

# The Beet



**IN THIS ISSUE:** Fuel: Fermented foods  
 From your RD: Fermented food benefits  
 Detox: You are what you eat  
 Move: Digestive yoga & stretching

Connect: Staying active this May  
 Reframe: Stress and the digestive system  
 Rest: Digestive rest - cleaning waves  
 Wellness champion of the month

**WHOLE FOOD OF THE MONTH: FERMENTED FOODS**

Fermented foods are essential to a happy, healthy gut. Here are some well-known staples to include in your diet:

- Kefir:** fermented dairy product, great for lactose intolerance
- Kimchi:** fermented cabbage that supports blood health
- Kombucha:** bubbly, probiotic-rich tea that supports the liver
- Miso:** (yes like the soup)...soybean and salt fermented broth
- Natto:** fermented soybean patty that supports regularity
- Sauerkraut:** fermented cabbage with eye health benefits
- Tempeh:** fermented soybeans, a high-protein meat substitute
- Yogurt:** fermented dairy product rich in vitamins and minerals

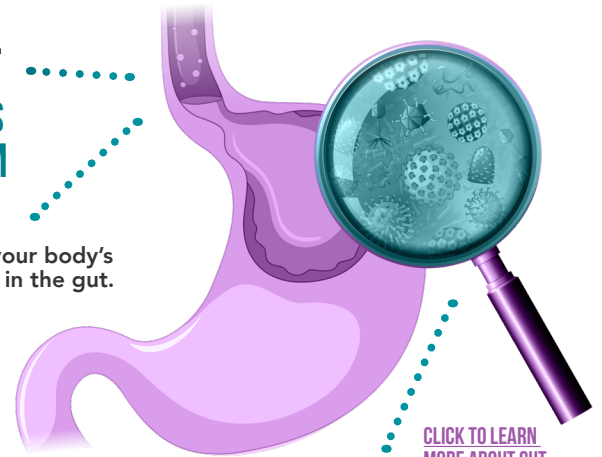
**FROM YOUR RD: THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FERMENTED FOODS**

Fermented foods are rich in probiotic bacteria - so by consuming fermented foods, you are adding beneficial bacteria and enzymes to your overall intestinal flora. They increase the health of your gut microbiome and digestive system, and enhance the immune system. Fermentation extends food life, but it works harder to reduce inflammation, improve digestion and even promote weight loss. To incorporate fermented foods in your diet, you can start by introducing the fermented food staples we listed above or even make your own at home. Read more below on how fermentation works, and [learn the importance of obtaining probiotics from food.](#)

**DIGEST THE FACTS: GO WITH YOUR GUT!**

**YOUR GUT WALL HOUSES 70 PERCENT OF YOUR BODY'S IMMUNE SYSTEM**

**COME ON GET HAPPY**  
 About 90 percent of your body's serotonin is produced in the gut.



[CLICK TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GUT HEALTH FROM YOUR CLINICAL DIRECTOR](#)

**THE GUT DOESN'T NEED THE BRAIN'S INPUT**  
 No other organ, not even the all-powerful heart, can pull that off.



**HOW FERMENTATION WORKS**

When properly stored, the starches and sugars in vegetables and fruits are converted to lactic acid, which acts as a natural preservative. Fermentation can produce quite distinctive, strong, and slightly sour flavors. Almost any vegetable can be fermented, and fermenting farm-fresh produce is a great way to provide nutrition year-round. Ferment one vegetable alone or create a mix of many different kinds (you can even ferment salsa!) for a great variety of gut-healthy cultured foods. Search online for at-home kits to learn more about doing it yourself.

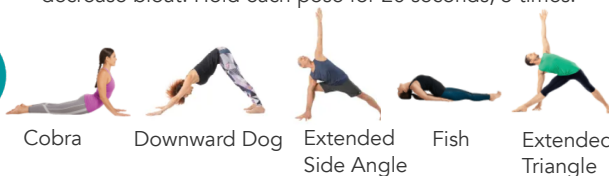


**SIMPLE RECIPES WITH FERMENTED INGREDIENTS**

- [Mango Yogurt Smoothie](#)
- [Cultured Breakfast Macro Bowls](#)
- [Fermented Vegetables](#)
- [Garlic Teriyaki Tempeh and Broccoli](#)
- [Basic Miso Soup](#)

**MOVE: DIGESTIVE YOGA POSES AND STRETCHING**

When your gut is off, your whole day can follow suit. Use these yoga poses for digestion to regulate your bowels and decrease bloat. Hold each pose for 20 seconds, 3 times.



**REFRAME: STRESS & YOUR DIGESTIVE HEALTH**



In more serious cases, stress may cause a decrease in blood flow and oxygen to the stomach, which could lead to cramping, inflammation, or an imbalance of gut bacteria. Feeling stressed can exacerbate gastrointestinal disorders. Although stress may not cause stomach ulcers or inflammatory bowel disease, it can make these and other diseases of digestion worse, so it's important to take measures to be in control during stressful situations and find ways to keep yourself calm. Deep breathing, aromatherapy and meditation can all help.

**CONNECT: GET YOURSELF OUTSIDE AGAIN**



We can do this - get outside AND stay healthy and safe. Here are some fun activities around the valley in May:

- [Paddle Tempe Town Lake or ride a swan boat!](#)
- [Drive-In movies @ the Scottsdale Princess](#)
- [Hit the driving range for a little golf](#)
- [Get out to pick up some local farm fresh produce](#)
- [The 5 best places to fly your drone in Phoenix](#)
- [Check out the Phoenix Bat Cave from May - October](#)
- [Find real petroglyphs right off the trail](#)
- [The perfect pic - picture frame at Dobbins Lookout](#)



My favorite part about being involved in health and wellness is all of the awesome people!!! There are so many people that truly, truly care about others and their well-being. It is a beautiful thing and it makes my heart sing. Luckily, I am able to plan different healthy activities for our entire district!!!

### WELLNESS CHAMPION OF THE MONTH: JENNY CHAMP, WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

I became involved in health and wellness because I did not feel good about myself physically, mentally, and emotionally. My favorite part about being involved in health and wellness is all of the awesome people!!! There are so many people that truly, truly care about others and their well-being. It is a beautiful thing and it makes my heart sing. Luckily, I am able to plan different healthy activities for our entire district!!! We had our First 5k this year and it was a huge success, wahoo! I am enjoying working with WellStyles and planning new activities all the time. I really love focusing more on the mental and emotional side of wellness too. I am trying to put a large focus on that for our WESD family. About 13 years ago I was making several unhealthy choices including smoking cigarettes. After critical thinking I decided I needed a change. I hopped on a treadmill and ran a mile. It actually felt awesome! I was completely hooked and started running, hiking, and trail running nonstop. The best part was that all of the running led me to quit smoking because it's difficult to run if you smoke. I have been on so many amazing running adventures! From hiking to Havasupai, running Rim to Rim to Rim at the Grand Canyon in one day, traveling to Tennessee for an ultramarathon and running other ultras here in Arizona.

I've had way more adventures through the running and hiking than anything else. I also started a hiking group with one of my best friends called Summit Soul Sisters about three years ago. We take people on our favorite hikes and it's always a blast!! I started practicing yoga and meditating around the same time I started running. This was the real life-changer. Yoga and meditation has helped me remain calm, positive, and focused no matter what life throws at me. Of course I still feel stress and anxiety like anyone else, but I have tools to cope with these feelings now and I am truly grateful. As far as the nutrition part of health goes, I had tried many "diets" in hopes of finding something that benefits my body and mind. One day, I watched a meat industry documentary and was moved to give it up. I'm not saying this is the "healthiest" way to live or trying to convert anyone. You can certainly eat poorly on a vegan diet. However, I cook and bake most of my own meals from scratch and rarely eat processed foods. I can honestly say that I feel better at 36 years old than I ever did in my twenties. I have run over 56 miles in one day around the city of Prescott and felt completely fine the next day...eager to do it again! I love feeling my best and even more so, I love encouraging others to find the light inside of them to do what makes them feel their best.



### DIGESTIVE REST: CLEANSING WAVES

When the body is fasted, muscles in the small intestine produce a **periodic wave of forward motion called the migrating motor complex.** This "cleansing wave" is a housekeeping function – not unlike the sweep of a broom – that prevents stasis of intestinal contents. Thus, bacteria passing through don't have time to settle in and lay down roots. Try tiny meals (grazing) for this fasting effect.



## Detox

### DETOX: NOT JUST A 3-DAY FAD

It is important to remember that the word "detox" is NOT a three day cleanse, a juice fast, or diet plan! Scientifically speaking-detoxification is a multifaceted process where the body takes substances that are brought in from the environment through food, air, water, medications, etc. and transforms those into new compounds where the body can then eliminate them.

**One of the many ways that the body transforms and removes these compounds is through the digestive system.**

This happens through several mechanisms, one being elimination via bowel movements. Disturbances such as constipation or diarrhea can affect optimal elimination and may even lead to reabsorption of substances back into circulation where these non-beneficial substances may act on biology, cause cellular damage, or be stored in fat cells and increase ones "body burden". Another critical facet of digestion is the absorption of nutrients the body gathers from food. If nutrient absorption is impaired or the body is not getting the appropriate amount, an individual may become deficient of important nutrients needed to support the detox and digestive processes. Overall, high stress, poor diet, inadequate sleep, and/or exposure to medications or non-biological substances found in water, beauty and personal hygiene products, etc. can affect how well these processes function.

If you do feel the need to "detox", look at your body and lifestyle as a whole to lessen the burden of exposure and support the systems at work constantly, versus reaching for a quick fix.

**"You are what you eat, drink, breathe, touch.... and can't eliminate"**

**– Bob Rountree, MD**

### FROM YOUR WELLNESS TEAM: THE BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS AT MEALTIME

Hello everyone! Being mindful is bringing awareness to the present moment. During our meals, we are often sidetracked with work, phones, TVs and so much more. Instead of taking time to consciously eat our food, we try multitasking to make the most of our time. While this sounds like a fantastic idea considering how busy our lives have become, it can be pretty detrimental to our own health. How can we choose to become more mindful during our meals? Here are some easy ways:

1. **Give full attention to your food.** Set aside the work email and social scrolling. Allow yourself to sit down and acknowledge the food in front of you and take it in with all of your senses. Give yourself time to fully chew, taste and swallow each bite of food before taking the next bite.
2. **Prepare the meal yourself.** This is the easiest way to prepare your mind to eat mindfully. Start by choosing the meals you want to make, making your grocery list, and prepping food. Since you are physically taking on the task of creating the meal, you are mindful of each step that's required. Once you are prepared to eat, take a moment to be grateful for yourself and the food that is about to nourish your body.
3. **Take time to learn when your body is physically hungry.** Certain smells and sights can trick our mind into believing that we need food, when in reality our body is already fully nourished. A common way to recognize when we are full is when food doesn't taste as good as it did when you started eating.

When we let other things distract us during the time we are eating, we aren't mindful of how much we are consuming or even the types of foods we consume. Try these and enjoy your mindful mealtimes!

Yours truly,  
Your Wellness Team

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