



Empowered

Diet Balance

& Food Reintroduction

Live Life While Confidently
Supporting Health and Fertility

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LIVE LIFE WHILE CONFIDENTLY SUPPORTING HEALTH AND FERTILITY

Elimination diets can be hard, especially when there is no end in sight or benefit to be gained. When we're trying to heal root causes of health issues, figure out fertility issues, or improve egg quality, it's important that we do an elimination diet at first. Doing this helps us to find food triggers and causes of inflammation that can be driving these problems for us.

Eventually, though, we need to find a good dietary balance. This means we understand exactly what kind of food affects us and how so that we can only eliminate what is absolutely necessary for our health moving forward.

Remember, environmental factors like diet and nutrition are more powerful deciding factors in our health than our actual genes themselves. Genes are suggestions for how a certain part of your body or cell can act, but the environment dictates whether that gene gets turned on or off, and ultimately is the most important thing that we have control over.

Our goal in this phase of the process is to determine what, if any, sensitivities to foods you have so that you can continue eliminating what needs to be and you can resume eating those foods that you don't react to.

A very important point: If you find that your body doesn't do well with a certain food it is extremely important that you avoid that food for the vast majority of the time (if not always). Even if it's a food you really love, it may not love you and your health back! Consistently eating a food that you react to triggers a chronic inflammatory response that can wreak havoc on your gut, hormonal health, and continues sending the "unsafe for reproduction" message to the body. Inflammation is a type of chronic stressor and creates an environment inside that keeps your body in fight or flight mode.

Let's only eliminate what we need to and continue eating in a way that supports optimal health and fertility, and creates great quality eggs.

PROCESSED AND ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

Processed and ultra-processed foods are all those boxed and packaged foods include some substance extracted from real food (some skim milk) but then have a whole bunch of additives, preservatives, chemicals, and other lab-created ingredients that we can't pronounce. These are things like breakfast cereals, cookies, cakes, chips, soda's – these foods move through a machine and are chemically or structurally changed in some way and have added preservatives. These types of foods are full of pesticides, chemicals, and contribute to toxin overload in our body.

Heavily processed foods are still things we're going to stay away from - they shouldn't make up any substantial portion of our diet at any point for us to maintain optimal health and fertility.

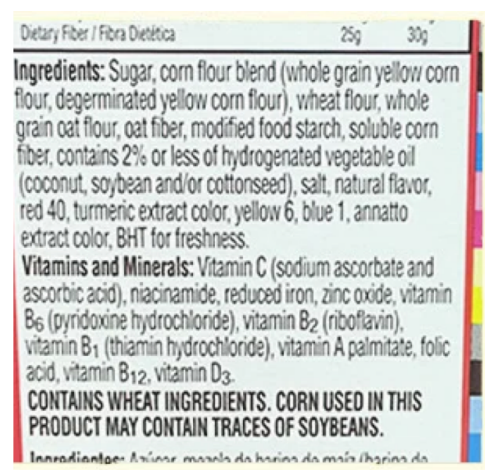
While we're not going to include processed or ultra-processed foods, there is room for what we call minimally processed foods. These are made from natural foods and ingredients and are altered by different processes like drying, crushing, filtering, fractioning, refrigeration, freezing, roasting, removing certain parts, packaging, pasteurization, etc. They frequently do not have the same fillers, chemicals, and preservatives, which relieves our body from having to detoxify these things.

Minimally processed foods can be included as long as the label has ingredients that you recognize. When checking the label ask yourself:

1. Can I find the ingredients to make this myself if I had to?
2. What are the quality of the ingredients? (skim milk vs full fat, folic acid fortified? etc)



Minimally processed



Heavily processed

The other foods that we eliminated in the first week of our Cleanse are:

- Gluten/wheat/grains
- Corn and rice
- Dairy
- Soy
- Coffee
- Alcohol

Let's discuss each one and then we will talk about how to put them back in, in what order, and what you should look for in terms of reaction.

GLUTEN

A common misconception about "gluten" is that it is 1 single protein only found in wheat, barley, and rye. In fact, gluten should really be referred to as "glutens" because this is actually an expansive family of proteins whose job is to provide a source of nourishment for seeds. Not only do glutens give the seed vital nutrients for germination and continuation of the plant, glutens also protect the seed's embryo from being eaten into extinction by predators.

This is vital to fully understand: glutens are a family of proteins designed to protect seeds by causing upset and damage in predators who would eat those seeds.

This family of proteins has about 1,000 confirmed different type of glutens. The most common gluten that we know of and refer to is called alpha gliadin. Alpha gliadin is the most studied form of gluten found in wheat, barley and rye but every grain that exists has its own form of gluten. An example is below:

GRAIN	GLUTEN PROTEIN
Wheat	Alpha gliadin
Oats	Avenin
Millet	Panicin
Corn	Zein
Rice	Orzenin

****Gluten is the #1 scientifically recognized trigger for autoimmune disease****

When we consider the purpose of gluten proteins in protecting seeds from predators, the fact that its consumption can cause autoimmunity is not shocking. They're literally designed to cause inflammation and discomfort. When gluten gets inside the gut it causes the damage of something called zonulin, which is a protein responsible for forming those tightly connected epithelial cells important in protecting us from absorbing toxins into our bloodstream. Damage to this protein, and to these cells, over time causes leaky gut, which as we've talked about before is one of the key root causes in almost all disease.

There are 45+ million cases of autoimmunity, most of which are in women. Autoimmune disease is the #1 cause of death in women over 65 with a disturbing exponentially increasing trend. It is believed by many in the scientific community that gluten is one of the primary reasons for these autoimmune problems, including cancer and heart disease.

Unfortunately, antibody testing for gluten can be misleading because they only test for a single type of gluten: alpha gliadin, which is the gluten predominantly found in wheat. Since alpha gliadin is the most studied gluten and it's most associated with celiac disease, this is the only one that gets tested. There's a few problems with this:

1. Not everyone who has a sensitivity or intolerance to gluten will test positive for the antibodies
2. Non-celiac gluten sensitivity is more common than celiac disease
3. Celiac disease is actually a *rare* manifestation of gluten sensitivity

This is probably one of the most misunderstood pieces of gluten sensitivity. There are countless doctors, healthcare practitioners, and fertility 'experts' who will say that "you don't need to eat gluten-free if you don't have celiac disease". This is categorically untrue and wrong for the following reasons:

1. **Gluten sensitivity is the #1 cause of unexplained infertility in women.**
2. Gluten sensitivity is not a disease but rather a genetic predisposition that can LEAD to disease - if you have gluten sensitive gene markers AND you expose them to gluten the result is going to be excessive inflammation.
3. Excessive inflammation from gluten exposure in a person who is gluten sensitive can lead to over 100 different diseases including Hashimoto's hypothyroidism, celiac disease, cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, bone loss, infertility, and many many more issues.
4. It is estimated that at least 6% of the population has non-celiac gluten sensitivity. In contrast, only 1% of the population has celiac disease. Of those 1% who have celiac, only 50% receive a diagnosis while the other 50% don't get one for years or maybe decades.

Given that non-celiac gluten sensitivity is 6x more common than celiac disease itself, it is clear that more people than only those who are diagnosed with celiac have issues with gluten. We can't make the assumption that you don't have a gluten issue simply because you may have tested negative for celiac disease, which unfortunately is what too many practitioners will do.

With the fact that gluten exposure in someone who is gluten sensitive is proven to cause over 100 different diseases, including infertility, we absolutely *must* rule out a gluten sensitivity or intolerance. The best way to do this is an elimination and reintroduction.

However, gluten is a tricky one to reintroduce because it is so closely linked with causing inflammation and autoimmunity. It's also tricky because ALL grains have a form of gluten, and someone who is gluten sensitive might be sensitive to multiple different ones.

To make this even *more* complicated, gluten has been dubbed "the great deceiver" and this is because it can have opioid-like effects in certain people that masks the damaging effects that gluten has on the gut lining. This opioid-like effect can allow gluten to mask its own toxicity for years until the body is no longer able to keep up with all the damage caused.

For these reasons, I recommend reintroducing these foods slowly over time in a specific order. If you have a diagnosed autoimmune condition like Hashimoto's hypothyroid (if you have positive TPO and/or Tg antibodies), ulcerative colitis, rheumatoid arthritis, etc. continue to keep most grains out and only reintroduce rice, quinoa, and other flours (like sorghum, millet, teff) one at a time and stop if they observe any symptoms of a reaction at all. I do not recommend reintroducing wheat, barley, and rye glutes in the presence of an autoimmune disease, and in fact many specialists and functional medicine doctors use an elimination of gluten in the treatment of such autoimmune illnesses with great results.

If you have PCOS, IBS, leaky gut, or nutrient deficiencies then I strongly recommend that you do not reintroduce wheat, barley, and rye gluten (which is the alpha gliadin) for at least 3-6 months. Other grains like rice, quinoa, and above-mentioned flours can be slowly reintroduced, and stopped if any reaction should occur. PCOS and gluten sensitivity are commonly found together, especially when there is gut dysbiosis, or leaky gut involved.

Sourdough?

Sourdough breads actually do break down some of the gluten proteins making it easier to digest. It's also more nutritious (and delicious). It's because of its increased nutritional value that sourdough is one of the best ways to consume regular wheat, though I still don't recommend it if you have any autoimmune disease, especially Hashimoto's. When you already have autoimmune disease it means there has been a progressive immune triggering that has caused enough damage to detect measurable differences in the way the body functions. Gluten is the #1 known cause of autoimmune diseases, and should be avoided in those already diagnosed with one.

We will discuss order of reintroduction for grains in a little bit.

RICE AND CORN

Rice and corn are both grains that contain gluten proteins, and so for those who are gluten sensitive these can set off an inflammatory reaction, contributing to autoimmune disease or general oxidative damage throughout the body.

One of the biggest issues with rice is the high prevalence of arsenic, which is unfortunate because it is a staple food for millions of people. There are 2 types of arsenic found in our soil: organic and inorganic. Inorganic arsenic is a known carcinogen! Organic arsenic is less toxic but still concerning and not something we want to be eating in large quantities or giving our children (rice milk, rice snacks, rice cereal).

Rice soaks up both types of arsenic very easily and makes its way into us. There is no "safe" limit of inorganic arsenic - it is carcinogenic and even the EPA states this shouldn't be something consumed.

In order to decrease the amount of arsenic consumed in rice, it needs to be soaked:

1. Short Soak: Rinse and soak for at least 2 hours, then drain before cooking. This reduces levels of arsenic in rice
2. Long soak: Place 2 cups of rice in large bowl with 2 cups of water. Add in 2 Tbsp of fresh lemon juice or apple cider vinegar. Let soak at room temperature for 7 hours. Drain, rinse, then cook as usual.
3. Cooking rice using the "pasta method" - this is using A LOT of water per cup of rice (about 6-10 cups of water). Boil until cooked to your desired texture then drain like pasta. Some studies have shown a 60% reduction in arsenic when rice is cooked this way

White Rice Versus Brown Rice

Many people eat brown rice because it's been touted as the "healthier" option when it comes to rice. There are several problems with this, though.

- Brown rice contains significantly more arsenic than white rice. In fact some brown rice tested 50% over the "safe" limit, while others tested twice the "safe" limit
- It contains anti-nutrients and phytates in the bran, which reduces the bioavailability despite the additional vitamins or minerals present in brown rice
- Brown rice is harder to digest
- It also reduces dietary protein and fat digestibility when compared to white rice

It's for these reasons that I recommend eating white rice over brown rice, when tolerated. When prepared correctly and eaten with a protein and fat we not only decrease arsenic but we also maintain a good blood sugar balance. Since white rice is just pure starch it can spike our blood glucose fairly quickly. We can lessen these effects by eating a balanced meal containing enough protein and fat. For those of you who have some insulin resistance or blood sugar imbalance issues then cutting the amount of rice in half and substituting the other half with cauliflower rice might be beneficial.

The rice grown in California generally has the lowest arsenic levels. Lundberg Organic White Basmati Rice has tested well below the safe limit and is one of the best brands and types to eat.

In terms of corn, we want to avoid all processed forms of corn when possible. This includes corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, and corn oil. We also want to avoid genetically modified corn, which accounts for around 85% of all corn grown nowadays.

When buying any kind of packaged or pre-made food it's important to check for the presence of corn, as it's again one of the more triggering foods for autoimmune diseases (like Hashimoto's/hypothyroid).

The type of corn you can eat (if tolerated) is organic whole food corn, or organically and well made corn products like chips or tortillas.

The corn gluten, zein, has been shown in studies to still cause inflammation, even as severe as developing neuropathy from corn flakes (yes, true case study). Corn gluten contributes to a persistent antibody response in celiacs because zein contains similar sequences to wheat glutes, inducing the same type of reaction. If you have celiac, or you discover a gluten sensitivity, OR you have autoimmune disease then it's best to stay away from corn products altogether.

GRAIN REINTRODUCTION

The following grains can be added in first:

1. Quinoa - properly soaked and prepared
 - a. Soaking quinoa = 2 cups of quinoa covered with 6 cups of water. Add in 1 Tbsp of fresh lemon juice or apple cider vinegar. Leave at room temperature for 24 hours then drain, rinse, and cook as usual
2. White rice (soaked as outlined above)
3. Buckwheat - this is technically a seed and does not contain any "wheat"
4. Amaranth

Then you can move on to adding in:

1. Corn
2. Sorghum, teff, millet (most commonly found in "gluten free" products)
3. Oats
4. Wheat, barley, rye (only if you don't have autoimmune disease)

Ideally you want to have most of your grain intake be from quinoa, white rice, buckwheat, and amaranth if possible, with corn, oats, wheat, barley, rye being less emphasized.

A note on gluten free products:

Gluten free products are usually made with rice flour, which is still a gluten protein. If you have gluten sensitivity and continue to consume other grains you can still be causing damage if you haven't ruled those grains out as being triggers for you. Gluten free products that contain rice also have the arsenic that rice absorbed, so that's another consideration.

One of the biggest concerns people have when it comes to dairy is not getting enough calcium in, however some of the most calcium-dense foods are dark leafy greens and not dairy products. Current FDA recommendations is to get anywhere from 1000mg to 1300mg of calcium per day, but experts and research disagree on this point. Many experts suggest that eating between 600-800mg of calcium from highly absorbable food sources is plenty to keep optimal health.

This can be easily attained from eating a variety of whole food sources that are high in calcium. The foods below list some of the foods with the highest calcium content:

Food/Serving	Calcium (mg)
Sesame Seeds/0.25 cup	351
Sardines (with bones)/3.75 oz can	351
Yogurt/1 cup	296
Collard Greens/1 cup	268
Spinach/1 cup	245
Cheese/1 oz	204
Turnip Greens/1 cup	197
Mustard Greens/1 cup	165
Beet Greens/1 cup	164
Bok Choy/1 cup	158
Almonds, dry roast/2 oz	150
Cow's milk/4 oz	138
Swiss Chard/1 cup	102
Kale/1 cup	94
Cabbage/1 cup	63
Broccoli/1 cup	62
Brussels Sprouts/1 cup	56
Green Beans/1 cup	55
Oranges/1 medium	52
Cinnamon/2 tsp	52
Summer Squash/1 cup	49
Parsley/0.5 cup	42
Asparagus/1 cup	41
Celery/1 cup	40
Cumin/2 tsp	39
Basil/0.5 cup	38
Garlic/6 cloves	33
Oregano/2 tsp	32
Leeks/1 cup	31
Romaine Lettuce/2 cups	31

DAIRY

Dairy is another group we eliminated in the first portion of the cleanse phase. This is because not only do people have a lot of reactions to the lactose in milk (the milk sugar), but there are also the milk proteins that cause reactions as well. The proteins that people have the most trouble with are casein and whey, and it's estimated that around 70-80% of adults develop an allergy or reaction to dairy at some point. Interestingly, some people who develop a dairy issue later in adulthood get this because of gut damage and leaky gut from the inflammatory damage of gluten.

If you are diagnosed with an autoimmune disease like Hashimoto's then it's really important that we continue to eliminate dairy. It is quite common for the proteins casein and whey to cause inflammation and damage and contribute to ongoing autoimmune triggering, especially in Hashimoto's.

Dairy may also contribute to some blood sugar imbalances in women who have PCOS or insulin resistance. In this case dairy can be consumed, if tolerated, in small quantities.

Since dairy is a very nutritious food group with lots of vitamins, minerals, and good fat content we do want to put this back in if possible. If you do not have any type of autoimmune disease, then reintroducing dairy can be done. However, given the high rate of dairy intolerance (80% of adults!) it's important that if any reaction is noted that we go back to eliminating it.

In terms of improving our fertility and health we want to make sure that it's *full fat dairy* that we consume. No low fat or no fat dairy products! A study out of Harvard University found that women who consumed skim or low fat dairy products had infertility rates 85% higher than those who consumed full fat dairy products. When eating dairy, eat the full fat version - whole milk, cream, full fat yogurt, and avoid products that have low fat dairy.

Dairy can be reintroduced in any order - goat's, sheep, or cow - with any product you wish. Yogurts, cheese, milk, etc. are all good to put back in slowly (we'll be going over the reintroduction timing down below).

Non-dairy options for eating include: coconut milk, almond milk, cashew milk, oat milk, coconut oil in place of butter, coconut yogurt, almond yogurt, beef protein instead of whey protein powders, cashew cheese, dairy-free/soy-free cheese option like Daiya, coconut ice cream or almond ice cream

SOY

Generally thought of as a health food, soy can actually cause a lot of health issues. Unfortunately for us, soy is one of the most commonly produced crops in the world and you can find it in almost anything processed in the form of soybean oil.

There are now hundreds of studies that link modern processed soy to a myriad of health problems like malnutrition, thyroid problems, digestive issues, reproductive disorders to even cancer and heart disease. Soy has such a connection to so many disease because it is very high in toxins that are resistant to normal methods of elimination (like soaking) *and* it's high in phytoestrogens.

Soy estrogens are called isoflavones, and there's a big dietary myth out there that these are actually good for our health. Isoflavones are estrogen-like compounds that are designed to act as the plant's natural pesticide - these cause predatory insects to become sterile! Some studies have found that having less than 1 cup of soy milk per day can contribute to hypothyroidism, weight gain, fatigue, and constipation. In fact, there are many animal studies that show isoflavones in soy can cause infertility and thyroid disease.

There are different kinds of soy - modern and traditional sources of soy. Traditional sources are miso, tempeh, soy sauce, and natto and in Asia these are usually consumed in small amounts mostly as condiments. Even traditional tofu was created using a different process that included fermentation.

Modern soy products are generally made with something called soy protein isolate, which is a protein powder that is made from the waste product of soy oil manufacturing. Yes, soy protein isolate is industrially processed from a waste product. This type of soy can contribute to nutrient deficiencies like vitamin B12 and zinc.

In addition, the vast majority of soy produced worldwide (99%) is genetically modified and is a crop that is highly sprayed with pesticides. In fact, it is one of the most heavily sprayed crops, so the dose of chemicals and pesticides we can get from soy products is high.

Soy can actually cause a lot of inflammation in those with autoimmune conditions, so it should generally be avoided. For those who like to eat soy or tofu I recommend eating a traditional fermented tofu, or using miso, tempeh, or natto (fermented soybeans).

Unfortunately there is a lot of conflicting evidence when it comes to soy. Some studies show the isoflavones have estrogen effect, others anti-estrogenic effect, and others show a neutral effect. Given what we know about how it's produced and the pesticides used to make soy, my best recommendation is that *some* soy from quality traditional sources is perfectly fine, however Soy should never make up the majority of your protein source, as it's not a complete protein and can contribute to nutrient deficiencies.

Soy milk should be swapped out for other non-dairy milks like oat milk or almond milk. Some soy in limited amounts (a few times per week) from more traditional sources is fine.

COFFEE

As we previously spoke about, coffee isn't bad for you just because of the presence of caffeine. Though there are some people who do not process caffeine well and that can cause a problem, the biggest issue with coffee is the high amount of mold, mycotoxins, pesticides, and chemicals that can be found in 97% of coffee.

When considering reintroduction of coffee it's important to consider two things:

1. How does your body specifically handle caffeine
2. How can we significantly reduce the toxins that can come with coffee

For fertility and trying to conceive, it is generally recommended to have only 1 cup of regular caffeinated coffee per day. This can be good for some but not good for others because some people do not process caffeine well, which can contribute to imbalances.

I recommend that if you absolutely love coffee for the flavor and ritual of it then you can drink a high quality brand that is decaffeinated using the Swiss water method. Regular processes used to decaffeinate coffee can include the use of solvents like methylene chloride, which is an industrial solvent commonly used as a paint stripper. Not something we want to drink- yuck!

I also recommend not using any kind of automatic coffee maker like a Keurig that has an attached water reservoir and internal components that are hard to clean. These types of coffee makers not only have plastics and other chemicals in the material, but mold very easily develops in the internal tubing and is hard to clean, or rarely cleaned.

The best way to make coffee that does not introduce additional toxins, plastics, or chemicals is through a drip method (like a Chemex) or a french press.

Brand recommendations:

- Lifeboost coffee
- Bulletproof
- Purity
- Natural Force

ALCOHOL

Alcohol does effect our health and fertility, especially when consumed regularly. As we've discussed before, alcohol consumption is related to fertility issues in both men and women and birth defect rates are increased as well.

But life is life and sometimes we need a drink, or we're going out with friends, or we just love wine. I get it! My recommendation here is to get organic wine that is free of sulfites/nitrates and have it at most one drink once per week. Ideally you might want to keep it at only a couple of times per month.

I recommend red wine if you're going to have alcohol, and to stay away from any kind of cocktails that are full of sugar (and sometimes glitter? Don't get me started on this). Dry Farm Wines is a curated wine delivery service that delivers wines that fit this description (USA delivery only). There is also [Organic Wine Find](#) where you can search for the best organic wines that you can pick up at your local store.

Red wine. Organic. Sparingly, BUT -

When you decide to have wine I want you to relax and enjoy it. Red wine does actually have some good properties in it that can be good for the body in small amounts. So unless you personally notice that your body does not do well with drinking then it's ok to have this once in a while. If you experience flushing face, itchiness, headaches, have difficulty sleeping, or any other discomfort after only 1 regular glass of wine this might be your body's way of saying it doesn't really agree with you, or that particular wine might have had something in it.

HOW TO REINTRODUCE FOODS BACK IN

You can reintroduce any type of food you'd like to in any order. The only rule in reintroduction is to do one food at a time every week. You can eat your reintroduced food (RF) once on the first day and observe over the next 36-48 hours to gauge if there's any change at all. You can have it again after 48 hours if you have not noticed any reaction. Once you eat it the 2nd time you can decrease the window to 24 hours. If not reaction to that then you may eat it as many times in a day (while still following the food plan) over that week. If by the end of the week you have not noticed any change, then you can move on to the next food.

If, however, you do notice any symptoms then you should remove the food for another 2 weeks, and you can try again if you'd like to double check the reaction. If your reaction is very obvious and you don't feel like you need to double check this, then continue eliminating that food. If you double check by trying again and you have a reaction the 2nd time, this should be a food you eliminate. This is a good thing! You've discovered a food trigger you previously didn't know was causing inflammation and damage within your body.

SYMPTOMS OF TRIGGERING FOODS

When you're reintroducing foods, if you find that you have any of the following symptoms anywhere from 15 minutes to 2 days after eating then this could signal a reaction and food trigger:

- Bloating, cramping, pain, gas
- Change in bowel movements
- Constipation, diarrhea
- Change in body odor
- Itchiness, rash, or hives - even one single hive that shows up on your face or body after eating something can signal a reaction
- Acne, or sudden appearance of a pimple up to 2 or 3 days after eating RF
- Feeling very sluggish or tired - If you experience feeling very very tired around 2 hours after eating this can also signal an inflammatory response or it could mean this food is causing a blood sugar imbalance
- Itchy ears - If you are itching the inside of your ears a lot this is correlated with food sensitivity
- Anxiety - feeling anxiety in the immediate time to 2 days after eating can mean a RF sensitivity
- Runny nose, congestion, or post nasal drip - If you have a runny nose soon after eating, or a congested nose/post nasal drip up to 2 days after reintroduction this can mean a sensitivity
- Pain in feet - are your feet hurting when you step out of bed in the morning?
- General pain in body, joints, back

- Feeling of heart racing or skipped beats
- Headaches
- Trouble sleeping - if your sleep has gotten better after a food has been removed and then experience poor sleep after reintroduction, this can be a sign
- An increase in allergy symptoms/seasonal allergies
- Swelling of fingers and joints - are your rings a little tighter the morning after reintroducing a food?
- You feel run down like you're coming down with a cold

If you observe these signs then you may need to eliminate that food altogether. It can be a process to find these - progress, not perfection! Just keep going.

THE 80/20 RULE

A lot of the trying to conceive experience is one of limitation and restriction. We do so much to get our bodies in a better place, but sometimes this can leave us feeling mentally exhausted with constant thoughts of, "I can't eat this, I can't do that because it's bad for my fertility".

I'm giving you a pass right now. We don't **have** to be perfect all the time with this stuff! Our bodies are very resilient, and it can handle quite a bit especially when we're instituting all the techniques and strategies that we're learning with not only our nutrition but also with sleep, stress, toxin elimination, etc.

Enter the 80/20 rule. Aim for 80% of your week to look really good, and 20% of the time you can let loose a little more and eat what you want within the boundaries of your food triggers. If you have celiac, please don't eat grains or glutes. If you know you react to dairy, then you still shouldn't be eating dairy. But if you don't have a problem with certain foods like pizza or pasta or other minimally processed foods then this can be back on the menu. Even some processed foods can be consumed in this 20%.

We're still going to continue making sure that we're supporting our liver detoxification daily - taking our NAC, drinking our daily detox drink, eating lots of colorful things with good variety. When we're doing these things along with all of our other stress, sleep, exercise, and toxin elimination (and keeping within our food plan for the other 80%) then this 20% of leeway isn't going to tip the apple cart. Your body will be able to handle it.

This isn't your ticket to go totally nuts and eat all the processed food in the world, but it is your moment to let go of thinking that little things will make a huge difference especially when you're taking care of all the other stuff. Your body is resilient, it is strong, and you are giving it what it needs!

EATING OUT

While it's always healthier to prepare your meals at home so you can control what ingredients are used (like the cooking oils), eating out is a fun thing to do! I love eating out and there are some simple things you can do while eating out to keep things health and fertility friendly.

1. Eat lots of colors! No matter what you decide to eat, make sure there are lots of colors that are involved at some point during the meal
2. Lemon water - this will help get some vitamin C in during the meal and gives just a little extra something towards the liver
3. Yes, you can still have things like french fries but consider these high carb things cooked in less-than-optimal oils as side dishes or condiments. Keep colorful things as the main portion
4. Ask for substitutions if necessary, and continue to avoid food triggers or allergies - if you have a gluten intolerance then it's fairly easy to navigate this now with so many options available in most restaurants. Ask your server for help in this and play the allergy card
5. Salad dressings are usually made with soybean oil or canola oil - ask for olive oil instead and some balsamic vinegar (but if you can't or you just really love this one dressing that you're positive is made with less optimal ingredients, then that's ok - concentrate on lots of colors in the salad!)
6. Ask for a side of avocado if necessary to round out your healthy fat intake
7. Alcohol should ideally be red wine
8. Try to avoid having super processed and refined desserts - opt for a flourless chocolate cake, Crème Brûlée, or a fruit and cheese platter