

FERMENTED FOODS: DIET AND NUTRITION'S BEST-KEPT SECRET OF THE CENTURY!



Stomach health can be greatly improved by meal planning with fermented foods; an easy way to add healthy bacteria to your diet.

Real ferments pop. They bubble beneath a liquid brine. They have enough snap in them to chase away a crampy stomachache or even heartburn. Fermented foods are that good.

The art of culturing our food with lactic acid bacteria has been around for generations. And yet, most of us have forgotten about all that goodness that is locked into a jar of homemade sauerkraut or truly fermented dill pickles.

Nowadays, traditionally fermented foods like sauerkraut and pickles swim in white vinegar on supermarket shelves. White vinegar may give the right kind of sour tang, but not the many health benefits that we receive from friendly bacteria.

The friendly bacteria found in [fermented foods](#) and [probiotic beverages](#) are valuable to our health and to our well-being. For example, when good bacteria go missing from the diet for too long, we begin to see:

- Imbalances in immune function, such as reoccurring allergies.
- Compromised gut health, which includes things like constipation and heartburn. and unexplained weight gain.
- Brain fog and mood disorders, like anxiety and depression.
- Acne and other skin troubles.

Repairing the inner ecology of the digestive tract is at the heart of addressing so many of the common health problems we face today. And this begins with fermented foods.

Studies show that probiotics fare better in the stomach when they are consumed in the form of a fermented food or drink¹.

These pages contain healthy sources for introducing fermented foods into your diet: [One Step Better Than Raw Foods](#), [Build a Strong and Resilient Inner Ecosystem](#), [Modern Renditions of Traditional Favorites](#), and a delicious [Spirulina Salad Dressing Recipe](#).

FERMENTED FOODS: NATURE'S PROBIOTIC SOURCE

Fermentation was at one time an important way to preserve food. Without refrigeration, human beings had a limited number of ways to store food for long periods of time without it spoiling.

As it turns out, the same bacteria that help us to preserve food also play an essential role in gut health and in a well-balanced immune response. Friendly lactic acid bacteria are so vital to our well-being that nature intended for our first contact with the outside world to be with these good bacteria.

FERMENTED FOODS: BEWARE OF WILD FERMENTATION WHEN MAKING DIET AND NUTRITION CHOICES

UNDERSTAND YOUR STARTER CULTURE

Healthy gut bacteria are critical to our survival. By choosing fermented foods and fermented beverages on a daily basis we can help to nourish our inner ecology.

The inner ecology in the gut is made up of bacteria and yeast. Most of these microorganisms are beneficial to our health. They help to break down food and synthesize vitamins.

They also help to keep Candida yeast infections in check.

The yeast known as *Candida albicans* is an opportunistic microorganism. It will grow wherever it can whenever it can!

Unfortunately, many people have an overgrowth of *Candida* and do not yet know it. This can show up as itching in the throat or ears, joint pain, skin breakouts, a brain fog, and

of course in the gut itself. The best way to work with the body during this time is to support it with very specific strains of bacteria.

In other words, you want to know your **starter culture**.

Some people will use kombucha as a starter for their fermented veggies. We cannot stress enough the value of knowing the specific strains of bacteria and yeast that are in the starter that you choose.

Many wild starters are just that—wild. There is simply no way of knowing what bugs you are dealing with.

You may be risking the integrity of your gut and your health when you ferment foods with the following starters:

- Kombucha
- Whey
- A pure salt brine

When fermenting vegetables or making kefir at home, we always suggest:

1. Use a **starter culture** or **kefir starter** that contains **specific strains** of beneficial bacteria and beneficial yeast.
2. Feed your starter culture with a pre-biotic. A pre-biotic is easily metabolized by good bacteria and it can give your batch of fermented vegetables the edge that it needs to flourish. **EcoBloomis** is an example of a pre-biotic.
3. Add a pinch of **trace minerals**, such as fulvic and humic acid. Good bacteria love minerals as much as we do! They thrive in a mineral-rich environment.

FERMENTED FOODS: THE NEXT BIG DIET AND NUTRITION ANTIDEPRESSANTS



Feeling happy? It may have something to do with eating fermented foods that populate the gut with good bacteria to affect your mood for the better!

Gut microbes may influence your behavior.

Recent research is starting to catch up to what Donna Gates has been teaching through the Body Ecology Diet for the last fifteen years! Science now suggests that the bacteria in your gastrointestinal tract may have a great influence on your brain activity.

In the past 10-15 years, we have seen a growing interest in microbiology. It turns out that bacteria are responsible for many mechanisms in the body. So far, we know that symbiotic microbes in our gastrointestinal tract¹:

- Synthesize vitamin K and important B vitamins.
- Communicate with and regulate the immune system.
- Play a role in reducing inflammation both in the gastrointestinal tract and in other areas of the body.
- Detoxify heavy metals from the body.
- Help digest food.
- Promote gut motility.
- Help heal and protect the lining of the gut.

Scientists have studied the mood-altering effects of beneficial bacteria before.

In 2010, one study looked at the *Bifidobacterium longum* in mice². These mice were infected with a parasite, and the vagus nerve was severed. The vagus nerve connects the gut to the brain. This nerve would be what neurotransmitters and signals travel on.

They found that the probiotic *B. longum* reduced anxiety-like behavior.

Some route other than the vagus nerve was responsible for the calming affect of beneficial bacteria. Another significant study in 2009 noted that beneficial bacteria reduced anxiety in patients with chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS). However, at the time, the mechanism was not fully understood³.

The latest: Microbes generate neurochemicals!

In the immune system, bacteria can influence the expression of certain chemicals that inhibit or promote inflammation, which is an immune response. Researchers have found that microbes do not merely interact with the endocrine system, as they do with the immune system. *They actively contribute to it.*

DIET AND NUTRITION: WHAT FERMENTED FOOD HELPS PREVENT CANCER AND HEART ATTACKS?



Soybeans have gotten a bad reputation for causing food allergies. But, when they are fermented you can easily digest them and reap their many healing benefits, including cancer prevention and heart attacks.

Many foods that contain soy aren't good for your health.

Many foods that contain soy aren't good for your health. In its UN-fermented form, soy is extremely hard to digest due to the large number of enzyme inhibitors it contains¹. It certainly won't provide your body with the amino acids you need for a well-focused brain, for glowing hair and skin or for strong, well-defined muscles.

Beware, because UN-fermented soy can be harmful to your digestive tract and prevent you from digesting and absorbing other vital nutritional components in your food².

Soy is also a largely genetically modified crop that is over-processed and over-used in packaged foods.

More and more people are showing allergies and sensitivities to this food that was once hailed as a nutritional superstar and a perfect vegetarian protein.

Are You?

Back in the 1990's, because of a heavy economic push from the soy industry and a growing sensitivity to milk, tens of millions of us turned from dairy food to soy foods. Soy formulas became the norm for babies with digestive troubles. A dazzling array of advertisements in leading health magazines made us believe that soy was a safe and desirable food especially for cancer, heart disease, menopause symptoms and osteoporosis.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Sadly, today, many unaware shoppers (especially vegetarians) are still purchasing millions of dollars worth of soy milk, soy protein hot dogs and soy ice cream. Unaware pediatricians and parents put babies on soy milk formulas.

WILL ANY SOY PRODUCTS IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

Absolutely, yes! That's why we put **fermented soybeans** (organic and GMO free) in our new [Super Spirulina Plus](#). By making sure that our high-quality soybeans were readily digestible, your body can now obtain the wonderful benefits that only **fermented soy foods** can provide. An extra bonus – you'll also create and maintain a healthy inner ecosystem with lots of beneficial microflora in your gut.

FERMENTED FOODS: ONE STEP BETTER THAN RAW FOOD FOR OVERALL BETTER NUTRITION



Traditionally fermented foods naturally contain probiotics.

Before refrigeration, we dug holes.

We would gather clay pots that were full of muddled cabbage and bury these pots. Then, we would wait. After one week or several, we would dig up our clay pots and find perfectly vibrant and crisp cabbage leaves. Submerged in a bubbly brine, the leaves had lost their sweetness and they were a touch sour.

This process, otherwise known as fermentation, is one of the oldest ways to preserve food.

Long before high-fructose corn syrup and synthetic chemicals ever existed, we used bacteria and yeast to extend the “shelf life” of foods that would otherwise perish. The friendly lactic acid bacteria and yeast that are naturally involved in the fermentation process are our original food preservatives.

And while we no longer dig holes in order to ferment food, many stores still sell supermarket versions of time-tested fermented favorites. Examples include sauerkraut, dill pickles, and yogurt.

But are these supermarket versions really as good as their lacto-fermented forerunners?

A RAW, PLANT-BASED DIET IS DIFFICULT TO STOMACH

Your picky little eater may be picky for a reason...raw and sometimes even cooked vegetables can be tough to digest. Often, children appreciate fermented foods more than their parents. This is because the digestive tract of a child is not yet mature. Fermented foods naturally boost a child's digestive system and assist in the breakdown of a meal.

For similar reasons, adults often avoid hard-to-digest plants because they lack the force necessary to break these plant fibers down. This invites the normally friendly bacteria in the gut to overgrow and cause irritating symptoms. Signs of bacterial overgrowth are:

- Cramping pain and bloating
- Gas
- Constipation

- Heartburn
- Diarrhea

Although plenty of us eat a plant-based diet, raw vegetables are harder to digest than fermented ones. As it turns out, the body is able to access more of the precious nutrients available in plants when they are fermented.

We simply digest foods with more ease when they are fermented!

FERMENTED FOODS: ONE STEP BETTER THAN RAW FOOD FOR OVERALL BETTER NUTRITION

CHOOSE FOODS THAT NOURISH YOUR INNER ECOSYSTEM

Another term used to describe the beneficial bacteria and yeast that are found in fermented foods are probiotics. Examples of traditionally fermented foods that naturally contain probiotics:

- Fermented dairy foods: such as kefir, yogurt, cheese, buttermilk, and sour cream.
- **Fermented vegetables:** like sauerkraut, kimchi, and dill pickles.
- Soy ferments like miso, tempeh, and natto.

There is a lot of confusion around soy. Soy is both a superfood and perfect protein. BUT Soy is also one of the most genetically modified crops on the planet! You can find soy in just about every processed food that you encounter.

However, fermentation not only enhances the nutrient density of soy—it also gets rid of anti-nutrients that can interfere with digestion and absorption.

Like most foods, soy becomes more valuable when fermented.

Just because a food is fermented, it does not mean that we need to eat it in its raw state. Cooked fermented foods may not have good bacteria or active enzymes, but they are still valuable.

The most important benefits that we receive when eating cooked fermented soy is that it is less irritating to the lining of the gut. With fermentation, we also have access to all of the wonderful cancer-fighting phytonutrients in soy.

Miso is one example of fermented soy that we cook with. For centuries, Miso has been highly prized for its healing qualities, which include anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory, and anti-aging benefits!

Miso makes a wonderful addition to a soup, giving it that umami flair. It is fermented for 3 months to produce a mild, light-colored miso and up to 2 years. The longer miso ferments, the deeper its color and the richer its flavor.

FERMENTED FOODS: ABOUT HEALTHY FOODS, TRADITIONAL PRACTICES FOR A BETTER DIET

MODERN RENDITIONS OF TRADITIONAL FAVORITES

Several years ago I teamed up with a good friend and together we created [coconut water kefir](#).

This wonderful drink offers a safe way to consume the beneficial bacteria and yeast that are normally found in cow milk kefir.

Coconut water kefir does is free of proteins that may irritate the lining of the gut. You can make your own coconut water kefir at home with the water of young coconuts and a starter culture.

If you are using whole young coconuts for their water, it is important not to waste the meat, which is full of valuable fats.

At Body Ecology, we teach others to make a coconut meat pudding or cheese. We simply scrape out the tender flesh of the young coconut and ferment it with a starter culture or a few tablespoons of homemade coconut water kefir.

Once I saw how many people value fermented foods that are easily accessible, I began creating other products that focus specifically on bringing fermented foods back into our everyday lives.

[Vitality SuperGreen](#), [Super Spirulina Plus](#), and our [Body Ecology Probiotic Beverages](#) all contain beneficial bacteria.

The foods in Vitality SuperGreen and Super Spirulina Plus are fermented. This means they contain colonies of friendly bacteria. This also means that each and every vitamin, mineral, and phytonutrient is easy to digest and easy to absorb.

FERMENTED FOODS: RECIPE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER NUTRITION AND HEALTH

FERMENTED SPIRULINA SALAD DRESSING

Super Spirulina Plus contains 50% of fermented spirulina, making it easy to digest and a superior source of nutrition. Spirulina is a complete protein and contains 18 amino acids, all of which are more bioavailable when fermented.

This quick dressing can turn a simple salad into a complete superfood meal!

Mix together the following:

- 4 tablespoons of raw, unfiltered olive oil
- Squeeze from ½ large lemon
- 1 scoop of Body Ecology Super Spirulina Plus
- 1 tablespoon fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 teaspoon garlic dulse flakes
- ½ teaspoon Celtic sea salt

A pinch of cayenne pepper