOST of the goals above, but be mindful of your cravings, allow for flexibility, and listen to your hunger cues, which brings me to my next point...

## GET TO KNOW YOUR *hunger* FULLNESS CUES:

Our bodies are designed in a way so that our brain and digestive system (or our gut) are constantly communicating back and forth, So, why can it be hard to recognize hunger and fullness cues? We are born with the ability to eat when we are hungry and stop when we're full by listening to our body's signals (intuitive eating). But, certain things can make it difficult to recognize and trust our hunger and fullness cues making this all the more confusing





To help tune into your body's hunger cues, think of hunger and fullness like a scale of 1-10. Feeling starving, like with stomach pains, a headache, weakness and/or even "hangry" is a 1, 5 is neutral or not full anymore but not hungry, and 10 I like to call "Thanksgiving full," you're extremely uncomfortable, almost feeling nauseous. Ideally, our mind and body function best when we stay within the 3 to 7 range. But, there are instances when the extremes occur and that's totally OK. As long as we feel good about it and satisfied in our mind, body, and soul (like on Thanksgiving!), there is absolutely nothing wrong with this. It's all about how we feel about it.

Aim to stay within the 3 to 7 range on this scale at most meals and snacks, but know life doesn't always work out that way and that's OK. Use this scale not to control your choices but to simply feel more EMPOWERED around food and how you're feeling.

Managing your diet can be stressful, especially if you deal with constant consuming thoughts around food, exercise, and/or your weight. **When you put these practices into place, you won't lose control over your diet, you'll gain FREEDOM. You'll slowly start to learn to trust your body again and enjoy life more fully.**

If you find that any of the above are difficult to accomplish on your own or you just can't stop overthinking it, please don't hesitate to reach out. There is so much more to living than what we eat.

Lexi

