

The 9 Worst Foods to Eat and Healthy Swaps

By Dr. Jockers

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If you feel like healthy eating gets more complicated every day, I feel you. Paleo, vegan, low-carb, high-fat, organic, and the endless list of dietary terms can make it difficult to even begin eating healthy. Experiencing this feedback from my patients and followers for years, I completely understand where you are coming from. Here are 9 of the worst foods to eat, and healthy alternatives to swap them for.

That is why I have put together this article to lay the basis of the worst foods for your health, along with the foundational principles of a healing diet to support optimal wellness in the body. Some of these worst foods may come as a surprise because they are marketed by the media as healthy...but you will come to find out why you will want to avoid them!



Note On Worst Foods

Although it is important to know which of the worst foods to avoid, it is never a good idea to be constantly fixated on what you **can't eat**. Once you understand the foods to avoid, keep a mental note in the back of your head. Next, take to heart my healing diet nutrition principles and begin incorporating them into your life.

By doing so, you will begin to naturally avoid the worst foods for your health. Instead of feeling limited to a narrow selection of foods, you will experience liberation knowing that the foods that you are eating are adding to your vitality every day!



Table Salt

Commercial Table salt is nothing like the natural salts our bodies have been receiving for thousands of years. Naturally occurring salts from the earth contain sodium along with over 80 different **trace minerals**, all of which play an important role in the body.

Commercial table salt is a chemically synthesized sodium chloride along with other nasty additives that prevent it from clumping together. Additionally, these salts often contain things like aluminum and fluoride which I would never recommend putting into your body.



Alternative: Natural Salts

When it comes to salt, I recommend consuming generous amounts on your food. This is because the sodium and other trace minerals play a vital role as electrolytes that ensure your nervous system is working efficiently.

The salts I recommend are those from clean earth sources. This would include salts like **Pink Himalayan** and **Celtic Gray**. The coloration to these unique salts is an indication of their mineral content.

If you are concerned about getting iodine, I would recommend using a seasoning that includes kelp like **Herbamare** or **Braggs Sea Kelp Delight**.



Vegetable Oil

There are two important concepts to understand when it comes to fat consumption. Having a healthy Omega-3:Omega-6 ratio is important for controlling inflammation

in the body and regulating metabolism (1). Also, your brain and the myelin that surrounds your nerves is primarily made of fats.

Consuming highly processed [vegetable oils](#) contributes to disease by neglecting both of these important concepts. Vegetable oils are very high in omega-6 fats while also being highly damaged during processing. This leaves you with an elevation in inflammation and subpar building materials for your brain and peripheral nervous system!

Be careful here...these are **REALLY HARD to avoid all together**. Be sure to read labels and if you see anything with corn oil, soybean oil, safflower oil, cottonseed oil, canola oil and peanut oil than those are vegetable oil culprits. Many restaurants cook with these and call them "olive oil" when they are really 50% or more corn or canola oil.

Do the best you can and ask a lot of questions when you eat out. **Even better, call the restaurant ahead of time and ask if you are able.** My wife and I will often bring our own oils and grass fed butter or ghee to make sure we get the right stuff.

Here is an example, one of our favorite local restaurants, Ted's Montana Grill, has a great menu with bison and guacamole and good veggies. Unfortunately, their "olive oil" is 50% canola oil...so we don't use it. We bring our own extra virgin olive oil (we like [Fresh Pressed olive oil here](#)) or [MCT oil](#) like and either grass-fed butter or [grass-fed ghee](#).

KEY NUTRIENTS IN OLIVE OIL

- OLEIC ACID**
This is a healthy monounsaturated fatty acid that helps improve fat burning, blood sugar stability and insulin sensitivity.
- OLEOCANTHAL**
Powerful inflammation reducing polyphenol that helps reduce pain in the body. Gives the olive oil flavor - particularly the bitter peppery flavor.
- HYDROXYTYROSOL**
Polyphenol antioxidant that protects the blood-brain barrier and has anti-microbial and immune supportive benefits.
- PHYTOSTEROLS**
These are plant cholesterol compounds that improve insulin sensitivity, fat burning, lipid levels and inflammation.
- VITAMIN E**
Each tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil has about 1.9 mg of Vitamin E, a fat-soluble antioxidant that can protect the body against eye and skin problems and in fact make hair and skin much healthier.

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Alternative: Organic Virgin Coconut Oil

Coconut oil is a great source of healthy saturated fat that is safe for cooking up to 350 degrees F which is where it hits its smoke point. Coconut oil has a remarkable stability and along with extra virgin olive oil, butter, ghee and beef tallow handles heat quite well.

Additionally, it provides small amount of [medium chain triglycerides](#) which can be converted into ketones that have great benefits for your body. These fats also have anti-bacterial and anti-yeast properties that benefit the microbiome.

MYTHS & FACTS ABOUT COCONUT OIL

MYTHS	FACTS
Saturated fat leads to obesity	The medium chain fats in coconut oil help to improve metabolism and fat burning
Increases cholesterol levels & risk of heart attack	Increases good cholesterol levels which clears blockages in arteries
Is sweet & not good for diabetics	It helps control diabetes & reduces risk of developing diabetes
Coconut oil irritates the skin	Soothes skin, nourishes the skin microbiome and helps to heal wounds
Coconut oil is thick & not easily absorbed	It is thin, non sticky, non greasy & is readily absorbed by body
Coconut oil goes rancid very easily	Stable oil & does not go rancid for years
Tastes bad	Likes & dislikes are very personal & differ from person to person
Saturated Fats from coconut oil are bad for brain health	Studies have shown that coconut oil consumption helps to balance blood sugar and increase ketone production which reduces inflammation in the brain and helps improve mental performance

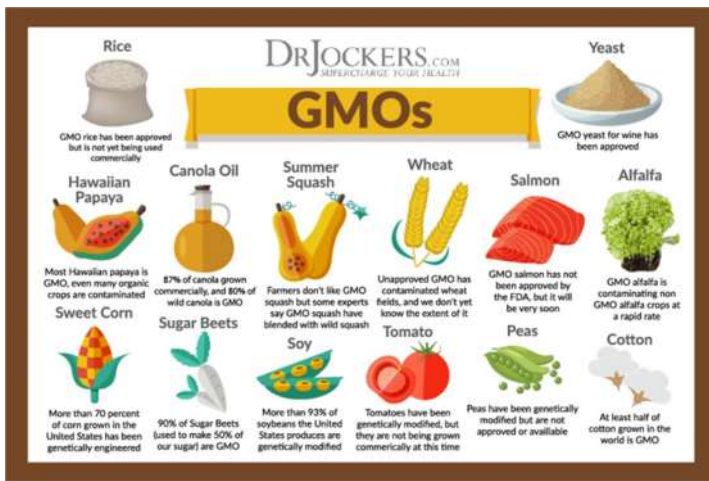
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Unfermented Soy Products

Over the years, soy has become a hot topic as a healthy vs unhealthy food. My view is that you do not want this stuff in your diet. Here's why:

- **High Amounts of Phytic Acids and Lectins:** Soy contains these chemicals as natural defenses from animals that try to consume them. Phytic Acid binds up minerals, lowering the nutrition you absorb from your meals. Lectins can be extremely damaging to the lining of the gut.
- **GMO & Glyphosate:** The vast majority of soy in our food supply is genetically modified, containing high amounts of the infamous herbicide [glyphosate](#). Glyphosate is another compound that destroys the health of your gut while draining vital nutrients as your body tries to neutralize it.
- **Hormones:** Soy has mild-estrogenic effects that may be harmful to someone who already has sex hormone imbalance.

Soy products have made their way into many processed foods on the market so it is important to read your labels. Especially look out for things like "soy protein isolate" as it is a very concentrated form of soy that may have exaggerated health effects.



Alternative: Fermented Soy

Soy can be tolerable and even nutritious in its fermented form. This includes things like **ORGANIC** miso, natto, and tempeh. The fermentation process deactivates a large amount of the phytic acid and lectins which allows you to readily absorb the nutrients.

If you have a [histamine intolerance](#), then I would recommend avoiding these foods as it can cause a reaction. Other Alternatives include:

- Instead of soy sauce, use [Coconut Aminos](#)
- Instead of soy protein use [Gut Healing](#) (vegan option) or [Bone Broth Protein](#)
- Instead of soy-based meats use Grass-fed Beef

Processed Meat

The types of meat you eat are extremely important. Many people believe that simply buying the leanest meats is the healthiest option. The truth is, most of the meat produced today is simply unacceptable.

You want to avoid highly processed meats like deli meats, cured meats, and any kind of meat that comes from poor living conditions. Unless the package states that it is organic and ideally pasture-raised, you will probably want to steer clear of it.

Alternatives: Pasture-Raised/ Wild-Caught

You want your meat to come from animals that have been raised humanely, in pastures, and fed the diet they are

meant to eat. For beef and lamb this would be grass, for poultry, this would be things like bugs, seeds, berries and things that can be foraged in a natural environment.

As a result these meats are more nutritious and contain a more favorable omega-3:Omega-6 ratios. The best bet to find good meat is either a health-centered grocer or an online source such as [US Wellness Meats](#) or [Slankers](#).

	Grain-Fed Beef	Grass-Fed Beef
Added Hormones	Usually	No
Fed Antibiotics	Usually	No
Fed Grain	Yes	No
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	0.10	1.22
Omega-6 Fatty Acids	3.10	1.08
CLA	0.21	1.46
Beta Carotene	41.00	87.00
Vitamin E	1.30	5.30
Vitamin A	10.00	52.00
Total Fat	High & Saturated	Perfect Balance
Flavor	Bland/Pasty	Original & Bold
All Other Factor	Fair	Perfect
E. Coli Risk	Present	Not Likely

Microwaved Popcorn






Microwave popcorn is no good for a few reasons. First it is typically GMO corn, which will almost always contain glyphosate. Next, many brands utilize an artificial flavoring called diacetyl that is an alternative to butter. Diacetyl has been linked to respiratory disorders (2).

Finally, corn is a common [food sensitivity](#) that I see with many of my patients that can cause inflammation in the gut. Traditional microwaved popcorn is truly one of the worst foods you could possibly consume.

Alternative: Sprouted Pumpkin Seeds

If you must have popcorn, your best bet would be to either hot-air pop it or in a pot with coconut oil. Toss it up with some grass-fed butter or coconut oil and a high quality sea salt.

For an even healthier alternative, [sprouted pumpkin seeds](#) are a great option. They are super nutrient dense, a great source of zinc, and are a great source of healthy fats. They are nutrient dense and blood sugar friendly!

BRAND	INGREDIENTS
	Corn, Natural Oil Blend (Corn and Palm Fruit Oils), Salt, Natural and Artificial Flavor (Derived from Lactose-Free Milk), Colored with Annatto, TBHQ to Preserve Freshness.
	Newman's Own Microwave Popcorn, Palm Oil, Salt, Soybean Oil, Natural Butter Flavor with other Natural Flavors, Annatto Extract (For Color), Vitamin E (For Freshness)
	Pop Corn, Partially Hydrogenated Soybean Oil, Salt, Natural Flavors, Annatto For Coloring, Soy Lecithin. Contains: Egg, Milk & Soy Ingredients
	Popping Corn, Palm Oil, Less Than 2% Of: Salt, Potassium Chloride, Butter, Natural And Artificial Flavor, Color Added, TBHQ And Citric Acid (For Freshness). Contains: Milk. No Added Diacetyl Butter Flavorings.
	Whole Grain Popcorn, Partially Hydrogenated Soybean Oil, Salt, Natural and Artificial Flavor, Color Added, Nonfat Milk, Freshness Preserved by Propyl Gallate and Citric Acid.

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Non-Organic Produce

I have mentioned glyphosate a couple times already but I am going to reiterate. You need to avoid glyphosate, as well as all other pesticides, as much as possible.

These are toxic to the human body, leaching minerals from the body and damaging the lining of your gut. Glyphosate consumption has been linked to many forms of cancer and [neurodegenerative disease](#) conditions. It is virtually impossible to avoid exposure to these chemicals all together, but you want to do your best where choice is available to reduce your exposure to these toxins.



Know What You're Buying!

Organic

Conventionally Grown

GMO

4011
Four Digit Code Starting with 3 or 4

94129
Five Digit Code Starting with 9

83137
Five Digit Code Starting with 8

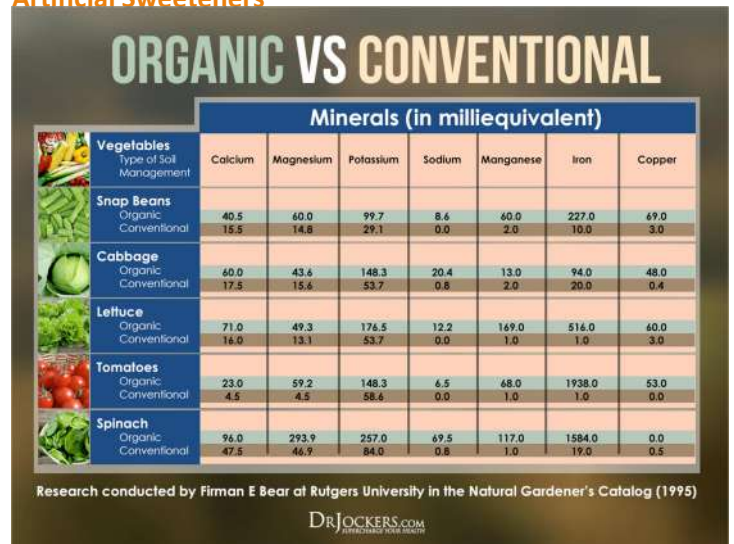
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Alternative: Organic Produce

You can either go all organic or, if you are sticking to a budget, follow the [clean 15](#) & [dirty dozen](#) guidelines released by the EWG. Buy organic for the dirty dozen foods while the clean 15 are relatively safe to purchase conventional.

I consider this an important investment in your nutrition and health of your gut (which tremendously influences your wellbeing overall).

Artificial Sweeteners



ORGANIC VS CONVENTIONAL

Minerals (in milliequivalent)

Vegetables	Calcium	Magnesium	Potassium	Sodium	Manganese	Iron	Copper
Snap Beans							
Organic	40.5	60.0	99.7	8.6	60.0	227.0	69.0
Conventional	15.5	14.8	29.1	0.0	2.0	10.0	3.0
Cabbage							
Organic	60.0	43.6	148.3	20.4	13.0	94.0	48.0
Conventional	17.5	15.6	53.7	0.8	2.0	20.0	0.4
Lettuce							
Organic	71.0	49.3	176.5	12.2	169.0	516.0	60.0
Conventional	16.0	13.1	53.7	0.0	1.0	1.0	3.0
Tomatoes							
Organic	23.0	59.2	148.3	6.5	48.0	1938.0	53.0
Conventional	4.5	4.5	58.6	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
Spinach							
Organic	96.0	293.9	257.0	69.5	117.0	1584.0	0.0
Conventional	47.5	46.9	84.0	0.8	1.0	19.0	0.5

Research conducted by Firman E Bear at Rutgers University in the Natural Gardener's Catalog (1995)

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[Artificial sweeteners](#) and flavor enhancers include aspartame, acesulfame potassium, monosodium glutamate, sucralose and many others. They allow us to make food taste amazing without needing to add salt or sugar. The downside is that these compounds have a neurotoxic effect on the brain and break down into nasty chemicals once they are digested.

The constituents of aspartame, for example, have been shown to increase chances of mood disorders, overstimulate neuronal cells in the brain, and increase chances of brain-related cancers ([3](#), [4](#)).



Artificial sweeteners are EVIL

and will contribute to major digestive issues, brain inflammation and accelerated aging processes

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Alternative: Natural Sweeteners

One of the primary draws of artificial sweeteners is that they do not have any calories or sugar. If this is your motivation for using these products, [stevia](#) and [monk fruit](#) are great natural alternatives that will not have any negative impact on your blood sugar.

Other healthier options are organic coconut palm sugar or organic raw honey. While these will still create a rise in blood sugar, they have a relatively low glycemic index. I would recommend only using these on occasion.



Margarine

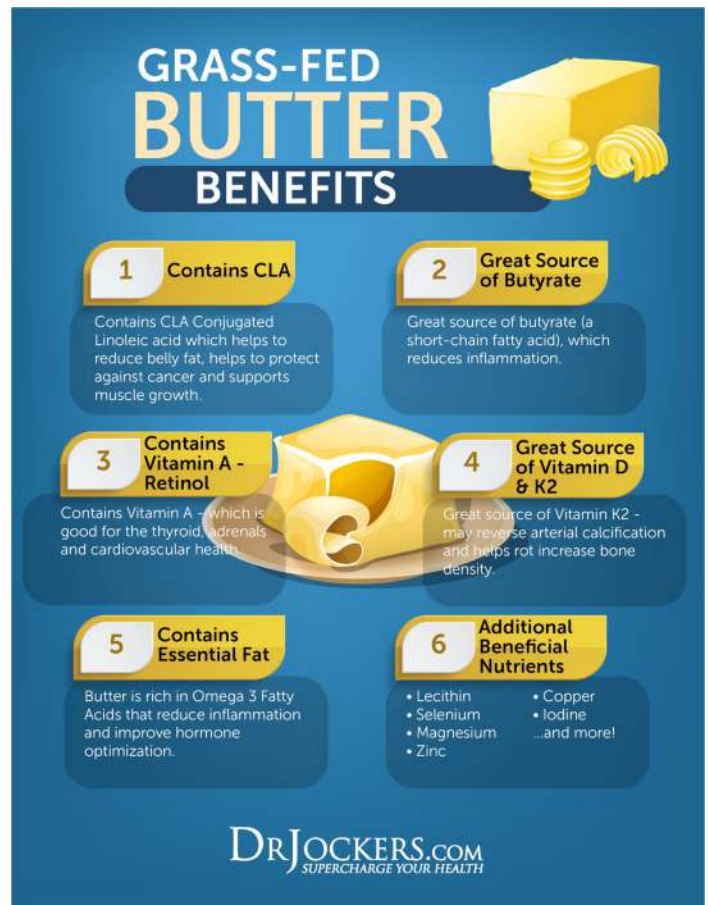
Margarine, like artificial sweeteners, is one of the more deceptive products to ever hit grocery store shelves. It is often marketed as a heart healthy alternative to butter. This is supposedly because it contains “heart healthy” vegetable oils and does not contain any saturated fat or cholesterol.

Although marketed as healthy, margarine is actually a toxic mixture of inflammatory, GMO, oils and artificial additives that I would not recommend to anyone. You want to instead eat fats that increase your Omega-3:Omega-6 ratio while providing [healthy saturated fats](#) for brain and nervous system health. Margarine is definitely one of the worst foods you can consume!

Alternative: Grass-fed Butter

While many alternatives could fall here, in terms of the health effects mentioned above, butter provides a very complete nutrition profile. [Butter from grass-fed cows](#) is naturally high in Omega-3 fatty acids as well as important saturated fats and dietary cholesterol that are key for brain health and formation of sex hormones.

Other great options include: Organic Coconut Oil, Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Animal Fats (Lard/Tallow), Omega-3 rich fish, and avocado oil. As a general rule, fats that are solid at room temperature are suitable for cooking, while those that are liquid at room temperature are better suited as dressings after cooking.



Canned Tomatoes

Chemicals from plastics are a disaster to healthy [hormone balance](#). For men and women, frequent exposure to chemicals leached from plastics can cause an elevation in estrogen that has many negative health effects. One of the major offenders is the chemical Bisphenol-A (BPA).

What many people don't realize is that BPA is often used in canned goods to protect the inside of the can from deteriorating. Combining a BPA lining with an acidic food such as tomatoes causes large amounts of BPA to leach out of the can. This means consuming canned tomatoes exposes your body to a massive amount of BPA.

In addition, aluminum cans also contain aluminum which leaches out with acidic substances like the canned tomatoes. Aluminum is highly toxic and especially detrimental to brain health. Although many have thought that canned tomatoes are a healthy choice, they are definitely one of the worst foods you can consume.

The Problem with Canned Tomatoes

This popular food item should be avoided if possible as the acidic nature of tomatoes pulls and leaches out aluminum and other harmful chemicals such as BPA from the can. This creates a high toxic load and can heavily burden the body's detoxification systems.

What To Look For Instead

- Dice Up Fresh Tomatoes
- Use Tomato Sauces in Glass Jars
- Look For Organic Brands

**Tomatoes are one of the EPA's dirty dozen each year as they are highly sprayed with pesticides and herbicides. It is always best to get them organic so you know they don't have these harmful chemicals.



Alternative: Fresh Tomatoes

You may be able to find canned tomatoes in BPA free cans or even alternative packaging. However, I would say it is probably ideal to buy fresh organic tomatoes from your local health foods store or farmers market.

You can also get tomato sauces and diced tomatoes in glass jars and this is perfectly acceptable as the glass doesn't have chemicals that leach into the tomatoes. Many brands offer tomatoes and tomato sauces in glass jars these days.

HOW TO AVOID BPA

WHAT TO LOOK FOR



Container bottoms marked with 7* or 3 may contain BPA

Bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical found in plastics used to package food, may be linked to birth defects, reproductive problems, heart disease.

New bio-based or combination plastics also marked with numeral 7.

POTENTIALLY HARMFUL

- Mimics the hormone estrogen
- Found in the urine of 93 percent of the population over age 6; suggests constant exposure to BPA
- BPA can leach into food or beverage if plastic container is heated

	PRODUCTS Purpose of BPA	HOW TO AVOID BPA
 Baby Bottles	Makes bottle transparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use glass bottles or plastic • BPA-free bottles available
 Nondisposable Water Bottles	Makes bottle shatterproof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not wash in dishwasher • Use stainless steel or BPA-free plastic bottles
 Canned Food Lining	Prevents corrosion, food contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose food packaged in cardboard cartons • Eat fresh produce
 Paper Receipts	Paper receipts from grocery/convenience stores are a major exposure to BPA that can leach into the blood stream through the skin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opt for digital receipts or use a glove when handling paper receipts to avoid skin contact.

BPA also found in plastic eyeglass lenses, coatings on cash register receipts, CDs, paints, medical equipment, toys.

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Following A Healing Diet

Sometimes the most daunting thing about beginning a new way of eating is becoming fixated on all of the worst foods you can no longer eat. So, after you get a general idea of the most important worst foods to avoid, it's best to focus on these key guidelines for the foods you **should** eat.

A [healing diet](#) focuses on a style of eating that stabilizes blood sugar, dramatically lowers inflammation, reduces exposure to environmental toxins, and floods the body with nutrition on a daily basis. As a simple starting point, I recommend 3 key rules for a healing diet.



Reduce Sugar & Grains

Sugars and refined carbohydrates consumed frequently throughout the day send blood sugar into an unstable rollercoaster. Along with this comes a fluctuation in insulin levels that contributes to inflammation, weight gain, and unstable energy levels.

Additionally, removing grains will drastically reduce phytic acids and [lectins](#) going into your system. This will help you extract more nutrition from your food and put less of an inflammatory strain on your gut lining.



Decrease Bad Fat & Increase Good Fat

Remove highly processed oils and fats from conventionally raised animals. Replace them with healthy fats.

This includes things like grass-fed butter, coconut oil and coconut products, olive oil, avocados, and MCT oil. These help stabilize [blood sugar](#), balance hormones, and keep you full between meals.



Change The Meat You Eat

It is absolutely critical that you replace all conventionally raised animal products with those derived from pasture-raised animals. The nutritional value of any animal derived product is a direct reflection of the environment it was raised in. Meat and dairy from pasture-raised animals is richer in nutrients, contains more omega-3 fatty acids, and overall is better for you and the environment.

Now you understand the worst foods to eat so be sure to avoid these. For a more in-depth shopping guide, click the banner below and you can get a [free shopping list](#) for the healing diet along with core principals of this powerful eating style.



My Favorite Olive Oil

My favorite olive oil is this [Fresh-Pressed Olive Oil](#). It is the most flavorful artisan olive oil you can find out there. It comes from award-winning artisan farms with a harvest-fresh taste to your table. These oils are independently lab-certified to be 100 percent extra virgin olive oil — so you can trust the quality. My family swears by it. We use it daily on our salads and meals. Our kids love it. I am sure your family will too.

I am excited to share a special offer with you. You can get this \$39.00 bottle of [Fresh-Pressed Olive Oil](#) for only \$1.00 to help with shipping if you click on the link [here](#)

**Love Great Olive Oil?
FREE Sample Offer!**

Try a \$39 bottle of rare, harvest-fresh olive oil and pay just \$1 shipping. No commitment to buy anything, now or ever.

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- ▶ Highest Antioxidant Levels
- ▶ Great Flavor and Texture
- ▶ Independently Lab Certified to be 100% Olive Oil

T.J. Robinson,
The Olive Oil Hunter®

Click here for
FREE \$39 bottle

Gut Health Kickstart

If you spend most days barely making it to bedtime, dead on your feet, and exhausted all the time, it's time for an energy reset.

The BEST way to improve your energy levels is with a full mitochondrial recharge. (Mitochondria are the parts of your cells that create all the energy you use every day.) But a mitochondrial reset won't work unless you have a healthy, balanced microbiome.

[→Click here to get Laura Frontiero's guide, Restore Your Mitochondria With A Gut Health Kickstart](#)

This 33-page guide has all the information you need to boost the good bacteria, clear out the bad bacteria, repair your intestinal lining, and balance your microbiome's flora. We know it sounds VERY glamorous. (Not really.) But gut health is the foundation for EVERYTHING your body does, and without a balanced gut, you're likely to feel exhausted for a very long time.

As a bonus, when you download the guide, you'll also get a ticket to the *Restore Your Mitochondrial Matrix Summit*, happening online from August 23 – 30, 2022.

The summit brings together more than 40 of the world's leading experts in mitochondrial health – including doctors, authors, sought-after speakers, nutritionists, and more – to teach you how to supercharge your mitochondria for energy, productivity, and a renewed sense of vitality!

**Sluggish and Sick?
Start Here
For a Total Gut Reset!**

Get the FREE guide and join a global community of people learning how to supercharge their mitochondria to be healthy, energized, and productive!

GET YOUR FREE COPY NOW!

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