



*Brain Bootcamp 2023*  
*Eating For Immunity*

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**GUT HEALTH**  
**RECIPE BOOKLET**



# *Brain Bootcamp 2023*

## *Eating For Immunity*

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The gut, or our intestines which can be divided into the small and large intestines, are a part of our 9 metre-long factory we call our digestive tract. This digestive tract is the barrier between our body and the environment, which means food doesn't really get into our body until long after we have eaten it and it has passed through our gut lining's defence barrier which is why it's equipped with an incredible 70% of our body's immune cells.

There is a large community of trillions of microbes that call our guts home. This is known as your gut microbiota. Your gut microbiota are incredibly powerful; not only are they capable of thousands of functions but have also been linked with supporting our immune system and even our happiness. Unlike our genetic make-up, which we have no control over, we have the ability to influence and modulate our gut microbiota by the way we treat it i.e. through food which truly is food for thought.

So, let's delve into this newly appreciated organ to further understand how what we eat can affect our health and wellbeing.

# The Gut Brain Axis

This is a constant two-way communication between our gut and our brain and is referred to as our gut-brain axis. The latest evidence suggests that tapping into our gut-brain axis could play a pivotal role in our mental health.

Although the science behind the gut-brain axis is relatively new, the “gut feeling” phenomenon is something you’ve previously experienced. In fact, long before science connected the two, we were using gut functions to describe our feelings and emotions: “I’ve got butterflies in my stomach”, “you don’t have the guts for this”, “trust your gut”.

We are still building on our understanding of the connection between our brain and gut microbiota. Scientific studies have shown not only that our gut microbiota is implicated in our mental health, but also modifying and nourishing our gut microbiota with some simple diet strategies may help manage and possibly even prevent some mental-health conditions including depression and anxiety.

A healthy gut is essential for a healthy brain, and vice versa. This connection goes both ways via a long nerve from brain to belly called the vagus nerve. In addition, we have chemical messengers and active metabolites produced by the trillions of gut bacteria. These little bugs feed on, and ferment, fibre-rich foods and produce beneficial compounds which support our gut health, as well as other organs in the body including the brain.

In addition, just as the gut bugs can affect our brain, the brain can also have an impact on our gut microbiota, with stress actually suppressing levels of beneficial bacteria. During stressful periods of our lives, e.g. exams, levels of particular bacteria in our gut can be reduced, alongside increased gut motility and fluid excretion (a.k.a. diarrhoea). More scientific evidence is needed in this area, but maintaining a healthy gut is likely to contribute to better health and a potential bonus of possibly improving our mood. To support the good work of our gut microbiota, aim to include a diverse, fibre-rich diet.

# *Dietary Fibre*

Fibre is a type of “carbohydrate” but unlike other types of carbohydrates, dietary fibre isn’t broken down in the small intestine as we don’t make the enzyme needed to digest it. Instead, it is broken down by the gut microbiota in the large intestine where they create a range of beneficial compounds known as short-chain fatty acids.

These short-chain fatty acids help “get things moving” in the large intestine, feed the cells in the large intestine, contribute to our blood sugar balance, can stimulate our immune system and the release of gut hormones and are known to directly impact on the brain.

Fibre also has the ability to help bulk out our stools, thicken the content of our gut (giving the gut muscles more to work with helping regulate our bowel habits) and bind to other compounds, which can help prevent blood-sugar spikes and lower cholesterol levels.

How much fibre do we need? We should be aiming for around 30g of fibre per day, which might sound like a lot but if we break it down it constitutes 2 pieces of fruit, 5 portions of vegetables, 3 portions of wholegrains and 1-2 portions of nuts, seeds or legumes per day. To put this into perspective, the National Diet and Nutrition Survey, a way we analyse the dietary intakes of the UK population, recorded an average intake of 18g fibre per day, well below the daily recommendation. Try increasing your fibre intake slowly, as too much fibre in one go may actually upset your gut at first (think gas and bloating). To avoid this, try increasing your intake by one portion per day, after one week add another portion and continue this gradual pattern until you’ve reached your target. If you have a sensitive gut, try increasing by half a portion a week, taking things a little more slowly.

# Probiotics

These are live strains of bacteria consumed to directly increase the population of good bacteria in the gut. Probiotics have to be alive, present in sufficient numbers and must have scientific evidence of a health benefit associated with them. You can find probiotics in live fermented foods and drinks such as kefir, kombucha, sour kraut, kimchi, and certain yoghurts. In the UK, probiotics are classed as foods and therefore are labelled as “live bacteria” or “live cultures”. Live strains will be destroyed on heating, so it is best to buy products which have not been pasteurised (find them in the fridge of your supermarket), and to eat these foods uncooked to get maximal benefits.

# Prebiotics

Not to be confused with probiotics, prebiotics are special fermentable fibres which the human body is not able to break down, but instead are fermented by specific gut microbiota in our large intestine. If you're wondering how prebiotics are any different to fibre in general, it's because each food that is called a prebiotic has been scientifically proven to have a beneficial outcome in several clinical trials. Therefore, all prebiotics are types of fibre, but not all fibres are prebiotics. For the majority of people, you can get enough naturally occurring prebiotic foods in your diet in order to nourish your gut microbiota.

Foods that are high in prebiotics include (and aren't limited to) Jerusalem artichokes, onions, garlic, leeks, asparagus, savoy cabbage, oats, barley, linseeds, chia seeds, skin-on-almonds, cashew nuts, apples, all legumes (e.g. chickpeas, black beans, aduki beans) and mushrooms. Try to include a wide range of plant-based foods to ensure you get the benefit of prebiotics in your diet.

# *Fibre Diversity*

Bacteria diversity is associated with how many unique plant foods we eat. In a scientific study, researchers found that eating 30 or more plant-based foods per week was linked to the production of special metabolites called short chain fatty acids that help to protect both our gut and immune system. This is because there are many different type of fibres in plant-foods, which help feed the trillions of gut microbiota living inside you.

Eating a wide variety of fibre has also been shown to improve the richness of the gut microbiome, while a low fibre intake can reduce the bacterial diversity. As well as many fruits, vegetables and wholegrains, the UK health guidelines recommend eating 30g of fibre per day from different foods. Try to include foods from beans and pulses, seeds, nuts, and herbs and spices each week to help diversify your diet and gut microbiota.

At the end of this booklet you will find our Plant-Based Diversity Assessment which I encourage you to take in order to assess your intakes of plant foods. This can help you establish some areas to work on to help improve your diversity, which in turn will help support a healthy gut microbiota, meaning a healthier happier you. I hope you enjoy the challenge!

# GUT FOOD



## PROBIOTIC BERRY BIRCHER



**MAKES:**  
TEN



**ALLERGENS:**  
MILK, GLUTEN

### INGREDIENTS

- 600G PROBIOTIC YOGHURT
- 350ML SEMI SKIMMED MILK
- 250G JUMBO OATS
- 5 APPLES, GRATED
- 100G LINSEEDS
- 30ML HONEY (OPTIONAL, OR TO TASTE)
- ½ TSP GROUND CINNAMON
- ½ TSP GROUND NUTMEG
- 500G FROZEN BERRIES

### METHOD

1. IN A LARGE BOWL, MIX ALL THE INGREDIENTS EXCEPT THE FROZEN BERRIES.
2. DIVIDE INTO SERVING PORTIONS E.G. IN TUPPERWARE TO TAKE FOR BREAKFAST THE NEXT DAY
3. TOP WITH THE FROZEN BERRIES. LEAVE IN THE FRIDGE OVERNIGHT FOR A QUICK BREAKFAST IN THE MORNING.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** This bircher is the perfect way to start the day without the faff. It's packed full of gut friendly foods including probiotics, fibre, prebiotics, healthy fats and gut-loving fruits – buy a bag of frozen mixed berries and you will already have increased the diversity of your plant food tally for the week. In addition, dark blue-purple fruits are packed full of phytochemicals which contribute to the maintenance of a health gastrointestinal tract through altering the intestinal microflora. Make this the night before and you will thank yourself in the morning when you can grab and go! Just remember to pack your spoon to be able to eat it.

# GUT FOOD



## WHOLEMEAL BLUEBERRY AND BANANA MUFFINS



**MAKES:**  
TEN



**ALLERGENS:**  
EGG, GLUTEN,  
WHEAT

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 LARGE BANANAS, RIPE WITH A FEW BROWN SPOTS
- 1 EGG
- 125ML VEGETABLE OIL
- 250G WHOLEMEAL FLOUR
- ½ TSP BICARBONATE OF SODA
- ½ TSP BAKING POWDER
- 150G FROZEN BLUEBERRIES

### METHOD

1. PREHEAT AN OVEN TO 180°C FAN/ 200°C CONVECTION. LINE A MUFFIN TRAY WITH 10 MUFFIN CASES.
2. MASH THE BANANAS WITH THE EGG AND VEGETABLE OIL. SEPARATELY MIX THE FLOUR, BICARB AND BAKING POWDER TOGETHER. COMBINE THE WET AND DRY INGREDIENTS AND MIX TOGETHER UNTIL MOSTLY SMOOTH (A FEW BANANA LUMPS ARE FINE). GENTLY FOLD IN THE BLUEBERRIES.
3. DIVIDE THE MIXTURE BETWEEN THE CASES AND BAKE IN THE OVEN FOR AROUND 15 MINUTES, OR TILL THE TOPS SPRING BACK WHEN LIGHTLY PRESSED.
4. REMOVE THE MUFFINS FROM THE TIN AND COOL ON A WIRE RACK.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Wholemeal flour provides extra fibre to help feed your gut microbiota. In addition, there are bananas and blueberries for natural sweetness. The blueberries are also a great source of polyphenols, which give these berries their lovely colour. Blueberries are full of anthocyanins, which have been shown to increase brain activity and memory in clinical trials. This recipe provides you with 4 plant points for your weekly tally.



# GUT FOOD



## PREBIOTIC FOCACCIA



**MAKES:**

TEN



**ALLERGENS:**

GLUTEN, WHEAT

### INGREDIENTS

- 14G DRY YEAST
- 1 TBSP SUGAR
- 250G STRONG WHITE BREAD FLOUR
- 250G STRONG WHOLEMEAL BREAD FLOUR
- 5 TBSP EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, PLUS EXTRA FOR GREASING
- 2 TSP SALT
- 1 BULB OF GARLIC
- 1 RED ONION, CUT INTO 12 WEDGES
- 150G CHERRY TOMATOES
- A FEW SPRIGS OF ROSEMARY

### METHOD

1. PUT THE FLOUR IN A MIXING BOWL AND MAKE A WELL IN THE CENTRE. ADD THE YEAST, SUGAR AND 100ML WARM WATER. GENTLY MIX AND LEAVE FOR A FEW MINUTES, UNTIL THE YEAST HAS DISSOLVED AND STARTS TO FOAM.
2. ADD REMAINING WARM WATER, 2 TBSP OLIVE OIL AND 1 TSP SEA SALT, STIRRING UNTIL THE MIXTURE FORMS A STICKY DOUGH. KNEAD FOR 5-10 MINUTES, ADDING A LITTLE EXTRA OIL IF NEEDED, UNTIL SMOOTH AND ELASTIC. SHAPE THE DOUGH INTO A DISC AND TRANSFER TO A LARGE, OILED BOWL. COVER WITH A CLING FILM AND SET ASIDE SOMEWHERE WARM FOR APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR UNTIL DOUBLED IN SIZE.
3. PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 180°C. SLICE THE VERY TOP OFF THE GARLIC BULB, WRAP THE GARLIC BULB IN KITCHEN FOIL WITH 1 TBSP OLIVE OIL DRIZZLED OVER THE TOP OF THE EXPOSED CLOVES AND ROAST DIRECTLY ON THE OVEN SHELF FOR APPROX. 25 MINUTES, UNTIL TENDER. REMOVE FROM OVEN AND SET ASIDE TO COOL. ONCE COOL ENOUGH TO HANDLE, GENTLY SQUEEZE OUT THE CLOVES AND SET ASIDE.
4. PUT THE ONION WEDGES AND TOMATOES IN A BOWL AND DRIZZLE WITH OIL. TOSS TO COAT AND SET ASIDE.
5. LIGHTLY GREASE A DEEP ROASTING TRAY WITH OIL. TIP THE DOUGH INTO THE TIN AND STRETCH IT OUT TO FILL THE EDGES AND CORNERS. USING OILED FINGERS, MAKE ROWS OF EVENLY SPACED DIMPLES OVER THE SURFACE OF THE DOUGH AND PRESS IN THE GARLIC CLOVES, TOMATOES, ONION AND ROSEMARY. COVER WITH OILED CLING FILM AND SET ASIDE TO PROVE FOR A FURTHER 45 MINUTES, UNTIL DOUBLED IN SIZE.
6. PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 200°C. SCATTER THE REMAINING SEA SALT OVER THE DOUGH. PLACE IN THE OVEN AND BAKE FOR 30 MINUTES, OR UNTIL GOLDEN.
7. REMOVE FROM THE OVEN AND LEAVE TO COOL IN THE TIN FOR A FEW MINUTES. DRIZZLE WITH A LITTLE MORE OIL JUST BEFORE SERVING.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** This recipe combines lots of fibre from the wholemeal, alongside some prebiotics in the form of garlic and onion. This gives plenty of food for your gut bacteria to feast on. Try pairing this with more plant-based foods such as hummus, make a sandwich with avocado, rocket and omega-3 rich smoked salmon (great for both brain and gut!), or serve with fermented foods such as blue cheese and pickled vegetables as part of a cheese board.

# GUT FOOD



## KEFIR AND FALAFEL PITTAS



**MAKES:**  
FOUR



**ALLERGENS:**  
GLUTEN, WHEAT,  
MILK, SESAME

### INGREDIENTS

- 12 READY-MADE FALAFELS
- 1 CUCUMBER, HALVES LENGTHWAYS AND CUT INTO THIN MOON-SHAPES
- 1 RED ONION, FINELY SLICED
- 150ML KEFIR
- 2 LIMES, JUICED
- 1 SMALL GARLIC CLOVE, CRUSHED
- 2 TBSP EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- ½ TSP GROUND CUMIN
- 4 SPRIGS DILL, CHOPPED
- 4 SPRIGS MINT, CHOPPED
- 4 SPRIGS FLAT LEAF PARSLEY, CHOPPED
- 1 AVOCADO, PITTED AND SLICED
- 4 WHOLEMEAL PITTAS

### METHOD

1. HEAT THE FALAFELS ACCORDING TO THE PACKET INSTRUCTIONS
2. COMBINE THE CUCUMBER, ONION, KEFIR, LIME JUICE, GARLIC, OLIVE OIL, CUMIN, DILL, MINT AND PARSLEY TOGETHER.
3. HEAT THE PITTAS JUST BEFORE SERVING TO OPEN THEM UP BEFORE STUFFING WITH THE SALAD, FALAFEL AND AVOCADO.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Adding kefir to your diet is an easy way to include a probiotic to help support a healthy gut. Kefir has a similar consistency to cream, so it naturally lends itself to a dressing for a salad, and keeping it cool means you will be maximising the benefit of consuming the live bacteria.

# GUT FOOD



## STILTON AND PEAR SALAD



**MAKES:**  
SIX



**ALLERGENS:**  
MILK

### INGREDIENTS

#### FOR THE DRESSING

- 2 LEMONS, GRATED AND ZEST
- 100G PUMPKIN SEEDS
- 4TBSP. WATER
- 20ML LEMON OIL
- 10ML HONEY

#### FOR THE SALAD

- 4 CONFERENCE PEARS
- 150G MIXED SALAD LEAVES
- 100G BLUE STILTON, CRUMBLED INTO CHUNKS
- 6 SPRING ONIONS, THINLY SLICED
- GROUND BLACK PEPPER, PINCH

### METHOD

1. TO MAKE THE DRESSING, PLACE THE LEMON ZEST IN A MINI FOOD PROCESSOR WITH 50G PUMPKIN SEEDS AND WHIZZ UNTIL FINELY CHOPPED.
2. ADD HALF THE LEMON JUICE, THE LEMON OIL AND WATER, THEN ADD THE HONEY AND SEASON. BLITZ THE INGREDIENTS TOGETHER AGAIN TO MAKE A CREAMY DRESSING.
3. SLICE AND CORE THE PEARS AND SQUEEZE OVER THE REMAINING LEMON JUICE TO STOP THEM TURNING BROWN.
4. ARRANGE THE LETTUCE LEAVES, PEARS AND CHEESE IN A SERVING BOWL.
5. SCATTER OVER THE REMAINING PUMPKIN SEEDS AND THE SPRING ONIONS. DRIZZLE WITH THE DRESSING AND SEASON WITH GROUND BLACK PEPPER.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Blue cheese is a fermented food, and will contain some probiotics as it is eaten raw. We pair this with prebiotic pears to make a delicious salad which can be eaten as a starter. Using a bag of mixed salad leaves will help increase the diversity of your salad – try to pick a bag with lots of different coloured leaves for added diversity. If you can't find lemon oil, use extra virgin olive oil.

# GUT FOOD



## GUT-LOVING KALE AND CHICKPEA CAESAR SALAD



**MAKES:**  
SIX



**ALLERGENS:**  
MILK, FISH, MUSTARD

### INGREDIENTS

- 500G CHICKPEAS, DRAINED AND RINSED
- 65ML EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 150G KEFIR
- 100G MAYONNAISE
- 5 ANCHOVIES
- 1 TBSP DIJON MUSTARD
- 1 LEMON, JUICED
- 1 GARLIC CLOVE, GRATED
- 150G PARMESAN, HALF GRATED, HALF SHAVED
- ½ TSP OREGANO
- ½ TSP PEPPER
- 400G KALE, STEMS REMOVED AND SLICED

### METHOD

1. PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 180°C FAN.
2. IN A BOWL, ADD THE CHICKPEAS AND 50ML OLIVE OIL AND MIX TO EVENLY COAT. PLACE ONTO A BAKING TRAY AND BAKE IN THE OVEN FOR 10-15 MINUTES TILL GOLDEN AND CRISPY. ALLOW TO COOL.
3. IN A SEPARATE LARGE BOWL, ADD THE REMAINING OLIVE OIL, KEFIR, MAYONNAISE, ANCHOVIES, MUSTARD, LEMON, GARLIC, THE GRATED PARMESAN, OREGANO AND PEPPER. WHISK TO COMBINE.
4. ADD THE KALE TO THE DRESSING AND MIX TO COMBINE.
5. TRANSFER TO A SERVING BOWL, AND SCATTER THE CRISPY CHICKPEAS AND REMAINING SHAVED PARMESAN.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** This is a gut-loving recipe combining probiotics (kefir and parmesan), prebiotics (chickpeas and garlic) anti-oxidant containing greens (kale) and omega-3 fats (anchovies). Yes, you read that right, parmesan is a probiotic. In a recent Italian study, scientists found that parmesan cheese was an effective way of getting good bacteria (Lactobacillus) into your gut – just be sure to use the unpasteurised version, and to not treat it with heat.

# GUT FOOD



## VERY GREEN BARLEY WITH BASIL



**MAKES:**  
TEN



**ALLERGENS:**  
GLUTEN

### INGREDIENTS

- 1KG PEARL BARLEY
- 4 COURGETTES
- 1 HEAD OF BROCCOLI
- 1 RED CHILLI, OR TO TASTE, FINELY SLICED
- 10ML LIGHT SOY SAUCE
- 20G DARK SOFT BROWN SUGAR
- 150G FROZEN PEAS, DEFROSTED
- 1 BAG WATERCRESS, ROUGHLY CHOPPED
- 1 SMALL BUNCH OF BASIL, CHOPPED
- 1 SMALL BUNCH OF MINT, CHOPPED

### METHOD

1. COOK THE BARLEY IN BOILING WATER FOR ABOUT 25 MINUTES UNTIL TENDER.
2. MEANWHILE, SLICE THE COURGETTES INTO QUARTERS LENGTHWAYS AND CUT THE BROCCOLI INTO SHORT LENGTHS, THEN STEAM BOTH FOR 8-10 MINUTES UNTIL JUST TENDER BUT STILL VIBRANT AND GREEN. ALLOW TO COOL.
3. MIX THE CHILLI, SOY SAUCE AND SUGAR IN A CUP.
4. DRAIN THE BARLEY, THEN TIP INTO A MIXING BOWL, ADD THE DRESSING AND TOSS TOGETHER BEFORE ALLOWING TO COOL.
5. TO SERVE, TOSS THE COURGETTES AND BROCCOLI WITH THE BARLEY ALONG WITH THE PEAS (NO NEED TO COOK THEM), WATERCRESS AND HERBS.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Barley is rich in prebiotic beta-glucan, which supports the growth of probiotic bacteria in the digestive system. The beta-glucan in barley may also help support the immune system, in addition to helping reduce cholesterol and glucose levels in the blood.

This serves 10 as a side salad, but if you wanted it could served as a main dish for 5 – try adding a source of protein in the form of beans, cheese, meat or fish to balance the salad.

# GUT FOOD



## MEXICAN REFRIED BEANS



**MAKES:**  
FIVE



**ALLERGENS:**  
NONE

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 GARLIC CLOVES
- 1 RED CHILLI
- CORIANDER, SMALL HANDFUL, CHOPPED
- 25ML VEGETABLE OIL
- 750G MIXED BEANS
- 1 RED PEPPER, ROASTED, SLICED AND FINELY CHOPPED
- SALT AND PEPPER TO TASTE

### METHOD

1. PEEL AND FINELY SLICE THE GARLIC, DESEED AND FINELY SLICE THE CHILLI AND PICK THE CORIANDER LEAVES AND FINELY SLICE THE STALKS.
2. IN A LARGE FRYING PAN, HEAT A SPLASH OF OIL AND FRY THE GARLIC, CHILLI AND CORIANDER STALKS FOR 1 TO 2 MINUTES, UNTIL GOLDEN.
3. DRAIN THE BEANS, THEN ADD ALONG WITH THE PEPPERS, THEN SEASON TO TASTE. FRY FOR APPROX. 15 MINUTES ON A LOW HEAT, STIRRING OCCASIONALLY, UNTIL CRISPY.
4. SERVE THE BEANS IN A SERVING DISH SPRINKLED WITH CHOPPED CORIANDER LEAVES.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Beans are a great source of prebiotic fibre. You can increase your fibre diversity by using a tin of mixed beans, rather than a single bean. This is a really cheap and effective way of increasing your fibre diversity without having to do anything extra. This is delicious served in a wholemeal tortilla wrap with some creamy avocado, crisp lettuce and a few slices of tomatoes which contain vitamin C to help your body absorb the plant-based iron in the beans.



**MAKES:**  
TEN



**ALLERGENS:**  
FISH

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 CHINESE CABBAGE
- 1 TBSP SEA SALT
- 3 CLOVES OF GARLIC, CRUSHED
- 2.5 CM GINGER, GRATED
- 2 TBSP FISH SAUCE
- 2 TBSP CHILLI PASTE
- 1 TBSP CASTER SUGAR
- 3 TBSP RICE VINEGAR
- 8 RADISHES, GRATED
- 2 CARROTS, GRATED
- 4 SPRING ONIONS, SLICED

### METHOD

1. SLICE THE CABBAGE INTO 25CM STRIPS. TIP INTO A BOWL AND MIX WITH THE SEA SALT AND ALLOW TO SIT FOR 1 HOUR.
2. MEANWHILE, MAKE THE KIMCHI PASTE BY BLENDING THE GARLIC, GINGER, FISH SAUCE, CHILLI PASTE, SUGAR AND RICE VINEGAR TOGETHER.
3. RINSE THE CABBAGE WITH COLD WATER TO RINSE OFF THE SALT. DRAIN AND DRY THOROUGHLY.
4. TRANSFER TO A LARGE BOWL AND TOSS THROUGH THE PASTE ALONG WITH THE RADISH, CARROT AND SPRING ONION.
5. SERVE STRAIGHT AWAY, OR PACK INTO A LARGE JAR PUSHING OUT AS MUCH AIR AS POSSIBLE AND LEAVE TO FERMENT OVERNIGHT BEFORE CHILLING.
6. ONCE OPENED STORE IT IN THE FRIDGE AND EAT WITHIN 1 WEEK.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Kimchi is growing in popularity thanks to the benefit from the natural fermentation that takes place producing lots of gut-loving probiotics. If you wanted to buy kimchi, make sure it isn't pasteurised as this will kill off any beneficial live bacteria. We love our own kimchi as it's so quick and easy to make, and you can eat it fresh or store it for use later in the week. Including fermented food as part of your diet can improve intestinal health, and as a result can support the immune system.

# GUT FOOD



## GUT LOVING SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE



**MAKES:**  
SIX



**ALLERGENS:**  
CELERY, GLUTEN, WHEAT,  
MILK

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 TBSP OLIVE OIL
- 1 ONION, CHOPPED
- 2 STICKS CELERY, FINELY CHOPPED
- 2 CARROTS, GRATED
- 2 CLOVES OF GARLIC, FINELY CHOPPED
- 100G MUSHROOMS, CHOPPED
- 250G MINCED BEEF
- 100G RED LENTILS
- 400G TINNED TOMATOES, CHOPPED
- 1 TBSP TOMATO PUREE
- 1 BEEF STOCK CUBE
- 1 TSP DRIED MIXED HERBS
- ½ TSP GROUND PEPPER
- 450G WHOLEMEAL SPAGHETTI
- 120G CHEDDAR CHEESE

### METHOD

1. HEAT THE OIL IN A LARGE PAN AND FRY THE ONION, CELERY AND CARROTS FOR 5 MINUTES OVER A LOW HEAT BEFORE ADDING THE GARLIC AND MUSHROOMS AND FRYING FOR A FURTHER 2 MINUTES.
2. ADD THE MINCE AND COOK TILL THE MEAT IS NO LONGER PINK.
3. ADD THE RED LENTILS, TIN OF TOMATOES, TOMATO PUREE, MIXED HERBS AND CRUMBLE THE STOCK CUBE BEFORE ADDING 400ML WATER. COOK ON A LOW SIMMER FOR 30 MINUTES, ADDING EXTRA WATER IF IT LOOKS DRY.
4. MEANWHILE, BRING A PAN OF WATER TO THE BOIL AND COOK THE SPAGHETTI ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS.
5. DRAIN THE SPAGHETTI AND SERVE ON A PLATE WITH BOLOGNAISE SAUCE ON THE TOP.
6. SERVE WITH GRATED CHEDDAR OVER THE TOP

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** The addition of lentils to this Bolognese adds a lovely gut-friendly twist of added plant protein. Serving it with wholemeal pasta adds extra fibre to the dish resulting in 11g of fibre per serving including 9.5 plant points! Your tastebuds and gut microbiota will be happy with this recipe.





## BLACK BEAN BROWNIES



**MAKES:**  
SIXTEEN



**ALLERGENS:**  
WHEAT, GLUTEN, EGG

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 TIN OF BLACK BEANS, DRAINED AND RINSED (235G)
- 2 EGGS
- 55G VEGETABLE OIL
- 1.5 TSP VANILLA EXTRACT
- 1 TSP INSTANT COFFEE DISSOLVED IN 2 TBSP HOT WATER
- 60G COCOA POWDER
- 1.5 TSP BICARB OF SODA
- 60G SPELT FLOUR
- 160G DARK SOFT BROWN SUGAR
- 100G CHOPPED CHOCOLATE

### METHOD

1. BLEND THE BEANS, EGGS, OIL, VANILLA AND COFFEE TOGETHER TILL SMOOTH.
2. MIX ALL THE DRY INGREDIENTS, EXCEPT THE CHOCOLATE, TOGETHER.
3. POUR THE WET INGREDIENTS INTO THE DRY AND STIR TO COMBINE. ADD  $\frac{3}{4}$  OF THE CHOCOLATE AND MIX.
4. POUR INTO A LINED BAKING TIN (MAX SIZE 23X23CM), SPRINKLE WITH THE REMAINING CHOCOLATE AND BAKE AT 160°C FAN FOR 20 MINUTES.
5. REMOVE ONCE COOKED AND ALLOW TO COOL FOR 20 MINUTES BEFORE CUTTING INTO 16 SQUARES.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Beans in a brownie? You have to trust me on this one, they add to the deep fudgy flavour of the brownie, whilst providing extra protein and fibre (and remember beans count as a prebiotic too!) to each portion. The good news is that if you do make and eat these (option to freeze down some for a later date) they will add extra plant points to your weekly tally in the beans and grains categories!

# GUT FOOD



## APPLE AND BERRY CRUMBLE



**MAKES:**  
SIX



**ALLERGENS:**  
WHEAT, GLUTEN, MILK

### INGREDIENTS

- 500G COOKING APPLES, PEELED, CORED AND SLICED
- 25G BUTTER
- 60G CASTER SUGAR
- 250G BERRIES OF CHOICE (OPTION TO USE FROZEN) E.G. BLUEBERRIES, BLACKBERRIES, RASPBERRIES
- 100G PLAIN WHOLEMEAL FLOUR
- 75G JUMBO PORRIDGE OATS
- 75G DARK BROWN SUGAR
- 75G BUTTER, CHILLED AND CUT INTO 1CM CUBES
- 25G SUNFLOWER SEEDS\*
- 25G PUMPKIN SEEDS\*
- PROBIOTIC YOGHURT (TO SERVE)

### METHOD

1. PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 160°C FAN/ 180°C CONVECTION
2. PLACE THE APPLES, 25G BUTTER AND CASTER SUGAR INTO A PAN AND COOK OVER A MEDIUM HEAT FOR 10 MINUTES, STIRRING FROM TIME TO TIME UNTIL THE SUGAR HAS DISSOLVED AND THE FRUIT IS JUST BEGINNING TO COLLAPSE. STIR IN THE BERRIES AND TRANSFER THE MIXTURE INTO AN OVEN PROOF DISH AND SET ASIDE.
3. MAKE THE CRUMBLE TOPPING BY COMBINING THE FLOUR AND BUTTER TO A BOWL AND RUBBING BETWEEN YOUR FINGERTIPS TO MAKE A BREADCRUMB LIKE TEXTURE. ADD THE OATS, DARK BROWN SUGAR AND SEEDS. MIX WELL BEFORE SPOONING OVER THE FRUIT.
4. BAKE FOR 35-40 MINUTE, OR UNTIL GOLDEN BROWN AND BUBBLING. LEAVE TO SETTLE FOR AROUND 10 MINUTES BEFORE SERVING WITH A HEAPED SPOONFUL OF PROBIOTIC YOGHURT.

**NUTRITIONIST'S TIP:** Apples are rich in a fibre called pectin, which has prebiotic properties. While further research into the role of apples in gut health is needed, an animal study found that pectin from apples could promote healthy gut microbiota. The pectin in apples may also aid blood sugar control which may help with concentration.

\*Option to use omega-3 containing walnuts, or prebiotic cashew nuts and skin-on almonds in the topping instead of seeds for extra added gut goodness at home. Simply chop the nuts up before adding to the crumble mixture in place of the seeds.





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