

RENEW FOOD PLAN

Comprehensive Guide



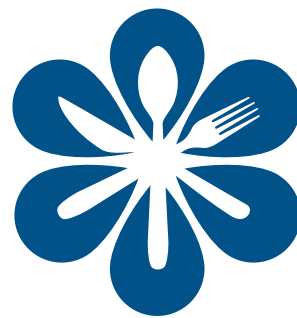


Table of Contents

What is the “ReNew Food Plan”?	3
Why ReNew?.....	4
Features of ReNew Food Plan	5
Touring Through the ReNew Food Plan	17
Preparing for the ReNew Food Plan	24
Frequently Asked Questions	25
Resources and Tools for Success..	28

What is the “ReNew Food Plan”?

The ReNew Food Plan prescribed by a Functional Medicine practitioner is a therapeutic, short-term approach followed for a specific amount of time, often used as a first step in:

- **Ridding the body of the most common foods that cause inflammation**
- **Identifying food allergies, sensitivities, intolerances, and triggers**
- **Eliminating foods with potentially addictive and harmful components**
- **Providing nutritional support for the body’s detoxification systems**

The following questions may help to determine if the ReNew Food Plan is right for an individual:

- Do you routinely consume and crave fast food, packaged foods, and processed foods with sugar or flour?
- Do you consume fish or shellfish regularly? If so, what kind and where does it come from?
- Do you regularly eat fruits and vegetables that are nonorganic?
- Do you eat fewer than five servings of fresh fruits or vegetables per day?
- Do you consume lots of animal products every day (e.g., meat, milk, cheese, and eggs)?

If a person answers “yes” to one or more of the questions above, he or she may have an addiction to sugar or processed foods, may be exposed to a high level of potential food triggers or allergens, or may have a high total body burden of toxins. The ReNew Food Plan focuses on removing processed foods with sugar, grains, and dairy—the main sources of most food allergies and intolerances (also referred to as food sensitivities)—as well as artificial sweeteners and processed chemicals. As a result of eliminating these foods and chemicals from the diet, the body will be better able to repair tissues and eliminate toxins.

A Functional Medicine practitioner may also suggest a gut restoration or healing program for patients who present with intestinal permeability (leaky gut). In this stage of healing, an assessment of digestive function may identify sources of gut bacteria or pathogens that create imbalances within the gut microbiome.



What is the “ReNew Food Plan”?

One of the most important aspects of the ReNew Food Plan is the emphasis on consistent intake of foods that help optimize function of the primary organs of elimination and reduce stimulation of the immune system. The gut needs to work efficiently to provide one to two well-formed bowel movements daily. Without proper movement of the bowels, fewer toxins are excreted from the body. Some of these excreted toxins are processed by the liver and are released through the bile. Adequate daily dietary fiber intake (at least 35 grams daily) from colorful, phytonutrient-rich, non-starchy vegetables also aids in elimination of endotoxins in the stool. Some converted toxins are also eliminated through urine, which is why proper hydration is essential for optimal detoxification.

The ReNew Food Plan is designed to support not just the gut, but also the liver, the hub of detoxification processes. When neglected through lack of nutrients or overburdened by an increased toxic load, the liver’s capacity to detoxify becomes compromised. By implementing this food plan, an individual will decrease toxin intake and experience better digestive function, improved immune function, and enhanced liver detoxification.

Some individuals may need to follow this plan (or a variation of it) long term. A Functional Medicine practitioner can personalize the plan, advising individuals on how to add certain foods back into the diet while maintaining exclusion of others.

Why ReNew?

The ReNew Food Plan is a nutritional pathway to health for those who have autoimmune, gastrointestinal, neurological, and other chronic health conditions. This plan is designed as a “whole systems reboot” to set an individual on a renewed path to wellness. It helps support healing by removing common food triggers that are contributing to metabolic dysfunction while providing the essential nutrients that are needed for health and vitality. The ReNew Food Plan is a way of eating that reduces intake of all sweeteners and processed foods, lowers inflammation, and improves the body’s ability to eliminate harmful substances. It places a strong emphasis on eating clean foods for life and avoiding those foods that impair the body’s ability to function properly.

The path to health and wellness is not a sprint, but rather a journey. This Comprehensive Guide supports an individual’s journey in following the ReNew Food Plan by providing tips on how to get started, what to eat, what to watch for, and how to provide the body with the right nutrients for improved utilization, elimination, and detoxification.



- **Supports Sugar Detoxification:** The term detoxification has been commonly used to refer to the process of withdrawing or “detoxifying” from recreational or prescription drugs, or from alcohol use. More recently, the meaning has expanded to include withdrawal or detoxification from unhealthy or addictive foods.

When used in the context of functional medicine, the term “detox” refers to the physiological process of rendering chemicals, compounds, hormones, and toxicants less harmful, allowing the body to achieve optimal health. This is often referred to as “metabolic detoxification”. The organs involved in detoxification work together efficiently to reduce the total body burden of toxins through elimination by the liver, kidneys, large intestine, lymphatic system, lungs, and sweat glands.

On the ReNew Food Plan, detoxification is supported by eliminating sugar, dairy, gluten, grains, alcohol, caffeine, and other processed foods that may contain heavy metals, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and artificial sweeteners, as well as foods that are high in pro-inflammatory saturated animal fats. By removing these components from the diet, thereby reducing environmental exposure to chemicals, the body is better able to convert toxins stored in fat cells into chemical compounds that are easier to eliminate via the urine or stool.

Most people are unaware of the addictive nature of sugar-containing foods. Sugar-laden foods can prompt overeating and weight gain, and they increase our risk of developing chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease. How did we become sugar addicts? Part of the blame lies with the food industry for using intense sweeteners in most of the processed convenience foods that many people consume daily. Highly-sweetened foods activate the ‘feel good’ receptors in the brain, much like addictive drugs. Constantly eating these foods raises blood sugar, which perpetuates the vicious cycle of food cravings. In fact, recent research has shown that sugar is eight times as addictive as cocaine! Other research has indicated that calories derived from sugar are more easily converted into belly fat compared with the calories from protein, fat, or non-starchy carbohydrates such as leafy greens.

It is important to understand why it is so essential to remove sugars (including artificial sweeteners) and processed chemicals from our bodies. One of those reasons is that prolonged consumption of these sugars and chemicals can alter brain chemistry. When we eat sugar-containing processed foods often, we get a rush of dopamine—a neurotransmitter associated with desire and pleasure. A constant barrage of dopamine dulls the dopamine receptors, which leads to an increased need for more and more of the addictive sugar to generate the same amount of pleasure over time. This increased need is called tolerance, and it explains why an occasional drinker might feel significant effects from a single alcoholic beverage, while a heavy drinker or an alcoholic may need several beverages to feel the same effect. Increased sugar tolerance has also been associated with an increased risk of depression, another major health concern.

Evidence also shows a clear association between excessive sugar consumption and risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and heart disease, as well as many other chronic diseases. In addition to these diseases, one could have ‘cardiometabolic syndrome’—a metabolic dysfunction with a constellation of symptoms including abdominal obesity, elevated cholesterol & triglycerides, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, low-grade systemic inflammation, and an increased tendency to form blood clots.



Features of ReNew Food Plan

While the dangers of consuming sugar and artificial sweeteners in excess are clear, removing them from the diet can be challenging because of their biologically addictive nature. The most effective way to put an end to sugar cravings is to replace all of the sugar and processed foods in the diet with nutrient-dense, whole foods that come from the ground or an animal. The ReNew Food Plan is designed to help reprogram an individual's biology and end the vicious cycle of processed food addiction.

Examples of refined sugars, natural sweeteners, and artificial sweeteners—all of which are excluded on the ReNew Food Plan—are listed in the table below.

Table 1. Refined Sugars, Natural Sweeteners, and Artificial Sweeteners

Refined Sugars	Natural Sweeteners	Artificial Sweeteners
Agave, agave nectar	Dates	Acesulfame
Cane juice, cane sugar	Honey	Advantame
Caramel	Maple syrup	Aspartame
Dextrose	Sorghum syrup	Dulcin
Fructose	Stevia	Equal
Glucose	Sucanat	Erythritol
Invert sugar	Yacon syrup	Glucin
Juice		Neotame
Lactose		Nutrasweet
Maltose		Nutrinova
Molasses		Saccharin
Sucrose		Splenda
Sugar (brown, coconut, date, granulated, raw, turbinado, white, etc.)		Sucralose
Syrup (brown rice, cane, corn, flavored, etc.)		Sweet'N Low
		Sweetmyx
		Truvia
		Twinsweet
		Xylitol

Features of ReNew Food Plan

The ReNew Food Plan will help detoxify the body from sugar and enhance overall health by:

- **Decreasing sugar cravings**
- **Providing nutritional support for the facilitation of toxin processing and excretion**
- **Resetting compromised metabolism**
- **Decreasing chronic pain and fatigue levels**
- **Enhancing weight loss**
- **Improving cognitive function and mood**
- **Creating more effective and satisfying sleep cycles**
- **Improving one's sense of wellbeing**



- **Eliminates Processed Foods:** The industrial revolution made food more accessible, more affordable, and in some cases, more nutritious with the fortification of certain foods. As a result, the incidence of malnourishment and macronutrient deficiencies plummeted.

During the industrial revolution, the food industry's goal was to make food affordable and accessible. However, now the goal seems to be to create products that influence consumers' taste buds and keep people coming back for more. Heat-and-eat boxed meals, microwavable frozen meals, drive-thru meals, as well as snack foods like chips, cakes, and donuts, are inexpensive and convenient, often taking little to no time to prepare. For many busy individuals and families, these products have become the primary sources of food—even in places where fresh foods are widely available—because of the minimal effort involved in preparing them. Further, health claims in packaging have created confusion for consumers. While convenient, these foods are generally made from low-quality ingredients that offer little to no nutritional value. Sugars are often added as a preservative to extend shelf life. Even foods that are not generally thought to be sweet—like pre-made sausages or pasta sauce—often contain added sugar. This sets the stage for sugar addiction, because many people don't realize they are consuming the sugar hidden in these processed foods.

For our purposes, processed foods are defined as packaged foods with more than five ingredients—including common allergens, additives, preservatives, chemicals, dyes, thickeners, and flavorings like MSG, salt, sugar, and fat. These processed foods are made from combinations of unprocessed, minimally processed, and processed food ingredients and are designed with convenience, rather than nutrition, in mind. Often, these foods are portable and can be eaten anywhere, requiring little to no preparation. Processed foods are often high in trans (partially hydrogenated) fats. These fats oxidize in the body, causing cellular damage. Antioxidants found in fresh fruits and vegetables can block or reverse the process of oxidation, but without these foods in the diet, oxidized fats can lead to inflammation and nutrient deficiencies.

Features of ReNew Food Plan

Most processed foods—even those advertised as fortified with vitamins and nutrients—offer limited nutritional value when compared with whole, fresh foods. In the United States, some food manufacturers use fortification as a selling point for processed foods of questionable nutritional value—including candy, snacks, and sweetened breakfast cereals. Research suggests that the synthetic forms of vitamins added to processed foods do not offer the same nutritional benefits as vitamins that occur naturally in food.

Examples of common processed foods—all of which are excluded on the ReNew Food Plan—are listed in the table below.

Table 2. Common Processed Foods

Food Category	Examples of Processed Foods
Grains and grain-based products	Breads, bagels, cakes, cereal, cereal bars, cookies, crackers, granola bars, muffins, pastas, pies, pizza, pretzels, rice and flavored rice mixes, tortillas
Dairy products	Cheese (any), ice cream, sour cream, yogurt
Vegetable-based products	Chips (potato, corn, tortilla, etc.), margarine
Meat products	Canned meats, cured meats, salted meats, and smoked meats (e.g., bacon, canned tuna, hot dogs, and sausages)
Vegetarian and vegan meat replacement products	Seitan, textured vegetable protein (TVP), veggie burgers
Boxed and canned meals	Canned chili, canned soups, frozen meals (diet and regular), shelf-stable dinner kits
Snacks	Candy, candy bars, dips, fruit-flavored gummy snacks, sweetened trail mix
Beverages	Bottled teas, fruit-flavored water, fruit juice blends, soft drinks, sports drinks
Store-bought condiments	BBQ sauce, chili sauce, chutney, duck sauce, jams, jellies, ketchup, liquid smoke, marinades (shelf-stable), marmalade, mayonnaise, mustard (flavored), pasta sauces, preserves, relish, salad dressings, salsa, sauces (especially pre-made, shelf-stable), steak sauce, syrups, tartar sauce
Herbs, spices, and other	Bouillon cubes, flavored seasoning packets, gravy mixes, spice blends

When it comes to processed foods, a couple of good rules of thumb to follow are found in Michael Pollan's books *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto* and *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual*:

- **Don't eat anything that is incapable of rotting.**
- **If it came from a plant, eat it; if it was made in a plant, don't.**

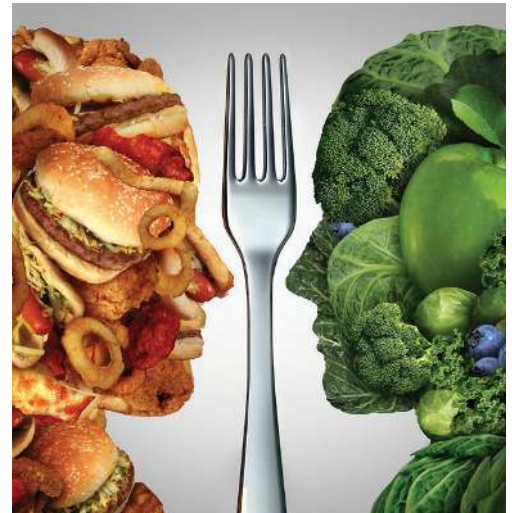
Features of ReNew Food Plan

In the ReNew Food Plan, processed foods do not include minimally processed or preserved foods like canned or frozen vegetables, or sauces and soups made with only one or two ingredients. These foods retain most of their nutritional value, and their ingredients are recognizable, containing minimal to no added preservatives or flavorings. Examples of these foods are frozen green beans, canned tomatoes, and fermented foods like sauerkraut. While whole, fresh, organic foods are optimal, cost and access may make it difficult to obtain fresh produce all the time.

- **Dairy-, Grain-, and Gluten-Free:** Because of their frequent association with adverse food reactions, dairy products are omitted from the ReNew Food Plan. Some of the trouble with dairy is due to the presence of lactose, a milk sugar. The lactose present in fresh milk and in many other commercially available dairy products can cause painful gas, bloating, and digestive upset, especially for those who lack adequate lactase, the enzyme needed to properly digest lactose. It is estimated that somewhere between 25% and 90% of the world's population is lactase-deficient.

Fermented dairy products like yogurt and sour cream are largely free of lactose, but these products contain casein, a milk protein that can also cause adverse reactions. There are different types of casein (A1 and A2 beta casein) in milk, depending on the type of cow (e.g., Holstein, Jersey, or Guernsey), and this too may impact tolerance. Some people who cannot tolerate A1 beta casein have no problem with A2 beta casein. However, researchers are continuing to investigate the role these casein proteins play in allergies, intolerances, and leaky gut. Until science clarifies the debate surrounding the different types of casein, the ReNew Food Plan eliminates all dairy products.

Gluten is a sticky, water-soluble family of proteins found in a few key grains (barley, rye, and wheat) and associated grain products (breads, cereals, crackers, pastas, etc.), all of which are omitted from the ReNew Food Plan. Gluten is also commonly found in various sauces, dressings, seasonings, and many other foods. Toxic proteins in gluten called gliadins can break down the microvilli (finger-like protrusions of intestinal cells) in the small intestine. This deterioration causes leaky gut, which can cause (and also be caused by) food allergies, sensitivities, or intolerances, as well as other digestive disturbances or autoimmune conditions. Some people respond well after gluten is removed from the diet, even in the absence of the usual gastrointestinal symptoms associated with gluten intolerance. A growing body of evidence links gluten exposure to neurological symptoms including depression, fatigue, migraines, and brain fog, which may seem to be unrelated to food intake. However, given that many neurotransmitters are produced in the gut, the link between overall gut health and brain health is undeniable.



Features of ReNew Food Plan

For many people, going gluten-free is not enough, especially with a growing number of gluten-free convenience foods now readily available. These foods—muffins, brownies, cake mixes, etc.—are often filled with substitutes and additives like corn, potato starch, and gums that can be just as damaging to the body, especially when they are a regular part of the diet. Additionally, gluten-free grains like rice, corn, and oats have proteins similar to gliadin, and these proteins can cause problems in gastrointestinal tracts that are already damaged or inflamed. For this reason, removing all grains from the diet, regardless of gluten content, is an essential step in the ReNew pathway to restoring health.

Many people don't associate grains with symptoms of food intolerance because of the frequency with which these foods are eaten. Repeated exposure to a trigger food can result in a chronic inflammatory response, which may be undetectable until the offending food is removed from the diet completely (usually for a few weeks) and later reintroduced. An acute or immediate reaction after reintroduction is a signal that the food causes an immune response in the body and thus should be eliminated from the diet for a longer period of time.

Examples of dairy products and grains removed from this plan are shown in the table below. Note that all products containing these foods as ingredients are also excluded from the plan.

Table 3. Dairy Products and Grains to Exclude

Dairy Products	Grains (gluten-containing)	Grains (gluten-free)
Butter	Barley	Amaranth
Cheese (all)	Bulgar	Arrowroot
Heavy cream	Oats*	Buckwheat
Half and half	Rye	Cassava
Ice cream	Seitan	Millet
Kefir	Triticale	Oats*
Milk	Wheat (farro, kamut, spelt, and all other varieties)	Quinoa
Sour cream		Rice
Yogurt		Sorghum
		Tapioca
		Wild rice

*Oats, even those that are labeled as gluten-free, are often processed in the same facility as gluten-containing grains and can become contaminated with gluten during processing. Additionally, even certified gluten-free oats that are never exposed to gluten can cause symptoms in some patients with celiac disease and gluten intolerance, as the protein structure found in oats is similar to that of gliadin. For this reason, patients should follow their practitioner's advice when reintroducing oats back into their diets.



- **Reduces Inflammation:** A growing body of scientific research suggests a connection between modern foods, inflammation, and autoimmune illnesses. Diseases that are epidemic in contemporary Western countries are rare or nonexistent in hunter-gatherer and less Westernized societies. These diseases are linked to foods and food products made popular during the industrial era—including dairy products, refined cereals, refined vegetable oils, and fatty meats from animals prevented from grazing. In fact, modern food processing techniques and the resulting products have fundamentally altered critical nutritional characteristics of the human diet: glycemic load, fatty acid composition, macronutrient composition, micronutrient density, acid-base balance, sodium-potassium ratio, and fiber content.

Many foods and chemicals can cause inflammation in the gut, and once the intestines are inflamed, absorption of nutrients is compromised. The intestinal lining becomes porous, which allows large particles of undigested food to pass through the intestinal wall into the bloodstream. This intestinal permeability can lead to a host of problems, such as fatigue, depression, more food intolerances, irritable bowel syndrome, autoimmune diseases, asthma, and many other conditions.



Over time, inflammation subsides with the elimination of certain foods—like gluten-containing grains, sweeteners, and dairy products—and the gut is able to heal, which means the immune system can begin to work properly again. This leads to an improved immune response to airborne contaminants and allergens, industrial contaminants, viruses, parasites, and bacteria—which means that individuals will be less affected by these toxins and infections, making them sick less often.

Another important point is that the intestinal lining is made of cells that replace themselves approximately every two to four days. This means that, in the span of a single week, every cell in the intestinal lining is digested or sloughed off and a new cell grows to take its place. Removing foods that cause inflammation from the diet makes this newly formed gut tissue stronger and healthier. Thus, it is important not only to remove potentially harmful foods from the diet, but also to supply the body with healthy, anti-inflammatory whole foods—especially those containing healthy fats, fiber, and an array of phytonutrients.

- **Identifies and Reduces Food Triggers:** Symptoms that have failed to respond to conventional medical therapy may resolve when a person follows the ReNew Food Plan. This plan can help patients identify any foods that may be connected to health concerns. Many people with food sensitivities don't realize how bad they feel, or that particular foods are the culprit, until the foods that trigger a reaction are removed from the diet. Food reactions are frequently overlooked as a contributor to chronic health issues. Some reactions are considered to be food **allergies**, meaning they cause severe symptoms immediately after a trigger food is eaten. Some reactions may be delayed by hours or even days; this type of adverse food reaction is referred to as a food sensitivity. Food **sensitivities** are usually the result of an imbalance in the gastrointestinal system that affects the immune system. Food **intolerances** are reactions to certain food chemicals (e.g., lactose, MSG, histamines, etc.) that occur when a person is lacking an enzyme or nutrient, resulting in an inability to properly metabolize certain foods.



Features of ReNew Food Plan

Removing the specific foods that cause adverse food reactions will allow the gut to heal, while simultaneously supporting detoxification pathways. Common food triggers are minimized or eliminated on the ReNew Food Plan, while nutrient-dense foods are included to support detoxification and gut health. As a person follows the ReNew Food Plan, it will become clearer which trigger foods should be avoided and for how long.

After completion of the ReNew Food Plan, a practitioner may suggest a personalized food reintroduction process for some patients. The goal is to expand the variety of healthy foods available to an individual for daily intake, not to maintain a long-term restrictive diet. Reintroduction involves adding back one food at a time and observing whether that food is associated with symptoms. Foods that continue to provoke symptoms (physical, mental, and emotional) are avoided until they no longer cause symptoms. Once the gut is healed, many foods that initially caused sensitivities may be reintroduced into a meal plan without symptoms. In the later stage of food reintroduction, the goal is to diversify the diet for optimal gut health. Eating the same handful of foods day after day does not provide the body with an array of phytonutrients, which is important for overall health and is especially important for those who have gut permeability issues.

- **Reduces Cravings and Food Addictions:** The ReNew Food Plan is not about feeling deprived! The nutrient-dense foods that make up the plan were all chosen for their ability to balance blood sugar and hormone levels, which in turn will reduce cravings for highly processed foods.

In addition to eating three balanced meals that contain lean protein, healthy fats, and low-glycemic carbohydrates, individuals may include up to two snacks per day to maintain blood sugar levels, if necessary. At least 10–12 servings of non-starchy vegetables should be consumed to help boost and support detox pathways. Healthy fats like organic ghee (clarified butter) from grass-fed cows, cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil, coconut butter, and coconut oil help balance blood sugar, which in turn reduces sugar cravings and promotes feelings of satiety.



Those whose previous diets were high in sugar, alcohol, or caffeine may face the greatest challenges when beginning the ReNew Food Plan. Some negative symptoms can occur, usually only in the first 3 to 4 days, and may include the following:

- Headaches, especially migraines
- Brain fog
- Flu-like symptoms
- Irritability
- Difficulty sleeping

After the initial detox period, patients following the ReNew food plan usually experience improved cognition and mood, decreased pain and fatigue levels, improved sleep quality, and favorable changes in body weight.



Tips for alleviating negative symptoms related to sugar detoxification and processed food addiction include:

- Staying well-hydrated
 - Taking a detox bath with Epsom salts and lavender oil
 - Practicing relaxation techniques such as mindful breathing or meditation
 - Spending time in a sauna or floatation therapy tank
- **Phytonutrients to Heal the Gut:** The ReNew Food Plan contains a broad variety of colorful vegetables and fruits. These plant-based foods provide a complex array of essential nutrients, called phytonutrients and antioxidants, that promote healing and detoxification in the gut, liver, and kidney. These plant-based antioxidants provide protection against free radicals that often form during detoxification. Plant foods help alkalize the body, improving excretion of toxins by the kidneys. Phytonutrients also play an active role in improving the stress response and reducing inflammation.

Fresh fruits, while high in colorful phytonutrients, are higher in natural sugar, so only specific types and amounts are included in the ReNew Food Plan. In general, our taste buds are more responsive to sweet foods, which often results in eating more fruits than vegetables. The focus of this food plan is on incorporating more vegetables than fruits in the diet in order to avoid excessive intake of natural sugars.

- **Encourages Healthy Elimination of Toxins:** While there is great emphasis in this food plan on reducing the intake of toxins of all kinds, the elimination of accumulated toxins present in the body is equally important. Several metabolic pathways in the body are responsible for converting toxins into chemical compounds, allowing toxin elimination primarily through urine, stool, and sweat. Many different nutrients are required to fuel the process of detoxification. A shortage or deficiency of any one of them could result in an increased toxic load or toxic burden. Lowering the body's toxic burden by eating clean, whole foods will assist the liver in converting toxins stored in the body's fat cells into intermediate metabolites that can then be excreted through the urine and stool. Intake of high-fiber foods with adequate hydration is essential to ensure elimination of these transformed toxins.

A person's toxic burden is a result of three main factors:

- **Genetics:** predisposition for effective production of detoxification enzymes needed to process toxic compounds or substrates is unique and depends on familial influence.
- **Toxins:** exposure can occur through both internal and external sources.
- **Diet:** a diet rich in detoxification nutrients and phytonutrients will promote the body's ability to eliminate toxic substances.



Sources of toxins that can increase the body burden include materials used in new construction, carpet chemicals, paint, household cleaners, synthetic materials used in dental products, and personal care products applied to face, skin, and hair. Air pollutants from industrial exposures, primary or second-hand smoke exposure, and auto exhaust are additional sources of toxins.

Sex hormones like estrogen or testosterone can also act as toxins because they go through the same biotransformation pathways before they can be excreted from the body. When estrogen metabolism is disrupted, for instance, it can result in high or low levels of certain hormone metabolites. Detoxification is necessary for individuals with imbalanced sex hormones. Premenstrual and peri-menopausal symptoms, as well as estrogen-responsive cancers like breast and prostate cancer, may be related to the body's inability to adequately metabolize these hormones into forms that can be utilized or excreted. There are ways to encourage proper estrogen metabolism, which are described in the table below.

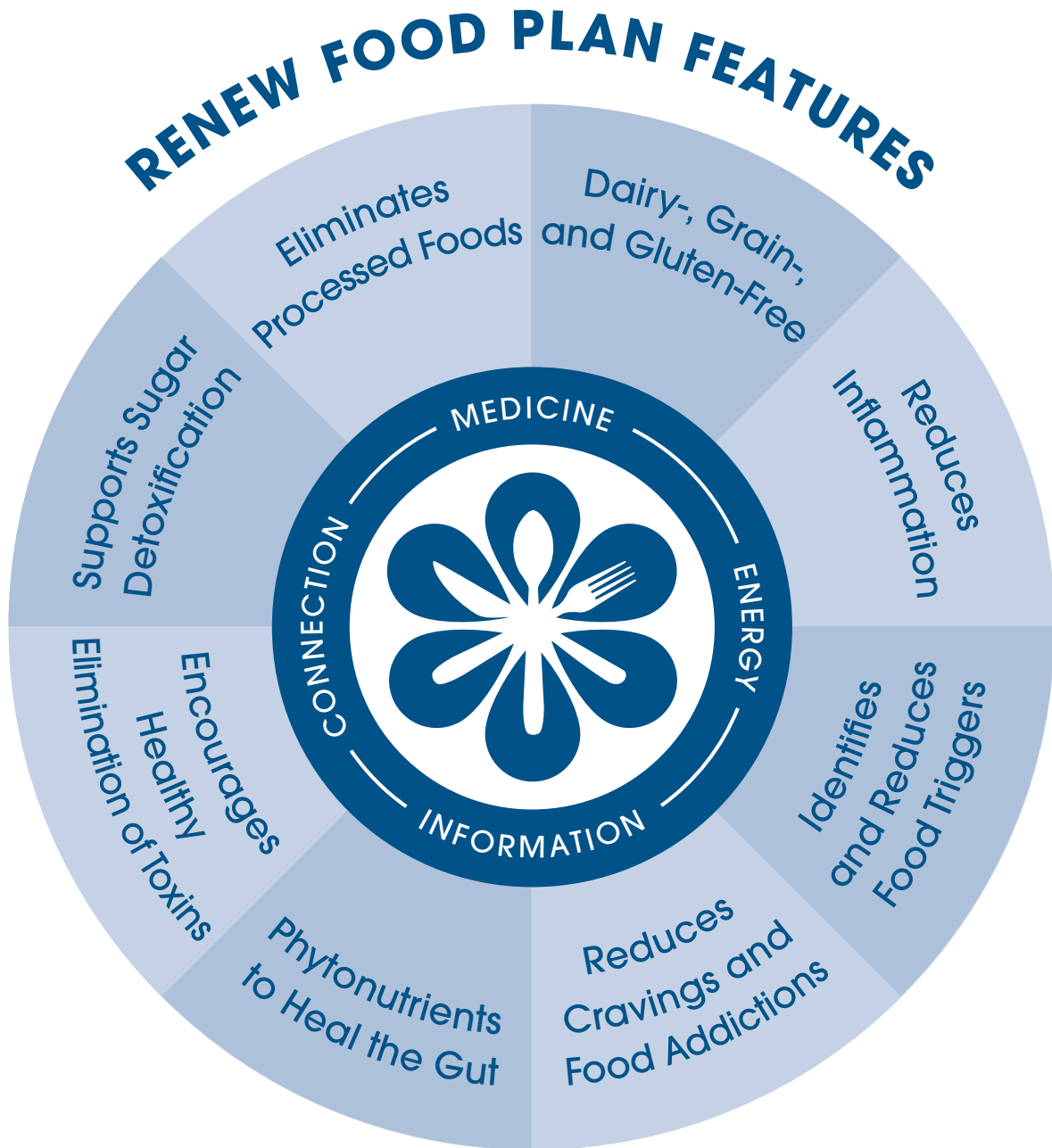
Table 4. Dietary Recommendations for Estrogen Metabolism

Step	Dietary Recommendations
Reduce estrogen production	Help decrease the conversion of testosterone to estrogen by eating phytonutrients, especially those found in flax seeds, green and herbal teas, licorice root, miso, pomegranate, soybeans, tempeh, and tofu.
Enhance phase I detoxification	Increase consumption of cruciferous vegetables (arugula, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, etc.), soy foods (miso, soybeans, tempeh, tofu, etc.), and omega-3 rich foods (anchovies, chia seeds, cod, flax seeds, herring, pecans, salmon, sardines, spinach, walnuts).
Protect against phase I metabolites	Increase levels of antioxidants by eating colorful, nutrient-dense plant foods (see IFM's Phytonutrient Spectrum Comprehensive Guide).
Promote methylation	Eat foods rich in folic acid (almonds, asparagus, bok choy, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, chicken giblets, egg yolks, kale, liver, soybeans, spinach); eat foods rich in vitamin B12 (beef, chicken, eggs, haddock, liver, rainbow trout, salmon); eat foods rich in vitamin B6 (beef, chicken, salmon, spinach, sunflower seeds, turkey); and eat foods rich in methionine (almonds, beef, Brazil nuts, chicken, eggs, egg whites, sesame seeds, soy protein).
Encourage excretion and elimination in the stool	To stimulate bile, increase intake of artichoke leaf, bitter greens, celery, daikon radish, dandelion, dark leafy greens, garlic, horseradish, lemons, limes, and watercress. To enhance bowel movements, get at least 35 grams of fiber per day from food and include fermented foods or probiotics to prevent reabsorption of estrogen into the blood from the intestine.
Reduce availability to tissues	Phytoestrogens bind to estrogen receptors in the body, which keeps excess estrogen from exerting its effect. Increase intake of phytoestrogen-rich foods such as soybeans and soy products like miso and tempeh. Phytoestrogens are also found in anise, carrots, fennel, fenugreek, flax seeds, ginseng, hops, kudzu, licorice root, mint, mung beans, pomegranates, and sesame seeds.

Some general strategies to reduce toxic burden:

- Choose lean meats over fatty animal foods, as pesticides are concentrated in fat.
- Buy organic, grass-fed, pasture-raised animal products (e.g., meats and eggs).
- Peel off the skin or remove the outer layer of leaves of some produce (e.g., lettuce, cabbage).
- Remove surface pesticide residues, waxes, fungicides, and fertilizers by soaking the food in a mild solution of additive-free soap (pure castile soap or biodegradable cleanser).
- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas before preparing or eating food.
- Wash produce before peeling it so dirt and contaminants aren't transferred from the knife onto the fruit or vegetable.
- Check the Environmental Working Group's website for recent versions of the "Dirty Dozen" (foods that are high in pesticide residues) and the "Clean 15" (foods that are typically low in pesticide residues). You can download the free app "Dirty Dozen" on your smartphone to use as a quick reference.
- Do not buy foods that contain preservatives such as BHT, BHA, benzoate, and sulfites; food colorings such as FD&C yellow #5, #6, etc.; or artificial sweeteners such as sucralose and aspartame.
- Limit consumption of canned foods (e.g., meat, fish, high-acid foods) and avoid drinking from plastic containers of water. These containers may have toxins like bisphenol-A and other plasticizers that have been shown to disrupt endocrine gland function.
- Use non-toxic pans, skillets, and pots that aren't worn or scuffed to minimize any release of problematic compounds while cooking.
- Ensure that drinking and cooking water is filtered. Consider putting a filter on the shower head.





Touring Through the ReNew Food Plan

The ReNew Food Plan incorporates whole foods to support, modulate, or induce natural body processes related to optimal detoxification and elimination, while avoiding foods that could potentially trigger inflammation. The ReNew food list is divided into general categories representing protein, fat, and carbohydrate content. This list also highlights foods high in histamines and nightshades, which may be problematic for people with certain health conditions, particularly autoimmune diseases.

More complete explanations of all foods on the plan are provided below. Please note that Functional Medicine practitioners may add alternate suggestions personalized to an individual's specific medical needs, including a calorie target or guidance on how much food to consume.

ReNew Food Plan

PROTEINS	DAIRY ALTERNATIVES	FATS & OILS	FATS
<p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Lean, free-range, grass-fed, organically grown animal protein; non-GMO, organic plant protein; and wild-caught, low-mercury fish preferred.</p> <p>Animal Protein:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Egg* - 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Fish: Anchovies* - 1 oz, cod, flounder/sole, herring* - 1/2 lb, salmon, sardines* - 1/2 lb, trout, etc. - 1 oz <input type="checkbox"/> Meat: Beef, buffalo, elk, lamb, venison, switch, etc. - 1 oz <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry (skinless): Chicken, Cornish hen, duck, pheasant, turkey, etc. - 1 oz <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Protein: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Black soybeans* - 1/2 c <input type="checkbox"/> Edamame* - 1/2 c <input type="checkbox"/> Hemp tofu* - 1/2 oz <p>1 serving as listed = 25-75 calories, 5-7 g protein, 3-5 g fat, 4-6 g carbs.</p> <p>Average protein serving is 3-4 oz (size of palm of hand).</p>	<p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Unsweetened, organic preferred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt: Coconut (plain)* - 4-6 oz <input type="checkbox"/> Kefir: Coconut (plain)* - 4-6 oz <input type="checkbox"/> 1 serving = 25-60 calories, 1-9 g protein, 1-4 g carbs (nutritional values vary) <p>NO DAIRY ALLOWED</p> <p>NUTS & SEEDS</p> <p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Unsweetened, unsalted, organic preferred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Almonds - 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Brazil nuts - 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Cashews* - 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Chia seeds - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Coconut (dried) - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Coconut wraps (raw, veggie) - 1 wrap <input type="checkbox"/> Flaxseed (ground) - 2 T <input type="checkbox"/> Hardnuts - 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Hemp seeds - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Macadamias - 2-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Pistachios - 16 <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin seeds - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Sesame seeds - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Sunflower seeds* - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Macadamias - 2-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Walnut halves* - 4 <p>1 serving = 45 calories, 5 g fat</p>	<p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Minimally refined, cold pressed, organic, non-GMO preferred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Avocado* - 2 T or 1/2 whole <input type="checkbox"/> Coconut butter (raw)* - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Coconut milk, regular (BPA-free canned or boxed) - 1/2 T <input type="checkbox"/> Ghee/clarified butter (grass-fed) - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Oils, cooking: Avocado, coconut, ghee/clarified butter, olive (extra virgin), sesame - 1 T <p>1 serving = 45 calories, 5 g fat</p>	<p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Unsweetened, no sugar added</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Oils, salad: Almond, avocado, flaxseed, hempseed, olive oil (extra virgin), sesame, walnut - 1 T <input type="checkbox"/> Olives* - Black, green, kalamata* - 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Pesto (olive oil) - 1 T
<p>KEY</p> <p>* High Histamine * Nightshades * Fermented Foods</p> <p><small>Notes: Nutritional amounts are based on average values for the variety of foods within each food category. Dietary prescription is subject to the discretion of the health practitioner.</small></p>			
<p>NO LEGUMES (Except those specifically listed) and NO GRAINS (Bread, pasta, cereals, oats, etc.)</p>			

VEGETABLES Non-starchy	CARBS	FRUITS	BEVERAGES
<p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Broccoliales (i.e. Cruciferous)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Arugula <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli sprouts <input type="checkbox"/> Brussels sprouts <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage <input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower <input type="checkbox"/> Horseradish <input type="checkbox"/> Kohlrabi <input type="checkbox"/> Radishes <p>Deoxygenating Leafy Greens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bok choy <input type="checkbox"/> Chard/Swiss chard <input type="checkbox"/> Chervil <input type="checkbox"/> Cilantro <input type="checkbox"/> Endive <input type="checkbox"/> Escarole <input type="checkbox"/> Green: Beet, collard, dandelion, kale, mustard, turnip, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Microgreens <input type="checkbox"/> Parsley <input type="checkbox"/> Radicchio <p>Thiols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chives <input type="checkbox"/> Dill <input type="checkbox"/> Garlic <input type="checkbox"/> Leeks <input type="checkbox"/> Onion <input type="checkbox"/> Scallions <input type="checkbox"/> Shallots <p>1 serving = 5-10 c. 1 c. raw greens = 25 calories, 5 g carbs</p> <p>NO STARCHY VEGETABLES (root vegetables)</p> <p>Organic, non-GMO fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices preferred</p>	<p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Liver & Kidney Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Artichokes <input type="checkbox"/> Asparagus <input type="checkbox"/> Celery <input type="checkbox"/> Spouts, all <p>Other Non-Starchy Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bean sprouts <input type="checkbox"/> Beans (not canned) <input type="checkbox"/> Bamboo shoots <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumbers <input type="checkbox"/> Eggplant* <input type="checkbox"/> Fennel <input type="checkbox"/> Green beans <input type="checkbox"/> Jerusalem artichoke <input type="checkbox"/> Jicama <input type="checkbox"/> Kinohioi* <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce, all <input type="checkbox"/> Mushrooms* <input type="checkbox"/> Okra <input type="checkbox"/> Peppers, all* <input type="checkbox"/> Sals* <input type="checkbox"/> Swiss chard* <input type="checkbox"/> Sea vegetables <input type="checkbox"/> Shiitake mushrooms <input type="checkbox"/> Snap peas/snow peas <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach* <input type="checkbox"/> Squash: Delicata, pumpkin*, spaghetti, yellow, zucchini, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes* <input type="checkbox"/> Turnip <input type="checkbox"/> Watercress 	<p>Servings/day _____</p> <p>Unsweetened, no sugar added</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Blackberries* - 1/2 c <input type="checkbox"/> Cherrries* - 1/2 c <input type="checkbox"/> Cranberries* - 1/2 c <input type="checkbox"/> Kiwi* - 1 med <p>1 serving = 40 calories, 15 g carbs</p> <p>NO OTHER FRUITS ALLOWED</p> <p>HERBS & SPICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Basil <input type="checkbox"/> Bay leaf <input type="checkbox"/> Black pepper <input type="checkbox"/> Cayenne pepper* <input type="checkbox"/> Oregano <input type="checkbox"/> Parsley <input type="checkbox"/> Paprika* <input type="checkbox"/> Cloves* <input type="checkbox"/> Cacao powder* <input type="checkbox"/> Coriander seed <input type="checkbox"/> Cumin <input type="checkbox"/> Curry powder* <input type="checkbox"/> Dill <input type="checkbox"/> Fenugreek <input type="checkbox"/> Garlic powder <input type="checkbox"/> Ginger <input type="checkbox"/> Himalayan salt <input type="checkbox"/> Nutmeg* <input type="checkbox"/> Onion powder <input type="checkbox"/> Parsley <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin spice <input type="checkbox"/> Red curry paste* <input type="checkbox"/> Rosemary <input type="checkbox"/> Sage <input type="checkbox"/> Sea salt <input type="checkbox"/> Thyme <input type="checkbox"/> Turmeric <input type="checkbox"/> Vanilla bean (whole) 	<p>Unsweetened, no sugar added</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Broth (organic): Bone*, meat*, vegetable <input type="checkbox"/> Coconut water (fresh, raw, cold pressed)* <input type="checkbox"/> Filtered water <p>NO COFFEE, ALCOHOL, CAFFEINE, SODA</p> <p>CONDIMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coconut aminos* <input type="checkbox"/> Lemon/lime juice (fresh)* <input type="checkbox"/> Mustard* (Dijon, stone ground) <input type="checkbox"/> Tamari* <input type="checkbox"/> Vinegars** (Apple cider, balsamic, white, etc.) <p>Use sparingly, suggest 1 T or less per serving.</p> <p>NO SUGARS, NATURAL SWEETENERS, OR ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS, INCLUDING BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO: ASPARTAME, SLENDA, STEVIA, AND SUGAR ALCOHOLS.</p>
<p>KEY</p> <p>* High Histamine * Nightshades * Fermented Foods</p>			

In order to achieve the therapeutic effects of the ReNew Food Plan, it is important to know which foods to remove and which foods are okay to eat. The table below provides a summary.

Table 5. Summary of Foods Allowed and Avoided on the ReNew Food Plan

Foods to Eat	Foods to Remove
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dairy alternatives ■ Eggs ■ Fish ■ Fruits (only those specifically listed) ■ Healthy fats ■ Lean meats ■ Non-starchy vegetables ■ Nuts ■ Seeds ■ Soy and soy products (only those specifically listed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Alcohol ■ Chocolate (except cocoa powder) ■ Coffee ■ Dairy ■ Grains (all) ■ Most legumes ■ Processed foods ■ Processed meats ■ Shellfish and tuna ■ Soy and soy products (except those specifically listed) ■ Starchy Vegetables ■ Sugars and sweeteners ■ Tea (except green and herbal teas)

Protein

Protein is an essential cornerstone of optimal nutrition. It performs multiple functions in the body, such as helping to stabilize blood sugar levels, which in turn keeps hunger and cravings minimized. Additionally, the human body cannot effectively detoxify without amino acids—building blocks of protein—that bind the transformed toxins in the liver and help the body excrete them. Thus, it is extremely important to include some protein in every meal or snack.



The ReNew Food Plan offers different sources of animal and plant proteins from which to choose. As with the other food categories, quality is of utmost importance. High-quality proteins include lean, pasture-raised, grass-fed, organic, and non-GMO sources.

Vegetarians may choose from eggs, black soybeans, edamame, miso, natto, tofu, tempeh, mung bean pasta, hemp tofu, spirulina, and certain protein powders (egg, hemp, pea, and pumpkin seed). Omnivores may include any of the plant protein options in addition to animal proteins such as fish, poultry, and lean red meat. Shellfish and tuna are omitted from the ReNew Food Plan, as they are often contaminated with high levels of toxic metals like mercury. Wild-caught, sustainable fish choices are preferred, as some farmed fish may contain hormones and harmful chemicals.

Dairy Alternatives

As discussed previously, dairy is not included in the ReNew Food Plans, as many people are intolerant of it and it is often a culprit in gastrointestinal symptoms related to leaky gut. Additionally, the risk of toxin and hormone contamination is high with many commercially available dairy products. There are several dairy alternatives available in this food plan, mostly in the form of milks made from nuts. Dairy substitutes like coconut (boxed variety), almond, flaxseed, or hazelnut milk often contain added sweeteners or gums, so it is important to read food labels before purchasing. Unsweetened coconut kefir is included in the food plan because of its prebiotic and probiotic potential, which may help improve gut health and aid in toxin removal.



Nuts & Seeds

There are a variety of nuts and seeds included in the ReNew Food Plan. They can be added to meals for a nutrient and flavor boost—perhaps sprinkled on top of salads or vegetable dishes—and make a great snack choice. Eating a handful of nuts each day has been shown to reduce the risk of chronic disease. It is recommended that at least 1 to 2 servings of nuts be eaten every day. Raw, unsalted nuts instead of nuts roasted in oil are preferred. Flaxseeds and hemp seeds can be ground and stirred into smoothies or sprinkled on salads. Additionally, nut butters like almond butter, cashew butter, and tahini (sesame seed butter) can be used as condiments, spread on fruit, or drizzled over vegetables.



Note that nuts can often be the source of food allergies, so a Functional Medicine practitioner may recommend a personalized variation of this food plan that excludes nuts if allergies or sensitivities are known or suspected.

Fats & Oils

A large selection of fats and oils can be used for salad dressings and cooking while following the ReNew Food Plan. Approved choices are minimally refined, cold-pressed, organic, non-GMO fats and liquid oils low in omega-6 fatty acids and high in omega-3 fatty acids. Consuming these high-quality fats on a daily basis is recommended for reducing inflammatory pathways, stabilizing blood sugar levels, and minimizing sugar cravings. A Functional Medicine practitioner may provide specific amounts to meet an individual's nutritional needs.

Extra-virgin olive oil is associated with healthy blood lipid levels and decreased inflammation because it provides monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs) in addition to polyphenols. Research suggests that consuming extra-virgin olive oil that is minimally processed and higher in polyphenols provides the greatest health benefits by increasing HDL (healthy) cholesterol and decreasing oxidative damage. The health benefits of olive oil are also found in whole olives, which are also included in this category.

Coconut-based fats, particularly coconut oil, are rich in medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs) that are easily absorbed and help restore gut health. These medium-chain fats are absorbed directly into the lining of the small intestine and sent straight to the liver for energy production, or are converted into ketone bodies, an especially important source of energy for the brain. Research suggests that MCFAs increase HDL (beneficial cholesterol), reduce LDL (bad cholesterol), and reduce obesity. These fats have antioxidant and antimicrobial properties that help support the immune system. They also offer antifungal, antibacterial, and antiviral benefits. Because MCFAs are extremely easy for the body to burn for calories, there is less potential for them to be stored as fat. Canned coconut milk is included in the 'fats and oils' category because it is predominantly a source of fat, unlike boxed coconut milk, which is primarily a source of protein and carbohydrate. Most metal cans are lined with a toxic material, bisphenol A (BPA), so look for BPA-free cans if consuming canned coconut milk, or purchase the boxed version.

Another high-quality fat included in the ReNew Food Plan is avocado oil. Unlike many other plant-based oils that are pressed from the plants' seeds, avocado oil is pressed from the fruit itself. In addition to being a good source of high-quality, healthy fats, avocados and their oils are nutrient-dense and antioxidant-rich. One half of an average avocado contains more potassium than a banana, in addition to other important nutrients like magnesium, folate, choline, and glutathione.



Ghee, or clarified butter, is also included in this category. While ghee is technically a dairy product, all milk proteins are removed in the process of making it. Ghee is primarily composed of short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs), which are easily digested by the body, and is thought to stimulate the secretion of stomach acids to help with digestion. It also has a high concentration of butyric acid, which contains antiviral properties and helps break down food for energy. The butter used for making ghee should come from grass-fed cows and be certified as organic.



Sesame oil is included in the ReNew Food Plan for its medicinal role in liver function, as it assists in the healthy processing of fats and reduces inflammation. Other fats included in this category include almond oil, flaxseed oil, hempseed oil, and walnut oil.

Fats and liquid oils can be damaged by heat, light, and oxygen. Liquid oils should be stored in tightly-sealed, tinted glass (not plastic) containers and kept in a cool, dark area. They should not be kept near the stove and should be discarded if they smell rancid.

Non-Starchy Vegetables

Ideally, including 10-12 servings of non-starchy vegetables per day is recommended, as these vegetables provide fiber for detoxification, elimination, and satiety. A serving is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of a cooked vegetable or 1 cup of raw leafy greens.

Non-starchy vegetables in the ReNew Food Plan are divided into five categories: Brassicales (cruciferous vegetables), Detoxifying Leafy Greens, Thiols, Vegetables for Liver & Kidney Support, and Other Non-Starchy Vegetables. The vegetables in these categories fortify the function of the gut (through dietary fiber and bitter properties), liver (by supplying important compounds that favorably direct metabolism), and kidneys (through enhanced urine flow and alkalization). Foods from each of these categories should be eaten every day to provide as much phytonutrient diversity as possible. Green leafy vegetables are especially important; however, the bottom line is to eat a variety of vegetables of different colors every day.



Table 6. Vegetables for Detoxification

Category	Benefits	Examples
Brassicales (cruciferous vegetables)	A source of healthy compounds to metabolize hormones in a balanced way	Arugula, broccoflower, broccoli, broccoli sprouts, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, horseradish, radishes
Detoxifying Leafy Greens	Anti-inflammatory, bitter, therapeutic greens	Bok choy, chard/Swiss chard, chervil, cilantro, endive, escarole, greens (beet, collard, dandelion, kale, mustard, turnip), microgreens, parsley, radicchio
Thiols	Provide nutrients like sulfur that aid in liver detoxification processes	Chives, daikon radishes, garlic, leeks, onions, scallions, shallots
Vegetables for Liver & Kidney Support	Help the liver produce bile, help the kidneys excrete toxins more efficiently through the urine	Artichokes, asparagus, celery, sprouts (all)
Other non-starchy vegetables	Sources of fiber, foundational nutrition, and phytonutrients	Bamboo shoots, bean sprouts, beets, carrots, cucumbers, eggplant, fennel, green beans, jicama, lettuce, mushrooms, okra, peppers, sea vegetables, snap peas, spinach, squash (delicata, pumpkin, spaghetti, yellow, zucchini), tomato, turnip, watercress

The following list provides many creative suggestions for ways to incorporate more vegetables into the diet.

- Add a handful or two of greens (fresh or frozen) to a morning smoothie.
- Stir-fry leftover broccoli with other vegetables for a morning meal.
- Toss leftover vegetables into broth to make a hearty soup.
- Spiral-cut zucchini and top these “noodles” with a vegetable-rich pasta sauce.
- Pulse cauliflower in the food processor, steam it, and use it in place of rice.
- Finely chop mixed vegetables and incorporate them into a meatloaf.
- Puree vegetables with healthy oils and nuts to make flavorful sauces for proteins.

Routinely integrating a small salad plus including at least two cooked vegetables with dinner can help a person meet his or her vegetable serving quota each day. Eating seasonally is also highly desirable, as produce is more nutritious, fresh, and abundant during the season in which it is grown.

When using cold-pressed juices or freshly made vegetable juices, check food labels for added sugars and be sure that the ingredients meet the food plan guidelines. Do not store fresh juices too long, as they will oxidize and change color, a sign that their nutrient levels are less than when originally extracted.

Fruits

Phytonutrient-rich fruits offer antioxidant protection and provide targeted nutrients for detoxification. In general, fruit may be helpful when the desire for something sweet arises, which is important to address when undergoing a sugar detox. Pair fruit with a small amount of protein to offset potential blood sugar spikes.

While many fruits are beneficial for a variety of conditions, the only ones included on this plan are those lower in natural sugar: blackberries, blueberries, cherries, cranberry, kiwi, pomegranate seeds, raspberries, and strawberries. Pomegranate seeds are recommended because they support detoxification pathways. Fruit can be fresh or frozen, but patients should avoid consuming dried fruit due to the high sugar content.



Herbs and Spices

Many herbs and spices are included in the ReNew Food Plan, and some of these offer specific health benefits. Salt and pepper are the most widely used seasoning agents in the United States, and both have medicinal properties. Sea salt (including Himalayan salt) helps regulate blood volume, blood pressure, muscle contractions, nerve transmissions, and heart functions. In addition to being a source of sodium, Himalayan salt occurs naturally and is not chemically processed or refined. It also contains iron, magnesium, phosphorus, calcium, potassium, and chloride. Salt's common culinary counterpart, black pepper, aids in digestion by stimulating the taste buds in a way that increases stomach acid secretions. It also has demonstrated antioxidant and antibacterial properties. The active compound in black pepper (piperine) has been shown to increase the absorption of certain nutrients and to support and enhance the liver's detoxification process.

Other herbs and spices selected for the ReNew Food Plan can reduce pain and inflammation, particularly in the context of gastrointestinal upset. These include cayenne pepper, chili powder, cilantro, ginger, nutmeg, and paprika. Turmeric is also known for its anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties, in addition to its cancer-fighting and liver-detoxifying characteristics, especially in combination with piperine. Digestive health is further enhanced by several others, including cinnamon, cumin, and dill. In addition to supporting digestion, cinnamon has also been shown to lower blood sugar. Other herbs and spices selected for detoxification and for their overall antioxidant and antimicrobial effects include cloves, oregano, rosemary, and thyme.



Beverages

Hydration helps rid the body of toxins, builds resilience to stress, enhances metabolism, and promotes satiety. It is important to drink plenty of clean, filtered water throughout the day. Individual recommendations for fluid intake will depend upon a number of factors including body weight.

To determine an individual's hydration needs, measure body weight in pounds and divide in half. The resulting figure is the number of ounces of water to consume each day. For example, an individual who weighs 128 pounds should consume at least 64 ounces (or eight 8-ounce cups) of water each day ($128 \div 2 = 64$).

In addition to filtered water, broths (vegetable, bone), meat stocks, and other decaffeinated beverages like fresh, raw, cold-pressed vegetable juices are also good choices.

Decaffeinated green teas and herbal teas are also recommended on the ReNew Food Plan. Specific teas or herbs to incorporate, along with their health benefits, are listed below.



Table 7. Benefits of Medicinal and Herbal Teas

Tea	Benefits
Ginseng	Reduces pain and inflammation; enhances the immune system; balances the nervous system (stimulates or sedates, whichever is needed); increases the brain's use of amino acids (important when the body is under stress)
Licorice root	Reduces pain and inflammation; enhances immune support; supports adrenal health (important for stress management and detoxification); soothes bowels <i>Can raise blood pressure, so use with caution.</i>
Echinacea	Enhances immune support; reduces inflammation
Valerian root	Balancing (both calming and stimulating, depending on the body's needs); repairs oxidative stress
Chamomile	Calming; repairs oxidative stress; soothes bowels
Peppermint	Reduces inflammation; relaxes the nervous constriction of digestive muscles <i>May aggravate reflux, so use with caution.</i>

All alcohol, caffeinated beverages, and sweetened beverages are excluded from the ReNew Food Plan, as they tend to dehydrate the body, raise blood sugar levels, and contribute to chronic inflammation.

Condiments

Most condiments available on store shelves are not permitted on the ReNew Food Plan, as they contain added sweeteners and preservatives. However, homemade versions of many condiments—including mayonnaise, ketchup, and barbeque sauce—can be easily made with only a few approved ingredients.

Store-bought mustards (Dijon, stone-ground, etc.) made without added sugars are permitted, as are certain vinegars (raw apple cider vinegar, balsamic vinegar, and white vinegar). Also permitted are coconut aminos, cocoa powder (100% raw), fresh lemon and lime juice, miso, and tamari.

Preparing for the ReNew Food Plan

First, review all of the information and materials listed under the Resources and Tools for Success section.

To best prepare for the ReNew Food Plan, an individual should:

- Do any lab work recommended by the healthcare practitioner.
- Order any supplements recommended by the healthcare practitioner.
- Clean out the pantry and refrigerator to rid it of any food not on the plan.
- Start planning, shopping, and trying new foods and recipes. Be adventurous, as this is a new journey to health!
- Start batch-cooking so components of meals are readily available when preparing meals for work or home. An example of this would be roasting a whole chicken on a Sunday and using the leftovers for several meals during the week.
- Begin following the ReNew Food Plan.
- Record and track food intake, lifestyle factors, and notes in the nutrition and lifestyle journal provided.
- Practice daily relaxation techniques—breathing, meditation, mindfulness, etc.—as stress reduction promotes healing and produces a calming effect.
- Create a support network to foster relationships that can help ensure personal success.

Just remember that the healing process can take time. Critical factors for optimal results include:

- Having patience through the process
- Staying relaxed and mindful
- Meditating
- Fostering healthy relationships
- Recognizing joy



Frequently Asked Questions

Are organically grown foods really that important to buy? They are expensive.

Minimizing exposure to pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, and GMOs is the main reason to buy organically grown food, especially when it comes to animal-based foods. They may be more expensive; however, the negative impact of consuming these toxins is a great price to bear when it comes to health. Buying foods in season and buying from local farmers can help keep food costs down. Using the annual “Dirty Dozen” and “Clean 15” lists from the Environmental Working Group (www.ewg.org) can help guide purchase decisions. There is a free app for smartphones that allows an individual to access the current “Dirty Dozen” list while grocery shopping.

What is BPA and should I be concerned?

Bisphenol A (BPA) is often found in the plastic or resin linings of metal food and drink cans. BPA is a chemical that leaches out from the can lining and into the food. BPA is associated with a high risk of breast cancer, prostate cancer, and infertility, all which are on the rise in the U.S. population. To date, there are no government safety standards limiting the amount of BPA in canned food.

Studies show that BPA can alter the behavior of over 200 genes that are responsible for the growth and repair of almost every organ and tissue in the body. BPA has also been associated with an increased risk of developing diabetes.

Which sweeteners can be eaten on the ReNew Food Plan?

It is important to avoid all sweeteners on the ReNew Food Plan. Added sugars stress the body systems and create more inflammation, making it more difficult for the body to effectively clear toxins. Sugar is addictive, but it will take only a few days eating on this plan to reduce your cravings for sugar and other highly sweetened foods. If craving something sweet, choose one of the allowed fruits and pair it with a protein or fat, as both can help increase satiety. The fruit selections included have natural sweetness that will taste even sweeter when your taste buds are no longer assaulted by the intense sweetness of sugar.



What type of food packaging is best?

Food packaging is an essential aspect to consider in a sugar detox program. Nowadays, many foods are packaged in cans, cellophane, foil, boxes, cardboard, metal, and plastic, all of which can impart chemicals to what we eat and drink. Aim for whole foods with minimal packaging or in higher-quality materials (e.g., BPA-free containers and cans, glass bottles and jars, waxed cardboard). Special attention should be placed on keeping plastic water bottles out of the heat.

Is there a certain way to cook cruciferous vegetables to maximize their impact on detoxification?

Raw cruciferous vegetables can be difficult for some people to digest. Additionally, active goitrogens (thyroid-inhibiting substances) are found in raw cruciferous vegetables, but are inactivated by cooking, so people with low thyroid hormone levels should cook these vegetables. Also, the enzyme myrosinase, which converts broccoli compounds to anticancer substances, is typically destroyed with about 10 minutes of cooking). Lightly steaming cruciferous vegetables, like broccoli, for about 90 seconds (to the point it becomes bright green) is best for digestion and for liberating active compounds in the broccoli, yet will avoid destroying beneficial compounds.

How much fish should be eaten per week?

The Environmental Protection Agency makes the following recommendations regarding fish consumption:

- Do not eat shark, swordfish, king mackerel, or tilefish because they contain high levels of mercury.
- Eat 12 ounces (two or three average meals) a week of a variety of fish that are low in mercury. Some of these fish are listed in the ReNew Food Plan, but a more detailed list can be provided by a practitioner.
- Five commonly eaten fish that are low in mercury are sardines, anchovies, salmon, pollock, and catfish.
- Check local advisories about the safety of fish caught by family and friends in local lakes, rivers, and coastal areas.



Are there any other foods I should avoid?

In addition to the major allergens, there are compounds in certain vegetables and fruits that may cause food intolerances in certain individuals. These compounds include histamines, oxalates, salicylates, and nightshades. Practitioners may choose to have their patients avoid foods that contain these compounds if there is reason to think that these foods are causing symptoms. Nightshades and foods high in histamine are highlighted on the food list to help individuals for whom these foods are a concern. If symptoms are observed when eating foods from these categories, patients should notify their practitioner.

Histamines

Histamine is a key mediator in inflammation. It occurs naturally in many foods and is also produced by the body during times of stress and allergy. Histamine is made and stored in mast cells and is released during allergen exposure, causing dilation of blood vessels, increased mucus production, and broncho-constriction. The release of histamine results in symptoms such as itching, sneezing, asthma, headache, and rash. Additionally, certain foods and food additives prompt the release of histamine from mast cells.

In general, foods to avoid on a low-histamine diet include bananas, chocolate, strawberries, tomatoes, egg whites, pork, sauerkraut, cheeses,



Frequently Asked Questions

fermented soy products, sausage, spinach, ketchup, eggplant, alcoholic beverages, smoked meats, vinegars, and canned fish, coffee and tea, leftover meats along with certain food additives and preservatives such as tartrazine and other food colors, benzoates, BHA, and BHT. You will note that few of these foods are part of the ReNew Food Plan.

The histamine content in foods varies markedly according to storage and maturation; protein foods that may normally be low in histamine will have increasing amounts of histamine as they age (e.g., leftover beef) or ripen (a green tomato vs. a ripe tomato). Leftover foods, especially those containing protein, should be frozen immediately. It is generally advisable to eat only food that has been freshly prepared.

Oxalates

Oxalates are naturally occurring molecules found in plants and in the human body. Because the body cannot process oxalates, they are usually eliminated through the stool and urine. However, certain health conditions (like predisposition to kidney stones) may require oxalates to be limited or avoided. The leaves of oxalate-containing plant typically contain higher oxalate levels than the roots, stems, and stalks. High oxalate-containing foods include: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, currants, kiwifruit, Concord (purple) grapes, figs, tangerines, plums, spinach, Swiss chard, beet greens, collards, okra, parsley, leeks, quinoa, celery, green beans, rutabagas, summer squash, almonds, cashews, peanuts, soybeans, tofu, soy products, wheat bran, wheat germ, cocoa, chocolate, and black tea.



Salicylates

Salicylates are derivatives of salicylic acid that occur naturally in plants and serve as a natural immune hormone and preservative. Salicylates can cause health problems in anyone when consumed in large doses, and must be avoided by those who are salicylate intolerant. The bark, leaves, roots, and seeds of certain plants store salicylates, preventing them from rotting and protecting them against harmful insects, bacteria, and fungi. Many common foods, such as citrus fruits, berries, certain vegetables, herbs, spices, tea, and flavor additives contain salicylates. Chemically related to aspirin, salicylates may also be created synthetically and can be found in many drugs other than aspirin: analgesics, muscle relaxants, cough mixtures, antacids, cold and flu medications, and acne lotions. Certain perfumes, pesticides, and preservatives also contain salicylates. People with nasal polyps and asthma may have a particular susceptibility to salicylate-containing foods.



Nightshades

Nightshades are a botanical family of plants known as Solanaceae. This family has more than 2,000 plant species, most of which are inedible or poisonous. The edible plants can cause adverse food reactions in individuals with certain autoimmune diseases and are especially troublesome for people who are sensitive to lectin, saponin, or capsaicin. Common edible nightshades include the following and their varieties: ashwagandha, bell peppers, cape gooseberries, eggplant, garden huckleberries, goji berries, hot peppers (e.g., chili, jalapeno, habanero, and scotch bonnet, as well as chili-based spices like cayenne, chili powder, crushed red pepper, and paprika), naranjillas, pepinos, pimentos, potatoes (except sweet potatoes), tomatillos, and tomatoes.



The ReNew Food Plan is intended to be a short-term approach that enables the body to more efficiently process toxins. It works best when personalized for the patient by the healthcare practitioner. To make the transition seamless, there are a number of other tools to help in the process.

The following handouts are available from Functional Medicine practitioners to assist patients in implementing the IFM ReNew Food Plan, which was developed in collaboration with the Center for Functional Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic:

- ReNew Food Plan – Bibliography
- ReNew Food Plan – Food List
- ReNew Food Plan – Weekly Planner and Recipes
- Diet, Nutrition, and Lifestyle Journal – 7 day
- Phytonutrient Spectrum – Comprehensive Guide

